OUTCOME OF THE SURVEY OF THE HARMONISED CONSUMER SURVEY CONCERNING THE OCCUPATION BREAKDOWN OF RESPONDENTS AND PROPOSAL FOR A NEW BREAKDOWN

Roberta FRIZ
European Commission DG-ECFIN

Abstract

At the beginning of 2015, DG ECFIN launched a survey of surveys for the harmonised consumer survey. The survey was supposed to provide an overview of how partner institutes currently collect information on respondents' occupation, thereby paying particular attention to whether international classifications are applied and, if so, how results are matched with the occupation categories currently used by DG ECFIN.

Currently, DG ECFIN is asking the institutes to send information on the occupation of the respondent according to the following breakdown:

- Self-employed and professional
- Self-employed farmers
- Clerical and office employees
- Skilled manual workers
- Other manual workers
- Total workers
- Other occupation
- Unemployed

This breakdown was introduced at the beginning of the '70s and, arguably, is not the most suited for today's reality any more. What is more, the individual categories lack a clear definition and are hard to demarcate from each other, as evidenced by categories like "skilled manual workers" and "other manual workers".

A tentative analysis of national questionnaires furthermore showed that there is a high degree of diversity in respect of how the occupation of the respondent is inquired and categorised.

For these reasons, DG ECFIN decided to collect information on how each partner institute is currently gathering information on the occupation of respondents and how this information is subsequently aggregated to match the occupational breakdown stipulated by the harmonised programme.

The responses to this survey will helped DG ECFIN's to design a new breakdown for the categorisation of survey respondents' occupation, which should (i) make clearer which occupations pertain to which category, (ii) follow or build on an internationally acknowledged occupation classification scheme used for general employment analysis and (iii) be applied in a uniform way by
all partner institutes to allow for meaningful occupation-specific analyses across countries, as well as at EU and euro-area level.

During the 2015 Annual Workshop, DG ECFIN will present the results of the survey and the proposals for an up to date and harmonised breakdown.