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DRAFT STATEMENT OF THE COUNCIL'S REASONS

Subject:	Position of the Council at first reading with a view to the adoption of a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on European statistics on population and housing, amending Regulation (EC) No 862/2007 and repealing Regulations (EC) No 763/2008 and (EU) No 1260/2013 - Draft Statement of the Council's reasons

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Commission submitted its proposal for a Regulation on European statistics on population and housing, amending Regulation (EC) No 862/2007 and repealing Regulations (EC) No 763/2008 and (EU) No 1260/20131 (ESOP Regulation), on 20 January 2023.

2. This proposal aims at establishing a harmonised framework for European statistics on population and housing by integrating existing statistics on demography, migration, and censuses. It seeks to enhance the comparability, timeliness, and relevance of data across Member States, supporting EU policies related to demographic change, social cohesion, and sustainable development.

[1] ST 5588/23

3. The proposal was examined at numerous meetings of the Working Party on Statistics.

4. On 21 June 2023, the Committee of the Permanent Representatives (Part I) approved the negotiating mandate and, on that basis, invited the Presidency to start negotiations with the European Parliament, with a view to reaching an agreement at first reading.

5. The Committee of the Permanent Representatives approved a revised mandate2 on 6 March 2024, and on 7 May 2025 provided guidance in regard to the way forward3 in the negotiations with the Parliament.

6. The European Parliament adopted its report in the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL Committee) on 2 October 2023 and confirmed it in Plenary on 18 October 2023. On 24 April 2024, the Parliament adopted its position at first reading shortly before the conclusion of the 9th Legislature of the European Parliament.

7. The negotiations with the Parliament commenced in November 2023 during the ES Presidency and continued throughout the BE, and PL Presidencies. There was a break in negotiations from mid-March 2024 until the end of 2024, initially due to the change in the European Parliament's legislative cycle, and subsequently because of the workload associated with the appointment of the new Commission.

8. At the fifth trilogue, on 12 May 2025, the negotiating teams of the Council and the Parliament reached a provisional agreement.

9. On 28 May 2025, the Permanent Representatives Committee (Part I) analysed the final compromise text with a view to agreement and confirmed it3.

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[2] ST 7138/1/24 REV 1
[3] ST 9153/25

10. On 5 June 2025, the European Parliament's EMPL Committee confirmed the political agreement, and on 6 June 2025 the EMPL Chair sent a letter to the Chair of the Permanent Representatives Committee confirming that, should the Council approve the Regulation at first reading, after legal-linguistic revision, the Parliament would approve the Council's position in its second reading.

II. ELEMENTS OF THE PROVISIONAL AGREEMENT

11. The European Parliament and the Council conducted negotiations with the aim of concluding an agreement on the basis of a position of the Council at first reading that the Parliament could approve without amendments at its second reading. The text of the Council Position at first reading fully reflects the compromise reached between the two co-legislators, assisted by the European Commission.

Population Base

12. The population base was one of the most politically and technically sensitive elements of the proposal. The final compromise includes the obligation to apply estimation methods to the total population at national level only. This obligation applies specifically to three statistical topics: "The person's basic characteristics", "The person's socio-economic characteristics" and "The person's household situation". What is more, Member States may use a dedicated adjustment category where further estimations are available. This complementary but voluntary adjustment tool enables Member States to estimate population totals while acknowledging data gaps. Where this adjustment category is used, Member States are required to explain their methodology and justify its use in the accompanying quality reports.

13. Regarding the population figures for the needs of Qualified Majority Voting (QMV), Eurostat will provide the Council with the total population of each Member State by 30 September each year, based on data submitted by Member States as outlined in the Annex of the Regulation. Member States may revise their figures until 1 September each year.

Hard-to-Reach Population Groups

14. The provisional agreement introduces a definition of hard-to-reach population groups, referring to existing barriers for full and representative inclusion or identification of certain individuals in statistical data. This term is included in the recitals and the operative part, with the intention to enhance efforts to improve statistical coverage of these groups in population.

15. To support improved coverage, the compromise text includes provisions for pilot and feasibility studies aimed at assessing the availability of data on groups such as persons in institutions, homeless individuals, and persons with disabilities. These studies will explore appropriate methodologies while respecting data protection standards and taking into account national capabilities.

Derogations

16. Where the application of the Regulation, or its delegated or implementing acts, require major adaptations to be made to national statistical systems, Member States may request a derogation for an initial period of up to three years, with the possibility of a one-time extension of maximum three years more, provided sufficient justification is given.

Safeguards

17. The provisional agreement introduces qualitative safeguards adjusted to ESOP specificities. These safeguards ensure that there will be no unnecessary overlaps between data collected under the ESOP Regulation and those collected for the IESS Regulation4. Furthermore, the compromise text excludes the collection of data that by their nature can only be obtained directly from individual through surveys.

18. To facilitate the implementation, the preliminary agreement sets a general rule that implementing acts must be adopted at least 18 months before the start of the relevant reference period. Two exceptions apply: the implementing acts for the first reference times will be adopted not later than 12 months ahead of the first reference times while the implementing acts concerning census data shall be adopted at least 24 months ahead of the reference date.

Ad-Hoc Data Collection

19. The preliminary agreement establishes a structured mechanism for additional data collections. These collections, which are intended to address unexpected short-term or crisis-related statistical demands, are set up through delegated and implementing acts added in Article 5.

20. To ensure proportionality and avoid disruptions on ongoing statistical work the following limitations apply: a) each temporary data collection may last for a maximum of three years, b) there must be a minimum interval of two years between two subsequent collections and c) temporary data collection cannot overlap with census reference periods.

Annex

21. The Annex outlines the statistical requirements, periodicity, territorial breakdowns and transmission deadlines safeguarding feasibility and high data quality.

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[4] Regulation (EU) 2019/1700 establishing a common framework for European statistics relating to persons and households, based on data at individual level collected from samples (IESS Regulation)

22. It was considered that the six-month periodicity and the annual data on socio-economic characteristics did not carry a statistical value that would justify the burden they would place on national statistical systems, therefore they were deleted.

23. The compromise text confirms that data on energy-related building characteristics will be drawn exclusively from national databases, in line with Directive (EU) 2024/1275. This provision ensures legal clarity and avoids introducing new reporting obligations.

24. A T+24-month transmission deadline was retained for the most complex datasets, among others, the ones collected on a decennial basis, those under the "Families and households" domain, and the multiannual datasets with LAU5 as the territorial level.

25. For certain annual and multiannual datasets, a transitional period is set, until 2035. For certain annual datasets, a 12-month deadline will apply until 2035, after which the deadline will be reduced to 10 months. For multiannual datasets, the deadline will remain at 24 months until 2035 and shift to 18 months afterwards. These transitional periods will ensure a gradual and feasible implementation.

26. A 120-day deadline was set for quarterly immigrant data and a 60-day long deadline was set for annual total population data and for vital events.

Application Date and First Reference Year

27. As this Regulation will be adopted later than initially foreseen, the date of application is set for 1 January 2028. Consequently, the year 2027 will be the first reference year for data collection under the Regulation.

[5] Local administrative units (LAUs) are used to divide up the territory of the EU for the purpose of providing statistics at a local level. They are low level administrative divisions of a country below that of a province, region or state.

III. CONCLUSION

28. The Council's Position at first reading fully reflects the compromise reached in the negotiations between the European Parliament and the Council, facilitated by the Commission.

29. This compromise is confirmed by the letter that the Chair of the EMPL Committee addressed to the Chair of the Permanent Representatives Committee on 6 June 2025. In that letter, the Chair of the EMPL Committee indicates that she will recommend to the members of the Committee, and subsequently to the plenary, that they accept the Council's position at first reading without amendments in the Parliament's second reading, subject to verification by the lawyer-linguists of both institutions.