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Quality and Coverage

Statistical Business Registers as Backbone; issues regarding Business Register and outcome quality

Abstract

Statisticians nowadays face the increasing demand for integrated, consistent and coherent statistical information. At the same time they have to deal with the reality of the ever increasing complexity of organization of Global Enterprise Groups, difficulties to retrieve statistical data, the increased availability of administrative sources and the demand to use this type of data. And also small enterprises start to pay their contribution to the complexity issue concerning issues on outsourcing and the self-employed.

Major challenge for both statisticians and statistical business register staff is how to deal with this increased complexity, the pressure to combine all various data sources as efficiently and less burdensome as possible and still be able to release high quality frames and statistics in time.

This paper describes a possible approach in how to deal with this challenge and discusses various aspects of the organisation of related statistical production processes as a chain of statistical products. A crucial role is reserved for the Statistical Business Register (SBR) which at Statistics Netherlands (SN) is positioned as backbone for economic statistics and plays a central role in their production.

Related business economic statistics, including National Accounts, are designed and organized as a chain of statistical processes. This chain starts with a coordinated population of statistical units derived from the SBR and the operation is placed under central direction; the so called chain-management. The approach of chain management enables SN to orchestrate both the process and the statistical outcomes and governs quality management, including procedures to maintain SBR, coordination of adjustments of statistical estimates due to errors in the SBR populations and prevention of inconsistencies.

The SBR is the first place to correct errors and to repair them on a coordinated way in statistics. However, it's not only the quality of the SBR itself that counts, also the economic indicators derived from it are of importance for customers. In order to control the quality of the chain as a whole, the maintenance of the SBR is tuned with the statistical processes, e.g. by defining different maintenance groups of statistical units in the SBR or combining data of different sources (Administrative, National Central Bank etc.).

A major challenge lies in the existence and use of multiple sources and various modes that will further complicate the compilation of economic statistics. In this model of a "mixed-mode-multisource-approach" large and complex enterprises are dealt with in a custom fit approach, the role of administrative sources is enlarged and implementation of Standard Business Reporting & Reference Chart of Accounts is foreseen, with a limited collection of remainder data and variables.