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Quality and Coverage of Statistical Business Registers

Efforts to Enhance the Quality of the Economic Census in Japan

Abstract

The Business Register in Japan, formally called the Establishment Frame Database, is developed by integrating the results of the Economic Census, various statistical surveys and administrative data sources. Moreover, the information on all establishments and enterprises is kept updated on a regular basis.

The enhancement of the quality of the “Economic Census” is indispensable to enhance the quality of the “Business Register,” because the main data source for the “Business Register” is the “Economic Census.” The “Economic Census” consists of two surveys: one is the “Economic Census for Business Frame” which is to clarify the basic structure of establishments and enterprises; in other words, it inquires as to “address,” “name,” “employees” and so on. The other is the “Economic Census for Business Activity” which is to clarify the situation of economic activities of establishments and enterprises; in other words, it inquires as to “accounting matters such as the sales amount and expenses” and items which are more detailed than the “Economic Census for Business Frame.” With these two, the “Economic Census” clarifies the condition of economic activities of establishments and enterprises, and grasps the inclusive industrial structure.

In the latest Economic Census, the “Economic Census for Business Activity in 2016,” we introduced, for the first time, an online survey as one of the responding options for all establishments and enterprises. This contributed to reduce the burden on respondents and to enhance the convenience. As a result, the response rate was improved. Also, regarding aggregation of the data, we worked to enhance the quality of statistics by the imputation using past survey results and public information on the respondents for the unanswered items.

We will explain the efforts to enhance the quality of the “Economic Census for Business Activity in 2016” from the perspective of the survey method and the aggregate procedure for the data.