Labour force sample survey in the Community

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This is the second in a series of three-yearly reports which the Commission is required to submit under article 7 of Council Regulation 577/98/EC on the organisation of the labour force sample survey (LFS) in the Community. The first report was submitted by the Commission in 2000 and covered the period 1998-1999. This report documents the progress made by Member States, Candidate and EFTA countries with respect to the provisions of the Council Regulation and the associated Commission Regulations during the period 2000-2002. The content of the report is based upon quality reports, data and other information received from the countries concerned, in addition to analyses of the national questionnaires. The report also includes details of LFS projects for which the Commission provided financial support. The situation regarding the progress made in implementing specific aspects of Council Regulation 577/98/EC is described in more detail below, with references to the relevant articles. There has been an improvement in the timeliness of the quarterly data since the last report. Quarterly data are now transmitted by most Member States within the 12-week transmission period. The report concludes that there has been good progress within Member States and EFTA countries in a number of important areas since the last report to the Council. The implementation of the LFS in Candidate Countries is particularly encouraging. The agreement to move to a continuous quarterly LFS in all Member States represents a welcome improvement to the implementation of the LFS. In addition, the faster transmission of data has improved the usefulness of the quarterly results. Countries have directed national resources to test and introduce technical improvements to their surveys, in some cases with the financial support of the Commission, and this has increased the comparability of the data. However, the Commission is concerned that not all mandatory variables are being transmitted by Member States. The Member States must fulfil their obligations under this Regulation and the Commission will continue to work closely with Member States, Candidate and EFTA countries to achieve full implementation of its provisions.