

CMFB opinion

on a proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning European statistics on tourism

1. At Eurostat's request, the CMFB Chairman, with the assistance of the CMFB Executive Body, asked the CMFB Members on 22 December 2009 to state their opinion by 21 January 2010 on a proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning European statistics on tourism. Thirteen (13) national statistical institutes and eleven (11) national central banks from 17 different EU Member States replied within the specified time. The ECB also provided its opinion.
2. A large number of the replies received welcomed the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning European statistics on tourism, especially since tourism is an important sub-component of services. Several replies acknowledged the efforts made to improve the relevance of tourism statistics for balance of payments compilers, and a number of the replies underlined the importance of aligning concepts and definitions between the two domains. In general, it was suggested that further collaboration between the compilers of tourism statistics and balance of payments could lead to a better re-use of data on both sides.
3. The possibility of using other sources to supplement or replace surveys, and the elimination of some less relevant variables were seen as positive steps in the direction of burden reduction. Some concerns were expressed by balance of payments compilers because the transmission of quarterly demand side data has been suppressed and because the long deadlines for annual data may reduce the relevance and usefulness of these statistics for balance of payments.
4. Several institutions pointed at the need to improve the coverage of same-day visits. However, other institutions reminded of the methodological problems and the burden impact linked to collecting data on same-day visits.
5. It was noted that the proposal only provides for a sub-set of the information needed for the compilation of full Tourism Satellite Accounts and that this area will need further attention in order to ensure comparability. Finally, some (mostly) smaller countries believed that the required level of details for national tourism could be reconsidered. It was also suggested that quality reports should be compiled less frequently, e.g. every 3 years.

6. Accordingly, the CMFB suggests that Eurostat considers the specific remarks and questions raised.
7. In addition to this opinion, all the original answers from CMFB Members have been transmitted to Eurostat and will be kept in the records of the CMFB secretariat.

(Signed)

Peter van de Ven
CMFB Chairman

Den Haag, 23 March 2010