Relevance of business demographics

• Economic analysis and policy
  – study of business dynamics, employment growth, productivity
  – promotion of entrepreneurship, innovation, social inclusion, regional development

• Statistical purposes
  – Input to the work of survey statisticians
  – Improvement of the quality of economic statistics
Comparing different data sources for business demography statistics

An OECD study (Vale, 2006) and additional research work conducted together with Eurostat pointed to main benefits and challenges of different data sources:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data source</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SBR</td>
<td>Comprehensive coverage of business population</td>
<td>Possible thresholds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Censuses</td>
<td>Comprehensive coverage of business population</td>
<td>Periodicity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveys</td>
<td>Useful data/insights on specific aspects</td>
<td>Sample size, survey errors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SBRs as a convenient source for business demography statistics

• In light of the limitations of censuses and surveys for the purpose of compiling business demography statistics, SBRs appear as a preferred source. This source places no additional burden on businesses.

• In addition, international comparisons of business demography statistics based on SBRs can be further enhanced if basic requirements of SBRs have already been harmonised.
Eurostat and the OECD launched in 2007 the Entrepreneurship Indicators Programme:

- Business demography statistics are computed from SBRs
- Results are disseminated:
  - Eurostat data portal
  - OECD data portal
  - Publications
Countries practices - 2
Findings of the Global Survey on SBRs

UNSD conducted a Global Assessment Survey aimed at collecting information on the status of the SBR. Two questions related to business demographics. Key findings:

- 71 countries use SBR to produce business demography (BD) or similar statistics
- In most countries, the compilation of BD from business registers started in the early 2000s or in more recent years
- Misunderstanding on the meaning of BD: in some cases, the series mentioned by the respondents are statistics on the number of enterprises (by size, sector, region)
- BD produced by countries may simply consist of data on registrations and deregistrations of firms, or be the result of the implementation of ad-hoc methodology and definitions
Some lessons

- Importance of *disseminating information on business demography statistics*
  - Outputs available to the public

- Importance of *disseminating information on country practices*
  - Documentation on metadata and methodology for business demography

- Importance of *harmonisation for international comparability*
  - Definitions of business demography variables
  - Basic requirements of statistical business registers