

**21th Meeting of the Wiesbaden Group on Business Registers
- International Roundtable on Business Survey Frames**

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Country progress report 2008

**Country: United Kingdom
Reporter: John Perry**

Institution: Office for National Statistics

1. Organisation and Population of the Business Registers

In April 2008 the Business Register Unit was restructured. The unit was split into two parts:

- Business Register Strategy and Outputs (BRSO)
- Business Register Operations (BRO)

The majority of the staff moved to the business register operations team, who are responsible for data inputs and updating of the IDBR. A team of 14 moved to the BRSO, and this team, headed by John Perry, is responsible for development, outputs and computer systems. John Perry remains responsible for the overall register system, but the operational staff report to the Business Data Division within ONS. In exchange, BRSO has gained responsibility for the Structural Business Survey to provide a coherent approach to benchmark employment estimates and for PRODCOM, the annual production survey, with which will improve coherence of classifications on the business register.

2. Progress and Developments in the Past Year

Implementation of SIC 2007, the UK version of NACE Rev2, onto the register by January 2008.

Completion of business register changes to increase the information held for global enterprise groups.

Realisation of full benefits of improved data matching techniques in removing duplication from the business register.

A large pilot (10,000 questionnaires) of the new joint register updating and annual employment survey was mailed out in September. This survey, called the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) will also pilot the collection of local unit turnover.

Change of business register to new computing platform.

Size of the register (March 2008)

| | Count (thousands) | Employment (millions) |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Proven enterprises | 732 | 24.2 |
| Unproven enterprises based on : | | |
| - VAT traders with PAYE schemes | 499 | 1.8 |
| - VAT traders without PAYE schemes | 627 | 1.2 |
| - PAYE only | 304 | 0.7 |
| - Managed Service Companies | 84 | 0.1 |
| - Other | 194 | 1.0 |
| Total enterprises | 2440 | 29.0 |

3. Issues solved, problems and future plans

Future plans

Build on the work on global enterprise groups to develop and use the Eurostat EuroGroups Register.

A new publication on business demography that is consistent with the approach that Eurostat is developing will be published in November. This will include both births and deaths for 2007. The deaths figure will include an estimate of reactivations.

Improved access for customers to data through exploiting a new ONS publication hub.

Problems

General background of cuts in resources within the ONS putting pressure on quality and outputs and limiting scope for system development.

Government data sharing initiatives not yet delivering integrated administrative registration systems

Internet data collection not yet a reality.