CENTRALIZED STATISTICS FROM DECENTRALIZED ADMINISTRATIVE REGISTERS

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Administrative registers and data

• Collected primarily for administrative purposes
• Linked to different kind of administrative processes and decision making
  – E.g. taxation, granting of social benefits, decisions on pensions, administrative permits, administrative registrations of people and businesses
• Kept and maintained by different authorities belonging to various government departments
• Decision-making and corresponding registers might be decentralized to the local or regional authorities.
• In electronic form; regulated by law
How the law defines the register

• the purpose of the register
• the entities which should be registered and their identifiers,
• what data should be kept in registers (the content of the register),
• how the register is updated
• confidentiality rules of the register and its data
• the authorities who are responsible of establishing and maintaining the register and its data, the obligations and responsibilities of the authorities in question
Statistics and administration

- The use of administrative data creates a strong link between official statistics (OS) and administration
- Dependence of OS on administrative authorities increases
- **Close and continuous co-operation and proper co-ordination is a necessity**
- Assessment of the quality of administrative register/data before any statistical use has to be made
- Continuous monitoring of changes is necessary
- Borderline between OS and administration should be clear
- Only one-way data flow: from administration to statistics
- **The decentralised administrative registers demand a lot more work from OS than the centralised ones**
Use of administrative data in different statistical domains

• Most common in business statistics
  – tax data, trade registers, customs authorities’ data files, payment control data of central banks...

• Social and demographic statistics
  – tax data, data from pension and social security systems,
  – population registers

• Environmental statistics
  – a lot of opportunities to use administrative data, e.g. environmental permits
Ways of utilising administrative data

• As an identification tool of statistical units
• For the updating of statistical registers
• As sampling frames and updates
• As basic data as such
• To supplement information obtained with surveys
• As part of combined data collection
• For register estimations
• To improve the estimation of variables
• For the imputation of statistical data
• For non-response control and research
• To produce completely new structural and change statistics
Some common problems

- Timeliness of administrative data
- Limited data content
- Coverage of administrative data
  - combined data collection of administrative data and surveys
- Definitions and concepts differ from statistical ones
  - quality and usability of administrative data should be carefully analysed
- Conclusions: decision of using administrative data should be done by statisticians on a case by case basis; continuous methodological work needed
About benefits

• Cost savings for official statistics, especially in case of register based population census
  – Less cost savings in case of decentralised registers
• Some cost savings to NSI’s in other data collection, but not necessarily any net cost benefits
• Lowered response burden to enterprises, but not so much to households (except in case of population census)
• Quality and relevance of statistics can be improved
• Researchers and other users gain a lot
Co-ordination and co-operation

- Contact persons in NSI and in each register authority and for each register
- Centralised co-ordination in NSI
- Documentation and communication
- Regular high-level meetings
- Strong support from legislation
- Strong support from central government
Thank you for your kind attention!