

A. Summary of good practices (Chapter 5)

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5.2. Compilers of data in accordance with the statistical framework for measurement of the international supply of services are advised to use an SBR as the central sample frame for their survey programme in order to obtain better coverage, harmonize surveys, integrate trade in services statistics with other economic statistics, reduce costs and the response burden, prevent the double counting of statistical information and, above all, achieve better quality and more coherence in official trade in services statistics. A high-quality SBR helps to improve the efficiency and coherence of the national statistical system.

5.3. International guidelines for SBRs have recently been developed and are being continuously updated.^[1] Compilers are advised to refer to those guidelines for more detailed information on setting up and maintaining a statistical business register. The *Compiler's Guide* focuses mainly on the role of the SBR as a central sample frame for surveys related to international trade in services.

5.4. The maintenance and development of an SBRs should be well coordinated. It is good practice to have a clear agreement on the responsibilities of the agencies involved in the maintenance and development of the SBR in the national statistical system. It should be noted that in some countries, that process is handled by one dedicated unit in the national statistical system, instead of several units within the various substantive areas. The *Guide* advises that an appropriate legal framework be put in place for enabling statistical authorities to access and use administrative records, especially tax and social security records, to maintain the SBR.

5.5. It is good practice for the SBR maintenance process to be based to a large degree on the use of administrative sources, such as the administrative company register, the register of sole proprietors, the register of government units and the VAT register, as well as tax records and records of the social security administration. To ensure that the SBR provides a solid basis for the collection of the data needed for measuring the international supply of services, it is further advised to update the SBR on the basis of such sources as settlements and international payments databases, trade registers, the foreign direct investment (FDI) register, balance sheet information and other specific registers available from trade associations or regulatory bodies.

5.6. It is very important that the SBR use the definitions from the 2008 SNA for its statistical units. To ensure a more efficient collection of data on the international supply of services by various modes, the *Guide* advises the inclusion in the SBR of additional indicators providing information on international transactions of the registered entities, as well as on turnover, economic activity, number of employees, balance sheet variables and data on foreign ownership, in order to properly carry out the selection and stratification of the statistical units, sampling and estimation. It is also good practice to use the SBR to identify the mode 4 self-employed population, as merchants and small manufacturers, including self-employed and sole-proprietor companies, should be registered in it.

5.7. While it is good practice for the national statistical system to aim to maintain one multipurpose SBR, in practice, it may be useful to have a tailor-made satellite register consisting of all enterprises that are engaged in the international supply of services. If established, it is good practice for such a satellite register to be maintained by a dedicated unit within the agency responsible for the compilation of trade in services statistics. Such a unit should, in particular, systematically update the satellite register, using the information available in the central SBR, and actively participate in the harmonization of the content of the two registers.

Next: [B. Statistical business registers](#)

[1] See *Guidelines on Integrated Economic Statistics*, United Nations publication, chap. 5, sect. C; see also information on the Task Force established to draft international guidelines on statistical business registers, available from www.unecce.org/task_force_business_registers.html.