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**REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND
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the Council of 13 December 2011 concerning European statistics on permanent crops**

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1. BACKGROUND

Regulation (EU) No 1337/2011 ('the Regulation') concerning European statistics on permanent crops¹ entered into force on 1 January 2012. It repealed two legal acts: Council Regulation (EEC) No 357/79 of 5 February 1979 on 'statistical surveys of areas under vines'² and Directive 2001/109/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 December 2001 'concerning the statistical surveys to be carried out by the Member States in order to determine the production potential of plantations of certain species of fruit trees'³. Regulation (EU) No 1337/2011 covers two structural data collections on permanent crops:

- orchard data collection on apple, pear, peach, nectarine, orange, lemon, small citrus fruit and olive trees and vines for table grapes; and
- vineyard data collection on vineyards producing grapes for wine, raisins and dual purpose grapes.

So far, there have been three data collections organised: two on orchards (2012 and 2017) and one on vineyards (2015).

Article 13 of the Regulation stipulates that 'by 31 December 2018 and every 5 years thereafter, the Commission shall review the functioning of this Regulation. In the context of this review, the Commission shall assess whether it is necessary to produce all the data referred to in Article 4. Where the Commission considers that some of those data are not any longer required, it shall be empowered to adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 11 that delete certain data from Annexes I and II'.

This report summarises the main findings of the review on the Regulation's functioning. It refers to the European agricultural statistics strategy 2020 endorsed by the European Statistical System

¹ Regulation (EU) No 1337/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 concerning European statistics on permanent crops and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 357/79 and Directive 2001/109/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council Text with EEA relevance, OJ L 347, 30.12.2011, p. 7.

² Council Regulation (EEC) No 357/79 of 5 February 1979 on statistical surveys of areas under vines, OJ L 54, 5.3.1979, p. 124.

³ Directive 2001/109/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 December 2001 concerning the statistical surveys to be carried out by the Member States in order to determine the production potential of plantations of certain species of fruit trees, OJ L 13, 16.1.2002, p. 21.

Committee in its 27th meeting on 19 November 2015, and presents the new legal framework for structural statistics on permanent crops repealing Regulation (EU) No 1337/2011, the functioning of which is the subject of this report.

2. MAIN FINDINGS AND ASSESSMENT

Regulation (EU) No 1337/2011 is to some extent problematic to implement, as indicated by the experiences from the 2012 and 2017 orchard data collections and the 2015 vineyard data collection, the feedback from various expert group meetings⁴ and the quality reports provided by the Member States. The user needs have also changed over the past decade.

2.1 Issues linked to the data collection

Based on the analysis of the data and quality reports it is clear that the orchard data collection and vineyard data collection have some in-built challenges.

2.1.1 Orchard data collection

There are two consequences from having the data variables (species group, colour of fruit, time of harvest, age, density) cross-tabled against each other. Firstly, the Member States have to use very high sampling rates. Among those countries which did not have an orchard register, the average sampling rate was very high — 54 %. Therefore, five of these countries had to organise a census to collect data on orchards. Secondly, the detailed breakdown of the data leads to costly and time consuming data collections. The average cost of the orchard data collection (per reference year) is approximately EUR 220 000 per country, ranging from EUR 2 500 to EUR 900 000. The labour input in statistical authorities ranges from 0.1 full time equivalent (FTE) to 6.2 FTE. There is also a very heavy burden on respondents due to very large samples and long questionnaires requiring a lot of area measurements.

The large investment made at national level for collecting very detailed information unfortunately does not bring the full benefit to the data users as some of the collected data cannot be released due to statistical confidentiality.

The species groups defined in Annex I of the Regulation, in particular for apples and pears, do not well reflect the distribution of species groups in the EU. For dessert apples, 34 % of the tree area is classified in the group ‘Others’ and for pears 18 %. The problem is even bigger in the

⁴ Crop Statistics working group meetings (2012-2017), standing committee for agricultural statistics (until 2014) and Directors’ Group for Agricultural statistics (from 2015 onwards).

northern and eastern parts of Europe, where in some countries almost all orchards belong to the class ‘Other’.

It is difficult to collect voluntary data on apple, pear and peach trees that are planted for industrial processing as in many cases the weather, market conditions and quality aspects guide the yearly decisions of farmers on whether they sell the fruits for consumption or for industrial processing more than the fruit tree variety.

2.1.2 Vineyard data collection

Article 3 (4) of the Regulation stipulates that data on vines other than table grapes (Annex II of the Regulation) ‘shall be provided using the data available in the vineyard register implemented in accordance with Article 185a of Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 for all the holdings included in this register, as defined in point (a) of Article 3(1) of Regulation (EC) No 436/2009’. The obligatory link between the vineyard register and the vineyard data collection under the Regulation poses problems in several Member States as the register is not always up to date and it does not contain all the variables listed in the Regulation. The obligation to use the register as the sole data source is also problematic from the perspective of the European Statistics Code of practice⁵. This is because Article 6.2 states that the choice of statistical sources should be based on statistical considerations, and Article 12.1 requires that the source data are regularly assessed and validated.

2.2. User needs

The consultation with the policy DGs confirmed that the Commission needs to be kept accurately informed about the potential of plantations to produce certain species of permanent crops within the EU. To ensure that the common agricultural policy is properly administered, the Commission requires data on permanent crops to be regularly provided. However, the screening of data showed that significant measures can be carried out to reduce burden, particularly for collecting data on orchards.

⁵ European statistics code of practice for national statistical authorities and Eurostat (EU statistical authority), endorsed by the European Statistical System Committee on 16 November 2017: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/4031688/8971242/KS-02-18-142-EN-N.pdf/e7f85f07-91db-4312-8118-f729c75878c7> (only available in English).

The following variables are no longer needed as part of the structural statistical data that are provided for the policy monitoring needs:

- species groups for apples and pears;
- colour of fruit for peaches, nectarines and table grapes; and
- the time of harvest for peaches, nectarines, apricots, oranges and small citrus fruits.

In addition, there is no longer a need to cross-tabulate the variables used for age and density, although they can be collected separately. The regularity of the data collection can be 6-7 years as the structure of orchards and vineyards is relatively stable. Under the Regulation the Member States cultivating the vines on at least 500 ha had to implement the data collection. For the orchards the threshold was 1000 ha at national level for any single type of fruit tree. To align the threshold to the other measures and registers in the wine sector, it should also be 1000 ha for wine vineyards.

The policy needs data that better represents regional areas. Under the Regulation the data on fruit trees were collected at NUTS 1⁶ level and the data on vineyards for wine production at NUTS 2 level. As these data are important for analysing the regional potential of orchards and vineyards both in the context of market management and in the case of a crisis, all structural data on orchards and vineyard are needed at NUTS2 level.

3. EUROPEAN AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS STRATEGY 2020 AND THE NEW GENERATION OF AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS: IMPLICATIONS FOR REGULATION (EU) No 1337/2011

Eurostat has worked intensively on the ‘Strategy for Agricultural Statistics towards 2020 and beyond’⁷ with the data users (mostly other Commission departments and EU institutions) and the national statistical institutes since 2014. The agricultural statistics strategy aims to

- efficiently produce statistics, which meet the users’ needs;
- not significantly increase the burden on respondents and on statistical systems, and make more statistics available;
- improve the consistency between the agricultural statistics sub-domains;
- clarify and streamline the concepts and definitions;
- improve the quality of agricultural statistics; and
- improve integration of agricultural, forestry, land use and environmental statistics.

⁶ Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics

⁷ Commission staff working document impact assessment accompanying the strategy for agricultural statistics 2020 and beyond and subsequent potential legislative scenarios SWD/2016/0430 final — 2016/0389 (COD), <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52016SC0430> (only available in English).

The implementation phase started after the European Statistical System Committee endorsed the strategy in 2015. In the impact assessment the two-step implementation strategy was deemed to best suit the needs of the statistical system and data users.

- The first step is the Framework Regulation on Integrated Farm Statistics (IFS), which covers the Farm Structure Survey currently covered by the Regulation on farm surveys⁸, the statistics on the structure of orchards and vineyards under Regulation (EU) No 1337/2011 and some agri-environmental indicators. The structural data collections on orchards and vineyards will take place under the orchard and vineyards modules of Regulation 2018/1091 (IFS Regulation)⁹, adopted on 18 July 2018. Regulation (EU) No 1337/2011 has been repealed with effect from 1 January 2022.
- The second step is the SAIO regulation (statistics on agricultural inputs and outputs) covering, among others, crop production and crop balances.

The orchard and vineyard modules under the IFS Regulation will have less detailed data content on the crop characteristics but the data will be provided to Eurostat as micro data linked to the core farm data. This allows data to be used more flexibly and to better meet the user needs. The micro data will allow for cross-tabulation, showing which kind of farmer grows different types of permanent crops and how these farmers work (e.g. age, education and training, other farming activities, other gainful activities, whether they are located in less favoured areas etc.).

3.1 Orchard module in the IFS Regulation

The structural statistics on orchards will be covered by the orchard module in the IFS Regulation. It solves the problems highlighted in Chapter 2 and incorporates the Commission's current needs. The orchard module includes approximately 600 variables less than what is included in Regulation (EU) No 1337/2011. This is expected to reduce the cost and the burden of collecting data, even taking into account the precision requirements at NUTS 2 level.

The orchard data collection under the IFS orchard module will take place in 2023.

⁸ Regulation (EC) No 1166/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on farm structure surveys and the survey on agricultural production methods and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 571/88, OJ L 321, 1.12.2008, p. 14.

⁹ Regulation (EU) No 2018/1091 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on integrated farm statistics and repealing Regulations (EC) No 1166/2008 and (EU) No 1337/2011, OJ L 200, 7.8.2018, p. 1.

3.2 Vineyard module in the IFS Regulation

The content of the vineyard data collection under the IFS Regulation's vineyard module will stay mostly as it was under Regulation (EU) No 1337/2011. The only difference is the definition of main vine varieties. Currently the main varieties are defined as all those vine varieties which have a minimum of 500 ha on national level. Under the IFS Regulation they are defined from the bottom up: each wine-grower reports the 10 largest varieties grown on the holding and the main varieties at national level will be established from these varieties.

Under the IFS vineyard module the Member States may choose to use the best available data source for the vineyard data collection (either a data collection or the vineyard register). However, the Commission encourages the Member States to use the vineyard register data as much as possible as it reduces the burden on respondents and the costs. To improve the quality of the vineyard register data the Commission plans to publish a call for proposals for grants aiming to improve the interoperability of the vineyard register and statistical data collection (including the statistical holding register).

The collection of vineyard data under the IFS Regulation will take place in 2026. The 2020 vineyard data collection will still take place under Regulation (EU) No 1337/2011 to allow enough time to align the statistical holding register with the vineyard register, which is necessary under the IFS Regulation.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Regulation (EU) No 1337/2011 has not worked as was planned when it was adopted. This is due to the data content and the cross-tabulation of data being too detailed. These factors contributed to the heavy burden on respondents and high data collection costs, resulting in confidential data. The user needs also changed over the years and currently the Commission requires fewer details.

Due to the above-mentioned reasons and in order to implement the 'Strategy for Agricultural Statistics towards 2020 and beyond' the orchard and vineyard data collections covered by Regulation (EU) No 1337/2011 are integrated into the new IFS Regulation. Regulation 1337/2011 has been repealed, taking effect after the 2020 vineyard data collection (data delivery in 2022).

The new legal basis for the structural data on orchards and vineyards will better meet user needs and it is expected to reduce the burden on respondents. The orchard and vineyard module data under the IFS Regulation will allow the holdings cultivating fruit trees and vines to be thoroughly analysed. This is thanks to ample possibilities offered by the delivery of micro data, which will allow the structure of the orchards and vineyards to be linked with the full structural

data of the farms. Therefore, this will strengthen the evidence base used for taking decisions affecting the sector.