

D.1. Structural business statistics surveys

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6.97. Structural business statistics (SBS) surveys are designed to provide detailed economic and financial data about the activities of domestic resident business enterprises. They may encompass all types of activities or can be specifically tailored for firms primarily engaged in specific sectors, such as wholesale and retail trade activities. Reporting and statistical units for such surveys can be identified at several levels of consolidation, ranging from establishments (single physical locations or local activity units) to fully consolidated enterprises that may include several subsidiaries and operate in several different sectors of the economy.

6.98. SBS surveys can be used to provide FATS measures only for inward FATS, by identifying the subset of resident domestic corporations that meet the relevant criteria for statistical units and for which the recommended data items are either already collected for other purposes or can be added to the surveys to meet FATS requirements. As described in chapter 15, such an approach requires the existence of indicators of foreign ownership in the domestic business register, a sample frame that meet FATS requirements or the ability to link SBS data with an FDI survey or an FDI register through the use of common identifiers. That approach was implemented in the United States, i.e., the linking of inward FDI enterprise data with the more comprehensive and detailed data collected every five years at the establishment level in the economic censuses. Where existing domestic statistics are used as the source of information, links to FDI data can be used to supplement SBS data with information, such as by identifying the country of the controlling entity.

6.99. In general, SBS surveys cover most of the variables of interest identified in MSITS 2010, or include the relevant elements to compile them. However, in many cases, some of the elements or breakdowns are absent. When envisaging the use of SBS surveys for FATS, compilers are advised to coordinate with statisticians in charge of the structural business statistics data collection program, to identify what is already available and what would need to be added in the surveys. That would need to be established according to the priorities identified, keeping the burden for respondents to a minimum, as SBS surveys are generally quite long. The FATS variables often covered by existing surveys are the following: sales, employment, purchases of goods and services for intermediation consumption and for resale (often covering only goods), assets, compensation of employees, taxes on income and investment. Breakdowns of those variables are often included, and compilers will need to investigate how they can be used in the context of MSITS 2010. Some variables, for example on research and development, may be included or covered by supplementary surveys. Finally, the forms may include some additional variables of interest to the compiling economy.

6.100. The following additional characteristics are often absent from existing SBS surveys, but are of interest in the context of services:

- (a) For sales and turnover, a breakdown into sales of goods and sales of services (in the first instance) and, if possible, a further breakdown into the main categories of services (a longer-term goal), at least those of interest to the compiling economy, and compatible with EBOPS 2010;
- (b) The separate identification of (i) sales of services made in the host economy, (ii) exports to the economy of the ultimate controlling institutional unit (UCI) and (iii) to third economies;
- (c) Other geographical breakdowns of sales and exports and purchases and imports of services would also be useful. If possible, a distinction should be made between affiliated and unaffiliated parties. However, given the higher burden that may entail, the possibility offered by SBS surveys may be limited (see also chapter 15, sections E.1 and E.3);
- (d) For employment, the identification of non-resident employment, including intra-corporate transferees.

6.101. Using SBS surveys to collect FATS data has a few advantages. The FATS variables will be compatible with measures of the domestic economy. Moreover, such surveys allow FATS variables to be compiled without, or with little, added burden to reporters and relying on fewer resources than a separate data collection program. However, it may be difficult to include the full range of recommended FATS data items because of limitations in the domestic statistics.

Next: [D.2. Foreign direct investment surveys in the context of foreign affiliates statistics](#)