Community statistical programme 2008-2012

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In accordance with Decision No 1578/2007/EC1of the European Parliament and of the Council, the Commission presents a report on the final evaluation of the Community Statistical Programme 2008 to 2012 (CSP).

The report summarises the CSP's main achievements, and presents the outcome of the reprioritisation and the implementation of Eurostat's Vision communication, a major new initiative that, although issued after the CSP was adopted, reshaped the activities in 2010-12 and is also relevant for going forward.

Main achievements: the CSP contains **over 130 objectives, the majority of which achieved a high degree of implementation.** Institutional objectives and those aiming to improve the legislative framework had the highest degree of achievement, — 100 % and 95 % respectively of their objectives could be considered achieved — while some **10 % of the production-related objectives were not adequately achieved.**

Resources also had to be redeployed to meet new statistical needs that emerged during the CSP period, particularly in the areas of macroeconomic and social statistics due to the financial crisis.

The financial implementation was generally good.

Statistics play an important role in European integration, e.g.:

- the process of preparing the new European system of accounts (ESA 2010) culminated in the adoption of the ESA 2010 Regulation in May 2013
- the implementation of the NACE Rev. 2 classification advanced considerably ;
- a Union register of multinational enterprise groups is expected to be completed by end of 2013 and is already being used ;
- statistical and IT standards for the exchange of data and metadata became increasingly available within the European Statistical System (ESS) ;
- the ESS Committee (ESSC) endorsed a revised version of the European Statistics Code of Practice in 2011 and updated the ESS Quality Assurance Framework (v1.1) at the end of 2012. The European Statistical Governance Advisory Board reports annually to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of the Code ;
- the creation of the European Statistical Advisory Committee (ESAC) helped to improve communication with different types of users ;
- Eurostat collected and published a wide range of data for the enlargement process and, to a lesser extent, for the European Neighbourhood countries;
- there has been an increase in the number of domains now governed by legislation (energy, environmental accounts) in order to ensure timely and complete data transmission by Member States;

- regular compliance monitoring for enhancing the quality of European statistics was implemented ;

- a financing decision was adopted annually for the operational implementation of the work programme. The financial execution of the available credits was satisfactory and monitored at central level;

- new types of collaborative networks (ESSnets) were developed to share expertise and channel knowledge and resources in the ESS;

- following the launch of the revamped website in 2009 with new sections such as 'Statistics Explained' and improved functionalities, in 2010 a new dissemination chain was put in place.

With regard to cross-sectional activities, Eurostat published new indicators to replace the structural indicators. The list of sustainable development indicators (SDIs) was updated. The GDP and beyond initiative has led to improvements and the production of new indicators in a number of statistical areas, in particular economic, social and environmental statistics.

2) Redefinition of priorities: a methodology for the reprioritisation process was developed by a task force specifically set up for the purpose. However, this methodology was difficult to implement consistently at national level. Therefore, Eurostat proposed **a new strategy-driven approach to the ESS,** based on an annual review of existing statistical requirements, on identification of negative priorities and on sunset clauses.

Priority setting was performed during the **preparation of the annual work programmes** and involved a rolling process of consultation between Eurostat and the other Commission DGs as well as among the various ESS members, including ESAC. The annual priority-setting mechanism actually ensured that annual programmes could cope with emerging statistical priorities.

The report notes that even if there is no evidence that the reprioritisation process was partly guided by systematic considerations on efficiency gains, Eurostat made a big effort to increase the efficiency of the production system.

3) Implementation of Eurostat's vision: Eurostat's Vision involves most — if not all — phases of the statistical business process and could not have been completed in only three years. Major developments are provided for in the European Statistical Programme 2013-2017 (ESP). The report cites the establishment of Sponsorship Groups within the ESS to promote the sharing of knowledge and good practice among ESS members at a strategic level, the launch of the modernisation of social statistics and the introduction of the European Master's in Official Statistics.

The concrete initiatives mainly consisted of VIP and ESSnet projects. The former addresses cross-cutting domains of development. The latter is an initiative formalising a long-standing tradition of cooperation among ESS members with the final aim of developing tools and common solutions to be widely adopted by all the National Statistical Institutes (NSIs).

The reengineering of statistical operations is a long and complex process, and the results of VIP and ESSnet projects have therefore, in most cases, not yet been included in the production chain of NSIs. **NSIs will need resources to invest** in the modification of processes, even though they might bring cost-efficiencies in the long-run.

The degree to which NSIs have adopted the ESS Strategy and the Vision is **still mixed**, with NSI attitudes ranging from enthusiastic to sceptical — if not reluctant. The risk of lacking momentum in a scenario of resources shortage in the ESS can be mitigated by positioning the Vision at the core of the ESP, but this

strategy needs to be **supported by adequate means,** in particular, adequate management should be put in place.