Statistics: European Advisory Committee on Community Statistical Information Policy (repeal. Decision 91/116/EEC)

2006/0217(COD) - 11/09/2007

The Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs adopted, at first reading of the codecision procedure, the report by Ieke van den **BURG** (PES, NL) on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council setting up a European Advisory Committee on Community Statistical Information Policy.

Firstly, the committee proposes changing the name of the committee to the "**European Statistical Advisory Council**". The report underlines that in some Member States the body assigned to the national statistical offices (NSOs) on which all stakeholders not belonging to the NSO are represented is known as the Statistical Council. The UN's 2003 Handbook of Statistical Organization also calls bodies with a supervisory or advisory function assigned to NSOs "National Statistical Councils". This choice of title thus gives stakeholders some idea of the nature of the body in question.

The main amendments adopted by the committee are as follows :

- the decision-makers (the European Parliament, Council and Commission) should be able to obtain information on the cost-benefit ratio of individual sets of data in the Statistical Programme ;

- the Statistical Advisory Council shall also draw the Commission's attention to areas in which it may be necessary to develop new statistical activities and shall advise the Commission how to improve the relevance of the European Statistical System to users, taking into account the costs for information providers and producers;

- in order to accomplish its task, the Statistical Advisory Council shall cooperate with the Statistical Programme Committee and the Committee on Monetary, Financial and Balance of Payments Statistics. It shall regularly inform those two committees of its opinions regarding the tasks and shall send them opinions and reports that it has drawn up. Close cooperation between the Statistical Advisory Council and the two committees in the programme-planning process is to improve the governance of the European Statistical System and enhance the quality of Community statistics;

- the Statistical Advisory Board shall consist of **24** members. a) **12** members of the Statistical Advisory Board shall be appointed by the Commission after consultation of the European Parliament and the Council. The Commission shall endeavour to ensure that the composition of those twelve members reflects an equal representation of users, producers, respondents and members of civil society, including the scientific community; b) **11**members shall be directly appointed by the bodies to which they belong (including one from the European Data Protection Supervisor). The Director-General of Eurostat shall be an ex-officio member of the Statistical Advisory Board without voting right;

- MEPs have also stated that the **members shall act independently**;

- Members of the Statistical Advisory Council shall be appointed for a **term of 5 years** (as opposed to 4 as proposed by the Commission), renewable once;

- the Supervisory Council may, in agreement with the Commission, set up temporary working parties to be chaired by a Statistical Advisory Council member. For the performance of its tasks the Statistical Advisory Council may commission studies and hold seminars;

- secretarial services shall be provided for the Statistical Advisory Council and the working parties by the Commission. This shall not affect the independence of the Statistical Advisory Council;

- the expenditure for the Statistical Advisory Council shall be entered in the Commission budget;

- in order to clarify the voting procedure, an opinion delivered by the Statistical Advisory Council shall be valid if all its members have been convened and notified of the agenda, no later than two weeks before the meeting and two thirds of its members are present in person or by other means to be specified in the internal rules of procedure;

- this Decision shall enter into force three months after publication in the Official Journal.