Community statistics: income and living conditions in the Union EU-SILC

2001/0293(COD) - 06/03/2003 - Council position

The Council has unanimously adopted the Common position and the Commission accepts it. The European Parliament adopted the twelve amendments on 14 May 2002. The proposed Common position of the Council incorporates most of them either directly or with some minor wording reformulation which makes no change to the content of the project. Only two important differences can be noted in: - the area 'Physical and social environment' where the Council refused to be more precise and to accept the coverage of crime, pollution and noise as proposed by the EP. At the level of variables, however, this information is included; - the education area, where the highest ISCED level attained is specified in the Common position but parents' education as proposed in the EP amendment is not included. Among the other changes introduced by the Council, the most important are the following: - an additional aim of ensuring comparability of data, to be pursued through methodological studies has been introduced; - in the income definition, it has been clarified that: both monetary and non-monetary income components are to be covered; deductions for "self-employed and unemployed compulsory social insurance contributions" are to be made; only "inter-household transfers received" should be used for the calculation of gross income and inter-household transfers paid have to be deducted from gross income to obtain disposable income; - the Council has introduced the word "produced" in order to allow for the range of appropriate methods for Member States to compile or estimate the required data; - the first year of production of data has been changed from 2003 to 2004, reflecting the earliest realistic date for implementation of the Regulation. Dates throughout the Regulation have been adapted to reflect this change. In particular, the date in Article 6(2) for the inclusion of the first target secondary area has been postponed to 2005; - a derogation for Germany, the Netherlands and the UK has been added allowing these three countries to launch SILC only in 2005 under the condition that they supply data for the cross-sectional indicators in the context of the open method of coordination. - allowing transition periods for Germany during which it moves to full use of probability sampling for both cross-sectional and longitudinal data; - the specification that the dates of transmission of comparable data for cross-sectional common EU indicators will also apply to Member States which start annual collection of data after 2004; - funding for four years is guaranteed to all Member States, including those whose derogations allow them to begin collecting data later than others. The budget authority will actually grant the available appropriations, rather than simply determine them. It should also be noted that there have been problems of comitology encountered during the adoption of the Common position (and the position adopted by the Commission). The Council has changed the comitology procedure from management to regulatory procedure.