

**Second Meeting of the UN Committee of Experts on
Business and Trade Statistics
New York, 11-13 June 2019**

Draft Terms of reference of the
Task Team on Exhaustive Business registers

Task Team on Exhaustive Business Registers

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Mandate

Statistic Business Registers are the backbone for producing economic statistics that meet the increasing demand for better integrated, coherent and comparable statistics across countries and statistical domains. These statistics should describe also new phenomena like globalization, digitalization, well-being, sustainability and the gig economy. With these new demands, an inclusive and exhaustive Statistical Business Register becomes an increasingly more important element of the statistical infrastructure for maintaining the relevance, responsiveness and quality of economic statistics in order to measure the structure and dynamics of economic activity. Despite the fact that the appearance of new phenomena may differ between countries and regions, the main challenges for statistical business registers are likely to be addressed through developments in common concepts, definitions and classifications.

The Task Team will cover various areas of work:

- developing guidance for the Statistical Business Registers to become a) more inclusive and exhaustive in a rapidly changing economy; and b) better tailored to statistical production
- providing advice and guidance to the UNSD related to new global collections to support business statistics
- providing advice and guidance to UNSD related to the development and maintenance of a global enterprise group register¹.

UNSD will bring to the Task Team proposals of possible new data collections and the progress in developing the global enterprise group register in order to receive feedback and advice from the Task Team.

¹ in response to the decision of the Commission at its forty-sixth session (see E/2015/24, chap. I.C, decision 46/107) to promote and advance “the creation of a global enterprise group register, building on and taking into account lessons learned from the ongoing EuroGroups Register project”.

The Task Team will seek collaboration with the other statistical entities working on relevant topics, such as:

- the Wiesbaden group on Business Registers
- the Delhi Group on Informal Sector Statistic
- Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts.

It might also be useful to develop a strategy for incorporating input from countries that are not represented on the task team.

Indicative emerging topics and challenges for guidance on more inclusive and exhaustive Statistical Business Registers

The Task Team will review existing guidance on Statistical Business Registers (most notably the UNECE Guidelines for Statistical Business Registers, 2015, and the UN Guidelines for Statistical Business Registers, 2019) in order to identify areas that need to be further improved including guidance on inclusive and exhaustive Statistical Business Registers. It is expected that progressively the work of the Task Team will lead towards the development of comprehensive and updated guidelines for Statistical Business Registers.

Already the following topics have been identified for which we have to explore if further guidance in terms of concept, definitions and classifications have to be developed:

- Gig / sharing / informal economy in relation to SBR coverage
- Issues faced by developing economies
- New business models of production
- New employment arrangements
- Availability of big data
- Cross border statistics
- Low-regional availability of information
- Globalisation of economic activities and impact on registers

To foster the exhaustiveness of Statistical Business Registers in the mentioned areas above the following elements can be evaluated:

- coverage – does the SBR has appropriate coverage of units in order to capture in-scope economic activity?
- appropriate concepts and classifications - these may include current classifications plus additional or alternate views
- SBR variables or flags - to support a coherent analysis of both traditional and emerging economic activities (what variables should be core to the SBR because they have broad usage and what variables could be linked for specific investigations, also taking the feasibility in mind for smallest and informal businesses)

- statistical infrastructure - providing a back bone to link to other sources to enable broader data compilation and analysis

In addition to specific topical areas for which further guidance has to be developed, the TT will also review the challenges for the coverage of SBR mentioned in annex 1 of the summary report of the first meeting of the Committee of Experts on Business Statistics.

Recommended SBR coverage of informal sector:

Enterprise type	Recommended SBR coverage	Additional information^{a)}
Government	Yes	Component of formal sector. Inclusion of units in the SBR is preferable but having links in the SBR to data for government units held in an administrative source is acceptable.
Financial corporations and quasifinancial corporations (including those controlled by government)	Yes	Component of formal sector.
Non-financial corporations and quasi corporations	Yes	Component of formal sector.
Non-profit institutions serving households	Yes	Component of formal sector.
Registered household enterprises (including agricultural)	Yes	Component of formal sector.
Own account ^{b)} , non-registered nonagricultural household market enterprises excluding selfemployed professionals	Yes, but only if suitable administrative source available	Component of informal sector. If significant but no administrative source, cover through two stage household-enterprise survey
Own account ^{b)} , non-registered nonagricultural household market enterprises that are self-employed professional	Yes, but only if suitable administrative source available	Component of informal sector. If significant but no administrative source, cover through two stage household-enterprise survey
Own account ^{b)} , non-registered agricultural household market enterprises	Yes, but only if suitable administrative source available	Component of informal sector. If significant but no administrative source, cover through two stage household-enterprise survey

Non-registered, non-agricultural household market enterprises with employees	Yes, but only if suitable administrative source available	Component of informal sector. If significant but no administrative source, cover through two stage household-enterprise survey
Non-registered, agricultural household market enterprises with employees	Yes, but only if suitable administrative source available	Component of informal sector. If significant but no administrative source, cover through two stage household-enterprise survey
Household non-market enterprises	No	If significant, cover their activities through two stage householdenterprise survey.

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- a) Recommended coverage is provided on the assumption that the informal sector is defined as the set of household enterprises that have market production but are not registered in the administrative source(s) on which the SBR is based.
- b) Own account means self-employed with no employees.

Description of deliverables and timing

It is expected that the TT will produce the following deliverables²:

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| 1. Global exploration of topics for the Task Team to cover | Q1 - 2019 |
| 2. Refined work plan / ToR | Q2 - 2019 |
| 3. Strategic view on exhaustive business registers | Q3 – 2019 |
| 4. Gap analysis of Task Team topics | Q1 – 2020 |
| 5. Guidance reports on Task Team topics | Q4 - 2020 |

Global exploration of topics for the Task Team to cover in the first work area

The first step will be a written consultation among the Task Team members. The goals of this consultation are:

- sharpen the formulation of the problem area (which topics to be covered in the strategic view on statistical business registers)
- collect thoughts and concrete ideas on approach
- collect suggestions for background material (papers / presentations)

² The advisory role to the UNSD of the Task Team on the Global Group Register and possible global data collection still has to be incorporated in the time scheme above.

- collect ideas for collaboration with other statistical entities

The second step was a conference call among the TT members at the beginning of April to refine the outline of the proposed work plan

Refined work plan

A refined work plan (this ToR) will be drafted based on the inputs received from the TT members.

Strategic view on exhaustive business registers

A first version of the strategic view on an exhaustive statistical business register will be prepared for discussion in the June 2019 meeting of the Committee of Experts on Business and Trade Statistics. The drafting of a strategic view on exhaustive business registers will be done through an iterative process of written consultation and conference calls.

The work on a strategic view will be splitted into two subgroups.

The first group will be focussing on the identification of different challenges across countries depending on the stage of maturity of Statistical Business Registers.

The second group will be focussing on the strategic role that is envisaged for Statistical Business Registers, keeping emerging economic activities in mind.

A final version of the strategic view will be created by the integration of the angles of view coming from both subgroups.

Gap analysis Task Team topics

Based on the strategic view we should be able to conduct a gap analysis in order to determine the most important topics and challenges to be covered by the Task Team in 2020.

Guidance reports on Task Team topics

These guidance reports on inclusive and exhaustive statistical business registers are the signature products expected to be produced by the end of 2020.