

CMFB opinion

on a public corporations data questionnaire relating to the EDP notification tables

1. At Eurostat's request the CMFB Chairman, with the assistance of the CMFB Executive Body, asked CMFB Members on 9 November 2011 to state their opinion on a 'public corporations data questionnaire' relating to the EDP notification tables. The deadline for replies was 18 November 2011. Twenty-one (21) national statistical institutes and twenty-three (23) national central banks from the EU Member States returned the questionnaire within the specified time. A total of forty-six (46) institutions, including the ECB and Statistics Norway provided their opinion.
2. Based on a very large majority of the replies received, the CMFB agrees with the proposed questionnaire. The CMFB welcomes that the provision of the data requested in the questionnaire will improve the delineation of general government by facilitating the systematic identification of public corporations and, thereby, enhancing the quality of government finance statistics.
3. The CMFB welcomes the flexibility introduced in the reporting requirements, especially that business concepts may be used in the questionnaire, thereby reducing the reporting burden. Furthermore, the definition of the reporting deadlines and the reference year for the provision of the detailed information in the questionnaire should take into account the need to ensure a systematic and timely identification of public corporations for EDP purposes.
4. Several CMFB members expressed concerns about confidentiality of the data provided in the questionnaire, underlining that the data - in accordance with the scope of existing Regulations - shall only be used for statistical purposes by Eurostat.
5. It is important that the detailed guidance is further elaborated before the first reporting, in particular, regarding the collection and compilation of aggregated information and the precision needed for some of the variables, e.g., number of employees. Furthermore, references to the ESA-95 and the MGDD manuals should be introduced where relevant.
6. The CMFB notes that the current questionnaires relating to the EDP Notification Tables might need to be updated to avoid duplicating data requests.
7. The CMFB recommends that Eurostat take account of the specific remarks raised.
8. In addition to this opinion, all the anonymised answers from CMFB Members have been transmitted to Eurostat and will be kept in the records of the CMFB secretariat.

(Signed)

João Cadete de Matos
CMFB Chairman

Lisboa, 9 December 2011