

# Structural business statistics. Recast

2006/0020(COD) - 24/04/2014 - Follow-up document

The Commission presented a report on the implementation of the Regulation (EC) No 295/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning structural business statistics (SBS).

This report follows on from the May 2011 report and gives an overview of progress in implementing the SBS Regulation based on final data for 2010, the reference year, as regards structural business statistics on: (i) services; (ii) industry; (iii) trade; (iv) construction; (v) business services; and (vi) business demography.

The main conclusions of the report are as follows:

**Completeness of data:** on the whole, data sent by Member States are reasonably complete for all SBS modules. The 2010 results for the 27 EU Member States and Norway showed a **5 % increase** in data availability as compared with the previous report to the European Parliament and the Council.

**Confidentiality:** confidentiality rules have reduced data availability. The percentages of data classified as confidential vary from 0 % to 24 %, with higher rates recorded by the medium and small countries due to the rules mentioned above. The report notes that **8.3 %** of the aggregated EU results for 2010, the reference year, for statistics on **services, industry, trade and construction** could not be published for reasons of confidentiality. Around **14 %** of the aggregated EU results for **business services and business demography** have not been made available due to the same reasons.

**Accuracy:** in order to measure the accuracy of SBSs, Commission Regulation (EU) No 275/2010 requires all Member States to provide Eurostat, on an annual basis, with information on quality indicators such as **coefficients of variation:** the report shows that the aggregated EU coefficients of variation for the variables are in most cases below 1.5, with the exception of the 'gross investment' variable, for which the coefficients are mainly between 0.6 and 2.5. In general, the coefficients of variation are lower for industry and slightly higher for construction, trade and services.

**Coherence and comparability:** analysing the coherence of SBSs and the other statistical sources revealed a number of differences in both the data and the methodologies used. For any particular statistical source, the methodology will be chosen which best suits the purposes of that source and for this reason there tend to be differences in methodology between sources. Statistics on business services and business demography are comparable from 2008, when the survey became mandatory.

**Deadline:** for reference year 2010, 19 countries delivered their data on time for all SBS areas. Derogations from the provisions of the SBS Regulation were granted to some Member States to allow them to make the necessary adaptations to their national statistical systems. Complete derogations were granted to Estonia and France for statistics on business services.

**All SBSs are available free of charge** on Eurostat's website in the area 'Industry, trade and services', together with detailed explanations of methodological issues that may be of relevance to users.

**Compliance with the SBS Regulation:** the overall compliance score for 2010 data shows an improvement on the compliance level recorded in the previous report. Most countries are now delivering data more promptly than was previously the case, although some continue to miss deadlines, which delayed the publication of EU aggregates.

The Commission concludes that compliance was **‘very good’ or ‘good’** for most Member States.

**Reduce the burden on businesses:** Eurostat works with national statistical institutes (NSIs) on an on-going basis to find ways of reducing the burden on businesses by simplifying the data requirements, whilst at the same time ensuring that the available statistics meet the needs of users.

Following several consultations with the main users of SBSs, both within and outside the Commission, Eurostat has identified a number of **possible ways of reducing the burden on NSIs and businesses**. These measures relate to the requirements imposed on financial services businesses, the details requested for multiannual datasets and the discontinuation of ‘kind of activity unit’ based datasets.

**Further development:** ESS is constantly looking to identify ways of responding to new and emerging needs for statistics, whilst at the same time reducing both the burden on respondents and the cost of producing statistics.

Eurostat developed a programme for the modernisation of European enterprise and trade statistics (MEETS) which ran for six years, from 2008 to 2013. Its main outcome was a **proposal for practical steps to modernise business statistics**, such as developing a target set of indicators and conducting a review of priorities. Implementing this proposal will require significant commitment and investment from ESS in the coming years.