

Potential, strengths and weakness of the integration of administrative data into surveys. The Istat experience with the Sector Studies

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For years Istat has been acquiring from other public bodies administrative databases regarding different types of information. In line with the recent Italian and European direction to Statistical Institutions for the use of administrative sources, this type of sources represents a very important chance and challenge for both integration of survey data and reducing statistical burden.

Thanks to the huge amount of information on more than three million enterprises about accounting data, occupation, structural and specific aspects of the business activity, the Italian Tax Authority source (Sector Studies) can be considered a very powerful source acquired by the Italian Statistical Institute (Istat). As regards enterprises, we have been conducting so far analysis on Sector Studies in order to know whether such fiscal data can be used as a statistical one.

Up to now Istat has been using the Sector Studies data for direct tabulation and for editing and imputation of the Italian Business Register turnover, but a more widespread use can be foreseen as goods results have got out of the comparison with the Small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) survey data conducted by Istat.

There are some differences in concepts, definitions and target population which actually reflect the different purposes Sector Studies and Italian SME survey are supposed to obey to. Despite of that, after a lot of work done in collaboration with the Tax Authority in order to make the sources comparable, we used the accounting data form such a source in order to measure the business performance and finally we can evaluate the possibility to use Sector Studies to integrate or substitute part of the Sme survey data.

In this work we illustrate advantages and disadvantages in the statistical use of the Sector Studies as a survey integration source and as further development we are considering their use in an experimental way for the indirect estimation of National Accounts.