



Preface

Demand for statistics on business demography has grown and developed considerably in recent years. Data on births and deaths of enterprises, their life expectancy and the important role they play in economic growth and productivity, as well as the information they provide for tackling social demographic issues, are increasingly requested by policy makers and analysts alike. Some of these data form part of the Structural Indicators measuring the progress towards the European Union's goals set out in the Growth and Jobs Strategy. In addition, business demography is a core element of the OECD's Entrepreneurship Indicators Project, where the OECD and Eurostat are collaborating to develop a framework for the regular and harmonised measurement of entrepreneurial activity and the factors that enhance or impede it. The OECD Project is supported by a grant from the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, though the contents of this Manual are solely the responsibility of the OECD and Eurostat.

This joint manual reflects these growing needs and developments and the agreement between Eurostat and the OECD for a common methodological framework for business demography statistics that maximises their international comparability and relevance, recognising and addressing the different conditions and legal frameworks that govern the production of business statistics at the national level.

At EU level, the production of statistics on business demography has a legal basis with the entry into force of the recast Council and European Parliament Regulation on Structural Business Statistics. This manual describes the methodology for the data collection stipulated in Annex IX of this regulation, covering all enterprises including self-employment. In addition, the manual was endorsed by the OECD Committee on Statistics. It includes indicators that are essential for comparability across OECD countries and the investigation of entrepreneurship, namely indicators of employer enterprises, and, importantly, high growth enterprises, particularly young high-growth enterprises, referred to here as 'gazelles'.

A number of experts from Eurostat, the OECD and national statistical offices have developed this manual over several years. It is the result of many consultations and discussions. We would like to thank all those who have contributed.

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