

Annual Wholesale Trade Survey – Methods of Data Collection

A mail-out/mail-back survey of about 8,000 wholesale businesses. The sample is drawn from the Business Register, which contains all EINs and listed establishment locations.

Firms are first stratified by major kind of business and estimated sales. All firms with sales above applicable size cutoffs are selected into the survey and report for all their wholesale industry EINs. In a second stage, unselected EINs are stratified by major kinds of business and sales, and randomly selected from each strata.

The sample is updated quarterly to reflect employer business "births" and "deaths"; adding new employer businesses identified in the Business and Professional Classification Survey and deleting firms and EINs when it is determined they are no longer active. There is about a 9-month delay before new firms can be represented in the sample. To account for births during this interim period, data are imputed for all EINs that go out of business but are still active on the IRS mailing list.