

Social protection: set up the European System of integrated Social Protection Statistics ESSPROS

2006/0004(COD) - 20/01/2006 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to set up a European system of integrated social protection statistics (ESSPROS).

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

CONTENT: the current proposal seeks to set up a legal framework for the recognition a “European System of Integrated Social Protection Statistics” (ESSPROS). The proposed Regulation will provide for the co-ordination and harmonisation of social protection data at an EU level. It is essential that an EU-wide information system is set up to support the open method of co-ordination relating specifically to social inclusion and to pensions. Such a move will improve the usefulness of current data collections in terms of timeliness, coverage and the comparability of data. It is being proposed within the context of the Lisbon European Council which gave impetus to a process of policy exchange among the Member States on the modernisation of social protection systems. ESSPROS is to act as a key indicator for the streamlining of open co-ordination in the field of social protection. In addition, it was agreed that an annual Joint Report on Social Inclusions and Social Protection will become the core reporting instrument. This report, particularly in the field of social inclusion and pension, will depend on data from ESSPROS.

Currently, ESSPROS data offers the lowest statistical common denominator to which the numerous variations in the national welfare system can be reduced. Annual data collection on social protection is done on a voluntary basis. There is now, however, a recognised need to improve the timeliness of data collections. The proposed Regulation will be supplemented by Commission implementing Regulations. To include, firstly a core system of both quantitative and qualitative information. The second, to include a module on pension beneficiaries. The module on net social protection benefits will be the subject of a Commission Regulation should the results of a feasibility study and pilot data collection prove to be positive. In introducing the new system of ESSPROS the Commission believes that the data collected will offer a better system with which to compare and analyse data relating to social protection.