

## Economic census 2011 takes off in July

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PUTRAJAYA: The Department of Statistics will be conducting the Economic Census (BE2011) for the third time, beginning July.

In an interview with Bernama, chief statistician, Datuk Wan Ramlah Wan Abdul Raof, said it would involve some 943,000 local and foreign firms and businesses.

The census is conducted every five years, with the first in 2001.

She said the establishments must be registered with the Companies Commission of Malaysia, Registry of Societies and various registration bodies such as professional bodies, Construction Industry Development Board and business associations.

Wan Ramlah said the census also encompassed establishments in the country's main economic sectors - agriculture, mining and quarrying, manufacturing, construction and services.

The chief statistician said the BE2011 would for the first time be also carried out simultaneously with Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Census 2011.

"It is because 95 per cent of the establishments are SMEs and it could save cost," she said, adding that the last SME Census was undertaken in 2005 for reference year 2003.

The department has allocated some RM40 million to carry out BE2011 which was for 2010 reference year, she said.

According to Wan Ramlah, the planning started last year where the department prepared the frame or list of establishments to be canvassed as well as the questionnaires.

She said the field work operations involving some 2,000 officers would commence in July to November while the processing of the data would be from August to December.

"The report should be out by June 2012," she said.

On the importance of the economic census, Wan Ramlah said it would be used to obtain comprehensive information on the structure and profile of the economic activities in the country which would be used in the formulation of national development plans and economic policies.

"The data are also used as a benchmark for the compilation of National Accounts as well as to provide an up-to-date frame for the central register of establishments in the Department of Statistics," she said.

In addition, she said, data on SMEs obtained from the census would provide an updated database on SMEs as well as to monitor and evaluate the contributions of SMEs to the overall economy.

SMEs currently contributed about 30 per cent to the gross domestic product.

On information collected from the census, Wan Ramlah said one of the important data would be "access to financing."

"We could identify the financing sources of each establishment, what are the factors that make the financing failed and which sectors that need financing helps," she said.

Other information would include the main activity of the company, data on income, expenditure, human resources, capital expenditure, marketing and promotion, value of imports and exports.

"It will also include innovation, use of information, communication and technology and environmental compliance," she said.

The census is conducted through mail enquiry, interview and field work.

The questionnaires would be dispatched to all establishments by end-May 2011 and respondents are requested to return the completed questionnaires within one month.

The questionnaires, which consist of 52 main questions can also be downloaded from the website of the department at [www.statistics.gov.my](http://www.statistics.gov.my).

As an assurance to the establishments on confidentiality, Wan Ramlah said the census would be conducted under the provisions of the Statistics Act 1965 (Revised 1989).

"It clearly stipulates that the contents of the questionnaires are confidential. It is for planning purposes. We are not tracking your activities," she said.

On the output of the census, Wan Ramlah said a total of 20 publications by economic sub-sectors and one publication on SMEs would be released by June 2012, 18 months after the reference year.

"This is in line with international recommendations and practice," she said.

She said following the release of the publications, the updating of the National SMEs database would commence from July 2012.

Wan Ramlah hoped the respondents would give their fullest cooperation and support.

"You are needed to complete the questionnaire with accurate information within the stipulated time period to ensure data quality and timeliness.

"A good data will result you a good planning. Apart from being the respondents, you are also the beneficiaries as you are also the users of the data that we collected for future planning usage," she said.

Respondents can contact the department at 03:8885 7000 or at [banciekonomi@stats.gov.my](mailto:banciekonomi@stats.gov.my) for any enquiries. - Bernama