

Using administrative data in population and social statistics

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The use of administrative data in statistics production is increasing all the time. In many countries it is common practice especially within population and social statistics. There are several well-known reasons and benefits for the production of register-based official statistics. Using administrative data in an advanced way in the production of population and social statistics makes it possible to compile high quality statistics cost-effectively, to combine sample surveys and administrative data, but also to develop statistics for new and current needs of society. However, there are still concerns regarding the quality of statistics based on administrative data. This presentation will describe shortly the preconditions, challenges, reasons and possibilities for register-based statistics production. There are questions concerning availability, standardization of concepts and definitions, limitations, quality of data and comparability of statistics. E.g. there are no similar methodological framework and similar standard quality criteria and quality indicators for register-based statistics as for survey statistics. In order to justify the use of administrative data for statistical purposes, statistical authorities have to face legal, contentual, technical and methodological issues. There are some important issues to focus on, e.g. cooperation among the administrative authorities and possible coordination of standardization activities concerning administrative records, quality assurance and reliability studies of basic administrative data and comparison of surveys and register-based statistics. If these aspects are properly taken into account, there should be no barriers for using the administrative data and gaining the advantages of this.

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