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**\* Please note that paper copies of the documents will not be provided at the meeting\***

## **DIRECTORS' GROUP ON AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS (DGAS)**

30<sup>th</sup> June – 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015

**HUNGARY**

**CHAired BY: MR. MARCEL JORTAY**

### **ITEM 4.7: DEVELOPMENTS CONCERNING ORGANIC FARMING**

\* Document available on Circabc: <https://circabc.europa.eu/w/browse/d0a2b20a-f719-492c-8803-472fa840e106>

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Organic farming practices are beneficial for the climate and the environment. They are at the centre of the "greening pillar" of the renewed CAP. Good quality statistics provided on time are therefore essential for policy making.

Eurostat has been collecting and publishing annual organic farming statistics since 1997. A new questionnaire was put in place for collecting 2012 data according to Council Regulation 834/2007 and Commission regulation 889/2008.

Until 2013, the collection of organic farming statistics was under the responsibility at Eurostat of the Unit in charge of food safety. Since 2014, the responsibility was moved to Unit E1 (agriculture and fisheries statistics). The collection of 2013 data which started at the end of June 2014 was therefore the first exercise under the responsibility of Eurostat/E1.

This document informs about the state of play and possible future developments of the collection by Eurostat of organic farming statistics.

### ***The Members of the DGAS are invited to:***

- take note and comment on the state of play and possible developments on the collection of organic farming statistics;
- take all necessary measures in order to improve the quality, coverage and punctuality of the data delivered to Eurostat in particular for 2014 data to be delivered by end of June 2015;

## 1. BACKGROUND AND LEGAL BASIS

In addition to several characteristics of organic farming collected every 3 years with the Farm Structure Surveys, Eurostat has been collecting and publishing annual organic farming statistics since 1997.

Before 2009, the collection of data on organic farming was based on a gentleman's agreement. Countries were asked to transmit administrative data to Eurostat in the framework of Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91 on organic production and labelling of organic products (obligation for Member States to submit 'annual reports').

As from 1 January 2009, the data collection was based on a new legal framework:

- Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 of 28 June 2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91

### Article 36: Statistical information

*"Member States shall transmit to the Commission the statistical information necessary for the implementation and follow-up of this Regulation. This statistical information shall be defined within the context of the Community Statistical Programme".*

- Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008 of 5 September 2008 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products with regard to organic production, labelling and control

### Article 93 Statistical information:

*"1. Member States shall provide the Commission with the annual statistical information on organic production referred to in Article 36 of Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 by using the computer system enabling electronic exchanges of documents and information made available by the Commission (Eurostat) **before 1 July each year.***

*2. The statistical information referred to in paragraph 1 shall comprise, in particular the following data:*

*(a) the number of organic producers, processors, importers and exporters;*

*(b) the organic crop production and crop area under conversion and under organic production;*

*(c) the organic livestock numbers and the organic animal products;*

*(d) the data on organic industrial production by type of activities.*

*3. For the transmission of the statistical information referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, Member States shall use the Single Entry point provided by the Commission (Eurostat).*

*4. The provisions relating to the characteristics of statistical data and metadata shall be defined within the context of the Community Statistical Programme on the basis of models or questionnaires made available via the system referred to in paragraph 1."*

A Eurostat Task Force with the participation of DG AGRI and 20 EEA countries drafted a new questionnaire that was presented at the CPSA in November 2011 for opinion. This questionnaire was then adopted by written procedure in early 2012.

A first collection with the new questionnaire took place for 2012 data in summer 2013 under the responsibility of the Eurostat Unit in charge of "food safety". The responsibility was then moved on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014, without any additional resource to do the work, to Unit E1 in charge of agriculture and fishery statistics. The first data collection under the responsibility of Unit E1 referred then to 2013 data and took place between June 2014 and May 2015.

Seven datasets were designed in Eurobase to disseminate annual organic farming data based on the questionnaires valid until 2011 data<sup>1</sup>. 2012 data could nevertheless be, at least partially, disseminated through them.

## 2. DATA SOURCES

The statistics requested by the questionnaires are mainly based on administrative data collected by the national "Certification bodies" in charge of organic farming certification and inspections. They transmit the data to the relevant national Ministries (generally Ministry of agriculture).

The National Coordinators for organic farming are members of the RCOP (Regulatory Committee for Organic Production), managed by DG AGRI<sup>2</sup>. For most countries, the RCOP members are also the Eurostat data providers. The list of National Organisations providing organic farming statistics to Eurostat is in Annex-2.

## 3. DATA COLLECTION AND TRANSMISSION TO EUROSTAT

Data on organic farming are annual data. The deadline for submission of data for year T is 1<sup>st</sup> July of year T+1. Since 2009 data have to be submitted via EDAMIS.

The final harmonised questionnaire includes the following 4 tables:

### (i) Table 1: Certified registered organic operators

Data on organic operators, at the end of the year, newly registered and withdrawn during the year.

*Breakdown by type of operators:*

Producers: agricultural holdings, aquaculture animal production units

Processors

Importers

Exporters

Other operators, including traders

### (ii) Table 2: Certified organic crop area and production

Part 1: Organic crop area: data on the different types of organic area according to the level of conversion, i.e. fully converted area (= organic area), area under conversion and the total organic area (sum of fully converted area and area under conversion)

Part 2: Data on the production of organic crop products from fully converted area

*Breakdown by crops:* as close as possible to the classification of crops used in the conventional agricultural statistics (see Regulation 543/2009)

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/organic-farming/data/database>

<sup>2</sup> See [http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/committees/organic\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/committees/organic_en.htm)

(iii) Table 3: Certified organic livestock, animal and aquaculture products

Part 1: Certified organic livestock (data on livestock under organic rearing)

*Breakdown by species:* as close as possible to the classification of species used in the conventional livestock statistics (see Regulation 1165/2008)

Part 2: Certified organic products of animal origin

*Breakdown by products*

Part 3: Certified organic aquaculture

*Breakdown by species*

(iv) Table 4: Manufacturing of organic products:

Data on 'Certified registered organic processors' and (optional) 'Value/volume of production by type of economic activity'

*Breakdown by type of economic activity (NACE Rev. 2).*

#### **4. STATE OF PLAY – COLLECTION OF 2013 DATA**

Document DGAS/10 on timeliness and compliance assessment gives an overview of the punctuality, coverage and quality for the 2013 data. This overview reflects extensive problems which may be partially due to the "lack of maturity" of the new data collection (new questionnaire).

The results of the compliance monitoring for the reception of the first version of the data are:

- Punctuality: Only 10 countries provided data before 1 July 2014 (AT, BG, EE, EL, HR, HU, LT, NL, SI, UK) and 2 EU countries have still not provided 2013 data in May 2015 (LU, PT),
- Data coverage: many compulsory items were missing in several tables for most of the countries. This is particularly noticeable for the 2 biggest tables: table 2 and table 3,
- Data quality: problems of data quality could be noticed for all countries, in particular, for the 2 biggest tables (tables 2 and 3). These problems refer in particular to the usage of wrong units and to inconsistencies between totals and detailed data. As far as table 3 is concerned, consistency checks were done between the figures of livestock and animal products (see Annex-1). They reflect in particular very suspicious figures for 5 countries (HR, IE, IT, SI, SK).

The very poor data quality prevented any dissemination on Eurostat database and led to a heavy and time consuming work of data validation at Eurostat. This work was concluded by the transmission to countries, around mid-March 2015, (a) of detailed country quality reports that highlighted the main problems detected in each table and (b) of more advanced versions of the Excel questionnaires for the 4 tables (with automatic validations of the data embedded into the questionnaires).

Countries were asked to update these advanced versions of the questionnaires with correct data. Among them, only 16 EU countries replied with a new version of the data (BE, BG, CZ, DK, EE, EL, ES, HR, CY, LV, LT, PL, RO, SK, FI, UK) as well as 3 other countries (NO,

CH, TR). DE and SE did not send a new version of the data but sent letters with explanations in particular related to difficulties to provide all data requested.

Eurostat and DG AGRI are preparing a reply to both countries.

For 2013 data of a sufficient quality, dissemination is expected by beginning of June 2015 in 6 new datasets in Eurobase. Tables 1, 2 and 4 will each be reflected in one dataset and table 3 will be reflected in 3 different datasets (one for livestock, one for animal products and one for aquaculture products).

If possible, in the near future, these new 6 datasets which have been adapted to the new questionnaires, will also be updated with 2012 data which have been temporarily and partially disseminated into the older datasets designed for older versions of questionnaires.

## **5. STATE OF PLAY – COLLECTION OF 2014 DATA**

Simplified and more secure Excel questionnaires are expected to be sent by the end of May or beginning of June 2015 for the collection of 2014 data to be delivered before 1 July 2015.

Compared to the 2012 version of the questionnaires used for the collection of 2012 and 2013 data, the new questionnaires:

- Show more explicitly which fields are mandatory and which fields are voluntary,
- Prevent modifying the structure of the questionnaire and entering information in inappropriate fields,
- Contain basic validation checks which highlight immediately wrong or suspicious values,
- Contain, when relevant, new codes which are more explicit and aligned with the latest code lists used for annual crop production statistics (Reg. 543/2009), animal statistics (1165/2008) or aquaculture statistics (Reg. 762/2008),
- Contain fewer items, in particular for table 2 (about 60 crop items instead of 126), and table 3a (about 20 livestock items instead of 30).

## **6. POSSIBLE WAY FORWARD**

It is expected that, with the new environment that has been put in place for collecting 2014 data (new questionnaire, processing tool and datasets for dissemination), good quality data received on time could be disseminated on Eurobase in July-August 2015. Eurostat would then process progressively data for which quality problems have been detected.

As long as the current legal framework remains in force, Eurostat would continue collecting and disseminating data according to the questionnaire put in place for 2012 data and improved and simplified for 2014 data.

In addition to the production of annual statistics and to the work on data quality, Eurostat considers performing the following tasks in 2015-2017:

- 2012 data would be processed again in order to be validated again and disseminated into the new datasets available in Eurobase. In case of problems, countries would be contacted for corrections or explanations,

- Further methodological work would be carried out in order to provide updated guidelines for data collection,
- Investigations could be made together with DG AGRI and countries on how far data collected by the paying agencies could be reused for producing organic farming statistics<sup>3</sup>.

A new legislative package on organic farming is being prepared under the coordination of DG AGRI. It could be approved by the European Parliament and the Council in the second part of 2015. This package as well as implementing measures should define new data needs and lead to put in place a new data collection framework.

The first data collection under this new legislative package would probably not take place before 2018. Eurostat would then continue to be in charge, at least until 2017, of the data collection based on the questionnaire put in place for 2012 data and renewed for 2014 data.

## **7. CONCLUSIONS**

Organic farming practices are considered as beneficial for the climate and the environment, so they are very important for the "greening pillar" of the CAP. Good quality statistics on organic farming provided on time are therefore essential for policy making.

Due to many quality problems and limited resources available at Eurostat for organic farming statistics, the processing of 2013 data took almost one year. Nevertheless problems remain for many countries for several tables. It is important to correct them as soon as possible.

Countries are asked, for 2014 data onwards, to reinforce their efforts to provide good quality statistics on time and with a full coverage of compulsory items.

The respect of the structure and expected content of the Excel questionnaires is also essential in order to allow immediate basic validation of the data and automatic processing at Eurostat.

A new data collection framework based on a new legislative package should be in place, but not before 2018.

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<sup>3</sup> Under the new CAP, farmers complying with the requirements laid down in Article 29(1) of Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 as regards organic farming shall be entitled ipso facto to the payment for agricultural practices beneficial for the climate and the environment ("greening"). Therefore the data on which farms are organic and how many hectares of Utilised Agricultural Area will have to be collected by the paying agencies in Member States.





## Annex-2: National Organisations that provide organic farming statistics to Eurostat

Country	Data provider
BE	INS (Statistics Belgium)
BG	MZP (Ministry of Agriculture and Food Supply)
CZ	UZEI (Institute of Agricultural Economics and Information)
DK	DS (Danmark Statistics)
DE	BLE (Bundesanstalt für Landwirtschaft und Ernährung)
EE	SE (Statistics Estonia)
IE	DAFM (Department of Agriculture, Food & Marine)
EL	MINAGRIC (Ministry of Rural Development and Food)
ES	MAGRAMA (Ministerio de Agricultura, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente)
FR	MAGP (Ministère de l'Agriculture et de la Pêche)
HR	DZSHR (Central Bureau of Statistics)
IT	MPAAF (Ministero delle Politiche Agricole, Alimentari e Forestali)
CY	MANRE (Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment)
LV	ZM (Latvijas Republikas Zemkopības ministrija (Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Latvia))
LT	VIC (Žemės Ūkio Informacijos ir Kaimo Verslo Centras (State Enterprise Agricultural Information and Rural Business Centre))
LU	SERECORU (Service d'Economie Rurale)
HU	HCSO (Hungarian Central Statistical Office)
MT	MSDECC (Ministry for Sustainable Development, the Environment and Climate Change)
NL	CBS (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (Statistics Netherlands))
AT (1)	LEBENSMINISTERIUM (Bundesministerium für Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Umwelt und Wasserwirtschaft (Federal Ministry of Forestry, Environment and Water Management))
AT (2)	STAT (Statistik Österreich (Statistics Austria))
PL	MARD (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (Ministerstwo Rolnictwa i Rozwoju Wsi))
PT	MAM (Ministério da Agricultura e do Mar)
RO	MAFFF (Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forests, Fishery Dept.)
SI	MKGP (Ministrstvo za kmetijstvo, gozdarstvo in prehrano - Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food)
SK	CCTIA (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the SR, Central Controlling and Testing Institute in Agriculture)
FI	TIKE (Tike - Maa- ja metsätalousministeriön tietopalvelukeskus (Tike - Information Centre of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry))
SE	SJV (Jordbruksverket (Swedish Board of Agriculture))
UK	DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs)
MK	STAT (State Statistical Office)
RS	MAEPS (Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection)
TR	TURKSTAT (Turkish Statistical Institute (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu))
NO	SSB (Statistics Norway)
CH	OFS (Office Federal de la Statistique)