

**CONFERENCE ON ACCESSION
TO THE EUROPEAN UNION
– CROATIA –**

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ACCESSION DOCUMENT

Subject : EUROPEAN UNION COMMON POSITION
Chapter 18: Statistics

EUROPEAN UNION COMMON POSITION
(Revision of CONF-HR 18/07)

Chapter 18: Statistics

This position of the European Union is based on its general position for the Accession Conference with Croatia (CONF-HR 2/05), and is subject to the negotiating principles endorsed by the Accession Conference (CONF-HR 5/05), in particular:

- any view expressed by either party on a chapter of the negotiations will in no way prejudice the position which may be taken on other chapters;

- agreements - even partial agreements - reached during the course of the negotiations on chapters to be examined successively may not be considered as final until an overall agreement has been established;

as well as to the requirements set out in points 13, 16 and 26 of the Negotiating Framework.

The EU underlines the importance for Croatia of compliance with the Stabilisation and Association Agreement as well as the Accession Partnership, which constitute basic elements of the pre-accession strategy.

The EU encourages Croatia to continue the process of alignment with the *acquis* and its effective implementation and enforcement, and in general develop already before accession, policies and instruments as close as possible to those of the EU.

The EU notes that Croatia, in its positions CONF-HR 04/07 and CONF-HR 5/09 accepts the *acquis* under chapter 18 as in force on 1 June 2009, and that Croatia declares that it will be ready to implement it by the date of its accession to the European Union.

The EU notes that the **statistical master plan of 2007** has been well implemented: The short-term objectives of the master plan for the period 2007-2009 were achieved. Formal agreements with other producers of official statistics were signed, the issue of the reorganisation of regional offices was tackled, human resource management was introduced and the business register and agriculture statistics were further developed.

As far as the **framework** is concerned the EU notes that the co-ordinating role of the national statistical office (CBS) has been strengthened by positioning it directly under the Prime minister. The EU encourages Croatia to finalise the process of the integration of the regional statistical offices in the organisational structure of the national statistical office. The EU welcomes the increase in budget resources of 11.6 % in 2008 as compared to 2007 which enables a sustainable and comprehensive statistical production in line with the *acquis*. It encourages the Croatian government to approve the reorganisation proposal of the CBS.

With regard to **classifications and registers** the EU takes note of the high degree of alignment. It encourages Croatia to update its statistical register of business entities with data on groups of enterprises and to further improve the coverage of local units of companies. The EU welcomes the fact that free professions were included and encourages Croatia to establish a link to the farm register.

With regard to **sectoral statistics** the EU takes note of the high alignment of the external trade system. It encourages Croatia to finalise its preparations for the internal trade statistics, which will be applicable upon accession.

With regard to the **agricultural statistics** the EU takes note of the progress made concerning the benchmark. Farm structure statistics, farm structure survey and statistical indicators on Standard Gross Margins were introduced. The methodological descriptions were improved taking into consideration the remarks and recommendations made by the Commission. A comprehensive and detailed inventory of the methods used has been formulated and further plans of CBS regarding compliance with the *acquis* by the date of Croatia's accession to the EU have been developed. The EU encourages Croatia to fully implement the Economic Accounts for Agriculture and to update the farm register, which has been established.

The EU notes the substantial progress achieved in the areas of crop and animal production statistics. As far as the animal production statistics (i.e. livestock, meat, milk and poultry statistics) are concerned, information on both the methodology used and data provided were duly sent to the Commission.

On the basis of this assessment, the EU notes that Croatia has made substantial progress towards full compliance with the *acquis* in the field of agricultural statistics.

In view of the above the EU notes that the requirements of the first closing benchmark on agricultural statistics set out in the EU common position (CONF-HR 18/07) have been met.

As far as **fishery statistics** are concerned the EU takes note of the high alignment of the statistical production. This is equally the case for the statistics on fishing vessels. The EU encourages Croatia to close the remaining gaps.

With regard to **social statistics** the EU takes note of the high degree of alignment and welcomes the fine-tuning work on the Labour Force Survey. It encourages Croatia to adapt the Job Vacancy statistics and to implement the Structure of Earnings survey as stipulated by the *acquis*. It further encourages Croatia to implement the Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC) according to the requirements of the *acquis*. The EU takes good note of the full alignment of the Household Budget and Labour Cost Survey statistics and encourages Croatia to finalise the alignment of the Social Protection and Labour Cost Index Statistics.

With regard to the **freedom to provide services statistics** the EU notes that the communication statistics are fully compliant. The EU equally welcomes the full alignment of the tourism statistics.

With regard to statistics in the area of **transport policy** the EU takes note of the full alignment in the fields of road transport, rail transport, maritime transport, inland waterways transport, air transport and road safety statistics.

With regard to the statistics on **economic and monetary policy** the EU takes note of the substantial alignment of the national accounts, in particular of the inclusion of estimates for the non-observed economy, the allocation of the Financial Intermediation Services Indirectly Measured (FISIM) to the users and the improved estimates for dwelling services in the national accounts as well as the improved coverage and regularity of data transmission. It encourages Croatia to continue improving data production and delivery in line with the ESA 95 transmission programme. It notes the introduction of the financial accounts and calls upon Croatia to further complete their production. Regarding statistics for own resources the EU takes good note of the substantial progress made and encourages Croatia to continue the process of alignment with the *acquis*. Concerning the monetary and financial institution sector statistics the EU calls upon Croatia to complete its work. As far as the balance of payments statistics are concerned the EU encourages Croatia to complete the alignment of its statistical production according to the international guidelines. The EU takes note of the high alignment of the International Trade in Services statistics and of the partial alignment of Foreign Affiliates Trade in Services (FATS) statistics. The EU notes the alignment of the Foreign Direct Investment statistics and encourages Croatia to complete the alignment of the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) statistics. It notes that Purchasing Power Parities have already reached full compliance with the *acquis* and calls upon Croatia to further pursue its preparations for the government deficit and debt statistics upon accession. It encourages Croatia to complete the alignment of its Structural Business and Short-Term Statistics.

With a view to the benchmark on national accounts the EU notes that Croatia has transmitted the required information. The compliance of the methodology used for the key national account indicators (Gross Domestic Product and Gross National Income and main components) has improved substantially. The major statistical revision published in January 2009 incorporated several methodological changes and represents a significant step towards aligning Croatia's national accounts with EU standards.

In view of the above, the EU notes that the requirements of the second closing benchmark on national accounts, as set out the EU common position (CONF-HR 18/07), have been met.

The EU encourages Croatia to continue the process of alignment with the *acquis* in this area. This should include another revision of national accounts in 2010, addressing remaining issues as well as updating and completing the GNI Inventory by end of 2010. In addition Croatia should also review, and set up a work programme for, the issue of price and volume measures in national accounts. The Commission (Eurostat) will continue to monitor progress in this field.

With regard to **energy statistics** the EU welcomes the full alignment of the sector.

With regard to statistics on **regional policy** and of structural instruments statistics the EU notes that Croatia already has begun implementing the national classifications of spatial units in statistics compliant with the *acquis*. The EU encourages Croatia to complete the process.

With regard to statistics on **environment, consumer and health protection and public health**, the EU encourages Croatia to further improve the quality of waste statistics and to fully harmonise environment statistics. It takes further note of the high alignment of the causes of death statistics and health care statistics and encourages Croatia to further improve the quality of causes of death statistics and to fully align its accidents at work statistics.

With regard to the **education and culture statistics** the EU takes note of the high alignment of the education statistics. It takes note of Croatia's intention to fully implement the *acquis* concerning the Continuing Vocational Training in 2011. It welcomes the introduction of culture statistics.

With regard to the **science and technology statistics** the EU takes note of Croatia's intention to implement the general budget appropriations or outlays for research and development (GBAORD) statistics contrary to the initial schedule in 2009 and the human resources in science and technology statistics before accession.

With regard to **population statistics** the EU takes note of the high alignment of the sector. It takes note, in particular, that statistical data on asylum, illegal migration and acquisition of citizenship are available. The EU encourages Croatia to fully harmonise the migration statistics.

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In view of all the above considerations, the EU notes that, at this stage, this chapter does not require further negotiations.

Monitoring of progress in the alignment with and implementation of the *acquis* will continue throughout the negotiations. The EU underlines that it will devote particular attention to monitoring all specific issues mentioned above with a view to ensuring Croatia's capacity in statistics. The EU underlines the importance of a continuous and sustainable effort which has to be made in order to be fully compliant by accession. Particular consideration needs to be given to the links between the present chapter and other negotiation chapters, such as agriculture, as the consistent availability of reliable statistics is essential for the operation of EU policies. A final assessment of the conformity of Croatia's legislation with the *acquis* and of its implementation capacity can only be made at a later stage of the negotiations. In addition to all the information the EU may require for the negotiations in this chapter and which is to be provided to the Conference, the EU invites Croatia to provide regularly detailed written information to the Stabilisation and Association Council on progress in the implementation of the *acquis*.

In view of all the above considerations, the EU will, if necessary, return to this chapter at an appropriate moment.

Furthermore, the EU recalls that there may be new *acquis* between 1 June 2009 and the conclusion of the negotiations.
