

Quarterly statistics on Community job vacancies

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The Commission presented a report on the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 453/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quarterly statistics on Community job vacancies.

The document is the fourth report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council. It is based on the experience gained from quarterly data transmissions and on the documentation provided by Member States in their annual quality reports. It focuses on the quality of the job vacancy statistics received since these reports and examines the statistics sent to the Commission for the reference quarters from the first quarter of 2016 to the fourth quarter of 2018.

Progress achieved

As regards the production process, a number of improvements have been made to the production chain of job vacancy statistics over the last three years:

- the statistics have been transmitted by all Member States using the Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange (SDMX) data structure and internationally agreed code lists. The same coding was used in Eurostat's JVS database and to transmit the EU's job vacancy statistics to the European Central Bank;
- to check the structure and coding of JVS, a new IT tool (STRUVAL) has been introduced to simplify the production process and reduce the risk of errors arising from wrong coding;
- in each quarterly transmission, Eurostat makes plausibility checks by comparing data over time and across NACE Rev. 2 economic activities. In the event of significant quarter-on-quarter changes in the number of occupied posts or job vacancies, Eurostat asks Member States to confirm the data or retransmit a corrected data file. No major issues have been uncovered by the plausibility checks carried out over the last few years;
- Eurostat also introduced new rules on the processing of flags that signal special events such as breaks in the series and specify the confidentiality status of the data;
- Eurostat has started to give greater visibility to seasonally adjusted data by publishing European aggregates in the Statistics Explained article on job vacancy statistics, in parallel with unadjusted data.

Data quality

The report notes that job vacancy statistics were provided in a timely manner and European aggregates were published as planned. In general, the published European aggregates, for both flash and final estimates, required only slight revisions.

The Member States' quality reports have been processed using the latest version of the European statistical system metadata handler and made available to all users.

Nevertheless, incomplete coverage is still the main reason why job vacancy statistics are not used more widely. It is crucial for all Member States to fully cover the public sector (in the case of Denmark, France and Italy) and small businesses (in the case of France, Italy and Malta).

Improved coverage would also make it possible to publish the number of vacancies, for European aggregates, in addition to the job vacancy rate. Eurostat plans to address this issue in close cooperation with the countries concerned, under the next review of EU legislation on labour market statistics collected from businesses.

The Commission will continue to monitor compliance and data quality at regular intervals, using the data delivered and other national documentation, including quality reports, and follow this up closely with the competent national statistical authorities.