Regulation (EU) No 549/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2013 on the European system of national and regional accounts in the European Union (Text with EEA relevance)

REGULATION (EU) No 549/2013 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

of 21 May 2013

on the European system of national and regional accounts in the European Union

(Text with EEA relevance)

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 338(1) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

After transmission of the draft legislative act to the national parliaments,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Central Bank[(1)],

Acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure[(2)],

Whereas:

(1) Policymaking in the Union and monitoring of the economies of the Member States and of the economic and monetary union (EMU) require comparable, up-to-date and reliable information on the structure of the economy and the development of the economic situation of each Member State or region.

(2) The Commission should play a part in the monitoring of the economies of the Member States and of the EMU and, in particular, report regularly to the Council on the progress made by Member States in fulfilling their obligations relating to the EMU.

(3) Citizens of the Union need economic accounts as a basic tool for analysing the economic situation of a Member State or region. For the sake of comparability, such accounts should be drawn up on the basis of a single set of principles that are not open to differing interpretations. The information provided should be as precise, complete and timely as possible in order to ensure maximum transparency for all sectors.

(4) The Commission should use aggregates of national and regional accounts for Union administrative purposes and, in particular, budgetary calculations.

(5) In 1970 an administrative document entitled ‘European System of Integrated Economic Accounts(ESA)’ was published, covering the field governed by this Regulation. That document was drawn up solely by the Statistical Office of the European Communities on its responsibility alone and was the outcome of several years’ work, by that office together with Member States’ national statistical institutes, aimed at devising a system

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of national accounts to meet the requirements of the European Communities' economic and social policy. It constituted the Community version of the United Nations System of National Accounts which had been used by the Communities up to that time. In order to update the original text a second edition of the document was published in 1979[(3)].

(6) Council Regulation (EC) No 2223/96 of 25 June 1996 on the European system of national and regional accounts in the Community[(4)] set up a system of national accounts to meet the requirements of the economic, social and regional policy of the Community. That system was broadly consistent with the then new System of National Accounts, which was adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission in February 1993 (1993 SNA), so that the results in all member countries of the United Nations would be internationally comparable.

(7) The 1993 SNA was updated in the form of a new System of National Accounts (2008 SNA) adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission in February 2009 in order to bring national accounts more into line with the new economic environment, advances in methodological research, and the needs of users.

(8) There is a need to revise the European System of Accounts set up by Regulation (EC) No 2223/96 (the ESA 95) in order to take into account the developments in the SNA so that the revised European System of Accounts, as established by this Regulation, constitutes a version of the 2008 SNA that is adapted to the structures of the Member States' economies, and so that the data of the Union are comparable with those compiled by its main international partners.

(9) For the purpose of setting up environmental economic accounts as satellite accounts to the revised European System of Accounts, Regulation (EU) No 691/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 July 2011 on European environmental economic accounts[(5)] established a common framework for the collection, compilation, transmission and evaluation of European environmental economic accounts.

(10) In the case of environmental and social accounts, the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament of 20 August 2009, entitled 'GDP and beyond — Measuring progress in a changing world', should also be fully taken into account. There is a need to vigorously pursue methodological studies and data tests in particular on issues related to 'GDP and beyond' and the Europe 2020 strategy with the aim of developing a more comprehensive measurement approach for wellbeing and progress in order to support the promotion of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. In this context, the issues of environmental externalities and social inequalities should be addressed. The issue of productivity changes should also be taken into account. This should allow data that complement GDP aggregates to be made available as soon as possible. The Commission should present in 2013, to the European Parliament and to the Council, a follow-up Communication on 'GDP and beyond' and, if appropriate, legislative proposals in 2014. Data on national and regional accounts should be seen as one means of pursuing those aims.

(11) The possible use of new, automated and real-time collection methods should be explored.

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(12) The revised European System of Accounts set up by this Regulation (ESA 2010) includes a methodology, and a transmission programme which defines the accounts and tables that are to be provided by all Member States according to specified deadlines. The Commission should make those accounts and tables available to users on specific dates and, where relevant, according to a pre-announced release calendar, particularly with regard to monitoring economic convergence and achieving close coordination of the Member States' economic policies.

(13) A user-oriented approach to publishing data should be adopted, thus providing accessible and useful information to Union citizens and other stakeholders.

(14) The ESA 2010 is gradually to replace all other systems as a reference framework of common standards, definitions, classifications and accounting rules for drawing up the accounts of the Member States for the purposes of the Union, so that results that are comparable between the Member States can be obtained.

(15) In accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 May 2003 on the establishment of a common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS)[(6)], all Member States' statistics that are transmitted to the Commission and that are to be broken down by territorial units should use the NUTS classification. Consequently, in order to establish comparable regional statistics, the territorial units should be defined in accordance with the NUTS classification.

(16) The transmission of data by the Member States, including the transmission of confidential data, is governed by the rules set out in Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2009 on European statistics[(7)]. Accordingly, measures that are taken in accordance with this Regulation should, therefore, also ensure the protection of confidential data and that no unlawful disclosure or non-statistical use occurs when European statistics are produced and disseminated.

(17) A task force has been set up to further examine the issue of the treatment of financial intermediation services indirectly measured (FISIM) in national accounts, including the examination of a risk-adjusted method that excludes risk from FISIM calculations in order to reflect the expected future cost of realised risk. Taking into consideration the findings of the task force, it may be necessary to amend the methodology for the calculation and allocation of FISIM, by means of a delegated act, in order to provide improved results.

(18) Research and development expenditure constitutes investment and should therefore be recorded as gross fixed capital formation. However, it is necessary to specify, by means of a delegated act, the format of the research and development expenditure data to be recorded as gross fixed capital formation when a sufficient level of confidence in the reliability and comparability of the data is reached through a test exercise based on the development of supplementary tables.

(19) Council Directive 2011/85/EU of 8 November 2011 on requirements for budgetary frameworks of the Member States[(8)] requires publication of relevant information on contingent liabilities with potentially large impacts on public budgets, including government guarantees, non-performing loans, and liabilities stemming from the

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operation of public corporations including the extent thereof. Those requirements necessitate additional publication to that required under this Regulation.

(20) In June 2012, the Commission (Eurostat) established a Task Force on the implications of Directive 2011/85/EU for the collection and dissemination of fiscal data, which focused on the implementation of the requirements related to contingent liabilities and other relevant information which may indicate potentially large impacts on public budgets, including government guarantees, liabilities of public corporations, Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), non-performing loans, and government participation in the capital of corporations. Fully implementing the work of that Task Force would contribute to the proper analysis of the underlying economic relationships of PPP contracts, including construction, availability and demand risks, as appropriate, and capture of implicit debts of off balance sheet PPPs, thereby fostering increased transparency and reliable debt statistics.

(21) The Economic Policy Committee set up by Council Decision 74/122/EEC[9] (EPC) has been carrying out work in relation to the sustainability of pensions and pension reforms. The work of statisticians on the one hand and of experts on ageing populations working under the auspices of the EPC on the other hand should be closely coordinated, at both national and European levels, with respect to macroeconomic assumptions and other actuarial parameters in order to ensure consistency and cross-country comparability of the results as well as efficient communication to users and stakeholders of the data and information related to pensions. It should also be made clear that accrued-to-date pension entitlements in social insurance are not as such a measure of the sustainability of public finances.

(22) Data and information on Member States' contingent liabilities are provided in the context of the work related to the multilateral surveillance procedure in the Stability and Growth Pact. By July 2018, the Commission should issue a report evaluating whether those data should be made available in the context of the ESA 2010.

(23) It is important to underline the significance of Member States' regional accounts for the regional, economic and social cohesion policies of the Union as well as the analysis of economic interdependencies. Moreover, the need to increase the transparency of accounts at a regional level, including government accounts, is recognised. The Commission (Eurostat) should pay particular attention to the fiscal data of regions where Member States have autonomous regions or governments.

(24) In order to amend Annex A of this Regulation with a view to ensuring its harmonised interpretation or international comparability, the power to adopt acts in accordance with Article 290 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) should be delegated to the Commission. It is of particular importance that the Commission carry out appropriate consultations during its preparatory work, including with the European Statistical System Committee established under Regulation (EC) No 223/2009. Moreover, pursuant to Articles 127(4) and 282(5) TFEU, it is of importance that the Commission carry out during its preparatory work, where relevant, consultations with the European Central Bank in its fields of competence. The Commission, when preparing and drawing up delegated acts, should ensure a simultaneous, timely and

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appropriate transmission of relevant documents to the European Parliament and to the Council.

(25) Most statistical aggregates used in the economic governance framework of the Union, in particular the excessive deficit and the macroeconomic imbalances procedures, are defined by reference to the ESA. When providing data and reports under those procedures, the Commission should give appropriate information about the impact on the relevant aggregates of the ESA 2010 methodological changes introduced by delegated acts in accordance with the provisions of this Regulation.

(26) The Commission will carry out an evaluation as to whether the data on Research and Development have reached a sufficient level of quality both in current prices and in volume terms for national accounts purposes before the end of May 2013, in close cooperation with the Member States, with a view to ensuring the reliability and comparability of the ESA Research and Development data.

(27) Since the implementation of this Regulation will require major adaptations in the national statistical systems, derogations will be granted by the Commission to Member States. In particular, the transmission programme of national accounts data should take into consideration the fundamental political and statistical changes that have occurred in some Member States during the reference periods of the programme. The derogations granted by the Commission should be temporary and subject to review. The Commission should provide support to the Member States concerned in their efforts to ensure the required adaptations to their statistical systems so that those derogations can be discontinued as soon as possible.

(28) Reducing transmission deadlines could add significant pressure and costs for respondents and national statistical institutes in the Union, with the risk of a lower quality of data being produced. A balance of advantages and disadvantages should, therefore, be considered when setting the data transmission deadlines.

(29) In order to ensure uniform conditions for the implementation of this Regulation, implementing powers should be conferred on the Commission. Those powers should be exercised in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 laying down the rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission's exercise of implementing powers[(10)].

(30) Since the objective of this Regulation, namely the establishment of a revised European System of Accounts, cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States and can be better achieved at Union level, the Union may adopt measures, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity as set out in Article 5 of the Treaty on European Union. In accordance with the principle of proportionality, as set out in that Article, this Regulation does not go beyond what is necessary in order to achieve that objective.

(31) The European Statistical System Committee has been consulted.

(32) The Committee on Monetary, Financial and Balance of Payments Statistics set up by Council Decision 2006/856/EC of 13 November 2006 establishing a Committee on monetary, financial and balance of payments statistics[(11)] and the Gross National