

European business statistics

2017/0048(COD) - 16/04/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 576 votes to 25 with 46 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on European business statistics, amending Regulation (EC) No 184/2005 and repealing 10 legal acts in the field of business statistics.

Parliament's position adopted in first reading following the ordinary legislative procedure amended the Commission proposal as follows:

Purpose and scope of statistics

The Regulation establishes a common legal framework for: (i) the development, production and dissemination of European business statistics; (ii) the European framework of national statistical business registers and the EuroGroups Register.

European business statistics shall cover:

- the structure, economic activities and performance of the statistical units, their research and development and innovation activities, their Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) usage and e-commerce, as well as global value chains. European business statistics shall also cover research and development statistics in the higher education, government and private non-profit sectors;
- the production of manufactured goods and services and the international trade in goods and services.

Harmonised statistics on the international trade in goods

In order to improve the quality of statistics, the National Statistical Authorities of the Member States concerned shall exchange micro data for statistical purposes received from their customs authorities related to the exports or imports of goods, for the estimation of quasi-transit exports or imports of their Member State since those exports or imports involve the customs authorities of more than one Member State.

Technical specifications of data requirements

The Commission shall be empowered to adopt implementing acts for the purpose of further specifying the elements of the data to be transmitted under the Regulation, their technical definitions and simplifications. When adopting implementing acts, the Commission shall ensure that the overall number of variables in each domain does not exceed a specified number.

Whenever new data are required in order to respond to user needs and to provide for a certain degree of flexibility, the Commission may change not more than 5 variables for each of the domains "Short term business statistics", "Regional business statistics" and "Statistics on international activities" and not more than 20 variables for the domain "Country-level business statistics" in any period of five consecutive calendar years. These maxima shall not apply for the topics "Global value chains", "Innovation" and "ICT usage and e-commerce".

When preparing such implementing acts, the Commission shall take into account potential extra costs and administrative burdens on Member States or on the respondent.

Exchange of confidential data

To safeguard the quality and comparability of European Business Statistics or National Accounts, the exchange of confidential data should be allowed between the National Statistical Authorities of Member States concerned, the respective national central banks, the European Central Bank and the Commission (Eurostat) for statistical purposes only.

Pilot studies

Where new data requirements are identified, the Commission may launch pilot studies to be carried out by the Member States on a voluntary basis. As a priority, the Commission may launch pilot studies that will cover "international trade in services", "real estate", "financial indicators" and "environment and climate".

Following the evaluation of the pilot studies, the Commission shall prepare in cooperation with the Member States a report on the findings of the studies. That report shall be made public. The Commission shall accompany the regular reports on the overall progress made regarding the pilot studies with proposals for introducing new data requirements.

Simplification

The amended text specifies that Member States or national competent authorities should endeavour to simplify the collection of statistics from European businesses to the greatest extent possible. The National Statistical Authorities should factor in the latest digital developments at the time when the instruments and methods for collecting statistics are being established and should be encouraged to implement innovative approaches.