

EC statistics: legislative framework for the production of short-term EC statistics

1997/0171(CNS) - 26/06/2014 - Follow-up document

In accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No 1165/98, the Commission has presented a report on short-term statistics.

European short-term statistics (STS) describe the most recent developments in European economies in **four major areas**: industry, construction, retail trade and services (excluding financial services).

The present report:

- outlines the uses of short-term statistics and their relevance for key European policies and the steering of European monetary policy;
- indicates major developments in short-term statistics since the last quality report in June 2011;
- describes in greater detail the different quality aspects of short-term statistics;
- presents the cost and burden involved in the collection and processing of data for short-term statistics, and some examples of how Member States have been able to reduce these;
- provides an outlook on future developments in short-term statistics.

Overview of statistics and main developments: short-term statistics rank among the most important statistics produced by the Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat).

The Commission recalls that of the initial 22 principal European economic indicators (PEEIs) developed to monitor the economic development of the European Union and its Member States and in particular to conduct monetary policy in the euro area, eight are provided by short-term statistics: (i) industrial production, (ii) industrial output prices on the domestic market, (iii) industrial import prices, (iv) production in construction, (v) volume of retail trade and repair, (vi) turnover in services (excluding retail trade services) (other) services, (viii) service output prices and building permits.

A number of changes have taken place since the last quality report on short-term statistics was adopted in June 2011:

- with Commission Regulation (EU) No 461/2012 of 31 May 2012, the collection of data on industrial new orders was discontinued;
- in March 2012, a new seasonal adjustment method was introduced for European short-term statistics;
- in October 2012, short-term statistics became subject to the ESS guidelines on revision policy;
- in early 2013, the short-term indices were rebased from 2005 to 2010;
- as of 2013, quarterly data for hours worked and gross wages and salaries have been available for retail trade and repair and for other services.

Future developments: the report notes that between 2000 and 2012, **the share of industry and construction** in all economic activity dropped from 27.3% to 24.7%. Over the same period, the share of market services (excluding banking and insurance) increased from 43.2% to 45.5%. The high and increasing economic importance of the service sector is, however, not adequately reflected in current short-term statistics.

In 2011, Eurostat launched an intensive consultation of all key users and national producers of short-term statistics in order to assess ways of improving the short-term statistics indicators relating to service industries. Notwithstanding some concerns about a possible increase in cost and burden, the consultation showed a **broad consensus on the need for improvement in this area.**

Taking into account users' and producers' comments, the **Commission plans to propose changes to the current Regulation** to ensure the relevance of short-term statistics in view of the increasing economic importance of services in European economies, while fully taking into account concerns as to increasing cost and burden for their production.