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Business statistics in the CSO of Poland

The Central Statistical Office is the main institution responsible for conducting statistical surveys of official statistics and publishing their results. Each year the Council of Ministers adopts the programme of statistical surveys of official statistics for the next year, containing information on, among others, the scope of the conducted surveys, the resulting obligations for respondents and administrators of administrative data as well as the intended scope of the published data.

In surveys of business statistics data are mainly collected directly from respondents. Beginning with surveys for the year 2008 they are collected on electronic forms at the Reporting Portal (entities employing up to 5 persons may submit the information also on paper). These forms are personalized and contain directing questions, part of the information is pre-completed and only requires confirmation by the respondent. In order to minimize the burden on respondents, particularly the SME sector, the scope of forms to be filled in is dependent not only on the type of activity, but also on the size class of the entities or the kind of the books kept. For this reason, the smallest entities are often covered by sample surveys. The surveys of non-financial entities are based on the data collected from companies, with indirect use of administrative data, among others, for the purpose of preparation of frame list or grossing up and estimation of data during their processing, while administrative data are a direct source for most of the surveys of the financial sector companies.

The basis for the statistical surveys based on enterprises is the statistical register, which is updated on the basis of the National Official Register of National Economy Entities (REGON), administrative data and survey results, in accordance with the established rules and timetable. As a result, statistical surveys are based on a consistent basis of units conducting business activity, both in terms of scope and timing of updates.

The basic survey providing monthly information on the economic situation of the country, used for preparation of short-term statistics (STS), is the monthly economic activity report. Basic information about, among others, revenues, number of persons

employed and employees, hours worked, wages, exports and new orders is collected monthly on one form. This information is obtained from entities with 10 or more persons employed (for units employing 10-49 persons there is sample survey – 10%) engaged in economic activities classified according to NACE Rev. 2 to sections B-J, L, M (with the exception of divisions 72 and 75), N, R and divisions: 02, 95, 96 and class 03.11. Thanks to this survey, in the second half of the month t+1 the basic, consistent information used for national and international needs (STS, *Council Regulation (EC) No 1165/98 of 19 May 1998 concerning short-term statistics*) is available.

This information, for the purposes of the current analysis, is complemented by business tendency surveys, which by the end of the surveyed month provide diagnostic and prognostic qualitative information about the situation of enterprises conducting manufacturing, construction, trade and services activities.

More complete data on financial results (balance sheet and profit and loss account) and investments of non-financial enterprises is collected every quarter (from the entities employing 50 or more persons) or semi-annually (about entities employing from 10 to 49 persons). These data are used by external users and the national accounts.

The main annual study of non-financial companies covers entities engaged in activities classified in sections: A (excluding natural persons running individual farms), B-J (with the exception of a cultural institution with a legal personality), K (excluding banks, credit unions, insurance institutions, brokerage offices and houses, investment companies and funds as well as pension companies and funds), L-N, P (excluding higher education), Q (excluding independent public health care institutions), R (with the exception of cultural institutions with a legal personality), S. The entities with 10 or more persons employed are covered by the census survey, and the ones employing up to 9 persons employed – with a sample survey (sample 4%). In these surveys, structural information is collected about the unit, as well as about its financial performance and investment activities. It is the basis for the annual structural business statistics (SBS, *Regulation of the European Parliament and Council No 295/2008 of 11 March 2008 on structural statistics of enterprises*) as well as it contributes to the consistent preparation of data for Inward Foreign Affiliates Statistics (IFATS, *Regulation No 716/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2007 on Community statistics on the structure and activity of foreign affiliates*) and national accounts. From the smallest entities, with up to 9 persons employed, only basic information is collected, indispensable to prepare the data necessary from the point of view of the users in order to

minimize burden on the respondents. In addition, a number of domain- and activity-related surveys is conducted, which provides more detailed data on the selected types of activities or economic phenomena. The form of the annual survey of entities with more than 10 persons employed is integrated with the form providing information for IFATS.

Since 2009, an annual survey of enterprise groups is conducted, covering national and international non-financial enterprise groups. In this survey, information is collected from legal entities conducting activity in Poland about their relationships within groups, as well as basic information on the activities of the group and – if it consolidates its results – also the consolidated data. This survey allows both to present the users with information about the activities of enterprise groups in Poland, as well as is one of the data sources for the statistical business register on links of legal units.

These surveys are constantly modernized, on the one hand in order to reduce burden on respondents, improve quality and consistency of results and, at the same time, to provide data for multidimensional analyses.

In the past modernization of the survey of micro-enterprises concerned, inter alia, the inclusion of all enterprises with up to 9 persons employed to the sampling frame, the assumption that these units conduct only one type of activity (data on the secondary activities were not collected any more) and operate only in one place (they do not have local branches). Several undertaken activities have also been related to the improvement of the sample and grossing up of results, which was made possible by acquiring the data from administrative sources. As a result, it was possible to improve the method for the optimization of the sample, in particular by verification if micro-enterprises are active, with the use of information about the revenues based on administrative records. Identifying the activity status of all the entities included in the sample and the exclusion of inactive entities from the sampling frame is important for the estimation of survey results. The use of administrative data about VAT taxpayers with respect to revenue allowed the separation of an additional layer of atypical revenue units from the sampling frame. As a result, the variance of this characteristics in the rest of the population decreased. It should be emphasized that the additional control also allows for the elimination of erroneous data provided by the entities in terms of revenues and the number of employees, and in the future, given the strong correlation between other characteristics collected in the survey the correction of these data will be possible, in order to maintain the consistency of the complete set of data for a given entity. Such an approach will allow in the future for the development of estimation methods based on administrative data.

In 2015, the annual survey concerning the entities employing up to 9 persons and also partly the annual census survey of units with 10 and more persons employed (for entities with 10-49 persons employed) were for the first time integrated with the study regarding newly created entities, which up to that point had been conducted as separate, five-year panel study concerning the annually selected sample of 2000 newly established entities. The integration, which required, among others, changing the method of sampling, will allow to conduct more in-depth analyses by linking data – mostly qualitative – concerning the newly established entities, with quantitative information from the structural surveys. In subsequent years it is also planned to integrate the forms addressed to the smallest enterprises with the survey of the inward foreign affiliates. Thanks to this approach it will be possible to gross up the results for the population of micro-enterprises for the extended number of variables that will be consistent and observed for a selected panel at the micro level over the five years.

It should be stressed that the proposed changes are not a simple linking of previously separate forms. The starting point for the development of the new form was the analysis of the scope and variables of each survey, as well as the changing users' needs for information about the newly established entities. This allowed for the introduction of appropriate modifications to the form in the panel study, including the elimination of the elements that have become obsolete or which can be obtained from administrative sources (e.g., from the REGON register), or which can be acquired directly or indirectly on the basis of quantitative data gathered in the survey of micro-enterprises. Despite the reduction in the number of questions, the integration of forms will contribute to increasing the information resources in the field of new enterprises and conducting additional analyses that allow for the observation of phenomena that are impossible to describe under the previous system of data collection, at the same time meeting the expectations of users.

Also, in recent years the use of administrative data in the surveys of business statistics has increased. Due to the timing of their availability, currently their direct use is still limited, but they are – as mentioned earlier – the basis for the preparation of sampling and stratification in sample surveys of the smallest entities. Also, methodological work was started on their wider use in the imputation of data both for the smallest entities, as well as the larger enterprises.

In this surveys, the works conducted on the European forum are also taken into account. Currently, the surveys of business statistics are conducted on the basis of legal entities. The exception is the annual structural survey of enterprises, which gathers additionally limited information concerning the local units (in case of entities with 20 and

more persons employed – for the smaller entities it is assumed that they have no local units), as well as the survey of enterprise groups, in which although the information is collected from legal entities, a part of the data applies to enterprise groups. However, there are undertaken preparation for implementation of the statistical units consistent with *Council Regulation (EEC) No. 696/93 of 15 March 1993 on the statistical units for the observation and analysis of the production system in the Community* in the statistical business register and business statistics.