



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Committee on Regional Development

2011/0440(COD)

17.7.2012

OPINION

of the Committee on Regional Development

for the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council
on European statistics on demography
(COM(2011)0903 – C7-0518/2011 – 2011/0440(COD))

Rapporteur: Kerstin Westphal

PA_Legam

SHORT JUSTIFICATION

The proposal seeks to regulate the provision and harmonisation of population data in Member States. This includes the creation of a common framework for the systematic production of European statistics on demography regulating the collection, processing and transmission of statistics on population and life events.

Your rapporteur welcomes the desire for standardised and thus comparable statistics on demography at European level. Demographic challenges are increasing and play an increasingly important role in the development of the EU. Only if statistics are available on this subject, can meaningful comparisons be made from which conclusions can be drawn and policies drawn up.

The rapporteur had already pointed out the importance of this issue in her own-initiative report on demographic change and its consequences for the future cohesion policy of the EU (2010/2157 (INI)). This own-initiative report calls for demographic trends in the regions to be included in the statistics. It also calls for local, regional and national databases on demographic trends to be made comparable, so the data can be evaluated at European level and the exchange of best practices between countries, regions and communities promoted.

The Commission's idea in this proposal of drawing on the data compiled to create indicators of various types is endorsed by the rapporteur. The Commission's 'Demography Vulnerability Index' may constitute such an indicator. In the above-mentioned report, Parliament had already called for this Index to be drawn up on a regular basis in order to make clear which regions in Europe are particularly exposed to demographic change.

Essentially then the author supports the Commission's proposal, which consists primarily of definitions and implementing rules. The concern of some regions that the compilation of population figures based on the usual place of residence was too expensive (Art. 2 d i and ii) has been assuaged, since Article 3.1 now also allows a 'closest possible approximation'.

The amendments thus focus primarily on the role of the regions in this process, including the demand that regional demographic statistics (if any) be forwarded to Eurostat, so that regional differences in demographic trends can be identified. Since the text does not specify the quantity of data to be provided and how frequently they should be transmitted, it should be pointed out here that the statistical authorities should not be confronted with unconscionable financial or administrative obstacles.

Finally, the author proposes that a reference be included on the need to protect personal data when providing data.

AMENDMENTS

The Committee on Regional Development calls on the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following amendments in its report:

Amendment 1

Proposal for a regulation Recital 8

Text proposed by the Commission

(8) Annual statistical data on demography are fundamental for the study and definition of a wide range of policies, with particular regard to social **and** economic issues, at national and regional level. Statistics on population are an important denominator for a wide range of policy indicators.

Amendment

(8) Annual statistical data on demography are fundamental for the study and definition of a wide range of policies, with particular regard to social, economic **and territorial** issues, at national and regional level. Statistics on population are an important denominator for a wide range of policy indicators, **particularly in exploring the severe and permanent demographic handicaps of some Union regions.**

Amendment 2

Proposal for a regulation Recital 8 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(8a) With the "Demography Vulnerability Index", an index based on the estimated share of people aged 65 and over in total population, share of working age in total population and population decline in 2020, the Commission has already developed ideas for evaluating statistical data on demography in Union regions.

Justification

The "Demography Vulnerability Index", first developed in the Commission Staff Working Document Regions 2020: an assessment of future challenges for EU regions, shows how differently regions are affected by demographic change. In its report on demographic change and its consequences for future cohesion policy ((2010/2157(INI)), the European Parliament has stressed that this indicator is helpful and should be developed further.

Amendment 3

Proposal for a regulation Recital 9

Text proposed by the Commission

(9) Demographic statistics on population constitute an essential component for the estimation of total population in the framework of the European System of Accounts (ESA).

Amendment

(9) Demographic statistics on population constitute an essential component for the estimation of total population in the framework of the European System of Accounts (ESA). ***The updating and purging of data are the important elements for the establishment of statistics at European level.***

Amendment 4

Proposal for a regulation

Recital 10

Text proposed by the Commission

(10) In order to ensure the quality, and in particular the comparability, of the data provided by the Member States, and in order for reliable overviews to be drawn up at European Union level, the data used should be based on the same concepts and refer to the same reference date or period;

Amendment

(10) ***As practice has shown, statistical data provided by the Member States are not always gathered by means of the same methodology; therefore,*** in order to ensure the quality, and in particular the comparability, of the data provided by the Member States, and in order for reliable overviews to be drawn up at European Union level, the data used should be based on the same concepts and refer to the same reference date or period;

Amendment 5

Proposal for a regulation

Recital 13

Text proposed by the Commission

(13) In the development, production and dissemination of European statistics, the national and European statistical authorities should take account of the principles set out in the European Statistics Code of Practice as reviewed and updated by the European Statistical System

Amendment

(13) In the development, production and dissemination of European statistics, the national and European statistical authorities, ***and where applicable, those at regional level,*** should take account of the principles set out in the European Statistics Code of Practice as reviewed and updated by the European Statistical System

Justification

In some member states, statistics are collected by regional statistical authorities. These should follow the same principles.

Amendment 6

Proposal for a regulation
Recital 13 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(13a) The same criteria should apply to the sub-state authorities with legislative powers when collaborating in the development, production and dissemination of European statistics.

Amendment 7

Proposal for a regulation
Article 2 – paragraph 1 – point h

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(h) 'validated data' means data that fulfil a set of quality criteria for data compilation, including all the checks made in terms of the quality of the data to be published or already published.

(h) 'validated data' means ***statistical*** data that fulfil a set of quality criteria for data compilation, including all the checks made in terms of the quality of the data to be published or already published.

Amendment 8

Proposal for a regulation
Article 3 – paragraph 1

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

1. Member States shall provide the Commission (Eurostat) with data on the population as referred to in *Article 2(c)* and (d) at the reference time. Where the circumstances described in *Article 2 (d)i*.

1. Member States shall provide the Commission (Eurostat) with ***statistical*** data on the population as referred to in *Article 2(c)* and (d) at the reference time. Where the circumstances described in

or (d)ii. cannot be established, Member States shall provide the Commission (Eurostat) with data on population at their place of legal or registered residence at the reference time; in this case, they shall undertake proportionate efforts to compute data which are the closest possible approximation to the population referred to in Article 2(c) and (d).

Article 2(d)(i) or (d)(ii) cannot be established, Member States shall provide the Commission (Eurostat) with *statistical* data on population at their place of legal or registered residence at the reference time; in this case, they shall undertake proportionate efforts to compute data which are the closest possible approximation to the *statistical data of the* population referred to in Article 2(c) and (d).

Amendment 9

Proposal for a regulation

Article 3 – paragraph 3 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

3a. Where statistical data are delivered to the national level by regional authorities, Member States shall also forward these data to the Commission (Eurostat), in order to allow for a more detailed overview of the demographic situation in the Union.

Justification

Demographic change is affecting the regions in various, different ways. There are huge differences within Member States; therefore, it might be helpful not only to compare developments at national level but also at regional level.

Amendment 10

Proposal for a regulation

Article 3 – paragraph 4

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

4. Uniform conditions ***related to*** the breakdown of data referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, as well as to the frequency, deadlines and revisions of data, shall be adopted in accordance with the

4. The Commission shall adopt implementing acts laying down uniform conditions ***for*** the breakdown of data referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, as well as to the frequency, deadlines and revisions of

examination procedure referred to in Article 9(2).

data. ***Those implementing acts*** shall be adopted in accordance with the examination procedure referred to in Article 9(2). ***Those uniform conditions shall, to the greatest extent possible, not place any additional budgetary or administrative burden on national or regional statistical authorities.***

Justification

As the regulation does not regulate the frequency of data, it needs to be ensured that the authorities are not forced to deliver data so frequently that is unrealistic or cannot reasonably be expected.

Amendment 11

Proposal for a regulation

Article 6 – paragraph 1 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

The provision of data shall be carried out in compliance with the provisions of Regulation (EU) No xxx/xxxx of ... on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation), as well as Article 8 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

Justification

The protection of personal data is mentioned in recital 14 but it should be repeated here as it is an important issue when creating statistical data.

PROCEDURE

Title	European statistics on demography
References	COM(2011)0903 – C7-0518/2011 – 2011/0440(COD)
Committee responsible Date announced in plenary	EMPL 17.1.2012
Opinion by Date announced in plenary	REGI 17.1.2012
Rapporteur Date appointed	Kerstin Westphal 26.1.2012
Date adopted	11.7.2012
Result of final vote	+: 42 -: 0 0: 4
Members present for the final vote	François Alfonsi, Luís Paulo Alves, Charalampos Angourakis, Victor Boştinaru, John Bufton, Salvatore Caronna, Nikos Chrysogelos, Francesco De Angelis, Rosa Estaràs Ferragut, Danuta Maria Hübner, Filiz Hakaeva Hyusmenova, Vincenzo Iovine, María Irigoyen Pérez, Seán Kelly, Mojca Kleva, Constanze Angela Krehl, Petru Constantin Luhan, Vladimír Maňka, Riikka Manner, Iosif Matula, Erminia Mazzoni, Miroslav Mikolášik, Jens Nilsson, Jan Olbrycht, Wojciech Michał Olejniczak, Younous Omarjee, Markus Pieper, Monika Smolková, Ewald Stadler, Georgios Stavrakakis, Nuno Teixeira, Lambert van Nistelrooij, Oldřich Vlasák, Kerstin Westphal, Hermann Winkler, Joachim Zeller
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Jan Březina, Karima Delli, Ivars Godmanis, Juozas Imbrasas, Maurice Ponga, Elisabeth Schroedter, Richard Seeber
Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote	Hans-Gert Pötering, Konrad Szymański, Janusz Wojciechowski