



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
Regulatory Scrutiny Board

Brussels,  
Ares(2016)

## **Opinion**

### **Title**

**DG ESTAT – Impact assessment on a proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and Council amending Regulation (EU) no. 99/2013 on the European Statistical Programme 2013-17, by extending it to 2018-20.**

(version of 18 February 2016)\*

### **(A) Context**

The European Statistical Programme (ESP) provides a framework for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics. Under Regulation (EC) No 223/2009, the duration of the European Statistical Programme should correspond to that of the multiannual financial framework, currently covering the period 2014-2020. This impact assessment analyses policy options for post-2017, when the current ESP expires.

### **(B) Overall opinion: POSITIVE**

**The Board gives a positive opinion, on the understanding that the impact assessment report will be significantly improved, particularly with respect to the following aspects:**

**(1) Policy options - The report should clarify and justify the negative and positive priorities made in the policy options and better explain how ESTAT assesses timeliness and relevance in that context.**

**(2) Methodology/assessment criteria – The methodology applied for the multi-criteria analysis should be better explained and justified.**

**(3) Budgetary impacts – The report should elaborate further on the financial implications of various policy choices, including for Member States.**

**(4) Administrative burden – Respondent burden should feature more prominently in the analysis, including with more concrete estimates of current and envisaged levels of administrative burdens.**

**(5) EU value added – The report should better justify the EU value added of the programme for European statistics.**

**The lead DG shall ensure that these recommendations are integrated in the report prior to launching the interservice consultation.**

\* Note that this opinion concerns a draft impact assessment report which may differ from the one adopted.

### **(C) Main recommendations for improvements**

**(1) Prioritisation** - The report should better put the ESP programme into policy context. In doing so, it should explain the relation with other current impact assessments launched by ESTAT. Furthermore, it should explain how continuous prioritisation is carried out under the programme, including how ESTAT assesses timeliness and relevance and what type of evidence is underpinning its cost-merit approach. The report should better distinguish between European statistics and other statistics and explain the 'fit for purpose' approach applied. Further justification should be given for the positive and negative priorities of the policy options.

**(2) Methodology/assessment criteria** – The scoring methodology applied for the multi-criteria analysis should be better explained and substantiated with evidence. When analysing the impact of options, an explanation should be given of how the different performance levels were arrived at and what explains a particular score of each of the options. The weights applied should be justified and the consistency between assessment criteria and objectives should be improved.

**(3) Budgetary impacts** – As this Impact Assessment report is expected to also serve as an ex ante evaluation of the associated spending programme, it should present a more comprehensive evaluation of the different types of budgetary costs and benefits associated with the various policy choices, including the financial outlays from Member States' budgets which are directly tied to the EU expenditure or are a direct consequence of the EU spending. Rather than presenting financial choices as upfront objectives or considerations, the report should better illustrate what policy action is warranted to address the identified problems and subsequently link this to budget needs. The concrete benefits of additional annual costs of EUR 30 million should also be specified in the preferred option 2c. The detailed cost analysis should be inserted in the annexes.

**(3) Administrative burden** – The respondent burden should feature more prominently in the objectives and in the analysis, including through more concrete estimates of current levels of administrative burden imposed by the programme and the envisaged impacts of the policy options. In this context, the longer term effects on administrative burdens of the investments in modernisation should also be addressed.

**(4) The EU value added** – The report should further elaborate on the EU value added of the programme for European statistics. It should better justify the modernisation efforts by more clearly setting out initial investment costs versus estimated impacts over the longer term. In addition, it should identify the EU value added more precisely; in particular demonstrating that action at EU level is needed for the modernisation on the data collection in complement to efforts carried out at the national level (administrative sources, 'big data', etc.).

*Some more technical comments have been transmitted directly to the author DG and are expected to be incorporated in the final version of the impact assessment report.*

### **(D) Procedure and presentation**

The report is generally clear and reader-friendly. However, the presentation of the ESTAT activities and definition and role of European statistics should be clarified.

### **(E) RSB scrutiny process**

Reference number	2014/ESTAT/003
External expertise used	No
Date of RSB meeting	17 February 2016

