

FIFTH INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON BUSINESS DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGY

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Background paper to A CONTINUOUS SEARCH TO IMPROVE TARGETED COMMUNICATION IN BUSINESS SURVEYS

Houben, L¹., Groot, W., Debie D., Goris, G., Opreij, A., Geers, X. and Snijkers, G.

¹Project Manager, Statistics Netherlands, apm.houben@cbs.nl

Organization: Statistics Netherlands

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Targeted communication to different groups of stakeholders is a promising technique for improving our data collection-method, and strengthening the image of our Statistical Office. By supplying the businesses with the right information, and by removing potential hurdles, we expect the businesses to provide us with better data, and, if possible, a faster response. But if some progress can be made, what is the best way to react proactively to the needs of the businesses? To gain a better understanding of the possibilities of targeted communication in business statistics, Statistics Netherlands conducted several pilots. For each pilot, a communication plan was made, and, according to the plan, communication products were prepared. To determine whether or not it is worth putting the products into production, the results of the pilots are monitored and evaluated thoroughly. This includes the effects on the response rates, the quality of the response, declarants' use and appreciation of our communication materials, and, of course, the consideration of extra costs. The summary of the performed pilot projects is as follows:

- Recently, the majority of our agricultural surveys have become mandatory. To remove potential barriers, we made instruction video's, factsheets, and pre-due reminder cards. To determine the effect of the obligation, we developed the same communication products for a non-mandatory agricultural survey.
- For the mandatory survey on R&D, we developed an information card about the approaching enforcement procedure. This card was enclosed with the reminder-letter.
- The non-mandatory survey on Art and Culture Education has a very low response level. Therefore, we improved the communication materials, particularly the pre-due date reminder.
- Last but not least, we evaluated the design of the non-mandatory ICT-survey, and experimented with an incentive, a more relaxed pre-due date reminder, and to the non-respondents with an additional third reminder.

In the presentation the applied communication approach for the several statistics will be discussed in detail, showing communication materials. In addition, by the time of the Workshop more paradata will be available, indicating the effectiveness of the different strategies, and the considerations of putting the individual products into production or not.

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