


Procedure file

Basic information	
COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure) Regulation	2001/0046(COD) Procedure completed
European statistical system: common classification of territorial units for statistics NUTS	
Amended by 2004/0202(COD) Amended by 2007/0038(COD) Amended by 2016/0393(COD)	
Subject 8.60 European statistical legislation	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	RETT Regional Policy, Transport and Tourism	PSE MIGUÉLEZ RAMOS Rosa	20/03/2001
	Former committee responsible		
	RETT Regional Policy, Transport and Tourism	PSE MIGUÉLEZ RAMOS Rosa	20/03/2001
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Environment	2473	09/12/2002
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	Eurostat		

Key events			
28/02/2001	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 1st reading		
09/10/2001	Vote in committee, 1st reading		
09/10/2001	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading	A5-0335/2001	
24/10/2001	Debate in Parliament		
24/10/2001	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading	T5-0551/2001	Summary
19/12/2002	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 2nd reading		
19/03/2003	Vote in committee, 2nd reading		Summary
08/04/2003	Decision by Parliament, 2nd reading	T5-0132/2003	Summary
26/05/2003	Final act signed		
26/05/2003	End of procedure in Parliament		
	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2001/0046(COD)
Procedure type	COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure)
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Regulation
	Amended by 2004/0202(COD) Amended by 2007/0038(COD) Amended by 2016/0393(COD)
Legal basis	EC Treaty (after Amsterdam) EC 285
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	RETT/5/15348

Documentation gateway					
Legislative proposal		COM(2001)0083 OJ C 180 26.06.2001, p. 0108 E	14/02/2001	EC	Summary
Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report		CES0930/2001 OJ C 260 17.09.2001, p. 0057	11/07/2001	ESC	
Committee draft report		PE301.804	06/09/2001	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE301.804/AM	02/10/2001	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A5-0335/2001	09/10/2001	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T5-0551/2001 OJ C 112 09.05.2002, p. 0146-0175 E	24/10/2001	EP	Summary
Committee of the Regions: opinion		CDR0182/2001 OJ C 107 03.05.2002, p. 0054	15/11/2001	CofR	
Council position		14052/2/2002 OJ C 032 11.02.2003, p. 0026 E	09/12/2002	CSL	Summary
Council statement on its position		13077/2002	09/12/2002	CSL	
Commission communication on Council's position		SEC(2002)1365	13/12/2002	EC	Summary
Committee draft report		PE314.757	10/02/2003	EP	
Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading		A5-0071/2003	19/03/2003	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading		T5-0132/2003 OJ C 064 12.03.2004, p. 0021-0072 E	08/04/2003	EP	Summary
Follow-up document		COM(2005)0473	06/10/2005	EC	Summary
Implementing legislative act		32007R0105 OJ L 039 10.02.2007, p. 0001	01/02/2007	EU	Summary
Follow-up document		COM(2007)0287	04/06/2007	EC	Summary

Additional information	
European Commission	EUR-Lex
Final act	
Regulation 2003/1059 OJ L 154 21.06.2003, p. 0001-0041 Summary	
Delegated acts	
2019/2784(DEA)	Examination of delegated act

European statistical system: common classification of territorial units for statistics NUTS

PURPOSE : to establish a common classification of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS). **CONTENT** : regional statistics are a cornerstone of the European Statistical System, they are used for a wide range of purposes and a wide range of users. The regional data of the EU Member States are inter alia used for allocating structural funds in a rational and consistent way. Hence, regional statistics are the objective statistical base for important political decisions. All regional statistics have been based on a geographical division of the territory studied. Eurostat, in collaboration with the Commission departments, set up the Nomenclature of Statistical Territorial Units (NUTS) at the beginning of the 1970s as a single, coherent system for dividing up the European Union's territory in order to produce statistics for the Community. This NUTS classification has gained increasing importance in recent years as the basis for harmonised, and thus comparable, regional data. NUTS is used as a reference for the collection, development, harmonisation and dissemination of Community regional statistics. Recent changes in the NUTS classification gave rise to some tensions between the Commission and the National Statistical Office concerned. Soon several new Member States will join the European Union; for them, a consistent regional breakdown of their territory for statistical purposes also needs to be defined in a suitable way. All these political developments and foreseeable task lead the Commission to the conclusion that it would be appropriate to create a legal base for the Nuts classification. In accordance with the principles of subsidiarity and of proportionality, the objective of creating a harmonised regional classification used for all European regional statistics can only be achieved at Community level. This legal text has been drawn up with several objectives in mind: - to fix the current state of the NUTS breakdown of regions in the Member States, as it has developed since 20 years; - to define objective criteria for the definition of regions, so that candidate countries have a guideline for creating a regional classification for their country; - to assure comparability and impartiality when regional statistics are compiled and used for various policy purposes; - to define clear rules for future amendments of the NUTS breakdown, so as to forestall conflicts of the kind that have occurred in the past. Amendments are inevitable when the administrative structure of a country changes. But also for the non-administrative units occasionally an adaptation to changing needs is mandatory. In the past these amendments were discussed between the Commission and the country concerned without a clear framework of rules. The proposed Regulation shall remedy this unsatisfactory situation; - by ensuring that the NUTS classification is not amended too frequently, so that the users of regional statistics have the requisite stability of data for analysis. ?

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The European Parliament adopted the report by Rosa Miguelez Ramos (PES, Spain) on the classification of territorial units for statistics. Many of the amendments made are of a technical nature. Parliament did, however, introduce a requirement on the Commission to provide a communication on the appropriateness of establishing a new level NUTS 4. ?

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The Council accepted all Parliament's amendments on substance, although the exact wording was not followed in each case. One of the amendments accepted introduced the possibility of expanding the current NUTS classification by including a NUTS Level 4. Additionally, the current wording of the recital explicitly states that Member States are free to add further levels of NUTS details. The Commission must verify whether the introduction of a new hierarchical NUTS Level 4 is deemed desirable after two years from entry into force of this Regulation. The Council has introduced some new elements into the common position. These include: - the shifting of certain technical implementation decisions to a comitology procedure; - the Commission is to report to Parliament and to the Council on the implementation of the Regulation three years after its entry into force; - a slight widening of the conditions under which Member States could request a modification of the NUTS classification. The following statements are to be entered in the Council minutes: Statement from the Commission and Council: "This Regulation does not impede the right of Member States to determine their own administrative organisation." Statement from the Belgian Delegation re Article 4(2) (on the transmission by Member States of all changes which may affect NUTS Level 3 boundaries): "The cartographic representation of NUTS boundaries and its transmission remain a matter between the Commission and the National Mapping agencies or equivalent. The National Statistical Institutes are not involved in that matter." Statement by the Netherlands re Article 5(4) (in the case of a substantial reorganisation of the relevant administrative structure of a Member State, the amendments to the NUTS classification may be adopted intervals of less than three years): "A substantial reorganisation of the administrative structure of a Member State should also include an ongoing process of changes in the administrative structure of a Member State as part of a general policy, for example on increasing the scale of the constituent parts of that structure."?

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The Commission states that the vast majority of the changes introduced in the common position are in the nature of technical clarifications and improvements to the specificity of the text. These do not pose any particular problems for the Commission. The Commission notes that there was, however, much concern in the Council at the possible effects on the National regional structures resulting from the exercise of the Commission's statutory right of initiative. To reassure the Council of the Commission's intentions in this respect the following declaration was included in the Council minutes: "Statement by the Commission re Article 5: In respect of the amendments of the NUTS classification referred to in Article 5, the Commission undertakes to pay particular attention to the views expressed by the Member State directly." The Commission went on to accept the common position unanimously adopted.?

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The committee adopted the report by Rosa MIGUÉLEZ RAMOS (PES, E) approving the Council's common position without amendment under the 2nd reading of the codecision procedure. ?

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The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the report by Rosa MIGUELEZ RAMOS (PES, Spain) and approved the Council's common position.?

European statistical system: common classification of territorial units for statistics NUTS

PURPOSE : to establish a common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS). COMMUNITY MEASURE : Regulation 1059/2003/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS). CONTENT : the purpose of this Regulation is to establish a common statistical classification of territorial units in order to enable the collection, compilation and dissemination of harmonised regional statistics in the Community. This Regulation is intended to provide a legal framework for the geographical division of the territory on which statistical data are gathered, and procedures for amending the NUTS classification where necessary. It signals a departure from the current method whereby NUTS are established through negotiations between the Member States and Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Communities. ENTRY INTO FORCE : 11/07/03.?

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This report from the Commission considers whether a more detailed level or levels of NUTS classification, as required by Article 2(5) of the NUTS Regulation.

The current NUTS breakdown subdivides each Member State into a whole number of regions at NUTS 1 level. Each of these is then subdivided into regions at NUTS level 2, and these in turn into regions at NUTS level 3.

Until the beginning of the 1990s, the NUTS classification consisted of these three regional levels alone. In order to meet a growing general need for information at local level, the Commission has set up an infra-regional information system, the first step being to compile a Community classification of local administrative units (?LAU?) compatible with NUTS. Two further levels (baptised LAU) have been defined in accordance with the NUTS principles, but only the last and smallest (LAU level 2) has been fixed for all Member States. This usually corresponds to the concept of the ?municipality? or ?commune?.

During the discussions of the NUTS Regulation in Council, there were diverging views as to how many levels of NUTS should be covered by the legal text. Many countries wanted to stick to only three NUTS levels, while some countries (supported by the European Parliament in its opinion) wanted to include levels 4 and 5, i.e. the current LAU level 1 and 2. In order to reconcile the views, the Commission accepted a proposal that it would be given two years to study the appropriateness of covering further NUTS levels in the Regulation. The NUTS Regulation contains a provision in Article to this effect.

The Commission considers in this report what an additional NUTS level in the Regulation would mean, considering the various principles of the Regulation.

- NUTS level 4 would be a subdivision of NUTS level 3 regions,
- NUTS level 4 regions should cover the territory of each country completely,
- The regional breakdown would be kept stable for at least three years before the next possible amendments,
- Minimum and maximum population thresholds would apply,
- Supply of complete lists of names/identities for level 4 regions,
- Development of specific rules to cover modifications of NUTS level 4 in Article 5.

In other words, the introduction of an additional regional level in the NUTS Regulation would imply a considerable additional workload both for the Member States and for the Commission. The Commission has investigated in the past months, if the advantages of an additional regional level in NUTS outweigh the additional burden.

The Commission concludes that currently no additional level of regional breakdown should be envisaged in the framework of the NUTS Regulation. The efforts of the services should concentrate on the statistical information available at the existing NUTS levels in terms of consolidation in the enlarged EU, quality improvement and obtaining additional regional data where required for policy purposes.

Also, at an informal level, the harmonisation of LAU level 1 should be supported actively by the Commission at a European scale. This comprises an intensive exchange of views between statistical offices, encouraged and supported by the Commission, and the development of guidelines to a harmonisation of concepts with regard to the definition of LAU level 1 regions.

It is proposed that the situation should be reassessed at some point in the future. The most appropriate moment would appear to be in 2008, which follows the start of the next Cohesion Policy period.

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IMPLEMENTING ACT: Commission Regulation (EC) No 105/2007 amending the annexes to Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS).

CONTENT: to recall, Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 constitutes the legal framework for the regional classification for the collection, compilation and dissemination of harmonised regional statistics in the Community. The territorial units used for these statistics are listed in the Annex to this Regulation.

The Commission has been made aware that a number of the administrative territorial division have changed in several EU Member States. The purpose of this implementing act, therefore, is to re-publish the Annex to Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 with the most recent data sent to the Commission by the Member States. The measure is in accordance with the opinion of the Statistical Programme Committee.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 2 March 2007.

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This report is required under Article 8 of Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 on the establishment of a common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS). It requests that three years after the entry into force of this Regulation, the Commission shall submit a report on its implementation to the European Parliament and the Council.

The report covers all of the actions undertaken in implementation of the NUTS Regulation. The first implementation exercise was carried out in 2003 following adoption of the Regulation. The frequency for updating the NUTS classification is every three years, in accordance with the provisions of the Regulation. This important operation took place towards the end of 2006. This report was therefore timed to allow a full account of it. The NUTS classification is the reference framework for all regional statistics of the EU. It is therefore pertinent in this context to report on the supply of regional statistics from Member States to the Commission, more specifically to Eurostat.

It examines whether the NUTS Regulation should continue to cover three territorial levels or if more levels should be added. The Commission submitted a communication to the European Parliament and the Council on this matter as required. On 1st May 2004 ten countries joined the European Union. The NUTS Regulation has been amended to cover these new Member States and this process is also covered by this report. Finally, in discussions with candidate countries about their regional classification, the rules in the NUTS Regulation serve as a guideline.

The report concludes that the NUTS Regulation is operational within the European Statistical System and is serving its primary purpose as a framework for regional statistics at European level. Recital 8 of the NUTS Regulation underlines the intention to maintain stability in the NUTS classification. For certain domains of regional statistics, any change in the NUTS classification creates significant problems with maintenance and recalculation of statistical data. For this reason, the Commission has taken a restrictive approach in its proposals for changes to the NUTS regions.

The question of adding further regional levels to the NUTS Regulation has been investigated in depth, including the required consultations with the Member States. A communication on this subject was submitted to the European Parliament and the Council. The conclusion was that no further level should be added to the NUTS Regulation at this time. The issue should be reassessed some time after 2008.

In discussions with candidate countries, the provisions in the NUTS Regulation have been used to encourage the countries concerned to bring their proposals into line with a more harmonised European regional classification.

Revision of the NUTS Regulation proceeded smoothly, but minor changes will be made to consolidate this process in the 2009 revision round.

Overall the process for revision of the regional classification worked well, but certain procedural changes will need to be made for the next revision in 2009. Firstly, to ensure that the intention of every Member State is absolutely clear, a specific response will be requested from each Member State, clearly indicating if they do not intend to make any revisions. This will avoid any problems with the clarity of their intentions in the future. Secondly, and more importantly, in view of the revision of the "comitology procedure", particularly the extension of the time allowed for the European Parliament's "right of scrutiny", the revision process will have to be initiated much earlier in the year and the deadlines adjusted accordingly.