

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
**EUROSTAT**

Directorate F: Social statistics  
**Unit F-5: Education, health and social protection**

Doc 2015-ETS-09

**Item 4.3 – New developments linked to administrative data (Schools  
as institutional entities)**

**Meeting of the  
Education and Training Statistics Working Group  
Luxembourg, 16-17<sup>th</sup> June 2015  
BECH Building – Room AMPERE**

## **Executive summary**

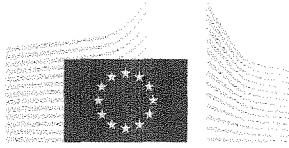
DG EAC, in charge of education and culture in the European Commission, would like to get information on schools as entities in view of analysis and monitoring school education policies and programs. The attached note provides information on the background and justification of this request from a policy point of view and on the nature of the expected data. This information is currently not included in Commission Regulation n°912/2013 on the collection, transmission and processing of statistical data on education and training systems. Collecting such information has also not been foreseen in current Eurostat work programme, priority being given to the appropriate implementation of the Commission Regulation including developments of mobility and expenditure data.

Several issues are raised in this new request, already identified in the note:

- Appropriate definition of a school as entity in order to collect reliable and comparable data
- Possibility for the national bodies responsible for UOE data to collect all or part of the expected information
- Capacity of the national bodies to provide the expected information due to the additional burden and priority being due to comply with the existing legal requirements on education data

### **The ETS Working Group is invited to:**

- *Comment on the note and in particular on the issues which have been identified*



Brussels, 09/06/2015

## **School as Entities**

### **Background Information on the Data Need for School Policies and Programs**

For formulation, analysis and monitoring of school education policies and programs there is a clear need of quantitative data on schools as entities. This request does not constitute a registry of schools in the EU (as opposed to the European Tertiary Education Register) or intend to have results published for individual schools.

This note gives further information on this data request presented by DG EAC on gathering basic statistical data on schools as entities. It serves to support the discussion the Education and Training Statistics Working group in Luxembourg 16-17 June.

#### **1. BACKGROUND**

##### **1.1. Erasmus+**

There are a number of areas in school education field that would benefit from statistical information about schools. Currently the UOE data collection provides us with important basic data only on students and teachers.

First and foremost we have to guarantee that the new Erasmus+ program will be a success. The Erasmus+ programme aims to boost skills and employability, as well as modernising Education. The seven year programme has a budget of €2.2 billion for schools, reflecting the EU's commitment to investing in this area. In the school education field this constitutes of:

- Key Action 1(KA1) Learning mobility of individuals Staff mobility, in particular for teachers, school leaders and other staff working directly with or in schools.
- Key action 2 (KA2) Cooperation for innovation and exchange of good practices. Strategic Partnerships involving primarily schools; IT-Platforms including e-Twinning

It is important to note that the beneficiaries are the schools themselves, whether partnering up with other schools or with other organisations in the fields of education, training, youth and the labour market. To monitor effectiveness of spending and to fine-tune the program year by year we need to continuously monitor the uptake of the Erasmus+ budget. Having the data on number of schools at regional level (NUTS2) will be used in ex-ante and ex-post analysis of Erasmus+, it will help to put into context the number of participating schools and to monitor whether there is also uptake in

disadvantaged regions. Combining information already gathered through the Erasmus+ reporting and monitoring structures on the use of different tools and participation in parts of the programme etc. with the data on the number of schools requested above will e.g. allow us to calculate uptake indicators on:

- school evaluation: to complement the information we have on countries that might follow self-evaluation on a compulsory basis, we can calculate the share of schools that are using evaluation tools (i.e. quantify the use of certain tools)
- Guidance: We can calculate the share of schools that have guidance services, support or how many schools that would require such services and tools
- Check-list to identify pupils at risk: We can calculate the share of schools that use such check lists
- European Development Plan: We can calculate the share of schools that have it
- Overall programme involvement: The share of schools actually involved in Erasmus+ programme activities

## **1.2. Investment in schools**

Effective investment in the facilities in which teaching and learning occurs is essential in order to continue to support the changing needs and demands of the knowledge economy. On the 26 November 2014, the Commission put forward an Investment Plan for Europe which should mobilise at least EUR 315 billion of additional public and private investment over the period 2015-2017 and improve significantly the overall investment environment. Education is one of the areas that the new European Fund for Strategic investments (EFSI) will support. In addition, investments in education are one of the categories of public expenditure highlighted in the 2015 Annual Growth Survey which should be prioritised and strengthened. The 2015 Annual Growth Survey states that "Education and innovation systems are less well equipped and less funded than those of our key competitors".

Furthermore, at European Union level, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) has significantly invested on education infrastructure, notably in convergence regions (EUR 9bn in the programming period 2007-2013). For 2014-2020 education infrastructure investments are eligible in all European regions and up to now more than EUR 6bn have been allocated to education infrastructures. In the framework of the renewed Cohesion Policy, education ex-ante conditionalities are applicable in order to ensure that the necessary framework conditions for effective use of Union support are in place. This means that a strategic policy framework should be in place which, inter alia, explains how infrastructure needs have been appraised and how this has been translated into decisions mapping out the long term infrastructure network.

Data on schools is necessary in order to follow the potential uptake of EFSI and to better understand the investment need of this sector.

### **1.3. Trends in the school sector**

The contemporary trends found in many Member States is the steep demographic decline in combination with substantial economic problems. This has led to low school enrolments which affect negatively students access to education mostly at secondary-school level. The ramifications of school closings, mergers, connecting schools across regions, and opening up of schools to serve the entire community is not fully grasped at the EU level. Overall these actions have no alternative in light of the current economic downturn. At the same time, concerns for economic efficiency and school size must not outweigh the provision of qualitative education.

Understanding better these trends will be essential to support member states in their efforts of efficient investment.

Overall the basic data as requested will help us to better interpret information gathered through different sources, results of studies, size and scope of policy initiatives, and put results and deliverables into context.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

Inevitably there will be some methodological challenges related to this data need. Some of them are foreseeable, for example the need to clarify the definition of a school and to provide for harmonisation across countries. Clearly, these methodological challenges need to be addressed before starting the requested data collection.

Supposing that the information requested must be already available to the administration of the education system at some level, we estimate that the additional burden of this request is marginal.

### 3. DATA REQUEST

Basic data needed on schools	
Number of Schools is needed, overall and by:	
Geographical level:	NUTS1, if possible NUTS2
ISCED level	ISCED 0 ISCED 1 ISCED 2 ISCED 3 Integrated school ISCED 0-1 Integrated school ISCED 0-2 Integrated school ISCED 0-3 Integrated school ISCED 1-2 Integrated school ISCED 1-3 Integrated school ISCED 2-3
Ownership/ governance	Public Private (following UOE definitions of public/private)
Number of pupils	For publication, size ranges should be established on the basis of data.  Average/median number of pupils per school will also be a relevant statistic to calculate
Capacity in terms of maximum possible number of pupils	This would allow examining over/under-capacity of schools. Further methodological work likely needed