# Information society, eEurope: Community statistics

2003/0199(COD) - 25/08/2003 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to establish a common framework for the systematic production of Community statistics on the information society. CONTENT : Information and communications technologies (ICT) are having an increasing economic and social impact. Policy makers have sought to ensure that the new technologies are rapidly absorbed into everyday economic and social life. This has led to requests for statistics on a wide range of topics in the information society domain. The Structural Indicators, used in the annual Spring Report to the European Council, include indicators from the information society domain, which require harmonised statistics at the European level. The eEurope 2005 Action Plan, which sets up a number of targets to be achieved by the end of 2005, includes a process of benchmarking by means of indicators. It states measurement of eEurope 2005 indicators should make greater use of official statistics from the National Statistical Institutes and Eurostat. The proposed legislation provides a legal framework for National Statistical Institutes to provide the statistics needed for the Structural Indicators and the e-Europe benchmarking process, while at the same time being flexible enough to respond to new needs. The act is a framework regulation which covers statistics to be provided only in terms of outputs, leaving Member States full flexibility in how to obtain the statistics. The regulation contains two annexes, each defining a module which will later be implemented by a Commission Regulation. The modules define lists of subjects which may be covered by implementing measures. Member States support both the content of the lists themselves, and the mechanism of defining subjects in broad terms in the present Regulation, and later drawing from these lists to define characteristics more specifically (in terms of statistical variables to be provided) in implementing measures. Eurostat is charged with assessing the quality of the data transmitted. For at least the first year in which Community statistics provided for in implementing measures to this Regulation are produced by Member States, the Commission will make a financial contribution to the Member States to help cover the costs incurred by them in producing, processing and transmitting these statistics. Financial contributions will be in the form of grants. If budgetary conditions permit, the Commission intends to continue financial support (grants) to Member States to help offset the costs of providing these statistics in subsequent years. The amount of the financial contribution will be fixed as part of the annual budgetary procedures of the EC. The maximum Community contribution will not exceed 90 % of the total costs of providing these statistics. FINANCIAL STATEMENT: - budget lines: B5-3310 until end 2004; in subsequent years subject to availability of funds from follow-up programme. B5-3260 and B5 6000 (the latter after 2006, if consistent with financial perspective in force for the period commencing in 2007.) - total allocation for action: EUR 12.5 million for commitment. - period of application: 2004-2008. - overall financial impact of human resources and other administrative expenditure: EUR 2 160 million. - overall total: EUR 14 660 million. - human resources : 4 staff assigned.