Basic information

1997/0202(CNS) CNS - Consultation procedure Regulation	Procedure completed
Labour force sample survey in the Community Amended by 2001/0127(COD) Amended by 2003/0047(COD) Amended by 2006/0180(COD) Amended by 2013/0084(COD) **Subject** 4.15 Employment policy, action to combat unemployment 8.60 European statistical legislation	

Key players

Council of the European Union	
European Commission	Commission DG: Eurostat - European statistics Commissioner:

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
30/10/1997	Legislative proposal published	COM(1997)0376	Summary
09/03/1998	Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament		
09/03/1998	Additional information		
14/03/1998	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	1997/0202(CNS)
Procedure type	CNS - Consultation procedure
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Regulation
Amendments and repeals	Amended by 2001/0127(COD) Amended by 2003/0047(COD) Amended by 2006/0180(COD) Amended by 2013/0084(COD)
Legal basis	EC Treaty (before Amsterdam) E 213
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	EMPL/4/11399

Documentation gateway

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Legislative proposal	COM(1997)0376 OJ C 364 02.12.1997, p. 0007	30/10/1997	Summary
Follow-up document	COM(2000)0895	05/01/2001	Summary
Follow-up document	COM(2003)0760	09/12/2003	Summary
Follow-up document	COM(2010)0046	09/02/2010	Summary
Follow-up document	SEC(2010)0115	09/02/2010	Summary
Follow-up document	COM(2012)0701	28/11/2012	Summary
Follow-up document	COM(2015)0628	14/12/2015	Summary
Follow-up document	COM(2019)0014	28/01/2019	Summary

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
EESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES0294/1998 OJ C 129 27.04.1998, p. 0065	25/02/1998	
EU	Implementing legislative act	32002R1313 OJ L 192 20.07.2002, p. 0016-0021	19/07/2002	Summary
EU	Implementing legislative act	32002R2104 OJ L 324 29.11.2002, p. 0014-0019	28/11/2002	Summary
EU	Implementing legislative act	32005R0430 OJ L 071 17.03.2005, p. 0036-0060	15/03/2005	Summary

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act	
Regulation 1998/0577 OJ L 077 14.03.1998, p. 0003	Summary

Delegated acts	
Reference	Subject
2016/2792(DEA)	Examination of delegated act

Labour force sample survey in the Community

1997/0202(CNS) - 28/11/2002 - Implementing legislative act

LEGISLATIVE ACT : Commission Regulation 2104/2002/EC adapting Council Regulation 577/98/EC on the organisation of a labour force sample survey in the Community and Commission Regulation 1575/2000/EC implementing Council Regulation 577/98/EC as far as the list of education and training variables and their codification to be used for data transmission from 2003 onwards are concerned. CONTENT : Council Regulation 577/98/EC on the organisation of a labour force sample survey in the Community sets minimum requirements for carrying out statistical surveys based on a sample of the labour force in the Union with a view to obtaining data on the level, structure, job evolution and unemployment in the Member States. The evolution of techniques and concepts, in particular concerning the distinction between formal education and other forms of learning activities and the implementation of the classification on fields of education and training, makes it necessary to adapt the list of the education and training variables laid down in Article 4(1)(h) of Regulation 577/98/EC. As a consequence, the codification of these variables laid down in the Annex to Commission Regulation 1575/2000/EC of 19 July 2000 should also be adapted. The new list and codification should be implemented already in 2003 so as to guarantee full compatibility with the 2003 ad hoc module on lifelong learning. ENTRY INTO FORCE : 19/12/2002. The Regulation shall be directly applicable in all the Member States.

Labour force sample survey in the Community

1997/0202(CNS) - 15/03/2005 - Implementing legislative act

PURPOSE: updating of the codification to be used for data transmission from 2006 onwards and the use of a sub-sample for the collection of data on structural variables in relation to the organisation of a labour force sample survey.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Commission Regulation 430/2005/EC.

CONTENT: The conditions for the use of a sub-sample for the collection of data on structural variables are laid down in Annex I of the Regulation.

The codes for the variables to be used for data transmission for the years 2006 onwards are laid down in Annex II of the Regulation.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 06/04/2005.

Labour force sample survey in the Community

1997/0202(CNS) - 19/07/2002 - Implementing legislative act

COMMUNITY MEASURE : Commission Regulation 1313/2002/EC implementing Council Regulation 577/98/EC on the organisation of a labour force sample survey in the Community concerning the specification of the 2003 ad hoc module on lifelong learning. CONTENT : in accordance with Council Regulation 577/98/EC, the Commission adopted a Regulation (1626/2000, OJ L.77/1998) drawning up a programme of ad hoc modules to the labour force survey covering years 2001 to 2004, which includes an ad hoc module on lifelong learning. In accordance with Article 4(2) of Regulation 577/98 /EC the detailed list of information to be collected in an ad hoc module shall be drawn at least 12 months before the beginning of the reference period for that module. The aim of this Regulation is to present the detailed list of information to be collected in 2003 by the ad hoc module on lifelong learning. ENTRY INTO FORCE : 27 July, 2002.

Labour force sample survey in the Community

1997/0202(CNS) - 05/01/2001 - Follow-up document

Council Regulation 577/98/EC on the organisation of a labour force sample survey in the Community stipulates that every 3 years from the adoption of this Regulation, the Commission is to forward to Parliament and the Council a report on implementation of this regulation with a view to evaluating the

statistical methods used for this survey. This is the purpose of this report. The following programme of ad hoc modules has been agreed: - 1999 Accidents at work and occupational diseases; - 2000 Transition from school to work; - 2001 Length and patterns of working time; - 2002 Employment of disabled persons; - 2003 Lifelong learning; - 2004 Transition from school to work. The 1999 ah hoc module was not implemented by Belgium, France and Austria and only partially implemented by Germany. The 2000 ad-hoc module was not implemented by Germany and only partially by the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The 2001 ad-hoc module has been defined and wil be implemented by all Member States except Germany that will only do it partially. In conclusion, the Commission: - emphasises the need to accelerate the transition towards a continuous survey in Germany and Austria; - invites France, Italy and Luxembourg to stick to the envisaged schedule for implementing a continuous survey; - urges in particular France and Germany to speed up the transmission of the Spring Survey data; - reminds Member States carrying out continuous surveys that the quarterly results must be provided to Eurostat within 12 weeks of the end of the reference quarter; - insists on the need to improve the information on education and training and to complete information on households; - will continue with the implementation of complementary surveys, in order to respond flexibly to high-priority political requirements.

Labour force sample survey in the Community

1997/0202(CNS) - 09/03/1998 - Final act

OBJECTIVE: to establish comparable statistics on the level and structure of employment and unemployment in the EU. COMMUNITY MEASURE: Council Regulation 577/98/EC on the organization of a labour force sample survey in the Community. SUBSTANCE: Council Regulation 3711/91/EC of 16 December 1991 provides for an annual labour force sample survey in the Community to be carried out in each Member State in the spring of each year from 1992. The new regulation, which repeals and replaces Regulation 3711/91/EC, lays down the arrangements for a 'continuous' annual statistical survey on the labour force in the Union. This continuous survey would supply quarterly and annual results and would be conducted among a sample of households or individuals residing in the economic territory of each Member State. However, the regulation authorizes Member States which would not be able to carry out a continuous survey to conduct an annual survey (in spring) as provided by the former regulation. Apart from laying down the units (individual or household) and scope of the survey (the employment situation and survey of under-employment), the regulation lays down: - the rates to ensure the representativeness of the sample (setting standard variations depending on the regions where the surveys are conducted); - the characteristics of the survey: demographic context (civil status, sex, etc.), employment situation (e.g. type of current work), characteristics of the employment (e.g. professional status, job permanence), length of work, former professional experience, characteristics of under-employment (e.g. type of job sought, number of working hours wanted, etc.), income, etc.; - arrangements for organizing the survey: the Member States may impose an obligation to respond; - the deadline for forwarding data to Eurostat. The data covered by the survey could be complemented by an additional set of variables established by the Commission (multiannual programme of ad hoc modules). It would be assisted by the Statistical Programme Committee set up under Decision EEC, Euratom 89/382. Every three years from 2000, the Commission is to forward to Parliament and the Council a report on implementation of this regulation with a view to evaluating the statistical methods used for this survey. ENTRY INTO FORCE: 15.03.1998.

Labour force sample survey in the Community

1997/0202(CNS) - 09/02/2010 - Follow-up document

This Commission Staff working document accompanies the report from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 577/98 (please refer to the follow-up document COM(2010)0046).

The document assesses Member States' compliance with the technical requirements of the legislation on the organisation of the labour force sample survey in the Community ('LFS legislation'). It examines in details data on the sample and survey characteristics including the definition of unemployment and the twelve principles for formulating the questionnaire.

Labour force sample survey in the Community

1997/0202(CNS) - 30/10/1997 - Legislative proposal

OBJECTIVE: to establish comparable statistics on the level and structure of employment and unemployment in the Union. SUBSTANCE: the proposal aims to define the arrangements for an annual statistical survey based on a sample of the labour force in the Union. The survey will be continuous, providing quarterly and annual data to be carried out in a sample of households or individuals living in the economic territory of the Member States. The Member States which are not in a position to carry out a continuous survey are authorized to carry out only an annual survey (in the Spring). In addition to setting the units (individuals or households) and scope of the survey (activity status and under-employment), the proposal sets: - the rates to be respected to ensure the representativeness of the sample (including setting the standard error in relation to the regions where the surveys are carried out); - the survey characteristics: demographic background (marital status, sex, etc.), labour status (e.g. actual type of work, etc.), employment characteristics (e.g. professional status, permanency of job, etc.), hours worked, previous work experience, characteristics of underemployment (e.g. type of employment sought, numbers of hours of work wished for, etc.), income, etc.; - arrangements for the conduct of the survey: the Member States may make it compulsory to reply to the survey; - time limits for forwarding the data. The data specified in the proposal may be supplemented by an additional set of variables set by the Commission in the framework of a multiannual programme of ad hoc modules. It will be assisted in its work by the Statistical Programme Committee set up under Decision 89/382/EEC/EURATOM. A report on the implementation of this proposal will be submitted by the Commission to the Parliament and the Council every three years beginning in the year 2000 in order to evaluate the statistical methods used in the framework of this survey.

Labour force sample survey in the Community

1997/0202(CNS) - 09/12/2003 - Follow-up document

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.

Labour force sample survey in the Community

1997/0202(CNS) - 09/02/2010 - Follow-up document

This is the fourth in a series of three-yearly reports that the Commission is required to submit under Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 577/98 on the organisation of the labour force sample survey in the Community ('LFS legislation'). The first report was submitted by the Commission in 2000 and covered the period 1998-1999, the second was submitted in 2003 and covered the period 2000-2002, and the third one was submitted in 2006 and covered years 2003-2005. This report documents the progress made by Member States, Candidate and EFTA countries (participating countries) in 2006 and 2007 with respect to the provisions of Council Regulation (EC) No 577/98 as amended by Commission Regulation (EC) No 2104/2002 and Council Regulation No 2257/2003. In particular, Regulation (EC) No 2257/2003 introduced some innovations within the LFS legislation from 2006 onwards, which included the following:

- six additional survey characteristics;
- mandatory inclusion of module 'n' on atypical working times, which hitherto had been surveyed on the basis of a gentlemen's agreement;
- distinguishing between core variables, which should be surveyed on a quarterly basis, and structural variables, which need to be surveyed only as annual averages and for which a sub-sample of the full yearly sample can be used.

Main conclusions of the report: overall, in the period under consideration, participating countries made good progress towards fuller compliance with the LFS legislation. National surveys have been adapted both to take into account modifications in EU legislation and to comply with the requirements already in place at the time of the previous report and from which there were national deviations. The **quality** of both the national and community labour force surveys as a whole has thus been improved, especially in terms of relevance, accuracy, geographical comparability and timeliness.

All Member States now carry out a **continuous survey** providing quarterly results, and almost all of them cover all the weeks of the year. The relevance of the Community labour force survey was improved by implementing the six new characteristics, by reducing the number of mandatory variables not provided and by having two additional countries send microdata to Eurostat. Cross-country comparability was enhanced, as several countries revised their questionnaires to achieve compliance with the definition of unemployment and to increase consistency with the twelve principles for the questions on labour status. The accuracy of many national surveys benefited from improved design and organisation - for example through increased sample size, more efficient rotation schemes, enhanced weighting system or by the adoption of computer-assisted modes which replace paper questionnaires. With a few exceptions, **timeliness of data delivery** has also improved. Additional improvements are already in the pipeline at both national and European level. A further push to improve the quality of the Community labour force survey can be expected in the coming years, with the implementation of the 43 recommendations of the Task Force on the Quality of the Labour Force Survey.

However, there were still deviations from a full implementation of the LFS legislation. The main concerns for the Commission in this regard are mentioned below.

Data transmissions: these were sometimes not of sufficient quality for dissemination, and several revisions were needed before an acceptable version was sent. This had a negative impact on the timeliness of data dissemination and prevented the introduction of a Labour Force Survey release calendar, which would be highly appreciated by users and would further increase the relevance of the survey.

Comparability: so far, despite progress since the previous report, most countries neither yet fully comply with the **definition of unemployment** nor yet fully observe the twelve principles for the formulation of questions on labour status. This reduces the geographical comparability of the key estimates relating to employment and unemployment. Geographical comparability is also influenced by the use of different concepts and practices, e.g. as regards the resident population or the coverage of institutional households.

Compliance with the precision requirements: although it is not possible to provide clear conclusions on compliance with the precision requirements, evidence from the assessment presented in this report is that the efforts made so far have not always been sufficient to produce fully reliable estimates. Some countries still have to adjust their survey design, e.g. by increasing the sample size or by adopting adequate rotation patterns, so as to significantly improve the precision of estimates either at regional level or of changes between quarters. Few countries have so far taken up the option of using a sub-sample to survey structural variables, which was intended as a major tool to reduce the response burden.

Coverage and respect of the deadline for data transmission: as regards ad hoc modules, coverage and respect of the deadline for data transmission were satisfactory. The Commission will continue working closely with the Member States to ensure that they achieve full compliance with the LFS legislation. Eurostat conducts compliance monitoring on a regular basis. Where non-compliance is detected, appropriate action is taken by the Commission.

Labour force sample survey in the Community

1997/0202(CNS) - 28/01/2019 - Follow-up document

The Commission presents its seventh report on the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 577/98 on the organisation of the labour force sample survey in the Community. The report takes stock of how Regulation (EC) No 577/98 has been implemented in the Member States, candidate countries, and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries. It also focuses on ongoing initiatives launched by the European Statistical System (ESS) to improve the quality of the Labour Force Survey. The report notes that the ESS works to continuously improve EU-LFS processes and methods. It has kept up the momentum of these efforts despite a difficult environment, with scarce resources and deep budget cuts.

As a reminder, the European Union Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) is a large sample survey of residents in private households, providing both quarterly and annual labour market statistics on employment and unemployment, as well as on people outside the labour force. In 2017, the EU-LFS sample size was around 1.3 million people (of which around 1.2 million were in the EU-28) aged 15-74 years. The samples were taken every quarter and covered 34 participating countries, making the EU-LFS the largest household survey in Europe.

Implementation

The Commission considers that the implementation of EU-LFS to be very satisfactory, as Member States are fully — or almost fully — complying with this European legislation. Unresolved issues are discussed with Member States, and, if necessary, action plans are jointly drawn up. The overall quality of the EU-LFS is good.

The report surveys how the EU-LFS is implemented in terms of (i) accuracy of the estimates; (ii) timeliness and punctuality (i.e. the time gap between the reference period and the availability of data for users); (iii) accessibility and clarity; (iv) comparability of concepts, definitions, classification and methodologies; and (v) coherence/consistency of estimates with statistics gathered.

The report notes that the timeliness of EU-LFS data has slightly improved for the EU-28 in recent years. In 2017, the average number of calendar days needed to disseminate the EU-28 data was 75 days, compared to 77 days in 2014. Eurostat plans to further improve the timeliness of dissemination of EU-LFS results by shortening the deadline for data delivery to Eurostat in the future.

Initiatives to further improve the EU-LFS

1) The LFS in a modernised system of social statistics: building on the Commission's 2009 Communication on the production method of EU statistics, the Commission adopted a proposal for a regulation for European statistics relating to persons and households, based on data at individual level collected from samples (the Integrated European Social Statistics (IESS) framework regulation). The proposed framework regulation will bring together seven existing household surveys that are currently carried out in the EU, and harmonising the definitions, concepts and variables that are common to two or more surveys. The modernisation will also improve the relevance of the LFS for: (i) migration analysis and (ii) comparability of information on working time and monthly pay from people's main job. In addition, the modernisation of EULFS will lead to better coverage of: (i) employment (dependent self-employment), (ii) general health information (to compare the labour market situation of disabled people with that of the total target population), and (iii) participation in education and training (lasting at least 12 months). The proposed framework regulation is expected to lead to a first data collection in 2021.

2) Extending the EU-LFS to additional candidate countries: currently, 34 countries (the 28 EU Member States, 3 candidate countries and 3 EFTA countries) participate in the EU-LFS. In addition, Serbia and Albania will also have data disseminated by Eurostat as soon as the national surveys of these countries meet the requirements of the European regulations.

3) Developing new statistical products

Statistics to capture labour market dynamics: Eurostat and national statistical institutes are currently working on developing a methodology to estimate annual labour market transitions, tackling the challenges posed by high attrition rates (decreasing sample sizes across interview waves) as well as population changes over time.

Extension and preparation of the EU-LFS main indicators with the future legal framework: Eurostat and the Labour Market Statistics Working Group have developed a strategy to tackle the breaks in time series caused by the entry into force of the new framework regulation. Due to: (i) the large differences in approaches used by countries to derive information on the breaks in series, and (ii) the large number of indicators that must be derived based on relatively scarce information, Eurostat has already begun working on all implementation steps of this project.

Additional information on the accuracy of EU-LFS results: Eurostat and the Member States have produced the variance of annual net changes for a subset of 23 indicators of high policy relevance. This allows users, when analysing these EU-LFS indicators for policy purposes, to supplement the information on indicator changes between two consecutive years with information on the statistical significance of these indicator changes.

Constant improvements to EU-LFS are under way, either as part of the modernisation process of social statistics, or as individual EU-LFS projects for adapting to changes in user needs and new challenges (e.g. increased timeliness requirements, estimates on annual labour market transitions).

Labour force sample survey in the Community

1997/0202(CNS) - 28/11/2012 - Follow-up document

This is the **fifth** in a series of three-yearly reports that the Commission is required to submit under Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 577/98 on the organisation of the labour force sample survey in the Community ('LFS legislation') and covers the period 2008-2010.

1. Scope and coverage: to recap, the European Union Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) is a large sample survey of residents in private households. It is the most important source of official statistics on labour markets in the European Union. The sample size is 1.8 million people every quarter. This makes it the largest household survey in Europe. It is implemented in the 27 Member States, in candidate countries, in EFTA countries and in Switzerland (i.e. 33 countries).

It provides both quarterly and annual labour market statistics, on employment and unemployment, as well as on people outside the labour force. It also collects multi-annual information from *ad hoc* modules and provides input for model-based monthly estimates of unemployment and unemployment rates.

Some key EU policy initiatives rely on EU-LFS data to monitor progress. For instance, the EU-LFS is one of the main data sources for monitoring Member States' progress under the employment guidelines in the context of Article 148 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and the EU's growth strategy, Europe 2020.

2. Implementation: the report surveys how the EU-LFS is implemented in the various countries in terms of (i) accuracy of the estimates; (ii) timeliness and punctuality (i.e. the time gap between the reference period and the availability of data for users); (iii) accessibility and clarity; (iv) comparability of concepts, definitions, classification and methodologies; and (v) coherence/consistency of estimates with statistics gathered.

3. Initiatives to further improve the EU-LFS:

- a **Task Force on the quality of the LFS** was set up in 2007 and formulated over **40 recommendations** for improving the design, organisation and conduct of the survey. Participating countries assessed themselves against the recommendations, and in 2010, each defined a national action plan to implement the recommendations;

- developing new statistical products: one way to extend the use of LFS results is to **improve the use of the microdata available**, for instance, by providing users with new indicators;

- an initiative to **modernise European social statistics** has been launched to: (a) improve the sampling frames; (b) streamline social surveys; and (c) make more use of new and existing data sources, particularly administrative sources.

Conclusions: the Commission concludes that the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 577/98 is satisfactory. Member States are fully or almost fully complying with the Regulation. Open issues are discussed with Member States, and, if necessary, action plans are jointly defined. The overall quality of the EU-LFS is good. The European Statistical System is making efforts to introduce ongoing improvements in EU-LFS processes and methods, and has kept up the momentum despite a difficult environment, with scarce resources and deep budget cuts. A review of EU-LFS methodology is under way to adapt to changes in user needs and to new challenges (e.g. improved timeliness requirements, estimates on labour market transitions). This work will be part of the overall modernisation of social statistics.

Labour force sample survey in the Community

1997/0202(CNS) - 14/12/2015 - Follow-up document

The Commission presents its sixth report on the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 577/98 on the organisation of the labour force sample survey in the Community. The report takes stock of how Regulation (EC) No 577/98 has been implemented in Member States, in candidate countries, and in EFTA countries. It also describes continuing initiatives launched by the European Statistical System (ESS) to improve the quality and reduce the burden of the Labour Force Survey.

To recall, the European Union Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) is a sample survey of residents in private households, providing quarterly and annual labour market statistics on employment and unemployment, as well as on people outside the labour force. The EU-LFS sample size is 1.3 million people, collecting more than 100 variables (on labour status, employment characteristics, working time etc.) and covering 33 participating countries, which makes it the largest household survey in Europe. Key EU policy initiatives (such as the employment guidelines and Europe 2020 headline targets) rely on EU-LFS data.

Implementation: the Commission considers the **implementation of the EU-LFS to be satisfactory** and Member States are fully or almost fully complying with this legislation. Open issues are discussed with Member States, and, if necessary, action plans are drawn up jointly. The overall quality of the EU-LFS is good. Progress has continued to be made despite a difficult environment, with scarce resources and a significantly reduced budget.

The report surveys how the EU-LFS is implemented in terms of (i) accuracy of the estimates; (ii) timeliness and punctuality (i.e. the time gap between the reference period and the availability of data for users); (iii) accessibility and clarity; (iv) comparability of concepts, definitions, classification and methodologies; and (v) coherence/consistency of estimates with statistics gathered.

It notes that the **timeliness of EU-LFS data has improved** over the period examined. In 2010, 85 % of Member State datasets were available for extractions 13 weeks after the end of the reference quarter. By 2014, this figure has increased to 95%. Eurostat also envisages improving further the timeliness of dissemination of EU-LFS results by **shortening the deadline** for data delivery to Eurostat in the future. The current deadline is 12 weeks of the end of a reference quarter.

Initiatives to further improve the EU-LFS

1) The LFS in a modernised system of social statistics: building on the 'Commission's 2009 Communication on the production method of EU statistics: a vision for the next decade', an initiative to modernise European social statistics was launched. This modernisation has an impact on the Labour Force Survey. The European Statistical System is currently carrying out a **comprehensive review of all EU-LFS variables**, with the aim of adapting the information collected in the survey to current and future user needs. Within the process of modernising European social statistics, Eurostat and the Member States are also working towards greater harmonisation of data across surveys. This should allow increased use of the information collected, by e.g. crossing information from different data sources. To achieve this goal, the definition, concepts and codes of a subset of variables collected from more than one European social survey are being standardised. Furthermore the revision of the EU-LFS encompasses an improved timeliness for the data transmission to Eurostat, a revision of the precision requirements and further methodological work.

The report notes that a **new framework regulation for social statistics** covering the EU-LFS is currently being prepared.

2) Developing new statistical products

- **statistics to capture the dynamics on the labour market**: labour status transitions can be measured using flow statistics. Although this important new field of statistics in relation to the labour market is accompanied by methodological challenges, work has progressed in recent years. It is expected that publication of flow estimates based on EULFS data will allow the monitoring of transitions on the labour market from the end of 2015;
- **revision of the EU-LFS main indicators**: these EU-LFS main indicators are currently being revised, in order to further improve their quality. This includes the estimation of back data, filling in data gaps, the removal of breaks in the time-series where feasible, and most importantly seasonal adjustment allowing quarter-to-quarter comparisons.
- **additional information on the precision of EU-LFS results**: Eurostat and Member States are currently working to establish methods and procedures for estimating the statistical precision of the EU-LFS main indicators. These harmonised quality indicators should improve the evaluation of EU labour market policies based on the EU-LFS.

Work will continue over the next few years to adapt the survey to changes in user needs and new challenges.