

THE SET-UP AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGISTER "BULSTAT"

G. Stanev, Directorate "Registers",
National Statistical Institute of Republic of Bulgaria

In accordance with the National Assembly's decision from 8th June 1995 and Decree 206 of the Council of Ministers a Unified State Register of the Economic Units "BULSTAT" started to function in the Republic of Bulgaria since 1st January 1996.

The set-up, maintenance and development of "BULSTAT" register was entrusted to the National Statistical Institute (NSI) and set in the Regulation of the Register.

The Council of Ministers Decision 379 of 30 July 1998 promoted the Unified State Register identification number of the economic units to Unified identity (UIN) of all legal and other units, carrying out their activity on the territory of the country.

The Council of Ministers Decision 469 of 3 September 1998 entrusted following tasks to the National Statistical Institute :

- to make complete analysis and verification of the content of all administrative registers, whose units are in the scope of the BULSTAT register;
- to improve the legal basis for the development of the existing register "BULSTAT";
- to develop a new version the software of the register in order to allow maintenance and storage all changes of the establishments from their appearance to their cessation.

The National Assembly has adopted the Statistical Law on 17 of June 1999. This act makes provision on the method of set-up, maintenance, functioning and use of the Unified Register for Identification of the Economic and Other Subjects carrying out activities on the territory of Republic of Bulgaria - "BULSTAT".

The subjects in the scope of the register are:

- all economic units regardless of their activity, type of ownership, a source of financing and methods of establishment (legal act, decree, international agreement or other legislative or administrative act);
- their legally registered subsidiaries;
- non governmental organization
- natural persons, registered as one-man trader;
- self-employed with own insurance;
- trade representatives;
- companies created by the law of liabilities and contracts;
- foreign missions, other foreign and international organizations.

The Register "BULSTAT" is an administrative (public) register but it is a main information source for the business register.

1. Register "BULSTAT" as an administrative register

The register "BULSTAT" is being built as a basic administrative register in the country. It includes all legal and other economical units carrying out activities in the country. A unique identity number is assigned to all units in "BULSTAT" register. A 9 digit identity number is assigned to the legal units and 13 digits number is assigned to their subsidiaries. For tax purposes the number of the subsidiaries contains in the first 9 digits the identity number of the legal unit, principal of the subsidiary.

This unified identity number is mandatory for all economic units in the country. All documents issued in the country and used by the economic unit in the circulation of documents, contain a "BULSTAT" identity number. All information systems containing data for economic units should include a BULSTAT identity number.

The basic aims of the Register "BULSTAT" are achieved by:

- Building up the Register, using unified methodology realized through national classifications and nomenclatures;
- Compliance with the regulations, law and the other acts concerning the set-up, changes and cessation of the economic units in the country;
- Information compatibility with the other administrative registers in the country;
- Using unified standards, definitions and basic classifications in accordance with the requirements of the national and EU Council Regulations.
- Improving the legal basis ensuring mandatory registration of all subjects, carrying out activities in the country;
- Close cooperation with the Court authorities, responsible for the legalization of the businesses, as well as for set-up and maintenance of the Trade Register;
- Entry in "BULSTAT" is effected on the basis of the official documents for the creation and change. Only additional information not contained in these documents is provided by means of computer aided interview with the authorized person;
- The information entered for the economic unit and its subsidiaries is printed-out in Registration form. The authorized person confirms by his signature the authenticity and fullness of the information entered in the register;
- NSI issues an Identity Card in compliance with the international standards containing the necessary personal information for identification of all units. The identity card is plastic with hologram and embossed BULSTAT identity number

Now "BULSTAT" is the only register, used by all other registers and information systems, providing unified identification of all legal and other units, carrying out activities in the country.

2. The role of register "BULSTAT" for statistical surveys

Using "BULSTAT" as source of information for the business register assures particular advantages on behalf of the statistical surveys.

2.1. Reference base for the objects identification of the statistical survey

The statistical surveys according to their aims and tasks use different statistical units - group of enterprises, enterprise, subsidiary, local unit. Data for all mentioned kinds of establishments are available in the register "BULSTAT". The unit enterprise is essential for the statistics of institutional structure of the economy and SNA financial flows. At the same time, however, the statistical variables obtained on the basis of the aggregated information by the enterprises do not allow to outline reliable parameters of the regional and functional structure of the economy. Having information about units such as the subsidiary and the localities of the units is a prerequisite for reliable information on production, employment, intermediate consumption and other indicators not only by activity, but in a territorial aspect as well.

2.2. A tool for preparation and coordination carrying out statistical surveys

.At the stage of the preparation of statistical surveys the register is a basis for constructing the sample and the organization of the surveys. Essential are the control functions of the register - it is a tool controlling the coverage of the surveys avoiding duplication or omission of the units. Conducting the surveys is not possible without the existence of a reliable and updated register, a basis for the formation of the statistical surveys populations.

The register creates a opportunity for co-ordination of the different surveys. by building up corresponding data sets from one and the same population, characterising different aspects of the economy. The coordination of the statistical surveys is essential for the quality and reliability of the statistical data - a basic principle in the establishment and operation of the official statistics. Of great importance is also the issue for the burden of the respondents and their attitude toward the statistical activity of the official bodies.

2.3. Information source for the analysis

Register "BULSTAT" provides reliable information for the analysis of the production organization and the economical structure in a temporal and regional aspect according to the legal status and the legal form of the units, ownership, institutional sector, activity and sources of financing.

The data on enterprise demography, inclusive the state and changes in the activity of the economic units are obtained from the register.

2.4. A link with other administrative sources

Since the Unified Identity Number in "BULSTAT" register is used for the identification of the units in all information systems in the country, it creates a bridge between all administrative registers. The most important of them are the Tax Register, Employers Register and Customs Information System.

With the practical realization of this function the register becomes a powerful tool for coordination of the official statistics at the national level. This way a unification of the information flows is provided and the reliability of information and efficiency of the public administration is increased.

2.5. A tool for data dissemination and carrying out information services

The information contained in the register allows the dissemination of statistical information on the number and structure of the economic units, the elaboration of single and multiple variation groupings according to a number of indicators. The register gives the opportunity to extract different samples of the included units to conduct statistical surveys.

3. Building a new information system

The "BULSTAT" organizational structure provides centralized database, centralized identity number assignment and decentralized registration in the Regional Bureau of BULSTAT. The National Bureau is responsible for maintenance of the National Database of the Register "BULSTAT" updated with the data from the regional bureaus.

The registration in the Regional Bureau is performed from workstations situated in the regional statistical office of NSI and in the regional court. All subjects created by a law are registered and maintained in the court. Other subjects created under other legal or administrative acts are registered and maintained in the Regional Statistical Office (RSO).

The workstations network in the court is connected with the server of the regional database via leased line. The workstations in the regional office are in the same local network as the server. A network between all Regional Bureau and National Database by leased lines is built. This structure assures online registration in the central database from all workstation in all offices.

New software based on the contemporary technologies has been developed and applied in the beginning of 1999. At all levels the "client-server" technology and relational databases are used. To make the software user-friendly a graphic user interface was implemented. The "on-line" mode of work assures the reliable verification of data, the information fullness and accuracy in the databases at the different levels.

With the establishment of "BULSTAT" our country disposes with a powerful information tool for personal identification of the economic units. It will be a basis for the maintenance of the other administrative registers and information systems. Built-up in compliance with the international standards, "BULSTAT" will have a leading role in the harmonization of our information systems with the information systems of the EU member states. A step forward facilitating the operation of the economic subjects under the conditions of the market economy is made.