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Methodological note: Eurostat experimental statistics on the structure of multinational enterprise groups

CONTENTS

1. Background and Context 1
2. Data sources 2
3. EGR coverage and accuracy 3
4. Access to EGR micro data 4
5. Computation 4
6. Breakdowns 4
7. Variables 5
8. Limitations 5

1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Multinational enterprise (MNE) groups play a major role in the economy of the European Union (EU). They contribute substantially to all EU countries' production of goods and services, employment and investment. The aggregated information produced under these statistics under development will provide to the users of the EU Member States and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries with more information about these entities and their structure.

2. DATA SOURCES

The EuroGroups Register (EGR) is a statistical register of Eurostat and national statistical authorities of the EU and EFTA countries. The EGR covers the population and units of MNE groups operating in the EU and EFTA countries. A MNE group is defined as an enterprise group comprising at least 2 enterprises or legal units located in different countries. If at least one legal unit of an enterprise group is in the EU or EFTA, the MNE group is in the scope of the EGR.

To create the EGR, Eurostat collects input information on group entities and on their relationships from the national statistical business registers ([1]) (NSBR) of EU and EFTA countries, and, to complete the coverage outside the EU and EFTA territory, it combines the information with data from commercial data provider as well as from open data sources.

The following information is collected from NSBRs on the constituent units of the groups:

- Identification
- Demographic events
- Stratification parameters
- Control and ownership information
- Economic information (e.g., employment, turnover, etc.)

The EGR acquires every year data on the largest MNE groups from a commercial data provider. This acquisition ensures consistency and completeness of the largest enterprise groups in EGR as information outside the EU and EFTA territory is limited at the NSBRs of each country. This information is then complemented by information

([1]) On top of the regular data from the national registers, the national authorities also provide data from profilers under an annual European profiling exercise.
Profiling is a method to analyse the legal, operational and accounting structures of a business, at national and world level, in order to establish the statistical units within that business, their links, and the most efficient structures for the collection of statistical data - European business profiling — Recommendations manual — 2020 edition

publicly available and collected free of charge from the web, which is then integrated into the register.

After validation of all the input data, the EGR calculates the consolidated output on the legal units, on their relationships and enterprises. Complementary and conflicting information of the different sources are treated in the EGR process with predefined priority settings and business rules. In the EGR production the highest priority data are the data from the country of the subsidiaries (bottom-up view), followed by the data from the country of the parent companies (top-down view), and then, complemented with commercial or open data. Having final information on legal units and relationships between them for a reference year, the EGR calculates the enterprise group structures. The enterprise groups are built on those legal units, which are linked together by control relationships, where the voting rights are above 50%.

Before publishing the final data on the groups, the calculated group structures and group characteristics are revised and validated by the national authorities of the EU Member States and EFTA countries as well as by Eurostat.

The EGR produces annual data, reflecting the status of the registered enterprise groups as of 31st December of the reference year T. The EGR final data for reference year T are available for statistical users 15 months after the end of the reference year. Data in Eurobase and in Statistics Explained articles are made available to all user 16 months after the end of the reference year.

3. EGR COVERAGE AND ACCURACY

The EGR process is a regulated activity. To meet the legal requirements of regulation 2019/2152 NSIs deliver to the EGR IS all the incorporated resident legal units. For legal units belonging to MNE groups, NSIs also deliver their control relationships and their enterprises. The control relationships are mandatory variables, while minority ownership relationships have to be exchanged only when are available in the NSBRs.

The EGR has successfully completed numerous annual cycles starting for the 2015 reference year. The volume of the EGR data was increasing over the years and since

2018 reference year cycle the process and coverage has reached a good level of stability and maturity.

4. ACCESS TO EGR MICRO DATA

The EGR is a statistical business register that serves statistical purposes only. The EGR micro data are subject of statistical confidentiality and can only be shared within European Statistical System (ESS) and European System of Central Banks (ESCB). National statistical compilers are given access to all units of the MNE groups, if at least one of the group's units is within their national territory. These populations can be used for national survey frames, official statistics production, or quality checks. The legal framework to access EGR data is defined in the Regulation (EU) 2019/2152 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European business statistics and in the Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/1197 laying down technical specifications and arrangements pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2019/2152 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European business statistics.

5. COMPUTATION

The data is computed as a direct aggregation of the information available in the full micro data of the EGR.

The data is aggregated at different levels, and it covers two main variables: (i) the number of MNE groups and (ii) the employment figures computed as persons employed and self-employed. Additionally, there are some other computations done using shares of the total values or shared based on the total business economy using data from Structural Business Statistics (SBS) as a denominator. However, these additional computations are very limited in number.

6. BREAKDOWNS

The data is broken down by NACE activity and by country or geographical aggregated (EU, EFTA, etc.).

Due to the nature of the MNE groups, both breakdowns by NACE activity and by geographical area can vary from one metric to another. For instance, the available

breakdowns disseminated under these statistics under development cover the location of the employment (the country in which the employees are located) or the controlling country of the employment (the country in which the MNE groups is located). This is something that can also happen with the NACE activity which can be taken at the enterprise level (as it is done in other statistical domains) or to take the NACE activity of the MNE group (as it is done in these statistics under development).

7. VARIABLES

The compute the presented data, one takes the information about (i) the NACE activity of the MNE groups, (ii) the information about the employment (measured as employees and self-employed persons) of the enterprises and the consolidated value of the MNE group, and (iii) the geographical information about the location of the enterprises as well as the geographical information about the country / region ultimately controlling the MNE group.

In terms of the EGR, these variables are:

	EUROGROUPS REGISTER (EGR)
NACE Rev.2 (from 2025 onwards, NACE Rev.2.1)	*GEG_NACE_CODE_DIV*
Employment (of the enterprises)	*ENT_PERS_EMPL*
Employment (of the MNE group)	*GEG_PERS_EMPL*
Geographical area (of the enterprises)	*ENT_COUNTRY_CODE*
Geographical area (of the MNE groups)	*UCI_FATS*

8. LIMITATIONS

The limitations to the computation of these statistics under development are only about the missing information in the underlying EGR micro data.

The EGR micro data has achieved a good level of maturity and stable information, especially for all the information within the EU and EFTA territory. This means that

the missing information is rather limited and captured in the aggregations under “Unknown NACE activity” and “Unknown employment class”.