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)

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)

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community, and in particular Article 285 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission[(1)],

Having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee[(2)],

Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions[(3)],

Acting in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 251 of the Treaty[(4)],

Whereas:

(1) Users of statistics express an increasing need for harmonisation in order to have comparable data across the European Union. In order to function, the internal market requires statistical standards applicable to the collection, transmission and publication of national and Community statistics so that all operators in the single market can be provided with comparable statistical data. In this context, classifications are an important tool for the collection, compilation and dissemination of comparable statistics.

(2) Regional statistics are a cornerstone of the European Statistical System. They are used for a wide range of purposes. For many years European regional statistics have been collected, compiled and disseminated on the basis of a common regional classification, called ‘Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics’ (hereinafter referred to as NUTS). It is now appropriate to fix this regional classification in a legal framework and to institute clear rules for future amendments of this classification. The NUTS classification should not preclude the existence of other subdivisions and classifications.

(3) Accordingly, all Member States' statistics transmitted to the Commission, which are broken down by territorial units, should use the NUTS classification, where applicable.

(4) In its analysis and dissemination, the Commission should use the NUTS classification for all statistics classified by territorial units, where applicable.

Changes to legislation: *There are outstanding changes not yet made to Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council. Any changes that have already been made to the legislation appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes*

(5) Different levels are needed for regional statistics depending on the purpose of these statistics at national and European level. It is appropriate to have at least three hierarchical levels of detail in the European regional NUTS classification. Member States could have further levels of NUTS details, where they consider it necessary.

(6) Information on the current territorial composition of NUTS level 3 regions is necessary for the proper administration of the NUTS classification and should therefore be transmitted regularly to the Commission.

(7) Objective criteria for the definition of regions are necessary in order to ensure impartiality when regional statistics are compiled and used.

(8) Users of regional statistics need stability of the nomenclature over time. The NUTS classification should hence not be amended too frequently. This Regulation will ensure a greater stability of rules over time.

(9) Comparability of regional statistics requires that the regions be of a comparable size in terms of population. In order to achieve this goal, amendments of the NUTS classification should render the regional structure more homogeneous in terms of population size.

(10) The actual political, administrative and institutional situation must also be respected. Non-administrative units must reflect economic, social, historical, cultural, geographical or environmental circumstances.

(11) Reference should be made to the definition of the ‘population’ on which the classification is based.

(12) The NUTS classification is restricted to the economic territory of the Member States and does not provide complete coverage of the territory to which the Treaty establishing the European Community applies. Its use for Community purposes will therefore need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis. The economic territory of each country, as defined in Commission Decision 91/450/EEC[(5)],also includes extraregio territory, made up of parts of the economic territory that cannot be attached to a certain region (air-space, territorial waters and the continental shelf, territorial enclaves, in particular embassies, consulates and military bases, and deposits of oil, natural gas, etc. in international waters, outside the continental shelf, worked by resident units). The NUTS classification must also provide the possibility of statistics for this extraregio territory.

(13) Amendments to the NUTS classification will require close consultations with the Member States.

(14) Since the objective of the proposed action, namely the harmonisation of regional statistics, cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States and can therefore be better achieved at Community level, the Community may adopt measures, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity as set out in Article 5 of the Treaty. 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.

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(15) The NUTS classification laid down in this Regulation should replace the 'Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics (NUTS)' established to date by the Statistical Office of the European Communities in cooperation with the national statistical institutes. As a consequence, all references in Community acts to the 'Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics (NUTS)' should now be understood as referring to the NUTS classification laid down in this Regulation.

(16) Council Regulation (EC) No 322/97 of 17 February 1997 on Community Statistics[(6)] constitutes the reference framework for the provisions of this Regulation.

(17) The measures necessary for the implementation of this Regulation should be adopted in accordance with Council Decision 1999/468/EC of 28 June 1999 laying down the procedures for the exercise of implementing powers conferred on the Commission[(7)].

(18) The Statistical Programme Committee established by Council Decision 89/382/EEC, Euratom[(8)] has been consulted in accordance with Article 3 thereof,

HAVE ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

[F1 Article 1

Subject matter

1 This Regulation establishes a common statistical classification of territorial units (NUTS), in order to enable the collection, compilation and dissemination of European statistics at different territorial levels of the Union.

2 The NUTS classification is set out in Annex I.

3 Local administrative units (LAU), as referred to in Article 4, shall complement the NUTS classification.

4 Statistical grids, as referred to in Article 4a, shall complement the NUTS classification. Those statistical grids shall be used to calculate population-based territorial typologies.

5 Union territorial typologies, as referred to in Article 4b, shall complement the NUTS classification by attributing types to the territorial units.**]**

Textual Amendments

F1 Substituted by Regulation (EU) 2017/2391 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2017 amending Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 as regards the territorial typologies (Tercet).

Article 2

Structure

1 The NUTS classification subdivides the economic territory of the Member States, as defined in Decision 91/450/EEC, into territorial units. It ascribes to each territorial unit a specific code and name.

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2 The NUTS classification is hierarchical. It subdivides each Member State into NUTS level 1 territorial units, each of which is subdivided into NUTS level 2 territorial units, these in turn each being subdivided into NUTS level 3 territorial units.

3 However, a particular territorial unit may be classified at several NUTS levels.

4 At the same NUTS level, two different territorial units in the same Member State may not be identified by the same name. If two territorial units in different Member States have the same name, the country identifier is added to the territorial units' names.

F2 5 . . . . . .

Textual Amendments

F2 Deleted by Regulation (EU) 2017/2391 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2017 amending Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 as regards the territorial typologies (Tercet).

Article 3

Classification criteria

1 Existing administrative units within the Member States shall constitute the first criterion used for the definition of territorial units.

To this end, ‘administrative unit’ shall mean a geographical area with an administrative authority that has the power to take administrative or policy decisions for that area within the legal and institutional framework of the Member State.

2 In order to establish the relevant NUTS level in which a given class of administrative units in a Member State is to be classified, the average size of this class of administrative units in the Member State shall lie within the following population thresholds:

Level	Minimum	Maximum
NUTS 1	3 million	7 million
NUTS 2	800 000	3 million
NUTS 3	150 000	800 000

If the population of a whole Member State is below the minimum threshold for a given NUTS level, the whole Member State shall be one NUTS territorial unit for this level.

3 For the purpose of this Regulation, the population of a territorial unit shall consist of those persons who have their usual place of residence in this area.

[F1 4 The existing administrative units used for the NUTS classification are set out in Annex II. The Commission shall be empowered to adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 7a to amend Annex II on the basis of the changes in the administrative units that have been communicated to it by the Member State concerned in accordance with Article 5(1).**]**

5 If for a given level of NUTS no administrative units of a suitable scale exist in a Member State, in accordance with the criteria referred to in paragraph 2, this NUTS level shall be constituted by aggregating an appropriate number of existing smaller contiguous administrative

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units. This aggregation shall take into consideration such relevant criteria as geographical, socio-economic, historical, cultural or environmental circumstances.

The resulting aggregated units shall hereinafter be referred to as 'non-administrative units'. The size of the non-administrative units in a Member State for a given NUTS level shall lie within the population thresholds referred to in paragraph 2.

[[F1]Some non-administrative units may, however, deviate from those thresholds because of particular geographical, socioeconomic, historical, cultural or environmental circumstances, especially in the islands and the outermost regions.**]**

Textual Amendments

F1 Substituted by Regulation (EU) 2017/2391 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2017 amending Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 as regards the territorial typologies (Tercet).

[F1 Article 4

Local administrative units

1 In each Member State, local administrative units (LAU) shall subdivide NUTS level 3 into one or two further levels of territorial units. At least one of the LAU levels shall be an administrative unit as defined in Article 3(1) and as set out in Annex III. The Commission shall be empowered to adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 7a to amend the list of LAU in Annex III on the basis of the changes in the administrative units that have been communicated to it by the Member State concerned in accordance with Article 5(1).

2 Within the first six months of each year, Member States shall transmit to the Commission (Eurostat), with reference to 31 December of the previous year, the list of LAU indicating any changes and the NUTS 3 region to which they belong. In doing so it shall follow the electronic data format requested by the Commission (Eurostat).

3 The Commission (Eurostat) shall publish the list of LAU in the dedicated section of its website by 31 December of each year.**]**

Textual Amendments

F1 Substituted by Regulation (EU) 2017/2391 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2017 amending Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 as regards the territorial typologies (Tercet).

[F3 Article 4a

Statistical grids

The Commission (Eurostat) shall maintain and publish a system of statistical grids at Union level in the dedicated section of its website. The statistical grids shall conform to the specifications laid down in Commission Regulation (EU) No 1089/2010[(9)].