Component of Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11-522-X
Statistics Canada's International Symposium Series: Proceedings

Article

Symposium 2008:
Data Collection: Challenges, Achievements and New Directions

Measurement and Follow-up of the Response Burden from Enterprises by the Register of Data Providers Concerning Enterprises and Organizations at Statistics Sweden

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2009

Statistics Canada Statistique Canada

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Proceedings of Statistics Canada Symposium 2008
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Niklas Notstrand and Elisabeth Bolin[1]

Abstract

The issue of reducing the response burden is not new. Statistics Sweden works in different ways to reduce response burden and to decrease the administrative costs of data collection from enterprises and organizations. According to legislation Statistics Sweden must reduce response burden for the business community. Therefore, this work is a priority. There is a fixed level decided by the Government to decrease the administrative costs of enterprises by twenty-five percent until year 2010. This goal is valid also for data collection for statistical purposes. The goal concerns surveys with response compulsory legislation. In addition to these surveys there are many more surveys and a need to measure and reduce the burden from these surveys as well. In order to help measure, analyze and reduce the burden, Statistics Sweden has developed the Register of Data providers concerning enterprises and organization (ULR). The purpose of the register is twofold, to measure and analyze the burden on an aggregated level and to be able to give information to each individual enterprise which surveys they are participating in.

1. Introduction

The paper is divided into four chapters. Chapter one describes the structure of the Swedish Register of Data Providers concerning enterprises and organizations and the possibilities to measure response burden from it. Chapter two describes three different methods for measuring response burden. In chapter three, the results from measure the burden in different study domains from the ULR are shown in three tables. Table 3-1 shows the number of enterprises burdened from surveys in the Register of Data providers concerning enterprises and organization during the year 2007. Table 3-2 shows average time in thousand hours and provider cost in million Euros. Those variables are broken down by section from ULR. Table 3-3 shows average time and provider cost variables distributed on aggregated level of enterprises size classes (in terms of employees) from ULR. In chapter four, conclusions are presented and some outlines for further development of the ULR register to better calculated average time.

1.1 The Swedish Register of Data Providers concerning enterprises and organizations

Background

An information system on response burden was developed some years ago (integrated in the system for co-ordination of frame populations and samples from the Business Register at Statistics Sweden i.e. SAMU system) which was based on the surveys included in the SAMU. The main goal was to include all business surveys at Statistics Sweden in the information system. However it proved to be too complicated to collect all needed information from the surveys which were not included in the SAMU. Other problems occurred when the sampling unit didn't coincide with the observation unit. This entailed that users had to update units in the sample due to special occasions such as merges, split-offs, break-ups and take-overs. These events could occur during the time elapsed between the sample occasion and the time of questionnaire send out. Since it was very important that the information on response burden was correct and up-to-date a discussion started about an alternative system based on

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directly collected information from all business surveys. This system was built 2004 and has developed to the system we now call the Register of data providers concerning enterprises and organization (ULR).

The response burden is always calculated regarding the enterprise unit level independently of what type of unit the survey is based on. An enterprise, with more than one of its lower level linked units included in the survey, is considered once in terms of number of surveys but the responding time is accumulated.

The response burden in the ULR system is measured in terms of number of surveys the enterprise is included in. We use the average time which is an estimated time from the survey producer of the statistics at Statistics Sweden. (Measurement error occurs in average amount of time enterprises filling in questionnaires. Not all surveys give the enterprise opportunity to answer questions about the average time it took to fill in the questionnaires.)

1.2 Overview of the ULR system

1.2.1 Purpose and use

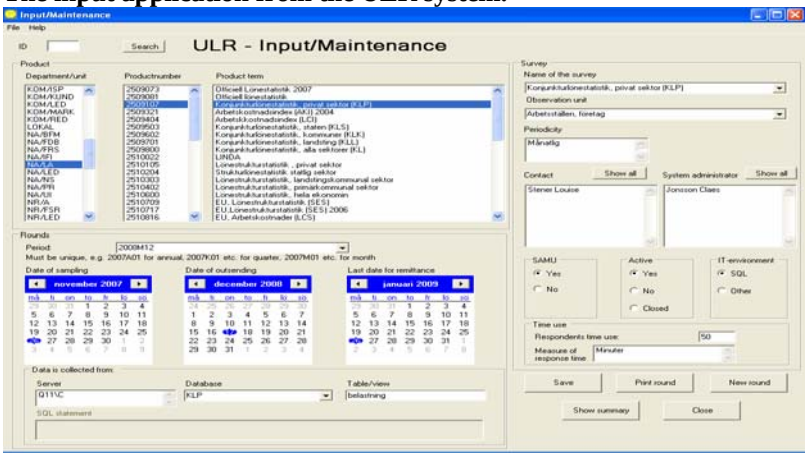
There are several purposes with ULR. The main object is to collect all surveys which are directed to enterprises for enable us to measure and follow the response process over time. Another object is to give information to specific enterprises about which surveys they participate in. Finally an object is to take out requested reports on for example summary of respondents' time use for each surveys, burden per branch of industry etc.

In the future the purpose is that individual entrepreneurs will be able to log on in the register to see which surveys they participate in.

The ULR system is edified through conditions registered in an application, one drive engine collects information, everything is logged and retrievals can be done on a specific enterprise or by taking out different reports. Below we first show a Figure 1.3-1 a view from the ULR input application. Then we describe the input application each separate part for itself in 1.3.1.

1.3 Information from the system

Figure 1.3-1
The input application from the ULR system.



1.3.1 Input/application for administration

The responsible person for each survey, which shall be registered in ULR, puts in information about the survey in a particularly application for this. Here follows some of the information that will be lodged:

- Department/unit, Productnumber is used as identification codes of the surveys in the ULR.
- Product term is specific name for surveys which is tied to their subject areas and follows the survey over time.

- The name of the survey which is stated on the questionnaire. This name will also be shown in the application for retrievals.
- Round is a name created for each round, for example 2008M06. You can lodge rounds for an entire year or longer if the information is settled.
- Selection date is the selection date which is not shown in the retrieval application. It is just a help for a thorough investigation of a enterprise that for example has changed branch of industry to see if it is overcoverage or not.
- The date of outsending is the date for sending out questionnaires to the enterprises. It is for example used when you map out enterprises participation.
- The last day for remittance is information that is collected by the drive engine, up to a last date varying time as from the last day for remittance, depending on if it is a monthly-, quarterly- or annual survey.
- Observation unit is the unit that is the investigated object. It is important that the responsible person choose the correct object in the application, as the sum of the time for response is calculated by the observation unit multiplied the response time. Eligible object are: local unit, enterprise, assessed unit, construction project, truck, kind of activity unit, individual (at enterprises), thermal power plant, authority, foundation, non-profit association, legal unit, agriculture, ship put in and apartment.
- Periodicity states how often the survey is carried out (year, quarter, month, intermittent, every week or single commission.
- Contact is the name of the person who is responsible for the actual survey.
- System administrator is name of the person responsible for the IT-system for the actual survey.
- SAMU is marked if the survey has used the SAMU system at the sample selection.
- Active means that a survey is active until this variable no more is changed. When a survey is finished, the person who is responsible has to mark it here. To be active means that information still is collected by the drive engine.
- SQL note if SQL is standard. If not, an Excel file has to be created. This Excel file has to be saved at a defined place. Later it has to be loaded manually.
- Respondent time use which is the average time use for respondents divided by collection and by observations unit. This represented time is estimated or a computation, calculated by the responsible person for the survey.
- Data server identification of the data server from where the drive engine shall collect information.
- Database name of the databases name at the data server
- Table/ view name of the created table or view for the actual survey for this purpose.

1.3.2 Drive engine

The drive engine collects information from ongoing data collection from servers and files, with the help of governing information as the responsible gives in the system's administration application. One defined view/table must be created and it has to be delivered in an advanced established format:

CRN	ID	Period	Return	Response time
111111111111	12345	2008A01	1	30
222222222222	56789	2008M1	0	05

The engine works regularly, it’s scheduled to run every night, with the aid of governing information from the central database. Result and log information are also stored.

1.3.3 Log

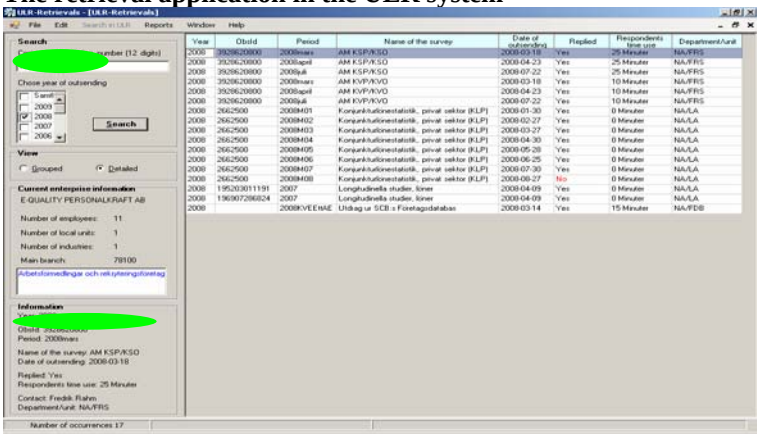
All logs are gathered and used to check that the system process data correctly and to find discrepancies.
The log remain several different views, for example ”activities” - during which you can follow the progress of the collection of data or ”round are missing” - in which surveys turns up where the drive engine have not found anything to retrieve, under a period where it would have been normal to retrieve.

1.4 Retrievals

All enterprises in Sweden that carry out some form of economic activity, irrespective if they belong to the private or the public sector, are gathered in a register at SCB, which is called The Business Register (FDB). When an enterprise is registered they get a corporate registration number that functions as their identity in contacts with authorities. The register contains addresses, industries, numbers of employee and much more. When retrievals will be done from ULR, from the special application, ULR will be matched with FDB. This means that we get access to diverse variables that give informative tables.

In the application for retrievals the enterprise' corporate registration number is signed in which is shown in the Figure 1.4-1 below. Information is retrieved from ULR on those surveys which has been carried out. Observation unit, round, name of the survey, date for outsending, if the questionnaire is received, response time the enterprise stated, responsible person at SCB will be shown. Some variables which are registered are not used until retrievals of reports will be done.

Figure 1.4-1
The retrieval application in the ULR system



1.4.1 Problem

If the drive engine should be able to collect information about individual enterprises, they have to be identified in a specific way. This can be done if business surveys are using the enterprise' corporate registration number. There are some surveys which do not use corporate registration number which is a problem. In these cases nothing will be collected by the drive engine.

(To have the summary respondent's time of use on those surveys, manual calculation is done by taking the response time multiplied by numbers of observation units multiplied by frequency)

1.5 Field of application

1.5.1 Supplying information service

Information from the application for retrievals is used by the Supplying information service (ULT) which controls response burdens and helps heavy loaded enterprise.

The Supplying information service was created as a consequence of The Register of Data provider's establishment. The register gives the enterprise the opportunity to see how heavy their response burden is i.e. (which surveys the specific enterprise has to answer). The Information on one particular enterprise is mainly used in contacts with this specific enterprise. At first it is important to check out in ULR how many and which surveys the enterprise participate in.

If the enterprise seems heavy loaded Statistics Sweden tries to find relieves for them. Considerations are also taken to, if the enterprise turns out to be in a special difficult situation or if it has problems to give details of a particular survey.

The ULT will also function as a gateway for the enterprises towards the entire Statistics Sweden. Enterprises that are included in several different surveys and needs to contact several different involved units can call ULT and they forward the enterprises message.

1.5.2 Mapping

Large enterprises get on request a summary which is called mapping, from ULR. The summary contains all surveys they participate in and different kinds of information like mandatory regulations, name of contacts and date for remittance etc.

This can be in connection with an enterprise scrutinizing their organization and wants a better overview over the distribution of work.

1.5.3 Reports

The purpose is, to have the possibility to develop reports, which should function as supporting documents at the work of reducing the response burden.

It is possible to make different analyses on the total respondent burden and its distribution between different types of enterprises (sectors, size classes et cetera). Reports are also produced to take out information on costs for the enterprises and time of use to SCB's annual report.

2. Different methods for measuring response burden

The "Handbook for Monitoring and Evaluating Business Survey Response Burdens" (Dale et al., 2007) has chosen to design and use a detailed way of measuring time use by separating time use into one question for time to collect information and one question for time to filling in questionnaire. The reason to use this method is that it distinguishes between time used by respondents and time used by business. This could give a more correct time estimate. Many business surveys have multiple respondents or information providers to one survey. There are several methods for measuring response burden and which of that method is the best one, no one can say. It depends on your purpose and the amount of resources that is available. In this chapter we describe three methods; Perceived response burden method, Standard cost method, Swedish method from the population of ULR and a future study of perceived response burden in Swedish enterprises.

2.1 Perceived response burden[2]

The first method is PRB method (Perceived response burden) which is a detailed way to measure time used with a questionnaire with different objects in a sample survey design. Perceived response burden was a joint project between Sweden, Norway and UK and was published in the publication "Handbook for Monitoring and Evaluating Business Survey Response Burdens". The main topic in the handbook is to monitor and evaluate perceived response burden (PRB) among business survey respondents and how to organise, conduct and analyse a perceived response burden survey procedure.

There are three aspects why statistical organisations such as Statistics Sweden should conduct response burden surveys:

1. To monitor perceived response burden over time
2. For evaluation of changes that's been made to the questions and/or questionnaire

[2] European commission, Handbook for Monitoring and Evaluating Business Survey Response Burdens, page 5

3. For evaluation of changes that have been planned or made in the mode of data collection.

A quality driven approach [3]

Response burden should been looked upon as a quality indicator for surveys. It's an issue of great importance to be aware of the response burden put on businesses. High response burden indicates that questions are difficult to answer, and respondents may not be able to give a correct answer. On the other hand difficult questions can lead to uninterested respondents that are not willing to make serious efforts to give correct answers.

To quote the survey methodologist Mick Couper: "If you obviously did not put much time and effort into designing your survey, why should the respondent do so in answering your survey"

This quality driven approach has at least three important factors for a response burden survey. First, it is the perception of the respondent that is crucial. The owners may complain that answering surveys is none profitable but as long as this doesn't affect the good will and motivation they don't do anything about it. Burden felt by those who bear economic responsibility is only to be considered as an explaining factor of response burden.

In the quality driven approach the common indicator for measuring response burden "average time spent" may not be the best response burden indicator. Even if it is correct that time consuming questionnaires are generally burdensome to complete, it is not the time use itself more likely perception of time and effort that affects response quality in a survey.

Thirdly, the most immediate factors to use in order to reduce response burden is the data collection instrument and the data collection process. If a questionnaire feels burdensome, it is seldom an option to drop the statistics produced from this questionnaire. Instead one should try to improve the collection instrument or change the data collection procedure. One should use the response burden questions for the purpose to identify the most burdensome part of survey questionnaires, to find out where to put most effort to change questionnaires according to reduce response burden.

Perceived response burden method

The perceived response burden (PRB) approach is different to the popular Standard Cost Model which starts and ends with regulations. The PRB focus on the survey instruments, how they affect the perceived response burden and response quality.

The perceived response burden method recommends a statistical sample to ensure the generalisation of the results while the SCM is generally based on strategic and not a statistical sample. The advantage with the PRB method is that it's less costly to run because of the design to attach PRB-questions to the original survey.

The weakest point with the PRB is that it doesn't catch the relationships between the respondent from the enterprises and other persons in the enterprises whom are involved in the reporting activities. The PRB-question sheet doesn't include questions about reporting activities the respondent took part in. Another problem is that it measures perceived burden of an individual survey at a time. However the perceived response burden may be influenced by the total amount of surveys burden for the respondent.

2.2 Standard cost method

The second method is the Standard Cost Model which starts and ends with regulations that generate information requirements and focus on time converted into costs for the businesses to fulfil all the needed information requirements. The Standard Cost Model (SCM) is today the most widely applied methodology for measuring administrative costs. The SCM methodology is an activity-based measurement of the businesses' administrative burdens making it possible to follow the development of administrative burdens. At the same time the results from

[3] European commission, Handbook for Monitoring and Evaluating Business Survey Response Burdens, page 6

the SCM measurements are directly applicable to governments' simplification work, because the results show the specific regulation and details which are especially burdensome for businesses.

To measure the administrative burdens with the necessary degree of precision and at a very detailed level, the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (NUTEK) has decided to employ the Standard Cost Model (SCM) that has been in use in the Netherlands since 1994. The method is used for surveying how administrative burdens evolve, and for assessing the impact of amendments to regulatory frameworks.

The SCM method is based on a review of current laws and regulations (the regulatory framework) with a view to identifying those areas within which the businesses have an obligation to make information available to the authorities or third parties. Each informational requirement comprises a number of different data, which businesses have to disclose to comply with informational requirements – these are labelled data requirements. Data requirements address the data that are required in e.g. the various entries in connection with a reporting form.

In order to gather the relevant data, businesses perform a number of administrative activities, which partly require internal resource use in the form of time used on the part of employees, and partly external resource use in the form of expenses to bookkeeping firms, external experts, etc.

Data on business activities are gathered through in-depth interviews with businesses. Experts standardise the costs associated with compliance with each data requirement. Overall costs within the relevant area of regulation can then be estimated by way of aggregation.

2.3 Swedish method from the population of ULR

The third method used at Statistics Sweden is based on the Register of data providers concerning enterprises and organizations (ULR) which contains a simplified estimate of time use compared to the PRB method.

The ULR register contains information of the average time for filling in the questionnaire from respondents in business surveys. The estimated time used for filling in the business survey is at first hand direct collected by a question in the business surveys from the enterprises or for those surveys which not have the question for enterprises estimated by survey personal at Statistics Sweden. There are only about 20 percent of our business surveys which collect the time use estimate with a question to the enterprise the rest about 80 percent is estimated by survey personal at Statistics Sweden.

The person that is responsible for the survey time estimates has to take into consideration the time it takes for the respondent to read through all material and to pick forward all information, potential calculations besides the time to fill in the questionnaire. The time is stated in minutes or hours. This method does not take in consideration perceived or experienced burden, only actual burden.

2.4 Future study of perceived response burden in Swedish enterprises

A future project at Statistics Sweden will study how to design an appropriate measurement to estimate the mean value in a more accurate way (as the responsible for each product has taken forward). This will be done with regard to nonresponse and for background variables like the size of the enterprise, industry, procedure for collecting data etc. This is intended to be a standard measure for Statistics Sweden and meant to be used by all business surveys. This is an easier and cheaper model than SCM and a qualitative better measure than only average response time.

3. Results from measure response burden on different study domains from surveys in ULR during year 2007

Table 3-1
Enterprises burdened from surveys in the ULR system during the year 2007

	Number of enterprises included in surveys distributed by size class (number of employees)								
Number of surveys	0	1-4	5-9	10-19	20-49	50-99	100-199	200-	Total
1	26 571	40 711	12 020	4 359	1 252	141	26	10	85 090
2	3 629	11 903	6 023	4 035	1 647	238	35	20	27 530
3	861	3 405	2 444	2 850	1 596	272	54	12	11 494
4	344	926	1 013	1 861	1 534	284	52	15	6 029
5-10	180	473	623	2125	3573	1588	565	175	9302
11-20	5	1	0	18	187	512	617	675	2015
21-30	0	0	0	0	0	2	26	397	425
31-36	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	24
Total number of enterprises included in surveys in ULR 2007[4]	31 590	57 419	22 123	15 248	9 789	3 037	1 375	1 328	141 909
Total number of enterprises in the Business register 2007	881 711	170 654	37 085	19 836	11 427	3 455	1 568	1 740	1 127 476

Table 3-1 shows number of enterprises burdened from surveys in the Register of data providers concerning enterprises and organizations during year 2007. The surveys in register have different periodicity, yearly, monthly or other periodicity.

The table shows for example that there are 26 571 enterprises without employees included in one survey, 3 629 enterprises without employees included in two surveys, 40 711 enterprises with between one and four employees included in one survey and so on. The figures in Table 3-1 clearly indicates the following pattern; small enterprises (in terms of number of employees) are included in few surveys and the low number of small enterprises included in two (upon eight) surveys is probably due to positive co-ordination between business surveys at Statistics Sweden. There some exception for small enterprises included in more then eight surveys but after analyzing the subject it seems that this depends on the updates in the business register (FDB). Those businesses reported back that they of different reasons such as (shut-down, switch, and so on) could not fulfil the questionnaires.

[4] Definition of enterprises included in surveys in the ULR 2007 (only enterprises in the private sector where selected from the Business register, year 2007 and the enterprise unit have to be active for the time and the surveys have to have unique survey identity Product Id)

Table 3-2
Enterprises burdened in sum of average time and cost breakdown by section

Enterprises by section [5]	Description of sections	Total number of enterprises by section included in surveys	Total number of questionnaires sent out (by section)	Provider cost[6] in (EUR millions by section)	Total response burden by section (thousands of hours)
A+B	Agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing	3 647	13 287	1	11
C+D	Mining and quarrying; manufacturing	17 307	292 941	25	355
E	Electricity, gas and water supply	876	12 118	1	10
F	Construction	13 954	43 827	2	30
G+H	Wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles; hotels and restaurants	40 293	275 703	29	416
I	Transport, storage and communication	9 543	50 872	2	31
J+K	Financial intermediation; real estate, renting and business activities	42 697	133 325	6	90
L	Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	14	92	0	0
M+N+O	Education; health and social work; other community, social and personal service activities	13 578	48 330	2	26
A-O	Total sum of all Private sections	141 909	870 495	69	968

In Table 3-2 is presented another way of showing the result from the ULR register. Four totals are presented.
(1) Total number burdened enterprise included in surveys from the ULR register broke down by section A to O.
(2) Total number of send out questionnaires to burdened enterprise from the ULR register broke down by section A to O.
(3) Total provider cost from the burdened enterprises in million Euros broke down by section A-O.
(4) Total sum of average time in thousand hours for the burdened enterprises broke down by section A-O.

If we look at the figures for the whole section C+D the table shows that there are 17 307 enterprises burdened with a total number of send out questionnaires of 292 941, total provider cost of 25 million Euro and a total average time of 355 thousands hours. If we compare these figures with the figures in the service sector, section G (which has the highest provider cost), there are 32 044 enterprises burdened with a total number of send out questionnaires of 236 703, total provider cost of 28 million Euro with a total average time of 389 thousands hours. There are fewer enterprises included from section C+D, 17 307 enterprises compared to 32 044 enterprises in section G. The total provider cost is 25 million Euro compared to 28 million Euros and total sum of average time are 355 thousand hours

[5] The numeration of industrial section refers to the Swedish standard for industrial classification SNI 2002, equal to Nace REV.1.

[6] Estimated time cost for respondents for Statistics Sweden annual account 2007, then changed into Million EURO as exchange rate.

compared to 389 thousands hours. The total sum of send out questionnaires are 292 941 compared to 236 703 questionnaires. The reason is because the sections C+D have more questionnaires sent out most of the surveys to enterprises includes in there samples enterprises from mining, quarrying and manufacturing.

Could we say that enterprises in section G are more efficient? If so you have to take into consideration that most of the enterprises in manufacturing in Sweden are larger (in terms of employees) and there response burden are by that much bigger. For almost all surveys enterprises over 100 employees have total census been done at Statistics Sweden. Most surveys in section G must include enterprises with fewer employees because there are fewer big enterprises but many small enterprises. If we in the future want to reduce response burden, efforts have to focus on small enterprises. Small enterprises have more difficulties to answer correct how much time they spend and average time spent is thereby often estimated from survey personal at Statistics Sweden.

Table 3-3
Enterprises burdened in sum of average time and cost distributed by size class (in terms of employees)

Enterprise Size class (in terms of employees)	Description of (enterprise Size class)	Total number of enterprises included in surveys by size class	Total number of questionnaires sent out by size class	Provider cost (EUR millions) by size class	Total response burden by size class (thousands of hours)
1	0 employees	31 590	59 348	3	47
2	1-4 employees	57 419	151 506	11	156
3	5-9 employees	22 123	95 023	9	133
4	10-19 employees	15 248	107 198	11	153
5	20-49 employees	9 789	127 386	13	179
6	50-99 employees	3 037	81 392	7	104
7	100-199 employees	1 375	68 552	5	70
8	200-499 employees	782	72 186	4	59
9	500-999 employees	268	39 334	2	29
10	1000-1499 employees	92	17 679	1	11
11	1500-1999 employees	36	7 691	0	4
12	2000-2999 employees	45	9 766	0	7
13	3000-3999 employees	25	7 133	0	4
14	4000-4999 employees	14	2 885	0	2
15	5000-9999 employees	42	13 353	1	7
16	10000- employees	24	10 063	0	4
size class 1-16	Total sum of all size classes	141 909	870 495	69	968

Table 3-3 shows the pattern mentioned above namely that small enterprises (in terms of employees) are much more burdened in relation to the total number of burdened enterprises, total number of send out questionnaires, provider cost and the total sum of average time distributed by size classes. In the table is shown that enterprises in the size classes group (1-5) together stand for a total provider cost of 47 million Euro with a total sum of average time of 667 thousands hours, total number of burdened enterprises for this group are 136 169 and total send out questionnaires of 540 461 questionnaires. These figures should be compared to the total number of burdened enterprises 141 909 enterprises, total number of send out questionnaires 870 495, total provider cost 69 million Euro and total sum of average time 968 thousands hours in size class (1-16). The group (1-5) answers for around 96 percent of the total burdened enterprises, around 62 percent of the total sent out questionnaires, around 68 percent of the total provider cost and around 69 percent of the total sum of average time. Focusing on helping the small enterprises instead of the biggest ones should have a good effect reducing response burden and for Statistics Sweden to reach the fixed

level of decreasing the administrative costs from enterprises in business surveys by twenty-five percent until year 2010.

4. Conclusions

Government wants Statistics Sweden to decrease burden on enterprises in statistical surveys with compulsory legislation. The fixed level goal on 25 percent decrease until 2010. This emphasizes the importance of measuring administrative burden and the providing costs at enterprises with high quality. The estimates based on data from the Register of Data providers concerning enterprises and organization is a very important part in this. The ULR system has up until today only been used for reports of the individual burden for businesses whom where complaining of there heavy burden from surveys at Statistics Sweden.

In this paper, we have tried to describe the Register of Data providers concerning enterprises and organizations (ULR) at Statistics Sweden. The system has the twofold purpose, firstly to measure administrative burden from enterprises on different aggregated level and secondly to give answers of individual burden from complaining businesses. There are still issues to solve with ULR system, such as to include more variables, problems identification of unique surveys and enterprises. There are also difficulties in measuring differences between send out questionnaires to surveyed enterprises and returned questionnaires from respondent enterprises.

In this paper we also briefly describe other methods for measuring administrative burden such as the Standard Cost Method (SCM) and Perceived Response Burden Method (PRB). These are methods that are more developed than the simplified method we use. There are measurement errors in our estimate of total average amount of time enterprises filling in questionnaires because not all surveys give the enterprise opportunity to answer questions about time to fill in the questionnaires.

Finally we have shown some results of administrative burden from enterprises in the ULR system with different study domains. Our findings indicate that Statistics Sweden should focus their efforts on smaller enterprises and help them filling in questionnaires. If so the administrative burden can decrease because smaller enterprises by them selves answer for the biggest proportion of burden in terms of provider cost and total average time.

Future plans

- In the immediate future Statistics Sweden plans a project which main object is to analyze how to improve the design and methods of measuring the response burden from enterprises. There is a need for a more accurate estimate of the average time than the simplified straight forward measurement used today. At present average time is in many cases estimated at Statistics Sweden. There is also a need to study the differences between questionnaires send out and respondent enterprises returned questionnaires in order to measure the nonresponse. We need more detailed background information such as size class of enterprises, industry, different procedure for collecting data in enterprises in different size classes etc. The project aims to create a standard measure for Statistics Sweden to be used in all business surveys.
- A project has started to point out different standard tables that should be produced from the ULR system for analyzing administrative response burden.

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