Sources of Information on Labour Statistics

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Outline

Official sources of labour statistics

Integrated labour statistic system

Labour statistics in the national statistics system
Official Sources

Population and housing census
Household surveys
Economic census
Establishment surveys
Administrative records
# Differences in coverage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Type</th>
<th>Coverage Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population and Housing Census</td>
<td><strong>Universal coverage of civilian population living in households</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Surveys</td>
<td><strong>Sample of the population living in households</strong>; coverage depends on objective &amp; sample design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Census</td>
<td><strong>Census of establishments</strong>, coverage depends on objective and frame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment Surveys</td>
<td><strong>Sample of establishments</strong>, coverage depends on objective, frame, sample design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Sources</td>
<td>Defined by <strong>legal or administrative</strong> obligations: Registered/contributing population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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## Differences in periodicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Type</th>
<th>Periodicity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population and Housing Census</td>
<td>Every 5 or 10 years. <strong>Recommended every 10 years.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Surveys</td>
<td>Usually <strong>more frequent than censuses.</strong> Depending on priorities and resources. For LFS could be continuous, monthly, quarterly, or annually.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Census</td>
<td>Every 5 or 10 years. <strong>Recommended every 5-10 years.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment Surveys</td>
<td>Monthly, quarterly, annually. Recommendation depends on purpose/resources: monthly or quarterly for time series; annually or 3-5 years for structural data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Sources</td>
<td><strong>Continuous updates</strong> depending upon administrative procedures.</td>
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Population & Housing Census

is the official procedure of systematically acquiring and recording information about the members of the population, (normally) at regular, long-term intervals (e.g. every 10 years).

**Importance of collecting data on the economic characteristics of the population through a population census:**

- May be the only source in some countries.
- Produces broad-based estimates on selected economic characteristics.
- Provides benchmark data on economic characteristics to which statistics from other sources can be related.
- Complements the other sources of data on economic characteristics.
Strengths of Population & Housing Census as source of information on economic characteristics

National and sub-national geographical coverage

Inclusion of all persons

• Permits extensive and detailed cross-tabulations.
• Produce summary statistics for all civil or administrative divisions.
• Generate finely detailed statistics for small geographical areas, small population groups, or finely classified groups of industries or occupations.

Permits cross-tabulation of economic characteristics with other demographic and socio-economic variables.
Limitations of Population & Housing Census as source of information on economic characteristics

### Less frequent
- Conducted only once or twice every 10 years

### High cost and sometimes heavy reporting burden

### Compete with demands for coverage of other topics; placement of questions on the questionnaire.

### Some of the concepts related to economic characteristics are very complex for censuses to handle

### Proxy respondent may not know the most accurate information on certain characteristics.
Household Survey: Labour Force Survey

Surveys carried out using a sample of households

Constitute the main data collection instrument for statistics on employment and unemployment worldwide

Permit the collection of coherent information on the total working age population and its components, in particular the economically active population.

Concept of employment in household surveys refers to persons employed rather than to jobs, since a person may have several jobs and work in different establishments

Large range of topics can be included such as:

- Employment, unemployment, not in labour force
- Time-related underemployment
- Informal employment
- Occupational segregation by sex*
- Youth not in education and not in employment, 15-24 years
- Hours actually worked

Note: * also captured by establishment surveys
Strengths of Labour Force Survey

- Flexible, can cover a large set of labour topics
- Allows personal interviews
- Detailed questioning permits precise measurement of concepts
- If frequent, can provide data to monitor short-term labour force trends
- Provides data on persons & their households
- Covers all workers, including all self-employed
- Allows disaggregation by demographic factors: by sex, age group, ethnic group
Limitations of Labour Force Survey

- Sampling often prevents reliable estimates of granular information on small groups and areas.
- Limited geographic coverage at times due to cost considerations.
- Sampling and non-sampling errors.
- Reliability of estimates regarding data by industry or occupation; and sensitive information (e.g., employment-related income).

Is still considered the best source for statistics on labour supply
Employment-related Establishment Surveys

• Surveys based on a sample of establishments that seek to obtain statistical information on employment, hours and earnings.

• They may have a short-term (current statistics, trends) or longer term purpose (structural statistics, distribution of earnings, etc)

• Employment measures the number of jobs held by persons working in establishments, not the number of employed persons

• Generally cover employees (i.e., not all workers are covered)

• Examples of indicators and topics:
  • Average hourly earnings in selected occupations
  • Manufacturing wage index
  • Employment by branch of economic activity*
  • Wage/earnings inequality*
  • Labour cost
  • Hours paid for

Note: * also captured by LFS
Strengths of Employment-related Establishment Surveys

Permit the collection of coherent data on employees who work in sampled establishments

Often best source of periodic data on wages & hours statistics

Good coverage of medium sized and larger establishments

Estimates disaggregated by economic activity are generally considered more reliable than those from household surveys.
Limitations of Employment-related Establishment Surveys

- May exclude small establishments from sampling frame
- Difficult to obtain reliable estimates for small industries
- May not allow data disaggregation by demographic variables (age, sex, ethnic group, etc.)
- Sampling and non-sampling errors
- Excludes self-employed workers not covered in sampled establishments
  - In developing countries can represent a high percentage of total employment
- Generally exclude the agricultural sector
  - A sector with a high concentration of employment in most developing countries
Administrative Records

Systematic registers related to administrative procedures maintained by institutions of the public sector

Used to carry out the administration or operationalization of Government programmes

Serve to control, verify and monitor compliance with legal and / or administrative obligations

Examples of topics and indicators:

- Minimum wage
- Occupational injury rate, fatal and non-fatal
- Union density rate *
- Number of collective bargaining conventions and worker coverage
- Share of population covered by (basic) health care provision *

Noted: *Topics that may also be included in household surveys
Strengths of Administrative Records

- A very low-cost source of data
- Allow a broad disaggregation of information and coverage of different topics
- Allow for more frequent production and dissemination of data (continuous collection)
- Not subject to sampling errors
- Good administrative information can be used to benchmark sample survey estimates
- Good source of information on small groups
- Population/business registers serve as sampling frames for sample surveys
Limitations of Administrative Records

- Generally are structured for administrative purposes rather than statistical purposes
- Accessibility to and availability of data source
- Time and geographic coverage of the data
- Coverage of target population defined by legal/administrative procedures
- Quality may depend on enforcement for registration
- Concepts & definitions classifications often based on legislation, not always consistent with statistical standards
Integrated labour statistics system

- No single data source can meet all needs
- All sources contribute to an overall system of national labour statistics
- Need to recognize relative strengths, limitations & complementarities

**Census data**
- for benchmarking & to develop sample frames for surveys

**Population/business registers**
- to develop sample frames for surveys data for inter-censal estimates & to monitor short term trends

**Administrative data**
- to complement or benchmark certain survey data

**Survey data**
- to gauge under-registration in administrative sources

**Census**
- for small areas/groups

**Administrative data**
Integrated labour statistics system (cont’d)

Requires coherence between sources in terms of:

- Concepts
- Definitions
- Classifications
- Reference periods
- Methods

Labour statistics standard framework
References

Castillo, Monica. Power Point presentation, “Methodologies: Sources of information on labour statistics (focus on the economically active population)”, National Labour Market Information Training Programme Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. November 2011


End of Session 2