Labour force in the Community: sample survey on employment and unemployment

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PURPOSE : to adapt the list of variables for the Community's sample survey on the organisation of the labour force. CONTENT : in 1998 the Community began a system whereby the labour workforce would be continuously surveyed in all of the Member States as from 2003. The aim being to provide comparable statistics on the twin issues of employment and unemployment (based on ILO concepts) and to analyse the structure of the EU's workforce. This latter point takes account of individual characteristics governing the workforce such as sex, age, educational level, occupation and previous work experience. In terms of job characteristics the survey takes account of economic activity and hours worked. Lastly, the survey also seeks to examine household issues such as the household's composition and who within that household participates in the labour workforce. In light of the changes which have been taking place in the EU's labour market the Commission considers it appropriate to introduce changes to the variables on which the labour survey is based. Thus, the current proposal seeks to adapt the list of survey variables by introducing six new characterises. They are: - supervisory responsibilities. This relates to matters of equal opportunities including career advancement; - involvement of the public employment service in finding a job; - contract with a temporary work agency. This is particularly relevant for labour market flexibility; - overtime hours in the reference week. This is an essential component in assessing the number of hours actually worked ; - lack of care facilities as a reason for non-participation or for deciding to work part-time; - Continued receipt of wages. This is deemed an essential variable in trying to understand the actual employment rate. At the same time as introducing six new variables the proposal seeks to reduce the frequency of the survey to once a year - rather than quarterly as is currently the case. The proposal foresees the application of the new variable in the labour force survey as from 2005. The proposal has no financial implication for the Commission.