Economic accounts for agriculture in the Community

2003/0023(COD) - 04/02/2003 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to set up the Economic Accounts for Agriculture (EEA) in the Community CONTENT : Eurostat has been publishing Economic Accounts for Agriculture (EAA) since 1964. They are based on a gentlemen's agreement by which Member States have committed themselves to respect the concepts and rules laid down in a common methodology, together with a calendar for the transmission of data. The EAA are mainly used to monitor and evaluate the Common Agricultural Policy. Recent years' experience shows that, lacking a formal legal base, the EAA are coming increasingly under pressure because of budgetary cuts. This not only puts at risk future improvements in quality, but also represents a serious threat even to current standards. The Commission makes this proposal in order to consolidate the methodological framework which has been built in close co-operation with the Member States, to maintain and improve the quality of data, and to establish a framework for their transmission. The proposed Regulation in no way goes beyond what is currently done under the gentlemen's agreement, either in terms of data delivery or in terms of deadlines. In the absence of the proposed legal basis, and in view of diminishing budgetary and staff resources, there is a risk that the quality of the EAA data will deteriorate. Keeping the EAA outside statistical legislation would give a negative sign to the Candidate Countries. The proposed Regulation sets up the EEA by providing for: - a methodology (common standards, definitions, classifications and accounting rules) intended to be sued for compiling accounts on comparable bases for the purposes of the Community, together with results as required under the terms of Article 3; - time limits for the transmission of the agricultural accounts compiled in accordance with EEA methodology.