

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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94/0314 (CNS)

Proposal for a

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC)

**on the European System of National and Regional Accounts
in the European Community**

(presented by the Commission)

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

The European System of Accounts (ESA) is the reference framework for drawing up accounts for Community requirements, since its methodology is designed to produce results which are comparable between Member States.

1. The aim of the draft Regulation is to establish:

- a methodology, known as the European System of Accounts (ESA), comprising common standards, definitions, classifications and accounting rules to be used in drawing up accounts and tables on a comparable basis for European Community requirements;
- a schedule for transmitting the accounts and tables drawn up on the basis of the ESA to the Commission on specific dates.

2. Responsibility for the project is shared with the Member States: the aim is to harmonize the concepts and nomenclatures for data collection and to present the information needed by the main users: Community institutions, national, regional and local government, international organizations, economic operators and research institutes. The methods used to collect the data and the collection itself are the province of the Member States.

3. All Member States have an interest in the system. They already collect certain data for accounts purposes. The new system will mean collecting additional information (only a limited range for most Member States), plus changes in the concepts and classifications used.

The proposal for a Regulation observes the international recommendations on the subject. It takes account of the need for statistical definitions to be adaptable to socio-economic and technical changes affecting the production system. It sets the standard for the quality of observation and analysis needed to meet economic policy requirements.

4. Only a Community measure of this nature is capable of establishing the reference framework for common standards, definitions, classifications and accounting rules and drawing up the list of necessary data. Member States' own accounts are then drawn up by the Member States themselves according to the system fixed at Community level.

5. One consequence of this legislative act will be an improvement in Community statistics relevant to national and regional accounts, and in their consistency. The improved comparability will help meet the challenge of managing Economic and Monetary Union and enable national accounts aggregates to be used for Community administrative, particularly budget, calculations. Without such a legislative act, Community economic and monetary policy would have to be formulated, implemented, monitored and evaluated on the basis of incomplete, non-harmonized and outdated statistics, with all the risks that would imply.

6. A legislative act - here a Council Regulation - enables the reference framework (concepts, classifications, list of necessary information) to be determined without having to concern itself with the details of organizing and the methods of drawing up accounts.

7. A Council Regulation is needed to establish the reference framework, but the way in which the accounts are drawn up and national statistical systems adapted will be for the Member States to decide.

**Draft proposal for a Council Regulation
on the European System of National and Regional Accounts
in the European Community**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community, and in particular Article 213 thereof,

Having regard to the draft Regulation submitted by the Commission,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Monetary Institute,

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee,

Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions,

Whereas the implementation and supervision of Economic and Monetary Union require comparable, up-to-date and reliable information on the structure of and developments in the economic situation of each country and/or region;

Whereas economic accounts are a basic tool for analysing the economic situation of a country and/or region on condition that they are drawn up on the basis of strict principles that are not open to differing interpretations;

Whereas the Protocol on the excessive deficit procedure annexed to the Treaty on European Union refers to the European System of Integrated Economic Accounts and whereas Regulation (EC) No 3605/93¹ on the application of the Protocol on the excessive deficit procedure states in Article 7 that the revision of this system shall be decided by the Council of the European Union;

Whereas Council Directive 89/130/EEC, Euratom² on the harmonization of the compilation of gross national product at market prices (GNP_{mp}) stipulates that GNP_{mp} can be comparable in concept only if the definitions and accounting rules of the European System of Integrated Economic Accounts are applied, and whereas Regulation (EEC, Euratom) No 1553/89³ on the definitive uniform arrangements for the collection of own resources accruing from value added tax provides that, in order to calculate the weighted average rate of VAT, the breakdown of transactions liable to tax shall be effected by means of national accounts prepared in accordance with the European System of Integrated Economic Accounts;

Whereas Council Regulations (EEC) Nos 2052/88⁴ and 2081/93⁵ on the tasks of the Structural Funds stipulate that the eligibility of regions for assistance under Objectives 1 and 5(b) of the Structural Funds shall be assessed mainly by comparing their gross domestic product (GDP) per inhabitant with that of the Community as a whole;

Whereas the European System of Integrated Economic Accounts must be revised to meet the requirements of Economic and Monetary Union and will have to be used for compiling the national and regional accounts provided for by Community legislation;

1	OJ No L 332, 31.12.1993
2	OJ No L 49, 21.2.1989
3	OJ No L 155, 7.6.1989
4	OJ No L 185, 15.7.1988
5	OJ No L 193, 31.7.1993

Whereas the revised system, entitled "European System of Accounts (ESA)" is the reference framework of common standards, definitions, classifications and accounting rules for drawing up the accounts of the Member States for the requirements of the European Community, so that results that are comparable between the Member States can be obtained;

Whereas the results of the accounts and tables of all the member countries drawn up according to the revised ESA (ESA 95) must be made available by the Commission to users on precise dates, particularly with regard to monitoring the convergence of the Member States' economic policies;

Whereas these dates must be laid down by broad category of accounts and tables, and whereas only the information essential to the requirements of the European Community must be processed and communicated to the Commission on precise dates;

Whereas in view of the volume and size of the accounts concerned, the level of detail and the geographical coverage, as well as the situation in this respect in the Member States, certain extra periods of time for forwarding data shall be granted exceptionally and temporarily to Member States which objectively are unable to meet the deadlines laid down by the Regulation;

Whereas solving the problem of breaking down indirectly measured financial intermediation services (IMFIS) would make a substantial qualitative improvement to the methodology of the ESA 95, and whereas the Member States and the Commission undertake to find a satisfactory solution by 31 December 1996 so that it can be implemented for the first transmission of data in 1998;

Whereas, according to the principle of subsidiarity, the creation of common statistical standards is a task that can only be dealt with effectively at Community level and whereas such standards will be implemented in each Member State under the aegis of the organizations and institutions responsible for compiling official statistics;

Whereas the European Community cooperates with third countries to mutual advantage, particularly those in the European Economic Area (EEA);

Whereas the United Nations Statistical Commission adopted in February 1993 the new System of National Accounts (SNA) so that the results in all countries should be internationally comparable;

Whereas the ESA, which constitutes a version of the SNA adapted to the structures of the Member States' economies, must adhere to the layout of the SNA so that the Community's data are comparable with those compiled by its main international partners;

Whereas it is necessary to set up a procedure to adapt and update the provisions of this Regulation in cooperation with the Statistical Programme Committee, established by Council Decision 89/382/EEC, Euratom;⁶

Whereas the Statistical Programme Committee and the Committee on Monetary, Financial and Balance of Payments Statistics (CMFB), established by Council Decision 91/115/EEC,⁷ have declared themselves in favour of the draft Regulation,

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OJ No L 181, 28.6.1989

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OJ No L 59, 6.3.1991

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1

Purpose

1. The purpose of this Regulation is to adapt the European System of Integrated Economic Accounts by providing for:
 - (a) a methodology annexed to this Regulation on common standards, definitions, classifications and accounting rules, hereinafter referred to as the European System of Accounts 95 (ESA 95), intended to be used for compiling accounts and tables on comparable bases for the purposes of the European Community and
 - (b) a programme, which appears in Article 3, for transmitting for Community purposes on precise dates the accounts and tables compiled according to the ESA 95.
2. This Regulation does not oblige any Member State to use the ESA 95 in compiling accounts for its own purposes.

Article 2

Methodology

The methodology of the ESA 95 referred to in Article 1(a) of this Regulation is given in Annex A.

Amendments to the ESA 95 methodology which are intended to clarify and improve its content shall be adopted by Commission Decision in accordance with the procedure provided for in Article 5, provided that they do not change its underlying concepts, do not require additional resources for their implementation and do not cause an increase in own resources in the Community.

The procedure in Article 5 shall also be applied when implementing the system for breaking down the indirectly measured financial intermediation services (IMFIS) described in Annex I of the methodology. The Commission Decision shall take effect not later than 31 December 1996.

Article 3

Transmission to the Commission of the European Communities

1. The Member States shall transmit to the Commission (Eurostat) the accounts and tables in Annex B by the deadlines specified for each table.

The extra periods of time granted to certain Member States in accordance with Annex B shall expire not later than 1 January 2005.

The Commission, after consulting the SPC, shall report to the Council of the European Union not later than 1 July 2003 on the application of the extra periods of time granted in order to verify whether they are still justified.

Not later than 1 January 2005, and on a proposal from the Commission, the Council of the European Union shall decide again on the extra periods of time granted to certain Member States for transmitting data.

2. The Member States shall transmit the results of Annex B, including the data which has been declared confidential by the Member States in accordance with national legislation or practice concerning statistical confidentiality, under the provisions of Council Regulation (EEC, Euratom) No 1588/90 of 11 June 1990 on the transmission of data subject to statistical confidentiality to the Statistical Office of the European Communities.

Within the limits set in the second paragraph of Article 2, any changes – new tables, countries and/or regions concerned – in the data requested from the Member States may be the subject of Commission Decisions in accordance with the procedure provided for in Article 5.

Article 4

The Committee and its tasks

1. The Commission shall be assisted by the Statistical Programme Committee, hereinafter referred to as "the Committee".
2. The Committee shall examine all matters relating to the implementation of this Regulation that are raised by its Chairman, either on his own initiative or at the request of a Member State.

Article 5

Procedure

1. The representative of the Commission shall submit to the Committee a draft of the measures to be taken. The Committee shall deliver its opinion on this draft within a time limit which the Chairman may set in the light of the urgency of the matter in hand. The opinion shall be delivered by the majority laid down in Article 148 (2) of the Treaty establishing the European Community for Decisions which the Council of the European Union is required to adopt on a proposal from the Commission. When the Committee votes, the weightings laid down in the above-mentioned Article shall be applied to the votes of the representatives of the Member States. The Chairman shall not take part in the vote.
2. The Commission shall adopt measures that are immediately applicable. However, if they do not accord with the opinion delivered by the Committee, these measures shall be immediately communicated by the Commission to the Council, in which case the Commission shall postpone the application of the measures it has adopted by three months from the date of such communication.
3. The Council, acting by a qualified majority, may adopt a different Decision within the time limit laid down in paragraph 2.

Article 6

Cooperation with other committees

1. On all matters falling within the competence of the CMFB, the Commission shall request the opinion of this Committee in accordance with Article 2 of Council Decision 91/115/EEC.
2. The Commission shall communicate to the Committee on Gross National Product, set up by Council Directive 89/130/EEC,⁸ any information concerning the implementation of this Directive which is necessary for the performance of its duties.

Article 7

First transmission of data

Data for 1995, 1996 and 1997 based on the ESA 95 shall be sent starting on 1 January 1998 at the latest, in accordance with the deadlines laid down in Annex B.

Until the first transmission based on the ESA 95, the Member States shall continue to send the Commission the accounts and tables according to the Directives and Regulations in force.

Article 8

Legal acts referring to the ESA

All references to the ESA in any existing or future legal act shall be understood to comply with the definitions of the ESA 95.

For the application of such legal acts, the Member States shall transmit the results for 1995, 1996 and 1997 in accordance with the ESA 95 for the first time starting not later than 1 January 1998 .

Article 9

This Regulation shall enter into force on the twentieth day following its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Communities*.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

- Annex I: Communication to the Commission
- Annex Ia: Summary
- Annex II: Financial statement
- Annex III: Impact assessment form
- Annex IV: Supplementary form concerning the EFTA countries

Annex I

Communication to the Commission

Concerning: **Draft proposal for a Council Regulation on the European System of National and Regional Accounts in the European Union**

Grounds:

1. The statistical services of the Member States, coordinated by Eurostat, have an important part to play in meeting Community needs in the area of national accounts.

Over the past two years, Eurostat, in close cooperation with the Member States and various international organizations, has carried out a thorough revision of the European System of Accounts (ESA). The aim of this revision was to bring the system up to date with economic changes, to clarify it on a number of points, to harmonize it with other Community statistical systems, and to iron out differences between the old Community system (ESA) and that used within the OECD and throughout the world (SNA).

2. The draft Regulation has two annexes: Annex A sets out the methodology of the European System of Accounts and Annex B is a list of the tables that the National Statistical Institutes will be obliged to transmit to the Commission.

The revised methodology is fully consistent with the United Nations' System of National Accounts (SNA), but more specific as regards the institutions and conditions in the Community, which will make it possible to achieve the higher level of comparability needed for the management of Economic and Monetary Union and the use of national accounts aggregates for Community administrative and especially budgetary calculations.

As regards the production of national accounts data, the main objectives are to reduce the time taken to process and disseminate the data, enhance coverage (not least geographical) and step up the harmonization of the data. This cannot fail to contribute to better management and monitoring of the implementation of Economic and Monetary Union.

Financial implications

3. The total cost to the Community budget in the first three years (1995-1997) of implementing this project is ECU 9 million, 90% of which is to be devoted to assisting the statistical services of the Member States. The rest (10%) covers operating expenditure on research and data management.

Impact on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

4. The information required will be obtained by processing official statistics, mostly using existing data collection systems. Hence, the impact of the project on enterprises is considerably reduced.

Draft Regulation

5. The Commission is requested to approve this draft Regulation and forward it to the Council for adoption.

Summary

Draft ESA Regulation

The European System of Accounts (ESA) is a reference framework for drawing up accounts to meet the Community's needs, using a methodology designed to produce results that are comparable between the Member States.

The aim of the draft Regulation is to establish:

- a methodology comprising common standards, definitions, classifications and accounting rules, called the European System of Accounts (ESA), for drawing up accounts and tables on a comparable basis to meet the needs of the European Community;
- a schedule for transmitting the accounts and tables drawn up according to the ESA to the Commission on precise dates.

The implementation of this programme will cost ECU 9 million over the first three years, of which 90% will be devoted to the statistical services of the Member States.

The Commission is requested to approve this draft Regulation and forward it to the Council for adoption.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

1 TITLE OF OPERATION

- Draft proposal for a Council Regulation on the European System of National and Regional Accounts in the European Union

2 BUDGET HEADING INVOLVED

- Sub-section B-5: Consumer protection, internal market, industry and trans-European networks.
- Chapter B5-60: Statistical information policy connected with the completion of the internal market and in support of Community policies.
- Article B5-600: Policy on statistical information concerned with non-member States.

3 LEGAL BASIS

- Article 213 of the Treaty establishing the European Community
 - The Treaty on European Union
 - The Treaty establishing the European Economic Area
 - Council Decision 93/464/EEC of 22 July 1993 on the framework programme for priority action in the field of statistical information 1993-1997, in particular, the provisions relating to the policy for Economic and Monetary Union (OJ No L 219 of 28.08.1993).

Council Directive 89/130/EEC of 13 February 1989 on the harmonization of the compilation of gross national product at market prices (OJ No L 49 of 21.02.1988, p. 26).

Commission Decision 93/570/EEC of 4 October 1993 defining the distinction between 'other taxes linked to production' and 'intermediate consumption' for the purpose of the implementation of Article 1 of Council Directive 89/130/EEC, Euratom on the harmonization of the compilation of gross national product at market prices (OJ No L 276 of 09.11.1993, p. 13).

Commission Decision 94/168/EC of 22 February 1994 on measures to be taken for the implementation of Council Directive 89/130/EEC on the harmonization of the compilation of gross national product at market prices (OJ No L 77 of 19.03.1994, p. 51).

Council Regulation (EEC) No 2081/93 of 20 July 1993 amending Regulation (EEC) No 2052/88 on the tasks of the Structural Funds and their effectiveness and on coordination of their activities between themselves and with the operations of the European Investment Bank and other existing financial instruments (OJ No L 193 of 31.07.1993, p. 5).

No a

4 DESCRIPTION OF OPERATION

4.1 General objective

The objective of the operation is to provide decision-makers in the Institutions and the national governments with harmonized statistical indicators enabling them to monitor the attainment of objectives in connection with Economic and Monetary Union. Such statistics are required by the Institutions and Member States for monitoring the application of the principles set out in Article 3A and Article 130 A-E of the Treaty on European Union concerning economic policy convergence and economic and social cohesion.

The aim of the programme is to submit proposals to the statistical institutes of the Member States for carrying out statistical surveys and for the processing of existing data in the field of national accounts using common procedures.

The programme will attempt to:

- implement a set of standards, methods and organizational structures for producing comparable, reliable and relevant statistics throughout the Community;
- provide the European Institutions and the Governments of the Member States with the information needed to implement, monitor and promote the convergence of economic policy and regional development within the Union;
- disseminate statistical information among the European public, enterprises and other social and economic operators to assist them in their decision-making;
- work towards improving the statistical systems of the Member States.

4.2 Period covered and arrangements for renewal or extension

Multiannual operation, as there is an ongoing demand for statistical information.

5 CLASSIFICATION OF EXPENDITURE OR REVENUE

5.1 Non-compulsory expenditure

5.2 Differentiated appropriations

5.3 Type of revenue involved

Sale of statistics, partly covering the production of publications

6 TYPE OF EXPENDITURE OR REVENUE

6.1. - 100% subsidy

No The Community budget contribution accounts for only a small percentage (in the region of 5%) of the actual cost of collecting the data, since the Community's statistical activities are largely carried out by the Member States. However, some expenditure is essential to encourage the standardization of data collection, processing and transmission to Eurostat.

6.2. - Subsidy for joint financing with other sources in the public and/or private sector

Yes Joint financing with the public sector (budgets of the national statistical services) and the private sector (receipts from sales of statistical products and financing of surveys by enterprises).

6.3. - Interest subsidies

No

6.4. - Other

None

6.5. - Should the initiative prove a financial success, is there provision for all or part of the Community contribution to be reimbursed?

Not applicable

6.6. - Will the proposed operation cause any change in the level of revenue?

Yes. The results of the statistical work on indicators of own resources (GNP, VAT, customs duties) may be used to re-assess the general level of the budget.

6.7. - Re-use

This expenditure may generate income which may be re-used.

7 FINANCIAL IMPACT

7.1 Method of calculating the total cost of the operation for the 1995 financial year

The financial statement provides an estimate of annual requirements by type of expenditure under the operating budget.

The total cost of the operation is broken down into three items:

Contribution to official statistical institutes
of the Member States: ECU 8.1 million

Services of research institutes and private firms
in the Member States: ECU 0.8 million

Information and publication: ECU 0.1 million

7.2 Breakdown by budget year (ECU thousand)

BUDGET	1995	1996	1997
	3 000	3 000	3 000

7.3 Operating expenditure on research, meetings of experts, etc. included in part B

Administrative expenditure directly related to the achievement of the objective of the operation and forming an integral part thereof, totals ECU 0.9 million.

	1995	1996	1997
Research	0.25	0.25	0.15
Meetings of experts	0.05	0.05	0.05
Conferences and symposia	-	-	-
Information and publication	-	-	0.1

7.4 Schedule to be completed for multiannual operations accompanied by amount deemed necessary

8 FRAUD PREVENTION MEASURES; RESULTS OF MEASURES TAKEN

Statistical information is considered an objective means of assessing Community action programmes and thus helps to consolidate anti-fraud measures.

9.1 Specific and quantified objectives; target population

- **Specific objectives:**

The objective mentioned in point 4.1 is linked to the Treaty provisions concerning:

Economic and Monetary Union.

The implementation of the programme will involve the following tasks:

- a) developing common classifications, methodologies and definitions directly applicable in the Member States with the backing of Community legislation;
- b) carrying out common statistical surveys on the basis of harmonized methods;
- c) producing, analysing and disseminating statistical results for the Community, including international and inter-regional comparisons;
- d) incorporating Community practice into the statistical programmes of the Member States;
- e) promoting the convergence of national statistical practices by means of common training programmes;
- f) assisting the development of the statistical systems of the Member States by means of structural initiatives and the exchange of technology and experience between Member States.

Sectoral programmes:

- Sectoral programmes for Economic and Monetary Union: economic and financial accounts; public-sector and balance-of-payments statistics; monetary policy coordination and ecu indicators; external trade statistics.

Target population

The beneficiaries of this operation are: the Community Institutions, the Governments of the Member States, enterprises, economic and social decision-makers in the Member States, research institutes, universities and the media.

9.2 Grounds for the operation

Need for Community financial aid

This operation aims to achieve four results:

- to provide the Institutions with the quantitative data they need to develop, monitor and assess programmes of action in accordance with Article 3, paragraph 2, of the Financial Regulation, thereby contributing towards a more efficient and relevant employment of the Community budget, combating fraud, and providing a basis for better decision-making in all areas covered by the programme;
 - to provide national Governments with comparable statistics at regional and national levels on all the Member States for assessing and monitoring the progress of Community policy programmes;
 - to provide political, economic and social decision-makers in the Community with statistics for taking decisions and assessing the results of decisions taken in their own area of activity; it is therefore a vital element in the European information market, enhancing the European economy's competitive position vis-à-vis the rest of the world;
 - to provide the scientific community with the information needed to pursue research into, and broaden knowledge of, the economic and social life of the Community.
- **Choice of ways and means**
- The financing of this operation falls mainly on the Member States (heading 1, point 6.1) that have well-established data collection and processing structures. If the Commission were to finance the whole programme, the cost would be extremely high for a less reliable result;
 - the results of the operation contribute towards improving the statistical information used in work on the gross national product (GNP) of the Member States, the distribution of the regional and cohesion funds, agricultural levies, VAT calculations, and customs levies and receipts;
 - the collection of statistical information is organized in a highly subsidiary manner, whereby the national statistical systems have full responsibility in each Member State; the Community statistical programme becomes an integral part of the national statistical programmes, thereby contributing to the creation of a European statistical area;
 - pump-priming effect on progress towards a European statistical area, and hence towards enhanced Community-wide integration of national statistical systems;
 - the Community statistical programme mobilizes the budgets of the national statistical systems, which make a large contribution to achieving it;
 - effect on the research and university world, which will have unprecedented scientific material for social and economic studies and research.

- **Main factors of uncertainty which could affect the results of the operation**

The amount of the appropriations.

9.3 Monitoring and evaluation of the operation

Performance indicators

The performance indicators selected for assessing the progress of work are of three kinds:

budgetary: in order to compare the plan with the out-turn of budget at the end of 1998, the plan must be carried out in full.

planning: to compare the statistical results with the programme established in advance and the forecast budget.

cost-effectiveness: comparative studies are planned to measure the volume of appropriations required for similar operations and to correct assessments.

A. Implementation of budget (ECU million)

	Committed	Disbursed
1995	3.0	2.1
end 1996	3.0	3.0
end 1997	3.0	3.0
end 1998	not forecast	0.9
Total	9.0	9.0

B. Implementation of programme

Existing programmes

- reduction of time taken to disseminate data to users;
- volume of requests for access to data.

New programmes

- carrying out surveys and/or statistical processing according to a schedule decided under the programme;
- carrying out surveys and/or statistical processing within the budgetary limits set for each programme;
- volume of new databases available to users.

C. Use of human and budgetary resources

- study and assessment of resources needed for standard operations;
- computerization of services as a means of accomplishing the work with fewer resources.

Details and frequency of planned evaluations

The implementation of the programme submitted to the Council for its assent (Regulation) will be monitored by a Committee composed of a Chairman and a number of Directors-General of National Statistical Institutes:

Statistical ProgrammCommittee (Council Decision 89/382/EEC of 19 June 1989)

The Committee examines all questions pertaining to the implementation of the Regulation raised by its Chairman, either on his own initiative or at the request of a Member State.

Is the operation included in the DG's financial programming for the years in question?

The planned operation is part of the statistical programme, but no provision was made at the time for its financing.

To which broader objective defined in the DG's financial programming does the objective of the planned operation correspond?

10 ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENDITURE (PART A OF THE BUDGET)

10.1 Will the proposed operation involve an increase in the number of Commission staff?

No.

10.2 Indicate the amount of staff and administrative expenditure involved in the proposed operation.

19a

**IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM
THE IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL ON BUSINESS**

**with special reference to small and medium-sized
enterprises (SMEs)**

Title of proposal: Draft Proposal for a Council Regulation on the European System of National and Regional Accounts in the European Union

The proposal:

1. The aim of the proposal is to establish a common statistical language for the purpose of producing harmonized statistical indicators for monitoring the attainment of objectives in connection with Economic and Monetary Union. The programme aims to submit proposals to the statistical institutes of the Member States for carrying out statistical surveys and processing existing data in the field of national accounts using common procedures.

Impact on enterprises:

2. Enterprises are not directly concerned by this proposal, regardless of sector, size or region.
3. The Regulation does not entail any particular action involving enterprises, but at the end of the day they will benefit from the availability of comparable, reliable and relevant statistics for the Member States as a result of the development and implementation of a set of standards, methods and organizational structures.
4. The direct economic effects are considerable, and one may hope for time savings and better understanding between partners through the uniform application of a more systematic terminology.
5. The proposal itself defines the standards, terminology, concepts and priorities among the elements to be implemented. It does not contain specific measures affecting any given category of enterprises.

Consultation

6. UNICE and the main European Industrial Branch Federations (FEBI) have been informed indirectly via other drafts of this proposed Regulation.

Annex IV

SUPPLEMENTARY FORM CONCERNING THE EFTA COUNTRIES

Title of the proposal

Draft proposal for a Council Regulation on the European Systems of National and Regional Accounts in the European Union.

Impact on the EFTA countries

The EFTA countries are affected by the draft Regulation and were involved in the discussions concerning it.

They attended the meetings of the National Accounts Working Party at which the proposal was discussed.