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Profiling and Globalisation

The implementation of ISTAT automatic profiling to support the delineation of complex enterprises

Abstract

Globalisation calls for comparable statistics in Europe and around the world, thus necessarily implying a combination between the pure economic view of business groups and the statistical treatment of enterprises groups. Manual and automatic profiling techniques go in this direction. The major aim of profiling is indeed to examine complex enterprise groups (MNEs) in order to ensure high qualitative standards and suitable data comparability at international level and to establish a new statistical unit (the so-called ENT) within the group. However a similar approach is to be used to analyze also truncated and domestic enterprise groups at national level. Some economies such as Italy are characterized by the presence of a large number of complex enterprises, that can not all be delineated with only manual profiling approaches. Automatic profiling is a good method too, if all the necessary information on the organizational structure of the groups are available from the system of BR, while the manual profiling is applied only to a selection of very complex groups and with a meaningful impact on global economy. Depending on the structure of the groups of enterprises to be profiled, automatic algorithms slightly differ in the treatment and delineation of the statistical units. The automatic profiling developed by ISTAT exploits the organizational structures of organizations in line with a theme first explored by Chandler (1962), the existence of an intimate relationship between the strategy of the firm and its organizational structure. This activity implies a large investment on the Business Register system in term of information interoperability, accuracy and timeliness of data; the introduction of the new statistical unit (ENT) de facto involves the need to define and introduce a new concept, 'the representative unit,' that assigns to the enterprise its identifying characters.

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