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**Use of Administrative Data in Economic Statistics**

**Bulgarian experience in the use of administrative data sources for production of official statistics by economic sectors<sup>1</sup>**

**Introduction**

Growing demands for detailed statistical data, diminishing willingness of enterprises to supply the requested information, and the government policy directed at reducing the respondent burden have led the National Statistical Institute of Bulgaria (NSI) to look at the alternative sources for getting the information it needs. The thorough review of the current statistical practice of NSI on the organization of its data collection activities has revealed that the above mentioned challenges could be achieved through the use of administrative information.

The use of administrative information for statistical purposes is seen to provide a number of advantages for statistical authorities, the most important of which being the significant reduction of response burden, particularly for small and medium sized businesses; the provision of nearly census coverage for a key statistical variables; and the reduction of costs for organization of statistical surveys.

This paper presents the results of the recently undertaken survey on the use of administrative data sources by different departments in NSI for production of official statistics. Along with other initiatives, an important part of the NSI work in recent years has been focused on how to utilize more intensively the available administrative data sources with the aim of generating improved statistical series.

**Legal Framework**

The Law on Statistics provides a key foundation for the use of administrative data sources for statistical purposes in Bulgaria.

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The Law was enacted on 25 June 1999 and subsequently amended on 27 April 2001. It gives powers to the Bulgarian Bodies of Statistics<sup>2</sup> for “the realization of statistical activity by, registers and information systems they maintain as well as data exchange between them” (article 1). The right to collect data is regulated in article 3 (1) of the Law - “The Bodies of Statistics carry out the statistical activity of the State by conducting periodical and ad-hoc statistical surveys, included in the National Programme for Statistical Surveys”. The Program is elaborated on an annual base and is adopted by the Council of Ministers upon a proposal of the President of the NSI. The Law of Statistics provides the Bodies of Statistics with the legal right to require the mandatory participation of the respondents to all surveys listed in the National Programme.

The Law also makes provisions for the right of access to administrative data. According to article 20 (4) the Bodies of Statistics have the right, upon written request and free of charge, to obtain from other State bodies and holders of register data collected by them which are required in the statistical surveys included in the National Programme for Statistical Surveys. The provision of these administrative data is organized by formal agreements between the NSI and each of the state bodies.

### **The Task Force**

The President of the NSI established in 2003 a Task Force group to undertake a comprehensive investigation of the existing administrative data sources in Bulgaria, based on the national legislation. The main objectives of the Task Force were to identify the administrative data sources; to create a list with their names, responsible institution, type of information collected; and to find out which of them are currently used by the NSI departments and which are available but still not utilized in the compilation of official statistics. The Task Force looked at all possible administrative data sources and/or registers and discovered that their number as of 2003 is more than 200.

In 2005 an update of the existing registers and information systems in state administration was done and it was discovered that in the process of strengthening the administration capacity of the country new 200 registers were set up. This was also the moment when the Task Force carried out a follow up review of the use of administrative data sources for statistical purposes.

The review aimed at assessing the progress in the use of administrative information since 2003 and how individual departments in NSI overcame the challenges of using new information. The review was organized on the basis of a short questionnaire (see the Annex) sent to all department heads within the NSI. The questionnaire asked about the following characteristics of each administrative data source:

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<sup>2</sup> Bodies of statistics are the National Statistical Institute and the respective structural units within the Ministries, institutions and other bodies of the central and local administration that carry out statistical activity.

- Name
- Content of the data
- Institution/organization administering the data source
- Basis for having access to the information in the administrative data source
- Frequency of the provided information
- Delay after the deadline for submission of data
- Dissemination format
- Method of delivering the information
- Stability of the administrative data source
- Statistical surveys in which administrative information is used
- How the administrative information is being used
- Problems (difficulties) faced while using the administrative information
- Views about the future use of the administrative data source
- Suggestions for changes in the administrative data source

After the survey was carried out a separate department “Data from administrative sources” was created within NSI. The main tasks of the department are to monitor the developments in the national registers system, to maintain a copy of the data from the main administrative registers used for statistical purposes (BULSTAT register and the Register of Insured Persons) and to deliver, process and store the data from multipurpose sources.

### **Use of administrative data sources for production of official statistics by economic sectors**

The results obtained from the review of the use of administrative data sources by the departments of NSI are listed in the section below. These include the sector (i.e. the department and/or the statistical area), the most important administrative data sources as they were indicated by the departments as used for production of relevant statistics and short comments about the stability, problems and future use of the data sources.

#### ***Macroeconomic Statistics***

*National Accounts Department* uses a number of administrative data sources for the compilation of both financial and non-financial national accounts and supply and use tables. In most of the cases, the provision of administrative information is based on the bilateral agreements with institutions concerned. According to the terms of those agreements the institutions provide detailed or aggregated data, annually or quarterly. The information is provided electronically.

The bilateral agreement with *Central Bank* allows NSI to receive the following information:

- detailed data by types of financial instruments and counterpart sectors from the balance sheets of Central Bank and other commercial banks in Bulgaria;

- exhaustive information from the Balance of Payments and International Investment Position;
- detailed data by elements from the income statements of Central Bank and commercial banks.

The *Ministry of Finance* information is particularly valuable for the national accounts compilation. Besides the detailed quarterly data for the execution of the state budget by different budgets, functions, activities and revenues and expenditures components, Ministry of finance provides NSI with full access to its annual database. In addition, for the purpose of financial national accounts compilation, the bilateral agreement includes also the provision of balance sheets data for the units in the government sector and annual data about flows and stocks of the government debt.

It is worth mentioning that the review of the administrative data sources in the NSI has confirmed that the confidentiality is the main impediment for the use of Ministry of Finance information. This is particularly true for the public safety and defence functions, where the statisticians undertake additional surveys and disaggregation of information to compile the national accounts aggregates.

The *National Revenue Agency (NRA)* is a new government agency integrating the functions of Tax and Social Security authorities established under the supervision of Minister of Finance. This agency collects all government taxes, such as income tax, VAT, patents, corporate taxes etc. and compulsory social security contributions, including health insurance contributions. The agreement with Ministry of Finance, respectively National Revenue Agency as a secondary spending unit of Ministry of Finance, stipulates that National Accounts Department is provided with the following quarterly information necessary for the compilation of quarterly national accounts:

- Aggregated data on taxes on products for domestically produced commodities. This information includes data for accrual, paid and refunded excises by type of commodities;
- Aggregated data for the accrual, paid and refunded VAT on the domestically produces commodities.

The information received from the National Revenue Agency concerns mostly the transactions made on the domestic territory of the country. It is supplemented with corresponding data from Customs Agency on:

- Taxes on products for imported goods. The information includes accrual, paid, and refunded excises by type of commodities;
- Aggregated data for the accrual, paid and refunded VAT on the imported goods;
- Detailed data about the accrued import duties by commodity groups (10-digit level of Customs Tariff).

*International Trade Statistics Department* uses administrative information obtained monthly on the basis of a bilateral agreement with the Customs Agency. This

information includes imports and exports transactions data from SAD (Single Administrative Document) which is obligatory for all economic entities engaged with foreign trade activities. The information is delivered electronically. The importance of this data source will gradually diminish in relation to the forthcoming membership of Bulgaria in the European Union and the introduction of INTRASTAT system.

The information obtained from this administrative data source is being largely used as a frame for statistical sample surveys as well as directly, for the compilation and analysis of the following statistics:

- Imports and Exports Statistics;
- National Accounts;
- Supply and Use Tables; and
- Commodity balances

One of the main disadvantages of the Customs Agency's data is the confidentiality of provided information.

Since 2007 the main data source for trade flows between Bulgaria and European Union will be the National Revenue Agency (NRA), custodian of the INTRASTAT information system. In 2006 the Bulgarian Parliament adopted the Law on the Intercommunity Trade and the Instruction on Data Exchange between NSI and NRA was approved by Council of Ministries.

The Government, Financial and Non-Profit Institutions Department is one of the departments using predominantly administrative information for compilation of their statistics. These include:

- *Ministry of Finance* - (i) Information on the execution of the fiscal programme of all government units by type of budget and by unit; and (ii) Consolidated State Budget;
- *Central bank* – (i) Monetary and banking statistics provided by the Statistics Department; (ii) Balance sheet and income statement data of commercial banks, their branches and of non-monetary financial institutions provided by Bank Supervision Department. Besides the official submission of administrative information in an electronic format, the NSI can download it directly from the bank website. In addition, the Central Bank provides hard copies of their monthly/yearly bulletins and analyses;
- *National Social Security Institute* – provides data for social benefits and allowances paid. Due to the recent administrative reorganization, some of the social benefits data are submitted to NSI by the Agency for Social Protection;
- *Financial Supervision Commission* – provides an extensive set of data for all financial corporations (except banks) which operate and which activity is regulated by licensing regimes. Included are: insurance corporations, health insurance and pension insurance corporations, pension funds, investment corporations and other financial intermediaries.

The last administrative data source tends to be very dynamic and flexible which makes the provided information volatile and dependent on legislation changes. However, most of the observed units are well known and the changes are in result of adopted new laws or regulations. The continuous harmonization of data from these sources with the high standards and requirements of the European Union regulations slightly complicates the statistical work.

The administrative sources used by this branch provide nearly census coverage of the units concerned, so there is no need to conduct subsequent sample surveys. The primary use of received information is for direct compilation of statistical indicators; aggregation of data according existing classifications; making analyses and update of databases and registers.

The Labour Statistics Department has well established practice of efficient use of data from both the National Social Security Institute and National Employment Agency. The main source of data used is the Register of Insured Persons. The register covers both the employees and self employed. For each insured person the following information exists: personal information (such as birthday, gender, address etc.); type of the insurance; professional group to which the person belongs; insurance income (the income on which basis the social contributions are assessed); the value of social contributions made; the identification code of the employer; the worked out time by the person during the month (in days); social benefits paid etc. This information is updated monthly through the insurance declarations submitted to the National Social Security Institute.

Based on the bilateral agreement with the National Social Security Institute the information from the register is provided quarterly in the most suitable for further processing format. Data are used either directly for compilation of statistical indicators as those listed below or indirectly for cross-checking and verification purposes of data received from various statistical sources.

The data from the Register of Insured Persons are used as an additional information or in the compilation of the following statistical indicators: total number of persons employed; total number of employees; average wages and salaries; labour costs; employers social and health insurance contributions; employees social and health insurance contributions; time (hours and days) worked. Those data are the only source to distribute the social and health insurance contribution by institutional sector.

In addition to the register's information the Labour Statistics Branch obtains from the National Social Security Institute also data for pension beneficiaries and work injuries.

The National Employment Agency provides information about the registered unemployed persons. These data include the average annual number of persons registered as unemployed in the Labour Bureaus, split by regions.

### ***Business Statistics***

The basic tool for compilation of business statistics in Bulgaria is the Statistical Business Register (SBR).

The Law of Statistics (article 30) provides the legal basis for the establishment and maintaining of a SBR. According to Article 30 “The National Statistical Institute shall establish and maintain a Register of Statistical Units. The information for this Register shall be collected from the administrative “BULSTAT” register and from surveys carried out within this Law”.

The SBR includes all economic units covered by BULSTAT Administrative Register as the latter is considered to be the main source for updating the SBR. To each unit registered in BULSTAT is assigned a unique code, called the BULSTAT Unique Identification Number (UIN), which is obligatory for all units carrying out their economic activities in the country. All other administrative registers (in tax, social security, custom authorities etc.) and information systems, whose subjects are identical to those in BULSTAT, must also contain the BULSTAT codes of the respective units. At present, the BULSTAT register is maintained by the Registry Agency and an online data replication to the NSI exists.

The other register playing a key role for the update of SBR is the Register of Insured Persons, maintained by the National Social Security Institute. The information from the register is used for identification of statistical units (enterprises and local units) and for update of data on employed persons.

For the compilation of transport statistics the Transport Statistics Department uses the administrative information from the surveys of Ministry of Transport. These include:

- General Directorate “Civil Aviation Administration” provides the report on the traffic of aviation operators having regular flights and the report on the volume of traffic through the airports on a monthly basis. The traffic of aviation operators with occasional flights is presented annually. NSI undertakes a systematic logical and arithmetic control on the provided data since they have both inter-institutional and international significance. The information is compiled in accordance with the requirements of the Eurostat transport regulations.
- The Executive Agency “Port Administration” provides electronically on quarterly basis the information for maritime and inland waterway ports activities - passengers and goods carried; capacity; inland waterway vessels by age of stock etc. The information is collected according to the international obligations of the NSI and it is provided quarterly to Eurostat.
- The Executive Agency “Automobile Administration” provides annual data to NSI on the number of licensed taxi operators; the number of taxis (cars) owned by the taxi operators; the database of licensed for international transportation operators of both passengers and goods. The NSI considers the information obtained from the “Automobile Administration” Agency as reliable since the Ministry of

Transport not only issues the licenses but it controls the activity of transport operators.

Ministry of Interior Affairs also provides data to Transport Statistics Department. The information from the Vehicle Register of lorries and trucks is used to conduct sample surveys for freight road transport.

Many units engaged with economic activities in Bulgaria (irrespective of their particular kind of activity) keep single book-keeping records as they are not obliged to compile balance sheets. In most of the cases these are small enterprises. Annually they respond to the General Tax Directorate of Ministry of Finance and present their income tax declaration. According to the bilateral agreement with Ministry of Finance the Statistics of Enterprises Department receives detailed data for the revenues and expenditure of those units which are used directly for the estimation of their output and value added components.

To verify and supplement tax information, this department makes use of the National Social Security Institute data for the same units. The data for self employed, insured employees, wages and salaries paid, social security and health contributions made etc. are cross-checked. Despite of the existing unique identification number (UIN) in the country the main problem encountered is the incompatible definition of the units in the different registers (legal entity, enterprise and insurer). When this obstacle is combined with the incorrectly filled identity numbers in the tax or social security declarations, as it is a practice of some units, the statisticians find it extremely difficult to bind the relevant information and to identify properly those units.

### ***Regional and Multi-Domain Statistics***

The activities in agricultural statistics are split between the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) and the NSI. The compilation of structural agricultural statistics has been assigned to the Statistics Department in MAF while the responsibility for elaboration of Economic Accounts for Agriculture has been given to the Agricultural and Forestry Statistics Department in NSI. Both departments appear to be key users of administrative information.

A large number of different registers in the area of agriculture and forestry, as they exist and are maintained by the agencies of MAF, are being used by the statisticians for the compilation of agricultural statistics. They include:

- The Register of State Forestries, having comprehensive information for the area and type of forests as owned by the individual forestry farms;
- The Register of legal and natural persons, producers of and/or traders with commodities and substances destined for animals feeding;
- The Register of licensed for import and trade with plant protection products dealers, provided by the National Service for Plant Protection, Quarantine and Agrochemistry;



- The Register of legal and natural persons, producers and distributors of different seeds, provided by the Executive Agency Plant Variety Testing, Approbation and Seed Control;
- The National Register of Vines producers, Wine and Wine Products, provided by the Executive Agency for Vines and Wine ;
- The Registers of National Veterinary Service;
- The Public Register of Wholesalers with Grain, provide by the Fund “Grain”.

The Agricultural and Forestry Statistics Department in NSI uses additional information from the following registers:

- The Register of Tobacco Producers, provided by the Fund “Tobacco”;
- The Register of Commodity Exchanges and Commodity Brokers, provided by the Financial Supervision Commission;
- The Register of Agricultural Farms in the Republic of Bulgaria.

The NSI has signed bilateral agreements for access to or delivery of administrative information by the institution/ministry principal of all of the above listed registers. According to the agreements the information is provided electronically on annual basis. It is used extensively as a frame for different sample surveys; validation of data; assessment of data quality in agricultural statistics; and surveying producers prices of agricultural commodities.

The main source for the elaboration of Economic Accounts for Agriculture by the Agricultural and Forestry Statistics Department in NSI remains the Register of Agricultural Farms in the Republic of Bulgaria established on the basis of the census of agricultural units conducted in 2003 by MAF. The Register contains administrative and geographical data for agricultural farms such as type of ownership, cultivated area (total and by the type of crops), livestock by type etc. The information was received upon request by the NSI in electronic form and as a hard copy. It is used mainly as a framework for the economic accounts and for compilation of various agricultural statistics indicators in combination with data from other statistical surveys. Since this information was derived through census, it refers to the situation in the agricultural sector at a particular point of time. To be used continuously for statistical purposes by NSI, the Register has to be regularly updated with the data obtained through the structural surveys in agriculture carried out by the MAF in the years between the two censuses.

The Regional Statistics Department uses information for the revenues of municipalities from their budgets as presented by the General Tax Directorate of the Ministry of Finance for preparing the publication “Regions and Districts in the Republic of Bulgaria”. The data are provided annually to NSI in an electronic format. The lack of consistency in the codification of municipalities within the General Tax Directorate information system and the information system of the NSI poses the main challenge for the statisticians. All records need to be re-processed so to make them suitable for further use.

The Environment Statistics Department uses two administrative data sources for the compilation of environmental statistics, namely:

- Generated harmful waste from households – morphological composition and origin of treated waste.

Data are obtained from the Executive Environmental Agency of the Ministry of Environment and Water on the basis of a signed bilateral agreement. The periodicity of information is annual as the NSI receives it 10 months after the end of the reference year. Some delays in data delivery have been observed so far due to the changes in the legal basis for collecting the waste information and/or the reorganization of the information systems of Ministry of Environment and Water.

The need for using this data source has arisen from the national and international requirements for presenting exhaustive, coherent and with high quality information for the environment conditions in the country. Concerning the stability of the data source, the branch indicated that the coverage of the collected indicators is changing in time along with the changes of legal framework and methodology for their compilation which is directly related to the harmonization of national legislation with that of European Union. This administrative information is used predominantly for compilation of statistical indicators in combination with data from other statistical sources. Environmental statistics is disseminated nationally and internationally.

- Water supply through water supply firms (water use, areas under irrigation etc.)

The water supply firms are units belonging to hydro melioration sector. The number of registered firms performing this kind of activity is constantly increasing due to restructuring of the sector. The Executive Hydro Melioration Agency provides individual data for water supply firms annually, six months after the reference period. However, the quality and coverage of that data are extremely unsatisfactory. Regardless of the high level meetings with agency's officials that have been initiated by the NSI for improvement of environmental statistics, the data provided continue to be partial, not allowing the balance of water use to be compiled. This forced NSI to conduct through its regional offices an ad-hoc survey of water supply firms at the end of 2005. The NSI considers discontinuing the use of this administrative source in the future and including a regular survey of these units in its National Programme for Statistical Surveys.

### ***Demographic and Social Statistics***

The Consumer Price Index and Purchasing Power Parities Department uses the following administrative data sources:

- Monthly data for the electricity consumption of households according to the current tariff provided by the Ministry of Economy and Energy;
- Monthly data for the heating consumption of households according to the current tariff, provided by the State Energy and Water Regulatory Commission;

Additionally data from the Enterprise Resource Planning Systems of some companies are obtained:

- Sales of tobacco products by type, provided by the “Bulgartabac Holding”;
- Sales of cell phones for households, provided by the mobile operators and mobile distributors in Bulgaria;
- Detail information from the phone accounts of households, provided by the Bulgarian Telecommunication Company.

The above mentioned information is received upon written requests from NSI to the companies concerned once per year. The electronic delivery of data is supplemented usually by a delivery through a regular mail. The cooperation with these companies is considered to be very positive for the current statistical work as the data received are used to the maximum extent possible as a frame for sample surveys, for updating of existing databases, and in combination with data from other statistical surveys.

For the needs of current demographic statistics the *Population Statistics Department* uses information from the General Directorate “Civil Registration and Administrative Services” (CRAS) to the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works. The source for the births and deaths, marriages and divorces, migration as well as the address registration of the population is the National Register ESGRAON. According to the Decree of the Council of Ministers (1976) the data are provided monthly and they serve as a basis for the compilation and forecasting of demographic statistics indicators. Demographic data from the ESGRAON Register are used for updating of existing databases and in combination with other data from statistical sources. A problem for the statisticians working with demographic data is the law protecting the use of personal information, which limits the exchange of this information between institutions.

For the movement of Bulgarian citizens across the border (border checkpoints statistics) and of foreigners, residing in the country, the Population Statistics Department receives data from the Ministry of Interior. The same data appears to be an initial source for the compilation of tourism statistics.

One of the main tasks of the *Social Statistics Department* is to provide comprehensive information for the foreign tourists who have visited Bulgaria and for the Bulgarians who have been abroad as well as the information for the infrastructure of tourism activity in the country.

The Ministry of Interior, based on the signed agreement, provides each month two sets of data: (i) Aggregated data for foreigners who have entered Bulgaria by country, purpose of stay and means of transport; and (ii) Aggregated data for Bulgarian citizens traveled abroad by country and purpose of the travel.

Main source of data for the survey of tourism infrastructure is the Register of accommodation establishments by category. The register is received from the State Agency for Tourism. The information included in it concerns: the name of the

establishment (hotel, holiday house, recreation house etc); type of the ownership and name of the owner (s); the location (address); the category (in stars); number of beds. The main use of this register is as a frame for the subsequent sample surveys.

The main difficulty with the use of this administrative data source is related to the place of State Agency for Tourism within the Government structure. During the last year only, the Agency had changed three times the Ministry under which responsibility and control it was. As a result of these frequent transformations during 2005 the NSI received only once the necessary data despite that according to the signed agreement, the information should be submitted monthly.

The Health Statistics Department does a survey of the hospital establishments' personnel and practicing medical personnel and the hospital beds fund. The department uses information from the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) for all medical and dental entities having contracts with the Fund by region.

The information is obtained on the basis of an agreement between the institutions, according which data are submitted annually, four months after the end of the reference period. So far, the aggregated data from the NHIF have been used independently or in combination with data obtained from other statistical surveys. It is foreseen that this administrative source will increase its significance in the future with the full implementation of the Fund information system, when NSI will have access to the basic data of health establishments.

A complementary source of administrative data for compilation of health statistics is the information system of the National Centre for Health Information.

In the area of Education Statistics, the Social Statistics Department downloads the necessary information from the Register of the Licensed Centers for Vocational Education posted on the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training website. The Register contains information about the name of the center, number of the center's license, management board, location etc.

In 2006 the Register of Secondary Education (includes all educational levels up to the end of secondary education) was set up and also posted on the agency website. NSI has been granted with full access to it. So far, the register's information has been used predominantly for comparison with data for secondary schools, kindergartens and nurseries obtained through the relevant statistical survey and for validation of survey coverage.

## Concluding remarks

Following are the conclusions drawn by the review results:

1. Only a limited number of the existing 400 administrative data sources/registers, that have been established and maintained by various institutions and organizations during the past few years, is being used directly as a source for production of statistical data. However, the most significant for NSI registers and administrative information systems are utilized for the purposes of either economic or social statistics (Ministry of Finance information, National Revenue Agency, National Social Security Institute, National Health Insurance Fund, ESGRAON, Customs Agency data, Tax Authorities records).
2. Some departments have well established practice of efficient use of administrative information. These departments include: *(i)* Macroeconomic Statistics Department - using the Ministry of Finance and the Central Bank information; *(ii)* Transport Statistics Department – using information from the respective agencies for air, land and water transportation; *(iii)* Statistical Register Department using information from the National Social Security Institute and the National Revenue Agency (General Tax Directorate) *(iv)* Demographic Statistics Department- using information from the Unified System for Administrative Services on Citizen Status; and *(v)* Social Statistics Department – in the area of health statistics which is using information from the National Center for Health Information. Yet, not all statistical departments have fully investigated the potential of administrative data sources and their possible use for reducing the respondent burden. The NSI expects to make further benefits in this respect over the next few years as the full potential of the administrative information will be exploited.
3. The signed formal bilateral agreements between NSI and other government institutions, custodians of administrative databases are the foundation for obtaining the necessary administrative information for statistical purposes. The delivery of data is carried out in accordance with the deadlines specified in the agreements' terms. However, the cases of delayed data delivery, although rare, should be considered vigilantly, as they might result in delays of publication and dissemination of the relevant statistical information. Those delays are due either to the changes in the legal basis for collecting the administrative information or to the changes and/or reorganization of the information systems.
4. A special case of provided administrative information from Bulgarian National Bank, Ministry of Finance and National Center for Health Information is its aggregated form. This might hamper the compilation of official statistics at detailed activity or regional level.
5. The electronic way (CD or e-mail) is the main method of delivering the administrative information. The recent expansion of web technologies and the establishment of official websites of all government institutions, allow direct

access to and immediate download of aggregated administrative data. Often, the advanced web technologies not only reduce significantly the time of data delivery but they also allow for avoidance of bureaucracy, i.e. there is no more need of signing official agreements with government authorities concerned. Two important considerations arise in this aspect. First, the administrative information might be available well in advance before being posted on the web and the lack of formal agreements will not guarantee its timely delivery. Second, the structural changes in government institutions may prevent statistical authorities from accessing and using the administrative data.

6. The quality of some administrative data sources does not satisfy fully the statistical criteria. Moreover, the administrative information should be in conformity not only with national requirements, but also with requirements of the European Union. This is often the reason why particular administrative data sources have been rejected by the statisticians. To fill the gaps in statistical surveys, the statisticians are forced to seek alternative sources of information or to undertake additional processing of the administrative data. It is highly desirable that NSI find the legal mechanism to impact on the form and content of administrative sources in ways making these more useful for statistical purposes.
7. The major part of administrative data sources is used predominantly as a sampling frame for statistical surveys. For example, these are the registers of self-employed persons operating under different licensing regimes (hairdressers, notaries). Business statistics uses it in an analogous way, as in addition, it provides the necessary information for the update of units and their characteristics in the Statistical Business Register.
8. Some administrative data sources have multi domain significance – i.e. one and the same source is being used by two or more departments. Such sources are the National Social Security Institute data, Imports and Exports data, VAT register and Ministry of Finance information.
9. In addition to the statistical areas, where the administrative data sources have been extensively used so far, the prospects of enhancing their statistical application have also been investigated. These include (i) business statistics where the administrative information could be directly used for production of data for particular groups of units (below certain threshold); (ii) social statistics, mainly in the area of education and social protection.

Review of the use of administrative data sources for statistical purposes by  
the branches of the National Statistical Institute

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

Department .....

Branch .....

**ADMINISTRATIVE DATA SOURCE**

Name .....

Content of data  
.....  
.....

Institution/organization administering the data source .....

Basis for having access to the information in the administrative data source

Signed formal agreement	
Non-formal agreement	
Written request (letter)	

Frequency of the provided information

Weekly	
Monthly	
Quarterly	
Annually	
Upon request	

Delay after the deadline for submission of data .....

Method of delivering the information

By post	
By e-mail	
Through the web	

Dissemination format

Hard copy	
Electronic	

Stability of the administrative data source

Change in the coverage of units	
Changes in the information collected	

Statistical surveys in which administrative information is used

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....

How the administrative information is being used (more than one answer is possible)

As a frame for a sample survey	
For production of statistical data	
For update of an existing database	
In combination with data from other statistical surveys	
For cross-checking purposes	
For quality assessment of statistical data	
For analyses	
For classification	



Problems (difficulties) faced while using the administrative information

Problems related to the confidentiality of information	
Problems related to the use of information (need of additional processing of data, lack of comparability between software packages used, how up-to-date is the information)	
Others	

Suggestions for changes in the administrative data source

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Views about the future use of the administrative data source

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