

Business Register – Survey Description

The Business Register Division (BRD) maintains the Business Register (BR) which is the central repository of information on businesses in Canada. The BR is used as the principal frame for the economic statistics program of Statistics Canada (STC). The Business Register's role is to provide Statistics Canada with a comprehensive quality frame in terms of coverage and a set of stratification variables such as industrial classification, gross business income, number of employees and total assets.

The BRD monitors the ever-changing world of business organizations, the application of accounting practices, information technology, survey methodology and data collection techniques. As a result, the BRD is able to review the impact and implement corrective measures to ensure an effective and efficient integration of the conduct of business surveys. The BR stores statistical information regarding the composition of the population of businesses in Canada, in terms of their organization, industrial activity, size, geography and their dynamic evolution over time.

The BRD provides facilities to generate upon request accurate mailing lists required to initiate survey data collection. The BR is also used to track response burden imposed on individual Canadian businesses by Statistics Canada and provide relevant information to manage respondent issues.

The Business Register is updated by various sources such as the BN Master File, survey feedback and profiling. The BN Master File is generated monthly from Canada Customs and Revenue Agency. Survey feedback is an interactive process between the regional offices, survey areas and the Business Register that signals a change or correction involving a business. Profiling of large and medium sized businesses is the process of conducting in-depth telephone or on-site interviews with senior company representatives so as obtain all pertinent financial information, relationships, and structures about the company within a specified time frame.

The Business Register contains inter-corporate information for large enterprises so as to create a family of corporations under the same ownership and control. For small enterprises, the structural information is limited to the recording of one record representing an autonomous business unit. All enterprises on the BR are subject to manual and automatic classification systems such as: the System of National Accounts (SNA), North American Industrial Classification (NAICS), Standard Geographical Classification (SGC), Country of Control and the 1980 Standard Industrial Classification System (SICC & SICE).

The structure of the BR is based on an Information Model which covers real world and economic survey concepts. The model contains five main entity groups/files: Administrative, Legal, Operating, Statistical and Survey Collection.

1. The Administrative File contains frame data from the business number (BN) file of Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA).
2. The Legal Entity File contains data relative to the actual legal representation of a business or organization in Canada.
3. The Operating Entity File contains data comprised of the actual business operations of its associated legal entity.
4. The Statistical Entity File contains records derived from the operating file for the purpose of tabulating data in a statistically meaningful way. The Business Register can produce statistical models, in which every business, from a multi-national conglomerate to a corner grocery store, can be represented in a standardized form. The Collection Entity File is a repository of economic survey questionnaires for the various survey divisions that have derived their survey frame from the Business Register.