



Structural Business Statistics(44)

[Theme 44: Industry, Trade and Services – Horizontal view]

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1. GENERAL BACKGROUND

The objective for compiling Structural Business Statistics (SBS) is to obtain a set of relevant characteristics of the industries covered, allowing to compare the structure, activities, competitiveness and performance of businesses in the Community. Focuses on comparing:

- *same economic sector across MS*
- *different economic sectors within MS*
- *enterprise size classes within economic sectors*
- *a few characteristics across regions within MS*



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2. THE ACQUIS

The legal framework consists of the Council regulation (58/97) and several implementing Commission Regulations defining characteristics (2700/98), describing deliverables and the frequency and breakdown level required (2701/98), and the technical transmission format (2702/98). Those regulations were amended (mainly simplified) by 1614/2002.

Amendments 410/1998 and 2056/2002 of the Council regulation specified the characteristics to be provided for credit and insurance institutions and pension funds. They were implemented by comm. reg. 1225, 1227 and 1228/99 (insurance) and 1668 till 1670/2003 (fin. inst.), thereby amending 2700 till 2702/98.

Nomenclatures used in breakdowns: Nace Rev 1.1, NUTS-2, Employment size classes proper to SBS. Further size classes are defined for turnover (trade) and sales area (retail trade).



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3. MOST PROBLEMATIC ISSUES

- *Different accounting practices and legal systems imply EU-characteristics to be calculated from various subsets of questionnaire items.*
- *EU regulations do not prescribe the use of any data collection methodology. Most MS proceed through stratified sampling (taking all large enterprises and a fraction of the SME's depending on their size). Administrative sources are used, for checking survey data, for imputations and/or for calibration.*
- *In all cases SBS quality depends on accuracy and reliability of the Business Register (activity and size class information, aggregation of legal units to enterprise level).*
- *Statistical data editing and imputation -checking for errors and using plausible estimates for missing information- requires considerable efforts.*



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4. FUTURE ACQUIS

Frequent additions and modifications to the initial council regulation lead to a proposal for recast, constituting a single updated legislative act. The NACE Rev 2 introduction will alter activity breakdowns required.

Moreover a development program (not compulsory) focuses on themes not yet covered by the regulation:

- *Business demography*
- *FATS (foreign affiliates)*
- *Business services and demand for services*

NSI's may obtain grants for participation. There are Commission proposals to implement successful programs in the regulatory framework.



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5. SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

- *Quality of the business register as a prerequisite for sampling, for inference and for breakdown of results.*
- *Progress report on sampling methodology implementation, developments in data collection and statistics production methods; time frame necessary to develop before timely and reliable results can be sent.*