

**Standard Report**  
**on**  
**Methods and Quality**  
**for**  
**Response Burden Barometer**

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# **1 Overview**

The Response Burden Barometer (RBB) is a measure of the total administrative burden placed on Irish businesses by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) surveys when calculated on an actual compliance basis. This is calculated on a time and cost basis of fully or partially completed returns to the CSO and is the preferred method of the European Statistical System for calculating the Response Burden Barometer level.

As well as actual compliance, the RBB calculates what the burden would be in the case of full compliance i.e. all surveyed businesses made returns to the CSO in the reference period. The information is derived from returns and time figures measured by each of the different survey areas.

## **2 General Information**

### **2.1 Statistical Category**

Secondary statistics.

### **2.2 Area of Activity**

Response Burden

### **2.3 Organisational Unit Responsible, Persons to Contact**

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### **2.4 Objectives and Purpose;**

See Section 1 “Overview”.

### **2.5 Periodicity**

Annual

### **2.6 Client**

- National and internal

### **2.7 Users**

- Structural Business Statistics Division – CSO
- Irish Government
- Economists
- The general public

- • Other public bodies

## **2.8 Legal basis**

None

# **3 Statistical Concepts, Methods**

## **3.1 Subject of the Statistics**

Measures the total administrative burden placed on Irish businesses by the CSO surveys

- • Number of forms issued
- • Number of forms returned
- • Time – full compliance
- • Time – actual compliance
- • Administrative costs – full compliance
- • Administrative costs – actual compliance
- • Administrative burden – full compliance
- • Administrative burden – actual compliance (i.e. RBB measure)

## **3.2 Units of Observation/Collection Units/Units of Presentation**

## **3.3 Data Sources**

All business surveys conducted by CSO as well as surveys conducted jointly by CSO and other government bodies.

## **3.4 Reporting Unit/Respondents**

All survey areas outlined in 3.3

## **3.5 Type of Survey/Process**

Survey sample size, returns and time taken are measured for each survey and the RBB is derived from the collated results from each survey section.

## **3.6 Characteristics of the Sample/Process**

### **3.6.1 Population and Sampling Frame**

All business surveys conducted by CSO as well as surveys conducted jointly by CSO and other government bodies.

### **3.6.2 Sampling Design**

Not applicable.

### **3.7 Survey Technique/Data Transfer**

Not applicable.

### **3.8 Questionnaire (including explanations)**

Not applicable.

### **3.9 Participation in the Survey**

Not applicable.

### **3.10 Characteristics of the Survey/Process and its Results**

See section 6.

### **3.11 Classifications used**

The figures for number of active business enterprises in Ireland are based on the CSO's Central Business Register (for non-farming enterprises) and the results of the Farm Structures Surveys of 2005, 2007, 2010, 2013 and 2016. Businesses are known to be active or otherwise from administrative records provided to the CSO by the Office of the Revenue Commissioners and by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. The figures cover sections A through S of the NACE Rev. 2 activity classification.

The full list of NACE Rev 2 sectors covered is:

B – Mining and Quarrying, NACE Rev.2 codes 05-09

C – Manufacturing, NACE Rev.2 codes 10-33

D – Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply, NACE Rev.2 code 35

E – Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste management and Remediation Activities, NACE Rev.2 codes 36-39

F – Construction, NACE Rev.2 codes 41-43

G – Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles, NACE Rev.2 codes 45-47

H – Transportation and Storage, NACE Rev.2 codes 49-53

I – Accommodation and Food Service Activities, NACE Rev.2 codes 55 and 56

J – Information and Communication, NACE Rev.2 codes 58-63

K – Financial and Insurance Activities (excludes NACE code 64.20 Activities of holding companies), NACE Rev.2 codes 64-66 excluding 64.20

L – Real Estate Activities, NACE Rev.2 code 68

M – Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities, NACE Rev.2 codes 69-75

N – Administrative and Support Service Activities, NACE Rev.2 codes 77-82

P – Education, NACE Rev.2 code 85

R – Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, NACE Rev.2 codes 90-93

S – Other Service Activities, NACE Rev.2 codes 94-96

### **3.12 Regional Breakdown of Results**

Not available

## **4 Production of the Statistics, Data Processing, Quality Assurance**

### **4.1 Data Capture**

As indicated above, sample size, response and time taken in minutes for each survey are recorded by the survey sections, and the collated results are used in the formation of the RBB.

### **4.2 Coding**

Not applicable.

### **4.3 Data Editing**

See section 6.

### **4.4 Imputation (for Non-Response or Incomplete Data Sets)**

There are two measurements calculated in each of the categories of number of returns, time taken and cost. The first gives what these figures would be if response was 100% and the other gives what they actually were.

### **4.5 Grossing and Weighting**

Not applicable.

### **4.6 Computation of Outputs, Estimation Methods Used**

Total sample and response size is calculated from all of the periodic surveys throughout the year, with survey specific rules to calculate the average minutes. The time taken result used

in the RBB is then calculated by using a Winzorised mean, excluding the top and bottom 5% of results before getting the average.

#### **4.7 Other Quality Assurance Techniques Used**

Outputs are checked against the previous year and where the difference is significant, the survey area is contacted to verify the figures submitted and provide an explanation for the difference, if one is merited.

### **5 Quality**

#### **5.1 Relevance**

The RBB is indicative of the administrative burden placed on Irish businesses by CSO surveys. It also measures the CSO's progress in efforts to minimize that burden. Users of the data provided are listed in section 2.7.

#### **5.2 Accuracy and Reliability**

The RBB depends entirely on survey result metadata provided by each of the survey sections and are subject to the verification outlined in 4.7 above. Trend data is viewed with the aim that all significant changes are valid and can be explained. Changes in methodology and new data available can mean that data of previous years is subject to revision and there may be differences to previous versions of the release.

##### **5.2.1. Sampling Effects, Representativeness**

Not applicable.

##### **5.2.2. Non-Sampling Effects**

###### **5.2.2.1 Quality of the Data Sources used**

All data is provided from the areas that conduct the initial surveys and are verified by them. Any queries about the data are answered before it is added to the RBB calculation.

###### **5.2.2.2 Register Coverage**

NACE Rev 2 sectors B – S are available.

###### **5.2.2.3 Non-response (Unit and Item)**

Not applicable.

###### **5.2.2.4 Measurement Errors**

Not applicable.

#### **5.2.2.5 Processing Errors**

Not applicable.

#### **5.2.2.6 Model-related Effects**

Not applicable.

### **5.3 Timeliness and Punctuality**

#### **5.3.1 Provisional Results**

No provisional results are provided.

#### **5.3.2 Final Results**

The results and the RBB release are published within 12 months of the end of the reference year.

### **5.4 Coherence**

The RBB examines annual changes in terms of administrative burden and all data is derived from returns directly from survey sections.

### **5.5 Comparability**

#### **5.5.1 Other Sources**

Not applicable.

#### **5.5.2 Within the Series**

Not applicable.

### **5.6 Accessibility and Clarity**

#### **5.6.1 Assistance to Users, Special Analyses**

Response Burden Barometer 2020 is available as follows;

[Response Burden Barometer 2019](#) (need to update hyperlink to 2020) on T4

Releases for previous years are available at the following link:

[Response Burden Barometer - Archive](#)

#### **5.6.2 Revisions**

In 2016, the CSO completed a methodological review that examined what constituted an active enterprise and comparisons between various data sources, creating a more coherent product and bringing the methodology in line with Eurostat rules. The result of this is an increased number of enterprises for years 2008-2013 and a break in the series prior to 2008. Data prior to 2008 is no longer published.

As a result of the methodological review, the number of active enterprises changed for years from 2008, and related calculations, such as time and cost per enterprise etc., have also been revised.

Further information on the methodological review can be seen at:

[Business Demography and Structural Business Statistics Information Notice](#)

### **5.6.3 Publications**

#### **5.6.3.1 Releases, Regular Publications**

Response Burden Barometer data from 2008 onwards are available on the [CSO PxStat](#) as indicated in section 5.6.3.3 below.

#### **5.6.3.2 Statistical Reports**

While it is used internally, the Response Burden Barometer is not part of any other statistical report.

#### **5.6.3.3 Internet**

Data from the release is available through Database Direct available at [CSO PxStat](#)

### **5.6.4 Confidentiality**

The confidentiality of all information provided to the CSO by individual respondents is guaranteed by law under the Statistics Act 1993. The nature of this release is such that there is no identifiable data in either the preparation or the release itself. No data is released by the CSO where an individual or an individual enterprise can actually or potentially be identified.

## **6 Additional documentation and publications**

Survey information is available at:

[Response Burden Barometer - Survey Information](#)

Measurement Methodology is available at:

[Response Burden Barometer - Measurement Methodology](#)