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Answer given by Mr Dombrovskis
on behalf of the European Commission
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Eurostat is aware of the growing number of patchwork families. To collect more detailed information on different family types within social surveys¹, it is compulsory to collect the household grid, i.e. all the relations among household members. The household grid can be collected at low level or at high level of detail. Based on the information collected at high level of detail, it is possible to identify patchwork families. Countries are obliged to collect the household grid only at low level of detail², and only a limited number of countries provide highly detailed information. Additionally, within the European statistics on income and living conditions³, in 2021, information on ‘Children living in separated or blended families’⁴ was collected on ad hoc basis. However, due to sample limitations, it was only possible to disseminate the percentage of children having one parent living outside of the household, which, in 2021, in the EU, it was of 12.7%⁵.

Currently, considering the growing need for information on patchwork families, Eurostat is reflecting on how to encourage Member States to collect household grid at high level of detail, thus allowing a better understanding of living conditions of such families.

The Commission is working together with the Social Protection Committee to develop adequate monitoring and benchmarking frameworks to support and track EU social developments, such as those related to the European Child Guarantee. While there are difficulties in providing more granular information, the Commission encourages Member States to make use of administrative data collected for reporting on the implementation of the European Child Guarantee, including on access of children in precarious family situations to key services.

¹ Under Regulation (EU) 2019/1700 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 October 2019 establishing a common framework for European statistics relating to persons and households, based on data at individual level collected from samples, OJ L 261I, 14.10.2019, p. 1, <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2019/1700/oj>.

² According to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2181 of 16 December 2019 specifying technical characteristics as regards items common to several datasets pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2019/1700 of the European Parliament and of the Council, OJ L 330, 20.12.2019, p. 16, http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2019/2181/oj.

³ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/income-and-living-conditions/information-data>.

⁴ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2242 of 16 December 2019 specifying the technical items of data sets, establishing the technical formats and specifying the detailed arrangements and content of the quality reports on the organisation of a sample survey in the income and living conditions domain pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2019/1700 of the European Parliament and of the Council, OJ L 336, 30.12.2019, p. 133, http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2019/2242/oj.

⁵ Estimation with low precision because of low sample size or high non-response rate.