



International
Labour
Organization

► User Guide for the Questionnaire for Self-Assessment of the Quality of Administrative Records (SAQUAR)

Department of Statistics

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The Self-Assessment of the Quality of Administrative Records (SAQUAR) form and this Guide are an adaptation of the Questionnaire for Evaluating the Quality of Administrative Records (CECRA, for its initials in Spanish) recommended by the Working Group on Administrative Records in the framework of the Statistical Conference of the Americas (SCA) and coordinated by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

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► Introduction

Objective of the Guide

The Guide contains instructions to guide the completion of the SAQUAR form in case of doubts about the content or scope of the questions.

Objective of the Self-Assessment of the Quality of Administrative Records (SAQUAR) form

Obtain information on the characteristics and functioning of the Administrative Registers¹ in order to know their potential as a source of data for statistical purposes, in particular, to generate useful indicators for the Labour Market Information System (LMIS).

Structure of the questionnaire

The questionnaire is made up of 4 chapters, as described in the table below.

► Structure of the SAQUAR questionnaire

Chapter	Sections
A. Identifying data	1 - 3
B. Characteristics of the Administrative Register	4 - 12
C. Quality Assessment	13 - 15
D. Statistical use	16 - 20

Type of questions

The questionnaire includes both open and closed questions (a few multiple-choice and most with just two options).

Open questions

The respondent is required to answer the question concisely, according to their knowledge of the topic. If the answer, or additional information, can be found in the internet, please indicate where to find it.

Closed multiple-choice questions

The respondent can select one or more answer options (e.g.: the question in section 8).

Dichotomous questions

The response categories are YES/NO. If in any case these categories are not sufficient to give the appropriate answer, use the REMARKS space to indicate or complement the answer.

Remarks

It is used to amplify the response or provide useful context for the diagnosis.

¹ An Administrative Register is a set of data related to units of analysis (facts, persons, companies), which are stored and used for different purposes (control, audit, collection, to grant benefits), usually non-statistical, that organisations keep as part of their management.

Profile of respondents

The SAQUAR is intended to be answered jointly by technical staff and the person in charge of the Register and, if applicable, of the unit in charge of the statistical processing of the Register. It is suggested that both the person in charge of the Register and the specialists of the thematic, computer, and statistical areas participate.

A. Identification Data

1. Dates

These are the date of receipt and the date by when the form will be completed and ready for return.

2. Identification of the Register

Indicate the full name of the Administrative Register and the abbreviations or acronyms by which it is also known, if applicable.

Describe the Unit in charge of the Register and the Institution to which this Unit belongs.

3. Persons with responsibility for the Register

Please note the identification details of the persons involved in the response to the form. If the Register does not have specialists in any of the areas, please indicate this in REMARKS.

B. Characteristics and Operation of the Register

4. General characteristics

Purpose: indicate the purpose for which the Administrative Register was created (e.g. to register accidents at work, to monitor and sanction labour offences, to register trade union organisations, to register collective bargaining, to grant work permits to minors, to register vacant jobs, etc.).

Registration units: these are the events, persons or entities that are the object of registration (accidents at work, inspection visits, vacant posts, persons placed, etc.).

Supporting legal norms: these are the laws, decrees, regulations, agreements or regional or international recommendations that support the existence and continuity of the Register.

Main users: institutions or persons using the information in the Register for different purposes (control, audit, statistical use).

Start year of the Register: year in which it starts operating with its current characteristics.

Periods during which the register was not operational: periods during which there was no activity of the register since the start-up year. Indicate in REMARKS the reason for the temporary cessation of operation.

5. Sources of information

Indicate the entity (person, company, institution, other administrative record) providing the data in the Register.

6. Units to be registered

These are the events, persons or entities that are the subject of the record. Mark in each case whether or not it is a unit to be registered (YES/NO).

7. Operation of the Register

If the registration procedure was changed, indicate in REMARKS why. If improvements are being planned, indicate in REMARKS what they consist of.

8. Registration of data

This is a multiple-choice question. All means used to obtain information from the Register should be ticked.

9. Identification variables

Indicate which variable(s) are used to identify the units registered. The identification of the units in the register is fundamental to be able to relate information from different sources (registers, surveys, censuses). Examples of identification variables are identity card number, passport number, RUT number. A combination of variables could include 3 digits for nationality followed by the identity card or passport number.

10. Classification variables of the units of the Register

Indicate which breakdowns can be made of the registered units on the basis of the information contained in the register.

11. Data entry and storage

It provides information on the process that is followed from the time the data enters the register until it is arranged in a format useful for exploitation for statistical purposes. The last question asks about the use of classifiers for certain variables (occupation, branch of activity, type of work offence, accidents at work by nature, etc.).

12. Registry Resources

The questions assess the availability of trained human resources, equipment and financial resources for the proper functioning of the Registry.

C. Quality Assessment

13. Documentation

This is one of the quality requirements of any data source for statistical purposes. The existence of procedure's manuals (for registration, for checking completeness), manuals for error control, documents on how the entities of the Register are linked (data model) and the variables associated with their dictionaries, must be available to users for statistical purposes, who will have to define the units of analysis (not always coincident with the register units), the relevant variables, the treatment of errors and missing data, and the procedures to ensure the confidentiality of individual data at the time of dissemination of the statistics. The metadata of the Administrative Register are the "data about the data" contained in the Register, describing the main properties or characteristics (type of variables, methods of data capture, etc.). An international standard for metadata documentation is the Data Documentation Initiative Codebook (DDI-C).

It is requested that the documents (or the URL where they are located) with the DATA MODEL of the Register and the DICTIONARY of variables are attached to the questionnaire.

14. Quality control

All checks that are carried out (and their periodicity) to verify the completeness of the data, identify missing data or erroneous data (type and number of errors) are indicated here. In particular, whether checks are made by comparison with other data sources.

15. Security

The questions ask, on the one hand, whether information security protocols are complied with in the event of contingencies that could lead to the loss of the Register's data (security policies, backup copies), and on the other hand, whether the necessary actions are taken to prevent the leakage or dissemination of data that are protected by secrecy or confidentiality.

D. Statistical Use

16. Statistical exploitation

Consulted by the use for statistical purposes and type of access for users.

17. Data retrieval and processing

The possibility of low-cost statistical exploitation of the Register's data depends on how the data are stored. The questions in this part of the questionnaire ask how the data are stored, how statistical users can access the data, what operations they are allowed to perform, whether information on errors and updates is stored, and the data model in case the storage is in a database.

The "time-machine" paradigm is the ability of a system to allow queries to the database with values that were held at a given date in the past, i.e., the ability to access historical data. The typical example is querying the balance of a bank account at a given date. In a statistical data warehouse, it is the functionality to access historical data as of a given date without taking into account revisions that may have been made afterwards. Indeed, its usefulness is controversial, since in general revisions increase the quality of the data and not considering them would imply using a lower quality data.

SOAP (Simple Object Access Protocol) is a messaging protocol specification for the exchange of structured information in the implementation of web services between computers. In recent years it has been progressively discontinued due to its relative complexity and has been replaced by REST (Representational State Transfer) which is much simpler to use as it uses a subset of HTTP and allows the creation of interactive applications that use web services.

18. Statistical processing

The transformation of an Administrative Register into a Statistical Register implies the performance of several activities: quality control of the variables to be processed, coding or recoding of variables with usual classifiers in national or international statistics, definition of units of analysis, decision making with respect to missing or erroneous data, creation of derived variables. Indicate in REMARKS which unit performs these activities (if any).

19. Dissemination

The questions ask whether the unit responsible for the Register is in charge of calculating and disseminating the indicators; whether agreements or arrangements are made with other agencies or institutions for the statistical use of the Register; the way in which the data is delivered to users; the frequency of dissemination and the information provided to users on methodological changes, updates and responses to queries.

20. Main indicators of the Register

The list of indicators provides information on the relevance of the Register for the Labour Market Information System.