



**Decision No 17 of the Management Board of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working conditions (Eurofound) on the establishment of a Steering Group on the future of the surveys**

THE MANAGEMENT BOARD OF THE EUROPEAN FOUNDATION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS (hereinafter referred to as 'Eurofound'),

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2019/127 of 16 January 2019 establishing a European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working conditions (Eurofound) and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 1365/75<sup>1</sup> (hereinafter referred to as 'Eurofound's Founding Regulation'), and in particular Article 5(1) point (a),

Whereas:

- (1) The Management Board of Eurofound shall provide strategic orientations with regard to Eurofound's activities.
- (2) Surveys are an area of strategic importance for the future of Eurofound.
- (3) For this purpose, it is considered appropriate to establish a Steering Group to monitor and evaluate Eurofound activities in relation to the future of the surveys.

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

*Article 1 – Establishment of a Steering Group*

A Steering Group on the future of the surveys is hereby established. The role, composition and activities of this Steering Group are laid down in the annex to this Decision.

*Article 2 – Entry into force*

The present Decision shall enter into force on the day of its adoption by the Management Board.

Done at Dublin, on 13 December 2019

For the Management Board

The Chairperson

Annex: Proposal to establish a 'Steering Group on the future of the surveys'

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<sup>1</sup>. OJ L 30, 31.1.2019, p. 74–89.

# **Proposal to establish a ‘Steering Group on the future of the surveys’**

## **1. Introduction**

During the 2017-2020 Programming period, Eurofound has developed a long-term approach for the future of the surveys. This approach consists of three strands:

1. Making the surveys future-proof
2. Considering combining the EWCS and the EQLS into a single survey instrument
3. Addressing the way in which the surveys are organised

During the next Programming period (2021-2024), Eurofound wishes to implement most of the three strands. In this context, it is proposed to establish a Steering Group, which will monitor and evaluate the activities that are planned during the next programming period. The Steering Group will be a means for the Management Board to ensure oversight of the survey development process at the operational level and provide its opinion.

The Steering Group will be established in December 2019/January 2020 (see: ‘Activity 1’ below) and will operate throughout the next Programming period which ends in December 2024.

## **2. Composition of the Steering Group**

The composition of the Steering Group will be as follows:

- The Executive Director or the Deputy Director (acting as chair)
- Two representatives on behalf of each Group and the European Commission
- Eurofound staff engaged in the agency’s Survey Management and Development Activity

The Chairs of the Groups/European Commission will nominate their Steering Group representatives. This includes two alternates who will participate in meetings of the Steering Group in the absence of the representative. The nominees from the Groups/European Commission can be members or non-members of the Management Board.

Relevant external experts can be invited but are not members of the Steering Group. They will attend meetings and provide input as needed.

## **3. Activities**

The Steering Group will monitor and evaluate the following three activities:

1. Feasibility study to develop a new household survey that combines the EWCS and EQLS; possibly followed - depending on the recommendation by the Steering Group and the subsequent decision by the Management Board - by a pilot in 2021 and a full household survey in 2022-2023;
2. Testing the transition from face-to-face data-collection to online data-collection (CAWI);
3. Improving the way in which the surveys are organised in terms of contracting, further collaboration and better synergies with other EU-Agencies and Member States.

### **Activity 1**

This activity could consist of two phases. The first will be to examine the feasibility of combining the EWCS and EQLS into a single household survey. This will start in December 2019/January 2020. A tender procedure was launched in October 2019 to select an independent survey expert for the feasibility study. The expert will report (through presentations and a written report) to the Steering Group. For this purpose, three meetings of the Steering Group will be organised in Brussels. Taking this work into consideration, the Steering Group will formulate a recommendation which will be discussed during an (extended) Executive Board meeting in April 2020, with a final decision confirmed by the Management Board in July 2020.

If the Management Board decides to proceed with the development of a household survey, the second phase of the activity will start. This is a pilot to test and finalise the design of the survey (to be carried out in 2021) followed by the actual fieldwork of the new household survey (in 2022-2023). Following the fieldwork exercise an ex-post evaluation will be conducted in 2024. The Steering Group will monitor the evaluation process and on the basis of its outcome prepare a recommendation for a decision of the Management Board on whether Eurofound should continue with a new round of the household survey to be fielded in 2027, or should revert to fielding its regular surveys (the 8<sup>th</sup> round of EWCS in 2026 and the 6<sup>th</sup> round of EQLS in 2028). 'Annex 1 - Activity 1' provides a flowchart outlining possible developments for the surveys, including points in time for Management Board decisions.

### **Activity 2**

The Steering Group will also monitor the work that Eurofound is planning to carry out in order to test mode effects such as data-collection transitions from face-to-face to online and what impact this has on comparability over time.

The feasibility study (see: Activity 1) will identify items in both the EWCS and EQLS that could be fielded via on-line data-collection. Eurofound will use this information to develop on-line modules for the EWCS, the EQLS or the new combined survey. These modules will be tested both on the surveys to examine mode effects, and as separate pilot modules.

The Steering Group will be informed by Eurofound about the impact of mode changes on the comparability of items and will be asked for its opinion before Eurofound formulates a recommendation on whether or not to change from face-to-face mode to online data collection.

### **Activity 3**

In 2021-2022 Eurofound intends to carry out an in-house review of the survey procurement process and in 2023 Eurofound will contract out a (second) feasibility study to assess different survey management options (for instance, 'in-house management' or 'shared framework contracts' with other agencies). The Steering Group will be asked to develop a recommendation as to whether the current procurement process should be changed. The work will be supported by information from the earlier feasibility study (see: Activity 1), which will have already provided a comprehensive review of data-collection agencies and institutes in each of the EU Member States with a demonstrated capacity to carry out random probability surveys using face-to-face and/or online data collection.

Annex 1 – Activity 1

