

ENTERPRISES UNDER THE MICROSCOPE: FROM THE CENSUS, NEW DATA IN ORDER TO COMPETE

The census survey directly involves a sample of approximately **260,000 Italian enterprises**. The sample includes all of the major groups of enterprises, all small and medium-sized enterprises and a sample of around **190,000 small and very small enterprises**. The subject of the census survey will be the enterprises belonging to the sectors of the **Nace Rev.2** International Classification of Economic Activities.

The responses to the survey questionnaires must refer to the situation of the enterprise as of **31 December 2011**, the census reference date.

The census survey involves, in detail, individual firms, partnerships and joint-stock firms, cooperatives (excluding social cooperatives, which are included in the census of non-profit institutions), private consortiums, public-sector economic Entities, special enterprises and public-sector service companies. For the purposes of the census, self-employed workers and professionals are also considered enterprises.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the census is to provide fresh details on the system of enterprises, in order to enable a more accurate assessment of the degree of competitiveness and growth potential of Italy's production system, and to reorganise the annual process of production of structural economic data on the "enterprise" system and on the characteristics of employment.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The census of enterprises will include **two questionnaires**: one for small enterprises (Form: Istat CIS2011_QS) and one for larger enterprises (Form: Istat CIS2011_QX_Bis). The two questionnaires share the same basic questions, but contain different specific sub-sections and separate groups of questions depending on the size of the enterprise.

Form for enterprises with under 10 employees

- consists of 16 pages;
- begins with a section dedicated to the "Enterprise's activity status";
- is organised in eight Sections (seven sections on different topics and one concerning the respondent);
- has a section reserved for the Respondent;
- is structured in 106 questions: 86 are "basic" questions, while the remaining 20 are questions specifically for micro-enterprises included in the "Entrepreneurship" Sub-section (Sub-section 1.04) and in the "ICT Technologies" Sub-section (Sub-section 5.06).

Form for enterprises with at least 10 employees

- consists of 16 pages;
- begins with a section dedicated to the “Enterprise’s activity status”;
- is organised in eight Sections (seven sections on different topics and one concerning the respondent);
- has a section reserved for the Respondent;
- is structured in 102 questions: 86 are “basic” questions, while 16 are questions specifically for large firms and SMEs, which are distributed throughout the various sections.

The basic information about the enterprises’ details will not be requested from the enterprises themselves by means of the questionnaires, as they will instead be deduced from administrative archives and from the *Archivio Statistico delle Imprese Attive* (ASIA, Statistical Archive of Active Enterprises) with reference to their local units, while the sample survey will provide new details, focusing attention on a number of specific aspects, such as *governance* strategies, human resource management, competitiveness and market position, capacity for innovation, financial choices, internationalisation and the main reasons for choosing to delocalise, if applicable.

PROCEDURES AND DEADLINES

Sending of the questionnaires by post began on 3 September and will continue until 14 September; from 3pm on **10 September 2012** enterprises may begin to complete the printed or online version of the questionnaire. **The deadline** for returning completed questionnaires is **20 December 2012**.

Procedures for returning completed censuses differ according to the size of the enterprise:

- **enterprises with at least 10 employees** must complete the questionnaire exclusively online;
- **enterprises with under 10 employees** may complete and return the questionnaire online by **20 December 2012**, or complete the printed version and return it to a post office until **20 October 2012**, or to the *Ufficio Provinciale di Censimento* (Provincial Census Office) set up at the local Chamber of Commerce until **20 December 2012**.

THE LOCAL NETWORK

Coordination of the census in the field, with Istat’s supervision, is the responsibility of the *Uffici Provinciali di Censimento* (UPCs, Provincial Census Offices) set up at the Chambers of Commerce, under which the census enumerators work, providing assistance with completing the questionnaires and ensuring that they are returned within the set deadlines. Contact details (including telephone details) for the relevant local UPCs are available at the following address:

<http://censimentoindustriaeservizi.istat.it/istatcens/contatti/>

At the regional level, census operations will be overseen by the 19 Regional Census Offices specially set up at Istat’s local branches.

The results of the questionnaire will be published by the **second half of 2013**.