STATS SA
STATISTICS SOUTH AFRICA

Business Register (BR) Fact Sheet

Introduction:	The Business Register division is responsible for maintaining the Statistical Business Register (SBR) of Statistics South Africa (Stats SA).
	The SBR is a database that contains information on all businesses registered for Income Tax (IT) and Value Added Tax (VAT) with the South Africa Revenue Service (SARS).
	The SBR forms the pillar of economic statistics and is used to select (sample) businesses to participate in a range of economic surveys conducted by Stats SA.
	The defining characteristics of a reliable SBR are comprehensive coverage, accurate economic activity and size classification and updated contact information.
Information collected from:	Registered businesses operating within the borders of South Africa.
Importance:	In order for Stats SA to produce economic indicators, the SBR must be up to date.
	The continuous updating of the SBR ensures relevant and reliable information when businesses are selected for economic surveys.
	Economic surveys provide crucial information enabling government to facilitate and track the participation and contribution of registered businesses in the formal economy.
Frequency:	Maintaining the SBR is an ongoing process through constant interaction with businesses.
Business register objectives:	• To update and maintain the details of businesses on the SBR which ensures the inclusion of new businesses and the exclusion of 'dead' / dormant businesses.
How the information is collected:	• Telephone, fax or email. • Post • Visits to explain the purpose and handle queries. • Instruments used: questionnaires or spreadsheets.

Why businesses should participate:	• Business cooperation ensures accurate, relevant and reliable economic indicators.
	• Economic indicators ensure seasonal or annual trends and growth patterns which enables business comparisons.
	• Businesses can analyse the economic data and make informed decisions when drawing up plans for their businesses.

Types of information collected:	
	1. *Legal name and trading name, registration numbers (Company registration numbers; IT, VAT, UIF and PAYE):* To make sure that Stats SA sends the questionnaires to the correct business.
	2. *Physical addresses:* To draw samples and compile regional statistics.
	3. *Postal addresses:* To post questionnaires to the correct addresses.
	4. *Contact person and contact details* To know whom to contact when collecting information or seeking clarity on information.
	5. *Economic activities* To classify businesses according to activity e.g. manufacturing, wholesale, retail, etc. This will assist Stats SA in ensuring that each business is included in the correct economic survey.
	6. *'Turnover', 'Number of employees', 'Salaries and wages'* These are size indicators used in the sampling process to select the businesses. Size indicators are used to group businesses into small, medium or large enterprise categories.
	7. *Information at branch level* To draw samples at regional level e.g. provincial, municipality, etc.

Acronyms

Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
VAT	Value Added Tax
UIF	Unemployment Insurance Fund
PAYE	Pay As You Earn
BR	Business Register
SBR	Statistical Business Register
IT	Income Tax