

Voorburg meeting, Ottawa 2004

Inter-Enterprise Relations

Abstract

At the end of 2003 Statistics Denmark completed a survey about Inter-Enterprise Relations. The survey was conducted in collaboration with Eurostat as part of a project financed by the EU Commission. The detailed Danish results were complemented by results from a similar survey conducted in the neighbour country Sweden, and they were published in a special thematic publication in May 2004.

Cooperation between enterprises has a positive effect on competitiveness in Danish industry. It provides opportunities to use competences, knowledge, technology and capacity of the partner. This makes it possible to obtain economies of scale and improved flexibility. Access to new markets or stimulation of development of new products and production processes are yet other examples of benefits accruing from cooperation.

Cooperation relations occur in various ways. A constructor may outsource part of a project to one or more smaller enterprises; a retail dealer may sign a franchise agreement with an international business chain. Cooperation may also take a less formal character, e.g. several enterprises within the same business form a network where they exchange experience and other type of knowledge.

The survey has focused on established cooperation relations e.g. permanent relations like outsourcing, franchising, networks etc, which are all examples of cooperation that goes far beyond the more simple relation between two enterprises regarding mutual purchase and sale of products. The survey has not only focused on the type and extent of cooperation but also on qualitative aspects. These include e.g. the motives to engage in cooperation, the effects of cooperation on competitiveness, and barriers to cooperation.

The survey has analysed Danish enterprises' national relations as well as relations with foreign companies, however, the survey has not made an explicit distinction between these types of cooperation.

The paper will summarize the results together with a description of the survey design, the questionnaire design, response rates and methodological considerations.