

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 577/98

of 9 March 1998

on the organisation of a labour force sample survey in the 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 presented by the Commission,

Whereas, in order to carry out the tasks assigned to it, the Commission needs comparable statistical information on the level and pattern of and trends in employment and unemployment in the Member States;

Whereas the best method of obtaining such information at Community level is to conduct harmonised labour force surveys;

Whereas Council Regulation (EEC) No 3711/91 of 16 December 1991 on the organisation of an annual labour force sample survey in the Community⁽¹⁾ laid down that, starting in 1992, a survey was to be conducted in the spring of each year;

Whereas, although a continuous survey is preferable to an annual spring survey for ensuring the availability and harmonisation of data and measuring the volume of work, it is difficult to implement a continuous survey on the same dates in all the Member States;

Whereas the use of existing administrative sources should be encouraged insofar as they can usefully supplement the information obtained through interviews or serve as a sampling basis;

Whereas the data in the survey, as fixed by this Regulation, may be extended to include a further set of variables forming part of a programme of *ad hoc* modules which covers several years, and which will be drawn up under an appropriate procedure as part of the implementation arrangements;

Whereas the principles of relevance and cost-effectiveness, as these are defined in Council Regulation (EC) No 322/97 of 17 February 1997 on Community statistics⁽²⁾, which constitutes the legislative framework for the production of Community statistics, will also apply to this Regulation;

Whereas statistical confidentiality is governed by the rules set out in Regulation (EC) No 322/97 and in Council Regulation (Euratom, EEC) No 1588/90 of 11 June 1990 on the transmission of data subject to statistical confiden-

tiality to the Statistical Office of the European Communities⁽³⁾;

Whereas the Statistical Programme Committee established by Decision 89/382/EEC, Euratom⁽⁴⁾ has been consulted by the Commission in accordance with Article 3 of the aforesaid Decision,

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1

Frequency of the survey

A labour force sample survey, hereinafter referred to as 'the survey', shall be conducted by the Member States each year.

The survey is a continuous survey providing quarterly and annual results; however, those Member States which are not in a position to implement a continuous survey may carry out an annual survey only, to take place in the spring.

The information collected during the survey relates generally to the situation during the course of the week (taken to run from Monday to Sunday) preceding the interview, known as the reference week.

In the case of a continuous survey:

- the reference weeks are spread uniformly throughout the whole year;
- the interview normally takes place during the week immediately following the reference week. The reference week and the date of the interview may not be more than five weeks apart, except in the third quarter,
- the reference quarters and years are respectively groups of 13 or 52 consecutive weeks. A list of the weeks making up a given quarter or year is drawn up according to the procedure laid down in Article 8.

Article 2

Units and scope of the survey, observation methods

1. The survey shall be carried out in each Member State in a sample of households or of persons residing in the economic territory of that State at the time of the survey.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 351, 20. 12. 1991, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 52, 22. 2. 1997, p. 1.

⁽³⁾ OJ L 151, 15. 6. 1990, p. 1. Regulation as amended by Regulation (EC) No 322/97.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ L 181, 28. 6. 1989, p. 47.