

Informing large enterprises to get prepared for a new survey: some analysis results

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Abstract

In close collaboration with the Dutch Central Bank, Statistics Netherlands (CBS) redesigned the Quarterly Survey on Finances of Enterprises. The questionnaire collects detailed financial data from the 350 largest non-financial enterprises in the Netherlands, and is input for National Accounts. In 2014, a new set of required data was developed (the conceptual data model), which served as the basis for the new survey. In the years 2015-2018 a project team developed the new combined web questionnaires in a number of steps, having the conceptual data model as a starting point. The survey was fielded in the 2nd quarter of 2019, asking for Q1 data.

Because of the complex structure of the new questionnaire its introduction would have major implications for businesses (e.g. those with a significant presence abroad and/or a complex response process). A feasibility study, conducted in 2015, showed that enterprises liked to have up to one year to get prepared. Consequently, the information campaign started one-and-a-half year before the start of the survey, in December 2017. This campaign consisted of three phases:

1. Pre-field phase: a pilot year 2018, in which businesses could get prepared. To nudge them to use the new questionnaire, several communication instruments were used (simple folder, tailored motivational calls, business information day).
2. Field phase: The survey started in April 2019 (on Q1-2019). Apart from the usual advance and reminder letters, businesses that had not yet logged-in were called on the phone and assisted in case of questions.
3. Post-field phase, starting after the survey deadline, included enforcement.

This strategy is evaluated thoroughly, e.g. by analysing the effect of the pre-field communication: did businesses actually get prepared? The first analysis results indicate a positive association between login behaviour in the pilot and response behaviour in the Q1 fieldwork: businesses who showed some login activities in the pilot, showed a better response behaviour in the Q1 fieldwork. During the field stage response rate progress was monitored, and the effect of the actions analysed. The presentation will focus on the effects of the pilot on login and response behaviour during the Q1 fieldwork.

Keywords

Large enterprises, Getting commitment, Response behavior

