Title of Paper: **Quality and coverage issues for statistical business register in Georgia**

Statistical Business Registers have very important role for production of economic statistics. Quality of statistical products depends directly on the quality of Statistical Business Register, because the survey frame is derived from the register and data that is collected by and stored in the register itself is used for statistical calculations.

In the process of maintenance of an SBR, data from several sources is collected, processed, stored and provided to users.

Generally business register in Georgia is updated using administrative sources (In business register Geostat collects approximately 25 variables, of which 80% comes from administrative sources); Therefore quality of administrative data is very important for business register.

High quality of statistical products in most cases are received by combining administrative and survey data.

Therefore, another source for update of register is also various business statistics surveys. Quarterly and annual sample business surveys provide information on contact details and type of economic activities of the surveyed entities.

In the data received from administrative sources the actual address and type of economic activity are specified only for a limited number of enterprises. In some cases the information on economic activity is incorrect, which represents a major problem for the business register.

For this reason since January 2013 the Geostat has started a monthly survey - computer assisted telephone interviews (CATI) for companies included in the business register to update information about the status, kind of economic activity and actual address of every local unit of the companies.

Business register in Georgia covers approximately 639 thousand entities and includes about 25 variables by each entity. Information about kind of economic activity is available for 42.1% of registered entities; Information about actual address is available for 51.5%; data on turnover or income - for 41%; data on number of persons employed is available for 20 % of registered entities.

Almost full coverage of legal entities in business register is ensured, but full coverage of local, local kind-of-activities and enterprise units has not yet been achieved.

Business register covers all registered economic entities, including physical persons. Structure is in correspondence with the international standards and recommendations.

20% from registered entities belongs to the following activity: "trade, repair of motor vehicles, personal and household goods", 4,5% - takes entities from manufacturing industry, 3.8% - real estate, renting and consumer services, 3,0% - community, social and personal service activities; for 57.93% of registered entities - activity is unknown.

Activities for the development of BR in Georgia started a few years ago. There was a need to engage international experts in the above-mentioned activities, in order to take into account international recommendations and to introduce relevant methodologies for the formation of BR in line with the international standards.

In this regard cooperation with Statistics Sweden is noteworthy, which greatly contributed to the development of Business Registers.

Cooperation Agreement between Geostat and Statistics Sweden was signed in June 2011. The project is funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and covers five years period.

One of the components and goals of this cooperation was improvement and development of the BR in Georgia.

Main outcomes of this cooperation was new database and structure, improved knowledge of staff, complete metadata document.

One of the major factors for the development of the business register was the software. In this regard new software has been developed, which is user friendly. The database is operating in MS SQL Server and interface in Web application (PHP).

It was also important as well to establish flexible and automated system for updating the BR.

Relevant documentation is also essential for the users of the business registers and represents a part of the overall quality of the service the business register provides.

Geostat created a metadata document for business register, which contains comprehensive information about the business register and brief description of variables, production and update procedures, maintenance, etc.

In addition, the metadata documents contain information about the rules for dealing with BR. The relevant division of Geostat is working on the update of business register and improvement its quality and these activities have a regular character.

Therefore it is of major importance to share experience of different countries and improve capacity of staff through participation in trainings and workshops.

Based on information received from the Revenue Service (Tax Office) the Geostat has developed the methodology, which identifies the sampling frame for business surveys.

This sampling frame covers active enterprises from non-financial corporation sector and may be used for all business surveys in Georgia.

As I already mentioned, our one of priority is to improve quality of business register. High quality of business register should be done by improved access to administrative sources of information; Introduction/improvement of more effective and cost efficient surveys (CATI,

etc); Improvement of the qualification of the staff; Also cooperation with international institutions and experts, share experience of developing countries will be useful for this reason.

Above mentioned issues are part of our future plans related business register.

In terms of quality of statistical data, It is also important to investigate requirements of data users; Asses and looking for new data sources and use administrative data for production of business register and identify challenges as well as approaches to face current problems.