

VOORBURG GROUP ON SERVICES STATISTICS

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Progress Report Statistics Netherlands

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1. There are a number of gaps in the set of statistics on services produced by Statistics Netherlands. Three years ago a programme was established to bridge the main gaps, as described in Jan van Laanen's paper for the 12th VG meeting, entitled *Existing gaps in services statistics and how to bridge them: the Dutch approach*. This progress report mainly describes the parts of the programme carried out since the last VG meeting.
2. At the beginning of the year a budget and staff reduction of about 10% for the years till 2003 was announced. A reorganisation aimed at improving efficiency is currently being prepared for next year, creating four divisions for (1) output, (2) business statistics, (3) social statistics and (4) R&D, IT and other facilities. These circumstances have made it more difficult to carry out the programme.
3. Nevertheless, in several areas progress was made:
 - Data on the value of real estate property at municipality level were compiled for the first time.
 - A production statistics on commission trade was started (first collection year: 1998).
 - The coverage of data on business inventories has been increased.
 - The statistics on transport behaviour (mobility) has successfully been redesigned in order to increase response.
 - Some gaps in the financial statistics on enterprises (balance sheet type information) have been filled.
 - A pilot was held at the end of 1998 among very large enterprises measuring trade in services. This was done in close co-operation with the Dutch National Bank.
4. Statistics Netherlands has defined a programme to improve the measuring of prices and volumes of services. The programme partially coincides with a research programme of the European Union (Eurostat). It focuses on bank and insurance services, health care, transport and telecommunication services, and business services. In close co-operation with Statistics Netherlands, the Erasmus University Rotterdam is examining possibilities to improve the estimation of prices of consumer durables (cars) and the deflation of trade services (trade margins). The first results of the Dutch research programme already have been implemented. This concerns new methods to measure the output volume of bank services and to deflate the output of road haulage (transport margins). According to our time schedule, results on the other research areas should become available in the course of 2000.