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**COOPERATION BETWEEN VARIOUS USERS OF A STATISTICAL BUSINESS
REGISTER WITHIN THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL OFFICE
The Swedish experience**

Note by Statistics Sweden *

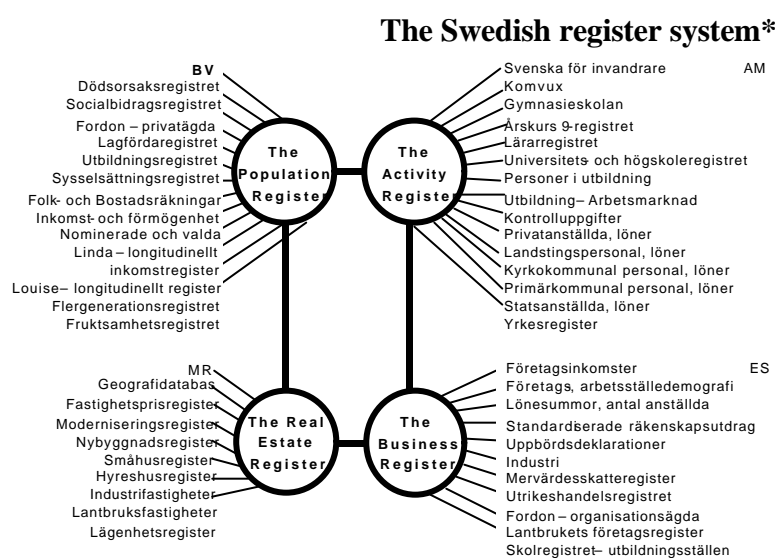
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Introduction

1. The extent and nature of cooperation between the users of a business register depends largely on the setting. The Swedish Business Register serves a twofold purpose, being both an administrative and a statistical register. Its coverage and role are largely steered by regulations and ordinances, and by agreements within the Swedish and European statistics systems. To a great extent, the conditions for internal cooperation are set by the role of the Business Register in the Swedish system of economics statistics and the Swedish register system.

The Swedish register system

Figure 1



*Translation to English in Annex 1

2. Statistics Sweden's Business Register is just one component of the Swedish register system that is in the process of construction. The Swedish register system (Figure 1) consists of four basic registers:

- **The Population Register** is made up of basic data for all Swedish residents. Linkage between the Population Register and other registers is made possible by the unique civic registration number established for each resident.
- **The Activity Register** consists of data on education, occupation, earnings, etc. Linkage with other registers is made possible by civic registration numbers in the case of data on individuals and by corporate registration numbers or local unit numbers in the case of enterprises. This register allows information about an enterprise and its employees to be linked. For example, industry-level statistics on educational levels, wages and salaries, etc., can be derived from this register.

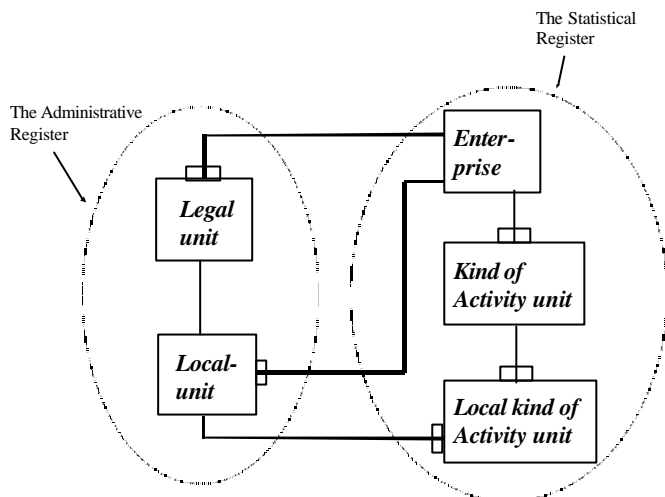
- **The Real Estate Register** is composed of data on properties, dwellings and addresses. Linkage to other registers is made possible by civic registration numbers, property registration numbers and address data.
 - **The Business Register** consists of data on enterprises carrying on business in Sweden and their local units. Linkage to other registers is made possible by the enterprise's corporate registration number, local unit number and address data.
3. Apart from these basic registers, the register system is made up of a number of sub-registers created for either administrative or statistical purposes. These sub-registers bring together data from one or more other registers, sometimes combined with other statistical information.
4. All four basic registers are kept by Statistics Sweden. The construction of the register system and maintenance of key variables requires a great amount of work. A Population and Housing Census based on administrative sources is planned for 2005 and to build up the statistics required to accomplish this task, cooperation must be stepped up. At present cooperation exists between the Business Register and a range of partners, including:
- The Activity Register, so as to ensure that the match between data on individuals and data on enterprises is as good as possible. To this end, each autumn the Business Register sends out a questionnaire to all enterprises with more than one local unit. In 2001 we plan to expand cooperation.
 - The Real Estate Register, with a view to raising the quality of address data. We also have a cooperation project for linkage between agricultural enterprises in the Business Register and the units in the Register of Agriculture.
 - The Population Register, for the self-employed.

Statistics Sweden's Business Register: a combined statistical and administrative register

5. Statistics Sweden's Business Register, FDB, has operated in its present form since December 1999. FDB builds on and extends the earlier business register CFAR. Whereas CFAR was a purely administrative register, FDB is a combined administrative and statistical register. FDB implements two EU regulations and incorporates statistical registers previously existing at Statistics Sweden's Economic Statistics (ES) Department.

Figure 2

Units and parts of the Swedish Business Register, FDB



6. The old business register contained two administrative units that were also used as statistical units in drawing samples for surveys. The statistical register was created as a frame when the sample was drawn using Statistics Sweden's system for coordinated samples, SAMU. The new Business Register (Figure 2) has added a statistical register that is always consistent with the administrative register. As a result, it is possible to draw coordinated samples considerably more frequently. In principle, this can be done at any point in time whatsoever.

7. The expansion of the register has entailed more far-reaching cooperation on content with methodological experts at Statistics Sweden. Some of the topics discussed are:

- Definitions of units and variables
- Continuity rules for units
- Register quality
- Other questions relating to contents

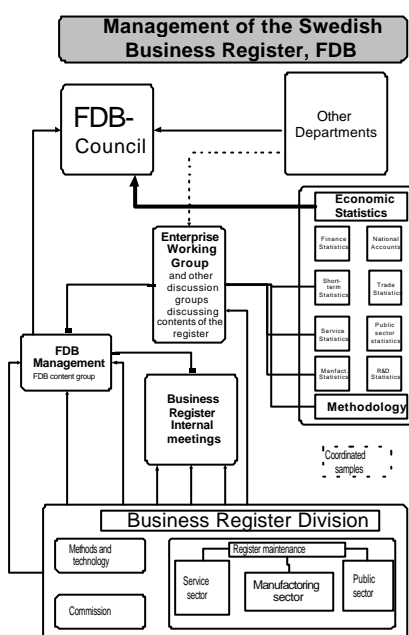
8. A further consequence of the expansion of the Business Register to include a statistical register was that the statistical registers that already existed (above all at the Economics Statistics Department) were superseded by the new Business Register. The register maintenance performed on these registers was transferred to the new Business Register. The transfer has entailed more extensive cooperation on register maintenance between the Business Register and employees responsible for the different statistical products. This cooperation is described in Chapter 4.

Management of the Swedish Business Register

9. As mentioned above, the expansion of the Business Register to include a statistical register has led to more extensive cooperation on questions of content. One effect of this has been more far-reaching requirements for management. There is a greater need for consultation and agreement when taking decisions on contents and other issues affecting the register.

Figure 3

Management of the Swedish Business Register, FDB



10. To ensure that this process of consultation and agreement works, management of the register is organised in accordance with the following plan:

11. **The Business Register Division** (or Programme) is responsible for running the Register. At present the programme has a staff of 35 who can be divided into three groups:

- Register Maintenance, which in turn is divided into three sub-groups, one specialising in service industries, one specialising in manufacturing and construction industries, and one specialising in the public sector. Cooperation with register maintenance is described in the next chapter.
- Method and Technology, whose responsibilities include matters of content and IT issues in the Register. This group serves the programme in an expert capacity and cooperates broadly across programme boundaries with other parts of Statistics Sweden on issues such as definitions, classifications, IT, etc. This group also largely takes care of international contacts.
- The Commissions Group. Some of the variables in the Business Register are in the public domain. The Commissions Group sells information from this public part of the register and also

engages in joint commissions-related projects, cooperating with partners within and outside Statistics Sweden.

12. **The FDB Content Group** and other internal forums discuss content issues and other issues affecting the Register within the framework of the Register Programme.

13. **The Enterprise Working Group** and other discussion groups are groups within Statistics Sweden as a whole that discuss content issues in the Register. They include persons representing the largest users of the Register and methodological experts.

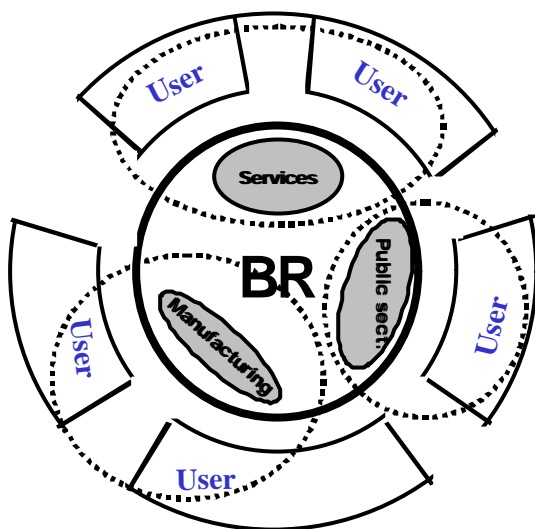
14. **The FDB Council.** Decisions relating to Business Register contents are taken by the Director of the Economic Statistics Department. Questions that require new decisions are prepared by the FDB Council. The role of this Council, which is an internal Statistics Sweden council consisting of representatives of all major users of register information, is purely advisory.

Cooperation in register maintenance

15. The expansion of the Business Register to include an integrated statistical register required increased cooperation in register maintenance between staff employed at the Business Register and those responsible for statistical products. Register maintenance at FDB was reorganised to meet these new requirements and was converted from source-organised to user-oriented, i.e. staff working on register maintenance are to work mainly in interaction with one or other of our largest users. At present register maintenance is divided into three groups, one cooperating with users interested in manufacturing industries, one with users interested in services and one with users interested in the public sector (Figure 4).

Figure 4

Cooperation in Register Maintenance



16. The reorganisation of register maintenance was a great change for both staff and users of the Business Register. To make it work, Register staff need to know more about statistics production and employees responsible for statistics production need to know more about the Business Register. A far-reaching understanding of one another's working methods is also needed, as well as of the computer systems and other tools employed by each party.

17. In order to improve cooperation and to make it a natural element of ongoing work in the long term, staff from the Business Register and staff responsible for statistical products meet regularly to discuss how to proceed. To make cooperation as efficient as possible, solutions have been tailored to fit each individual statistical product. Measures that have been taken include:

- General Business Register course. All new employees in statistical production and others who feel they need it are offered a course to teach them the basics of the Business Register and its computer system.
- Advanced courses in register maintenance. Persons responsible for statistical products who are more actively involved in register maintenance take a course more directly tailored to their needs.
- Seminars – presentations. Short presentations and seminars are given on the products and services offered by each party.
- Meetings by product. The Business Register and staff/those responsible for a specific product meet to discuss ways of improving their cooperation.

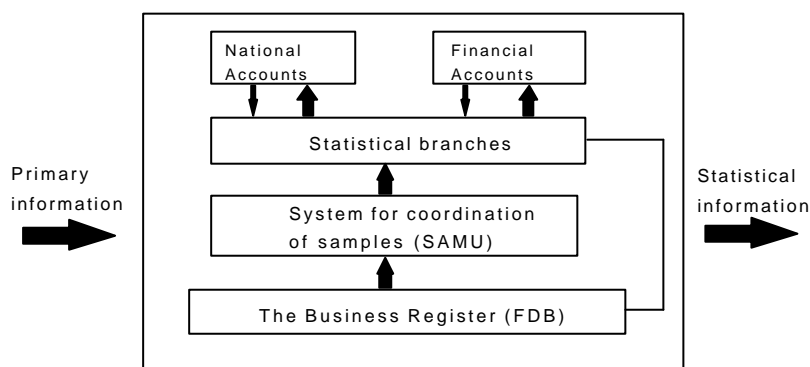
- Traineeships. A system of traineeships is being developed. Staff from the statistical products work at the Business Register for a shorter period, and vice versa, for the sake of increased knowledge of subject areas.
- Persons to contact are appointed at the Business Register and the statistical products, to ensure that the dialogue functions as smoothly as possible.
- Regular follow-up meetings are held.

The coordinated sample system, SAMU

18. The Business Register constitutes the base for the Swedish economics statistics system (Figure 5). If the Business Register is to serve as the instrument of coordination in economic statistics, as envisaged, it is essential that all users employ the same units, classifications, etc. One important element in this coordination is the use of Statistics Sweden's system for coordinated samples, SAMU. SAMU has two important purposes: to be an instrument of coordination and to be a tool for spreading out the burden of response among SMEs.

Figure 5

The Swedish economics statistics system



19. Coordinated samples are produced with the help of SAMU four times per year. The work associated with drawing the samples requires substantial internal cooperation between three players at Statistics Sweden – methodologists, product managers and the Business Register.

ANNEX 1

Swedish Register system

Translation of the registers presented in Figure 1

ANNEX 1

Swedish Register system

Translation of the registers presented
in Figure 1

Population Register

Causes of Death Register
Social Assistance Register
Vehicles – privately owned
Register of Criminal Convictions
Education Register
Employment Register
Population and Housing Censuses
Personal Income and Assets
Election Candidates and Candidates
Elected
Longitudinal Income Register
Longitudinal Register (Louise)
Multi-Generation Register
Fertility Register

Real Estate Register

Geographical Database
Real Estate Price Register
Modernisation Register
New Construction Register
Register of One- and Two-Dwelling
Buildings
Register of Multi-Dwelling Buildings
Industrial Real Estate
Agricultural Real Estate
Register of Dwellings

Activity Register

Swedish for Immigrants
Adult Education
Upper Secondary School
Year 9 Register
Register of Teachers
Higher Education Register
Persons Enrolled in Education
Education-Labour Market Register
Income Statements
Private Sector Employees (Wages
and Salaries)
County Council Employees (Wages
and Salaries)
Church of Sweden Employees
(Wages and Salaries)
Municipal Employees (Wages and
Salaries)
Central Government Employees
(Wages and Salaries)
Register of Occupations

Business Register

Business Income
Demography of Enterprises and
Local Units
Payrolls and Number of Employees
Standardised Accounts
Monthly Tax Returns
Manufacturing
VAT Register
Foreign Trade Register
Vehicles – company-owned
Agricultural Enterprises Register
Register of Schools