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**Joint ECE/EUROSTAT Seminar
on Business Registers
(Geneva, 28-29 June 2001)**

**BUSINESS REGISTERS IN THE STATISTICAL AND INFORMATIONAL SYSTEM OF
THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA**

Summary of the Note by the Statistics Serbia¹, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

1. Quarter of a century long experience in maintenance and development of statistical and administrative business registers in the Republic of Serbia (FR of Yugoslavia) shows that registers play significant role in the formation of information infrastructure of society. On the other side, they serve as a powerful foundation for statistical researches. To accomplish these functions, registers must have as full as possible coverage of business entities, information in the data basis must be of adequate quality, they must be accurate, reliable and integrated in the whole system.
2. Nowadays, Statistics Serbia, besides its statistical activities, has a central role in development of the information system of the country. This could generate useful results because of statistical experience with standards and permanent efforts to harmonize them with international recommendations.
3. Business register maintained in the statistical system is now comprised of two separate parts: Register of Classification Units and Central Register of Shops. Updating, methodological solutions, organizational structure in these two registers are different. Both of these registers are, in fact, more administrative than statistical.

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4. Two different problems aggravate maintenance of the mentioned registers. Transition to a new Classification of Industries (NACE, Rev.1) is not yet completed with various consequences on registers itself. Enactment of this Classification from the beginning of this year was the last warning for all legal persons to accomplish realignment with all laws as soon as possible.

5. More serious problem for statistics, as well as for the whole country is disorder in the address system. An adequate financial support is needed to solve this problem on the basis of recently adopted project on Central Register of the Streets and House Numbers. Also, it is of great importance that different participants (Ministry of Justice and local government, Cadastre Office of Republic of Serbia, Statistics Serbia (Information and Statistical Office of The Republic of Serbia), bodies of municipalities, etc) act jointly and in full cooperation. After establishing the address system database, all administrative and statistical registers would be of a quite better quality.

6. Statistics Serbia must create statistical Business Register. Until now there exist predominantly administrative Register of Classification Units and Central Register of Shops. Updating of such register should be organized independently from administrative business register. Of course, identification number of legal or natural person is stable and unchangeable code number, as long as units are in operation. Through this code all data from all the sources could be connected with adequate legal or natural person. Confidentiality of data must be respected, in the future even more then now, because of greater possibilities to create comprehensive picture of the individual units, which offer new developments.

7. To accomplish complete coverage of all economic subjects in the country, there are initiatives lately to develop Central Register of Agricultural Farms. With this register and in conjunction with registers of legal and natural persons all economic subjects will be covered. There will be numerous benefits for statistics, government and other users if this register comes into operation very soon.
