



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs

2011/2289(INI)

15.12.2011

DRAFT REPORT

on quality management for European statistics
(2011/2289(INI))

Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs

Rapporteur: Edward Scicluna

CONTENTS

	Page
MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION	3

MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on quality management for European statistics (2011/2289(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘Towards robust quality management for European Statistics’ (COM(2011)0211),
 - having regard to Rule 48 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and the opinion of the Committee on Regional Development (A7-0000/2011),
- A. whereas Eurostat has existed since 1953 as an institution whose independence is widely recognised;
- B. whereas reliable and accurate statistics are essential to allow effective economic and budgetary policy making by Member States and at Union level;
- C. whereas the success of the Europe 2020 Strategy for Growth and Jobs and the economic governance package, including the European Semester, demands high-quality statistics;
- D. whereas users of statistics should be supplied with relevant, timely and accurate data which are collected and compiled by national agencies in accordance with the principles of impartiality, objectivity and professional independence;
- E. whereas the debt crisis in the eurozone has highlighted the dangers of statistical inaccuracy and statistical fraud arising from weaknesses in both the quality of upstream public-accounting data and the current statistical governance arrangement;
- F. whereas statistical offices should not only be statutorily independent, but should also have mechanisms and ‘firewalls’ in place to ensure that statistical offices are separated from the political process and thus avoid systemic failures;
- G. whereas the 350 statistical regulations applying to all Member States impose a proportionately higher statistical compliance burden on the smaller Member States;
- H. whereas Eurostat is involved in the Union’s economic governance in that it provides the economic indicators required for the surveillance of fiscal policies and the scoreboard on macro-economic imbalances, together with new enforcement mechanisms;
1. Takes the view that a systemic approach to quality needs to be taken, which may require a reform of the method of producing European statistics;
2. Supports Eurostat’s intention of proposing amendments to Regulation 223/2009 (Statistical Regulation) in order to establish a legal framework for ‘Commitments on Confidence in Statistics’, allowing more rigorous enforcement of the Code of Practice;

3. Urges Eurostat to propose legislation to revise the European Statistics Code of Practice with a view to distinguishing clearly between the responsibilities and competences of national statistical agencies and those of Member State governments;
4. Calls on Eurostat to ensure that public accounting systems are established in all Member States in a standardised manner and that they are strengthened with both internal and external audit mechanisms, including the application of the recently revised legal framework of Regulation 479/2009, as well as further legislative proposals as deemed appropriate;
5. Welcomes the action of the European Statistical Governance Advisory Board (ESGAB) in delivering independent supervision of Eurostat and the European Statistical System; calls on Eurostat and other statistical offices to implement the recommendations the ESGAB put forward in its 2011 annual report;
6. Emphasises the need for Eurostat to ensure transparency with regards to its own staff by publishing information regarding its officials (who are civil servants) and contract agents, and to provide information about the way in which national experts are deployed;
7. Notes that the quality management system will require close coordination between Eurostat and national bodies responsible for verifying upstream public finance data; calls on Eurostat to present proposals on the role of national courts of auditors in verifying national statistics and on whether the European Court of Auditors should be involved;
8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the national parliaments.