



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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Excessive deficit procedure: strengthened rules on statistics

The Council agreed today¹ on a general approach on a draft regulation aimed at strengthening the rules concerning statistical data used under the EU's excessive deficit procedure.

The aim is to allow the Commission and the member states to work together more effectively in improving the quality and reliability of statistical data used to determine government deficit and debt figures.

This follows recurrent discrepancies and shortcomings in figures notified to the Commission by Greece in relation to its public finances, and repeated calls by the Council for it to improve the collection and processing of its statistical data.

Existing provisions, laid down in regulation 479/2009, enable Eurostat, the EU's statistical office, to regularly assess the quality both of data reported by the member states and of underlying government sector accounts. Quality of data implies compliance with accounting rules, as well as the completeness, reliability, timeliness and consistency of statistical data.

The draft regulation, amending regulation 479/2009, is intended to strengthen the role of Eurostat when verifying the quality of data in cases where significant risks or problems with respect to the quality of the data have been clearly identified.

The regulation will be adopted at a forthcoming Council meeting, once the European Parliament has submitted its opinion.

¹ The decision was taken, without discussion, at a meeting of the Economic and Financial Affairs Council.

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