# National statistical business register - Belgium
National Reference Metadata in Euro SDMX Metadata Structure (ESMS)
Compiling agency: Statistics Belgium - Statbel

## Eurostat metadata
### Reference metadata

For any question on data and metadata, please contact: Eurostat user support

## 1. Contact <span style="float:right">Top</span>

| | |
|---|---|
| **1.1. Contact organisation** | Statistics Belgium - Statbel |
| **1.2. Contact organisation unit** | Business Register and Statistical Units<br>Statistics Belgium (Statbel)-FPS Economy |
| **1.5. Contact mail address** | Boulevard du Roi Albert II, 16<br>North Gate III<br>1000 Bruxelles |

## 2. Metadata update <span style="float:right">Top</span>

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|---|---|
| **2.1. Metadata last certified** | 30/05/2023 |
| **2.2. Metadata last posted** | 30/05/2023 |
| **2.3. Metadata last update** | 30/05/2023 |

## 3. Statistical presentation <span style="float:right">Top</span>

**3.1. Data description**

The statistical business registers (SBR) are basic infrastructure for the collection and compilation of data for European business statistics. The SBR are used as the main source of information for statistical analysis of the business population and its demography, for the definition of the survey population and for establishing the link to administrative data sources.

European statistical business registers should become an authoritative sources for deriving harmonised frame populations for the production of European business statistics. SBR contribute to the achievement of consistent and comparable business statistics by creating and using coordinated populations of statistical units

The national statistical business registers include information on the active population of:

- all enterprises carrying out economic activities contributing to the gross domestic product (GDP) and their local units;
- the legal units of which those enterprises consist;
- the kind of activity unit for those enterprises which due to their size have a significant influence and whose kind-of-activity units (KAUs) have a significant influence on the aggregated (national) data. KAU stored as ENT characteristics: nace, employment,turnover.
- enterprise groups to which those enterprises belong.

Households shall not fall within the scope of the European framework for statistical business registers insofar as the goods and services they produce are destined to their own consumption, or involve letting out of own property.

Local units of foreign enterprises not constituting separate legal entities (branches), and classified as quasi- corporations in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 549/2013, shall be deemed to be enterprises for the purposes of the national statistical business registers and the EuroGroups Register.

Enterprise groups shall be identified through the links of control between their legal units in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 549/2013.

The main variables recorded in the statistical business registers are the following:

- Identification variables: identification number, name, address;
- Demographic events: date of commencement/cessation of the unit;
- Economic variables/stratification parameters: economic activity (NACE), employment, turnover, legal form, legal activity status;
- Information on control and ownership of units: parent/subsidiary legal unit, minority shareholder information, country of global decision centre.

### 3.2. Classification system

Classification systems and code lists used in the national statistical business register are as follows:

- Statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community (NACE Rev. 2);
- European System of Accounts (ESA 2010);
- Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics (NUTS);
- taxonomy annual accounts (see: taxonomy_2022 )
- Size classes in number of employees (Social Security , NSI)
- Table of correspondence between the NUTS classification and the REFNIS (belgian municipalities) classification : https://statbel.fgov.be/en/open-data/nuts-codes-2019

### 3.3. Coverage - sector

The coverage of the national statistical business registers is defined in the Regulation (EU) 2019/2152 on European business statistics.

The national statistical business registers comprise all enterprises resident in the national territory that are carrying out activities contributing to GDP.

Households do not fall within the scope of the European framework for statistical business registers insofar as the goods and services they produce are destined to their own consumption, or involve letting out of own property.

The Belgian SBR frame covers all units which, wholly or partially, exercise an economic activity and economically inactive legal units, which are part of an enterprise in combination with economically active legal units. For the purposes of the European framework for statistical business registers, the following economic activities are considered:

- any activity comprising the offer of goods and services on a given market;
- non-market services contributing to the GDP;
- direct and indirect holdings of active legal units.

Holding assets and/or liabilities are also considered an economic activity.

The national statistical business register covers all the sectors of the nace rev2 nomenclature. In some NACE sections, the coverage of self-employment is not totally complete. This is the case for example for helpers in agriculture.

### 3.4. Statistical concepts and definitions

The main statistical concepts and definitions used for the statistical business registers are as follows:

**Annual copy of statistical business register**

The annual copy of the statistical business register reflects the state of the register at the end of the year including all units active within the reference year.  NSIs have to make a copy annually and keep that copy for at least 30 years for the purpose of analysis.

**Active unit**

A statistical unit is considered to have been active during the reference period, if in said period it either realized positive net turnover or produced outputs or had employees or performed investments.

A legal unit can be legally or administratively active without any economic activity, when the inactive legal unit is part of an enterprise in combination with economically active legal units. Holding assets and/or liabilities shall also be regarded as an economic activity.

**Number of active enterprises**

The number of active enterprises is the number of all statistical units which at any time during the reference period were 'enterprises', as defined in Council Regulation (EEC) No 696/93, and also active during the same reference period. A statistical unit is considered to have been active during the reference period, if in said period it either realized positive net turnover or produced outputs or had employees or performed investments.

**Number of employees**

The number of employees represents the average number of persons who were, at some time during the reference period, employees of the statistical unit.

**Number of employees and self-employed persons**

The number of employees and self-employed persons is the sum of the Number of employees and Number of self- employed persons. The number of self-employed persons is the average number of persons who were at some time during the reference period the sole owners or joint owners of the statistical unit in which they work. Family workers and outworkers whose income is a function of the value of the outputs of the statistical unit are also included.

**Number of local units**

A count of the number of local units as defined in Regulation (EEC) No 696/93 registered to the population concerned in the business register corrected for errors, in particular frame errors. Local units must be included even if they have no paid employees. This statistic should include all units active during at least a part of the reference period.

**Net turnover**

For all activities except for NACE 64, 65 and some activities of NACE 66 net turnover consists of all income arising during the reference period in the course of ordinary activities of the statistical unit, and is presented net of all price reductions, discounts and rebates granted by it.

Income is defined as increases in economic benefits during the reference period in the form of inflows or enhancements of assets or decreases of liabilities that result in increases in equity, other than those relating to contributions from equity participants.

The inflows referred to are arising from contracts with customers and are realized through the satisfaction by the statistical unit of performance obligations as foreseen in said contracts. Usually, a performance obligation is represented by the sale (transfer) of goods or the rendering of services, however, the gross inflows can also contain revenues obtained as a yield on the use by others of the statistical unit's assets.

Excluded from net turnover are:

— all taxes, duties or levies linked directly to revenue;

— any amounts collected on behalf of any principal, if the statistical unit is acting as an agent in its relationship with said principal;

— all income not arising in the course of ordinary activities of the statistical unit. Usually, these types of income are classified as 'Other (operating) income', 'Financial income', 'Extra-ordinary income' or under a similar heading, depending on the respective set of generally accepted accounting standards used to prepare the financial statements.

Infra-annual statistics may not be able to take into account aspects such as annual price reductions, subsidies, rebates and discounts.

For the activities of NACE K6411, K6419 and K649 net turnover is defined as the value of output minus subsidies or government grants.

For the activities of NACE K642 and K643 net turnover can be approximated by the total operating costs, if net turnover is not available in the financial statements.

For the activities of NACE K6511, K6512 and K652 net turnover is defined as Gross premiums earned.

For the activities of NACE K653 the net turnover is defined as total pension contributions

For activities of NACE K66 for which net turnover is not available in the financial statements, net turnover is defined as the value of output minus subsidies or government grants. For activities of NACE K66 for which net turnover is available in the financial statements, the standard definition of net turnover applies.

**Principal activity**

The principal (or main) activity is the activity that contributes most to the total value added of a unit under consideration. Ideally, the principal activity of the unit should be determined with reference to the value added to the goods and services produced, by applying the top-down method. The top-down method follows a hierarchical principle: the classification of the unit at the lowest level of the classification must be consistent with the classification of the unit at higher levels. The principal activity so identified does not necessarily account for 50 % or more of the unit's total value added.

In the European Union the classification of principal activity is determined by reference to NACE Rev. 2, first at the highest level of classification and then at more detailed levels (top-down method).

**Secondary activity**

A secondary activity is each separate activity that produces products eventually for third parties and that is not the principal activity. The outputs of secondary activities are secondary products.

More information on statistical concepts and definitions relevant to the statistical business registers could be found in the EBS methodological manual for Statistical Business Registers (2021 edition).

| 3.5. Statistical unit |
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The statistical units maintained in the national statistical business register are defined in accordance with Regulation (EEC) No 696/93 on the statistical units for the observation and analysis of the production system in the Community, as follows:

- **Enterprise -** the enterprise is the smallest combination of legal units that is an organizational unit producing goods or services, which benefits from a certain degree of autonomy in decision-making, especially for the allocation of its current resources. An enterprise carries out one or more activities at one or more locations. An enterprise may be a sole legal unit.
- **Enterprise group** - an enterprise group is an association of enterprises bound together by legal and/or financial links. A group of enterprises can have more than one decision-making centre, especially for policy on production, sales and profits. It may centralize certain aspects of financial management and taxation. It constitutes an economic entity, which is empowered to make choices, particularly concerning the units, which it comprises.
- **Kind of activity unit (KAU)** - the kind of activity unit groups all the parts of an enterprise contributing to the performance of an activity at class level (four digits) of NACE and corresponds to one or more operational subdivisions of the enterprise. The enterprise's information system must be capable of indicating or calculating for each KAU at least the value of production, intermediate consumption, manpower costs, the operating surplus and employment and gross fixed capital formation. The KAU characteristics (nace, turnover and employment) are recorded as ENT's variables.
- **Local unit** - the local unit is an enterprise or part thereof (e. g. a workshop, factory, warehouse, office, mine or depot) situated in a geographically identified place. At or from this place economic activity is carried out for which - save for certain

exceptions - one or more persons work (even if only part-time) for one and the same enterprise

More details.

- **Local units** are based on the establishments of the legal units belonging to the same ENT.

- Identification characteristics of the local units come from the Crossroads Bank for Enterprises (the BE database owned by the FPS Economy containing all the basic data concerning companies and their business units);
- Employment and NACE code of the local units comes from the national social security (quarterly) data.

- Control links which are the basis for **enterprise groups delineation** come from the ownerships data of the annual accounts and from the consolidation accounts. Data found in the consolidation accounts are submitted to clerical checks. Perimeters of MNE are from the EGR; perimeters of DEG are delineated via an algorithm that combines control links (transitivity and joint control).

- **Enterprises** (and their main characteristics)

- Of the most important MNE in BE are delineated manually via manual profiling (IPT/National) (target: Top100).
- Other Ent (and their main characteristics) are determined automatically:
  - their structure are mainly derived based on the vat suppliers-customers flows;
  - their nace are computed based on a procedure (*) that takes into account: the individual uleg nace codes, the importance of each legal units in term of added-value in the ENT, and the vat suppliers-customers flows. We follow the Top-Down approach described in the NACE manual.
  - Employment of the ENT is computed as the sum of employment at the legal unit level.
  - Intra ENT vat-flows are neutralized for the computation of the ENT turnover.

- **Kind of activity Units** characteristics (nace, turnover and employment) are automatically computed and recorded as ENT's variables:

- for singleton TEN: KAU characteristics are based on:
  - local units employment (percentage of employment at local unit level by nace),
  - SBS survey (percentage of turnover by nace) and
  - ProdCom survey (percentage of turnover by nace in production activities).
- For complex (non singleton) enterprises, we exploit the algorithm for principal activity calculation (*) to derive possible secondary activities of the ENT, along with their importance in term of employment and turnover.

We follow the operational rules of the EBS recommendation manual (at the level of the individual enterprise, one secondary activity accounts for: more than 30 % of its total production at the nace class level, or more than 20 % of its total production at division (2digits) level). The search is limited for ENT that have a significant influence and whose KAUs have a significant influence on the aggregated national data.

## 3.6. Statistical population

The national statistical business registers shall be the authoritative source for deriving high quality and harmonised statistical business register populations for the production of European statistics in accordance with Article 8 to the EBS Regulation 2019/2152.
The national statistical business register comprises the following units. No threshold are applied.

- Legal unit that are active based on employment, turnover or a balance sheet deposit.
- Local units (as establishments of active legal units).
- Enterprises (including Kind of Activity Units characteristics)
- Group of enterprises

## 3.7. Reference area

The reference area for national statistical business register is the territory of the country. Concerning enterprise groups any country outside the national territory may be relevant.

## 3.8. Coverage - Time

The national statistical business register was established in 1994.

The statistical units are implemented and maintained in the national statistical business register as follows:

- Enterprise group – implemented and maintained since refyear 2008.
- Enterprise – implemented and maintained since refyear 2004.
- Local unit – implemented and maintained since refyear 2007.
- Kind of activity unit (as characteristics of Enterprises) implemented and maintained since refyear 2021.

## 3.9. Base period

Not applicable.

# 4. Unit of measure

The economic variables on employment are recorded in absolute figures.
The net turnover is recorded in Euros.

# 5. Reference Period

The reference period for the annual copy of the national statistical business register is a calendar year.

An annual copy that reflects the state of the national statistical business registers at the end of the year is taken and kept for at least 30 years for the purpose of analysis.

The latest available copy of the national statistical business register consists of the final annual master frame for 2021 reference year. In this annual copy, the economic variables (number of employees, turnover and economic activity) refer to the 2021 (=current_year-2) reference year.

## 6. Institutional Mandate                                                                Top

### 6.1. Institutional Mandate - legal acts and other agreements

Legal acts and other agreements - EU level

- Regulation (EU) 2019/2152 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 November 2019 on European business statistics;
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/1197 of 30 July 2020 laying down technical specifications and arrangements pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2019/2152 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European business statistics.

Legal acts and other agreements - national level

- **The law on public statistics (1962, amended in 2006 and 2023)**. This law enables Statbel to be able to fulfil its central role in the production of public statistics in a modern and efficient manner. This Act aligns the functioning of Statbel (AD Statistics Belgium) with the latest developments in the field of privacy protection, administrative simplification and data exchange for the benefit of academic research. In this way, Stabel is able to fulfil its central role in federal Belgium's statistical process in a modern, high-performance manner. More info: https://statbel.fgov.be/en/about-statbel/who-we-are/legislation.
- **The law on the Crossroads bank of enterprises (KBO-BCE) 22/06/2003**. Royal Decree relating to the registration, modification and deregistration of commercial and craft businesses in the Banque-Carrefour des Entreprises. More info: http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/cgi_loi/change_lg.pl?language=fr&la=F&cn=2003062432&table_name=loi

### 6.2. Institutional Mandate - data sharing

The EBS Regulation (EU) 2019/2152 lays down provisions on the exchange of and access to confidential data for the purpose of the European framework for statistical business registers.

The Commission implementing regulation (EU) 2020/1197 lays down technical specifications and arrangements pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2019/2152, including technical specifications for the exchange of confidential data for the purposes of the European framework for statistical business registers.

At national level, the following agreements or procedures for data sharing and data exchange between national (or regional) authorities have been established:

- **Institut des comptes nationaux (ICN)**: agreement between:

  Banque Nationale de Belgique: https://www.nbb.be
  Bureau Fédéral du Plan: https://www.plan.be
  SPF Economie, PME, Classes moyennes et Energie: https://economie.fgov.be
  Statbel: https://statbel.fgov.be

  ICN was created by the law amending the law of December 21, 1994 on social and miscellaneous provisions, and amended by the law of March 8, 2009 and by the law of February 28, 2014. More info : http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/cgi_loi/loi_a1.pl?language=fr&la=F&cn=1994122131&table_name=loi&&caller=list&F&fromtab=loi&tri=dd+AS+RANK&rech=1&numero=1&sql=(text+contains+(%27%27))#LNKR0039

- **Institut Interfédéral de statistiques**: A Cooperation agreement was signed in July 2014 to strengthen collaboration between the various services of the Federal State and federated entities in the development of public statistics. Agreement between:
  - Banque nationale de Belgique : www.bnb.be
  - Bureau fédéral du plan : www.plan.be
  - Statbel (Direction générale Statistique – Statistics Belgium) : www.statbel.fgov.be
  - Institut bruxellois de Statistique et d'Analyse : www.ibsa.brussels
  - Institut wallon de l'évaluation, de la prospective et de la statistique : www.iweps.be
  - SPF Economie, PME, Classes moyennes et Energie : www.economie.fgov.be
  - Statistiek Vlaanderen : www.statistiekvlaanderen.be

  More info: Institut interfédéral de Statistique (iis-statistics.be)

## 7. Confidentiality                                                                Top

### 7.1. Confidentiality - policy

Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 (recital 24 and Article 20(4)) of 11 March 2009 (OJ L 87, p. 164) on European statistics stipulates the need to establish common principles and guidelines ensuring the confidentiality of data used for the production of European statistics and the access to those confidential data with due account for technical developments and the requirements of users in a democratic society.

The following policy rules are applied at national level:

- **Belgian Statistical Law**:
  http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/cgi_loi/change_lg.pl?language=fr&la=F&cn=1962070430&table_name=loi
- **Privacy/GDPR** (General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679) : see https://statbel.fgov.be/en/about-statbel/privacy/privacy-gdpr

**7.2. Confidentiality - data treatment**

According to policy rules (see section 7.1).

## 8. Release policy

**8.1. Release calendar**

The preliminary frames of the national statistical business register are released according to the statistical user needs, as follows:

| **Domain** | **Frame Delivery (final frame: T+16m)** |
|---|---|
| JVS | T+1m,T+4m,T+8m,T+11m |
| ICT | T+1m, T+9m |
| STS/Construction | T+1m |
| Annual Accounts | T+4m,T+7m,T+10m,T+12m,T+16m (final) |
| SBS | T+6m, T+16m(final) |
| STS/Retail trade | T+9m |
| SES | T+10m |
| Agriculture | T+10m |
| TEC | T+ 11m, T+16m (final) |
| Business Demography (SBS) | T+16m (final) |
| (I) FATS | delivery: T+19m (final frame) |

The final frame of the national statistical business register is released in T+ 16 months.

For refyear 2021, no preliminary frames provided for ITGS, ITSS, CIS.

**8.2. Release calendar access**

Not applicable.

**8.3. Release policy - user access**

The statistical users get access to the SBR frames or receive required data in the following way:

- **SAS disk/libraries** on our dwh server dedicated to those exchanges for authorized Stabel users only.
- **Ftps server** for external users (National Bank/ICN)

## 9. Frequency of dissemination

The SBR preliminary frames are provided to statistical users with the following frequency:

- Preliminary frame : multi-Annual
- Final frame :  Annual

More details see 8.1 release calendar.

The final frame for a reference year T is available on annual bases in T+16 months. The annual copy is kept for 30 years for the purpose of analysis.

## 10. Accessibility and clarity

**10.1. Dissemination format - News release**

- Monthly news release: Statistics on the number of VAT units (https://statbel.fgov.be/en/themes/enterprises/vat-registered-businesses/statistics-number-vat-units-monthly).
- Annual news release: VAT-registered enterprises (https://statbel.fgov.be/en/themes/enterprises/vat-registered-businesses/vat-registered-enterprises )

**10.2. Dissemination format - Publications**

Publications in the form of experimental statistics:

- DataLab (experimental statistics)- Independent entrepreneurs (2022)(https://statbel.fgov.be/en/themes/datalab/independent-entrepreneurs )

- Datalab (experimental statistics)- Multinational groups in Belgium (2021) (https://statbel.fgov.be/en/news/datalab-multinational-groups-belgium ).
- See also Statbel/Analyse_Multinational groups_Statbel.pdf (fgov.be)

| 10.3. Dissemination format - online database |
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Open Data available:

- https://statbel.fgov.be/fr/open-data/evolution-mensuelle-des-entreprises-assujetties-la-tva-selon-la-nace (monthy vat registered units)
- https://statbel.fgov.be/en/themes/datalab/independent-entrepreneurs#figures (independent entrepreneurs)
- https://statbel.fgov.be/en/open-data/enterprises-subject-vat-according-legal-form-12 (annual vat registered units by legal form)
- https://statbel.fgov.be/en/open-data/enterprises-subject-vat-according-employer-class-12 (annual vat registered units by size class)

| 10.4. Dissemination format - microdata access |
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The NSI exchange microdata with the Commission (Eurostat) for the purposes of the European framework for statistical business registers.
The data and metadata are exchanged in electronic form and transmitted using the ESS data and metadata standards as specified by the Commission (Eurostat).
Specific information on statistical units are communicated to other ESS authorities or ESCB members.
Transmissions of confidential data to these institutions are made in compliance with article 21 of regulation 223/2009.
SBR microdata are provided, in compliance with European regulations or national laws to :
• Authorized members of the National Bank of Belgium and of the Federal Plan Bureau that are part of the National Account Institute (NAI).
• Regional statistical institutes
Pseudonymised micro-data are provided to researchers in compliance with to the procedure for dissemination of confidential data for scientific purposes (article 15 of the Statistical Law).
Data are encrypted before transmission (RSA or AES 256).
Individual SBR Nace code are available for extern users on request, for statistical purposes only, provided the Data Protection Officer has given its formal approval.

| 10.5. Dissemination format - other |
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The aggregated data on national statistical business register are provided annually to Eurostat in electronic form and transmitted via EDAMIS.
Tailor-made data sets (aggregated data) available on request for external users:

- Other Directorate of the SPF Economy for specific analysis: covid impact, Eco systems,..
- Other Regional Statistic Institutes for conjectural analysis.
- External users (universities, press, parlementary,...)

National statistical business register is the main source for the Business demography statistics that provide information for active enterprises in the business economy, the births, deaths and survival rates of enterprises, as well as information on related employment data. In the business demography domain, the business economy covers sections B to N, excluding activities of holding companies – K64.2 (NACE Rev.2).

| 10.6. Documentation on methodology |
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European business statistics methodological manual for statistical business registers – edition 2021 outlines the methodology to be used for the national statistical institutes.
The "Sheets Metadata " are metadata reports in PDF format created for all data items stored in the Metadata Management System.
Links to the metadata sheets for SBR:
Link NL : https://statbel.fgov.be/sites/default/files/files/metadata/ADM/T10.ADMIN_DTST_41.CTAC_ORG_1.DIFF_LVL_1.NL.pdf
Link FR : https://statbel.fgov.be/sites/default/files/files/metadata/ADM/T9.ADMIN_DTST_41.CTAC_ORG_1.DIFF_LVL_1.FR.pdf

| 10.7. Quality management - documentation |
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ESS Data Quality Programme for statistical business registers is available on CIRCABC.

# 11. Quality management                                                                                     Top

| 11.1. Quality assurance |
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The quality is assured by applying the following quality management and assurance procedures:

- internal working group on quality indicators related to some statistics based on SBR (vat affiliation, business demography).

- Methodological standards and guidelines assuring the quality of the production process and the output: description of our process with the GSBPM nomenclature (on-going effort)
- Data validation procedures in place: Statistics relying on the BR (monthly and yearly vat statistics along with SBS-Ann9 statistics) are validated via a peer-review process. A validation procedure is in place to check and validate the outputs (monthly/annualy).
- Quality assessment activities undertaken: By ad-hoc analysis at individual data level (e.g. Nace monitoring/ nace alert)

**11.2. Quality management - assessment**

The quality of statistical business register is monitored according the quality assurance procedure described in concept 11.1.

The overall assessment results could be summarised as follows:

- the coverage of our SBR register is very good since it relies mainly on the BCE register (Banque Carrefour des Entreprises, Crossroads bank of enterprises) which by law covers all business activity in Belgium.

- when variations occurs in our data series, they are often explained by

- administrative change (new vat affiliations rules, new thresholds (vat-declaration),.).
- improvement in estimation methods (eg estimation method for numbers of employed persons), or
- improvement of implementation of variable concept (eg variable turnovr: proratisation, ranking of sources)

## 12. Relevance

**12.1. Relevance - User Needs**

SBR are important for the compilation of consistent and comparable European business statistics, establishing efficient statistical survey frames, providing identification numbers of all the units and for linking to many different sources, increasing statistical information and reducing the reporting burden on enterprises.

SBR are referred to as the 'backbone' in the production of economic statistics because they provide the core infrastructure to ensure data consistency between various statistical outputs.

SBR is the reference mainly business statistics and national account compilers:

- SBS (and FATS)
- JVS, SES, CVTS,ICT,Construction,LCS, Retail trade,agriculture, Industrial waste
- STS
- TEC
- Annual accounts

**12.2. Relevance - User Satisfaction**

Since 2017, Eurostat together with the EU Member States conducts SBR user survey addressing users and potential users of the national statistical business registers (NSBR) and the EuroGroups Register (EGR).

The latest SBR User Survey 2020 show that the NSBR are widely used at national level and users consider that its quality had been significantly improved in the recent years. Most of the NSBR users (97%) had either no issue or manageable issue regarding business registers coverage, units, variables, timeliness and frequency of frames.

The results of the SBR User Survey 2020 are available on CIRCABC.

**12.3. Completeness**

The completeness of national statistical business registers is annually assessed by Eurostat. The SBR assessment results are provided to EU Member States and EFTA countries and presented at the Statistical Business Registers Working Group (SBR WG).

Data completeness rate and missing variables or data in the national statistical business register are as follows:

NSBR assessment 2022 (ref. year 2020)

- Total percentage of missing mandatory characteristics: 0%
- Total percentage of missing conditional characteristics: 0%.
- Total percentage of missing optional characteristics: 43%.

## 13. Accuracy

**13.1. Accuracy - overall**

The main issues regarding accuracy of the data are as follows:

- Undercoverage
- Misclassification
- Measurement error due to estimation or wrong identification

Undercoverage:

- for legal units: undercoverage comes from the fact that only legal units for which an economic activity is found in our available administrative sources are reported.
- for enterprises (ENT): consequence of possible legal unit undercoverage
- for EG: possible undercoverage in the public sector due to some limitations related to the availability of control links in that sector.

Misclassification: the major source of missclassification errors is due to possible wrong nace code.

Measurement error due to estimation or identification: possible erroneous identification of complex enterprises or groups may consequently lead to wrong estimation (eg. estimated consolidated turnover when the underlying EG/ENT structure is erroneously identified).

The actions taken to reduce bias and to improve accuracy of the data are as follows:

- misclassification: regular peer-review meetings (nace alert) to monitor the quality/nace change of big enterprises
- undercoverage: prospection to incorporate new administrative sources to improve the "economicaly active" flag at legal unit level.

| **13.2. Sampling error** |
| Not applicable. |
| **13.3. Non-sampling error** |
| Not applicable. |

## 14. Timeliness and punctuality <span style="float:right">Top</span>

**14.1. Timeliness**

Preliminary frames are available  1 months after the reference year T.

Final frame is available 16 months after the reference year T.

No time lag.

**14.2. Punctuality**

Aggregated data for the SBR final frame are provided annually to Eurostat according the deadline agreed by the Statistical Business Registers Working Group.

The SBR frames are provided on time to statistical users with regard to their needs and the agreed time frame, as follows:

- annual accounts: quaterly preliminary frames during T+1. Final frame T+16
- SBS preliminary:june T+1, final: mayT+2
- others: See 8.1

No delay.

## 15. Coherence and comparability <span style="float:right">Top</span>

**15.1. Comparability - geographical**

The geographical comparability of national statistical business registers is ensured by the application of common definitions of the statistical units laid down in the Council Regulation (EEC) No 696/93.

The SBR variables are harmonised and set up in accordance with the Annex VIII to the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/1197 laying down technical specifications and arrangements pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2019/2152 on European business statistics. Further guidelines on the variables implementation in the national statistical business registers are given in the EBS methodological manual for Statistical Business Registers (2021 edition).

**15.2. Comparability - over time**

The comparability over time of the frames results from the information provided in concept 3.8.

Possible limitations in the use of data for comparisons over time:

- NSBR frames are not entirely comparable for reference years 2017 and 2018. There have been a major change in the methodology : prior to 2018, ENT consists mainly of 1 ULeg; in 2018 we broadly implement the concept of complex ENT (multi-uleg) in the register.

**15.3. Coherence - cross domain**

The NSBR frame provides information on the active population of enterprises carrying out economic activities which contribute to the gross domestic product (GDP), the legal units of which those enterprises consist of,  local units, kind of activity units and enterprise groups, incl. all-resident and multinational enterprise groups.

The national statistical business register is used by statistical users as a coordinated frame population in order to derive consistent statistical output.

The coherence between statistics outputs and SBR is a work in progress. When consistency with other statistics is not complete, this is mainly due to the following factors:

- **Thresholds.** Eg: a threshold on turnover is used to exclude too small enterprises (SBS/BD). This produces discrepancies wrt the number of active Ent in SBR.
- **Sample survey variables versus register SBR variables.** Eg: NACE variable: The fact that SBS is a sample survey generates discrepancies with respect to SBR in terms of Nace breakdowns.
- **Computation method for some variables.** Eg:
  - SBS does not prorate turnover (alignment with SBR is being analyzed)
  - SBR-SBS computation of employment is not exactly the same (works in progress to resolve this discrepancy)

- **Data source**. Eg: STS reports turnover mainly based on VAT source while the turnover in SBR is based on additional admin sources.

| 15.4. Coherence - internal |
|---|

The SBR data included in the final frame are internally consistent.

## 16. Cost and Burden <span>Top</span>

Human ressources:
- SBR-department : 9 FTE
- ICT-department : 2 FTE

## 17. Data revision <span>Top</span>

| 17.1. Data revision - policy |
|---|

A revision policy stating principles and procedures is publicly available on the Statbel website:
https://statbel.fgov.be/en/about-statbel/quality/revision-policy

| 17.2. Data revision - practice |
|---|

Not applicable

## 18. Statistical processing <span>Top</span>

| 18.1. Source data |
|---|

The national statistical business registers is set up in accordance with EBS Regulation (EU) 2019/2152 using any relevant data sources while avoiding excessive burden on respondents and taking due account of the cost effectiveness of the NSAs.
NSI uses the following data sources, including a combination thereof for the national statistical business register:

- Crossroad Bank of Enterprises (for identification characteristics of legal units and their establishments)
- Fiscal data: VAT declarations , VIES data, VAT client-supplier listing
- Social Security data files for variables related to employment
- Surveys (SBS, ProdCom,..) (mainly for nace improvement)
- FDI data (useful for delineation of group perimeter)
- Balance sheets/annual accounts from the National Bank of Belgium (NBB)
- Import-export data (NBB)
- ownership (% shares) (NBB)
- EGR data

| 18.2. Frequency of data collection |
|---|

The national statistical business registers shall be updated by means of entries and removals at least annually. The frequency of updating shall depend on the kind of unit, the variable considered, the size of the unit and the source generally used for the update.

The frequency of updating the units and variables in the national statistical business register is as follows:

- Legal units - weekly.
- Enterprises - weekly (singletons), quaterly (complex ent),  profiling Top100 (continuous),
- Local units - weekly (identification), 2 times a year (employment)
- Kind of activity units (ENt charactéristics) - quarterly
- Enterprise groups - quarterly

| 18.3. Data collection |
|---|

Statistical business registers use data from administrative and statistical data sources, and from any other relevant sources that are comparable and compliant with the applicable specific quality requirements. For more details please see 18.1.

| 18.4. Data validation |
|---|

Statistical analysis of the national statistical business register is carried out to ensure the quality of data and frame populations provided to users.

Data validation procedures include:

- Format and file structure checks (logging ICT)
- automatic validation procedures to check coherence between statistical units and their variables (IT business rules, eg validity period);
- data controls (volume, evolution, basic statistics) at reception time for administrative data sources (dashboard/alert);
- crosschecks with other sources and data from previous years;
- Plausibility/consistency checks between domains inside Stabel and admin data provider (VAT, NBB, Social Security)
- Peer review of individual and aggregated data (in the context of ICN - Institut des Comptes Nationaux)

| **18.5. Data compilation** |
| --- |

The procedures used to combine data from different sources:

- Enterprise group algorithm to compute new control links based on joint control or the transitivity of the control relationship. Several sources of links are considered and combined (FDI, consolidation, ownership).
- Partition of an enterprises group into ENT and NACE determination of ENT (automatic profiling): exploitation of intra-group vat flow to determine the set of legal units to be linked together into the same ENT. The graph of intra-group vat flows is analyzed in view of identifying the legal unit(s) contributing most to the added value of an ENT. This analysis is performed hierarchically (Top Down approach from nace division to nace class) and combine several sources of information (VIES, vat declaration, listing client-supplier,..).
- Prioritization of several sources (balance sheet, surveys, VAT) to compute the turnover at legal unit level. Then, the turnover at ENT(TEN) level is computed by summing up the individual turnovers and by removing the inner TEN vat-flows (neutralization)
- prioritization of admin sources to compute primo nace
- Proratisation of balance sheet headings (applied when more than one account are available for a given calendar year)

The frame populations and annual copy of national statistical business register are produced as follows:

- Admin data for legal units and their establishment is updated weekly in our register
- Weekly update of the frame of economically active legal units
- Continuous work on profiling Top100 MNE
- Quaterly build of enterprises group (EGR, DEG) and integration of profiling work
- Quaterly production of the frames ULEG-ENT-MNE/DEG
- Update (2 times a year) of the frame of the local units.
- Production of SBR preliminary frames quarterly
- Final frame: T+16m

| **18.6. Adjustment** |
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Not applicable.

# 19. Comment

No additional comment.

# Related metadata

# Annexes