

World Bank Enterprise Survey 2025

World Bank Group (WBG)

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Identification

SURVEY ID NUMBER

LKA_2025_WBES_v01_M

TITLE

World Bank Enterprise Survey 2025

COUNTRY

Name	Country code
Sri Lanka	LKA

STUDY TYPE

Enterprise Survey [en/oth]

SERIES INFORMATION

As part of its strategic goal of building a climate for investment, job creation, and sustainable growth, the World Bank has promoted improving business environments as a key strategy for development, which has led to a systematic effort in collecting enterprise data across countries. The Enterprise Surveys are an ongoing World Bank project in collecting both objective data based on firms' experiences and enterprises' perception of the environment in which they operate.

An Enterprise Survey is a firm-level survey of a representative sample of an economy's private sector. Firm-level surveys have been conducted since 1998 by different units within the World Bank. Since 2005-2006, most data collection efforts have been centralized within the Enterprise Analysis Unit. The Enterprise Surveys are conducted across all geographic regions and cover small, medium, and large companies. The surveys are administered to a representative sample of firms in the non-agricultural formal private economy. Data are used to create indicators that benchmark the quality of the business and investment climate across countries.

The World Bank Enterprise Surveys (WBES) collect both objective data based on firms' day-to-day experiences, and perceptions of enterprises regarding the business environment in which they operate.

ABSTRACT

The World Bank Enterprise Survey (WBES) is a firm-level survey of a representative sample of an economy's private sector. The surveys cover a broad range of topics related to the business environment including access to finance, corruption, infrastructure, competition, and performance.

KIND OF DATA

Sample survey data [ssd]

UNIT OF ANALYSIS

The primary sampling unit of the study is the establishment. An establishment is a physical location where business is carried out and where industrial operations take place or services are provided. A firm may be composed of one or more establishments. For example, a brewery may have several bottling plants and several establishments for distribution. For the purposes of this survey an establishment must make its own financial decisions and have its own financial statements separate from those of the firm. An establishment must also have its own management and control over its payroll.

Scope

NOTES

The 2025 Sri Lanka World Bank Enterprise Survey covered the following topics:

- Firm/ establishment profile
- Infrastructure and services
- Sales and supplies
- Commercial disputes
- Management practices
- Degree of competition
- Innovation
- Land and permits

- Green economy
- Finance
- Business-Government relations
- Business environment
- Labor
- Performance

Coverage

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

National

UNIVERSE

All formal (i.e., registered) private sector establishments (with at least 1% private ownership) and with at least five employees. In terms of sectoral criteria, all manufacturing businesses (ISIC Rev 4. codes 10-33) are eligible; for services businesses, those corresponding to the ISIC Rev 4 codes 41-43, 45-47, 49-53, 55-56, 58, 61-62, 69-75, 79, and 95 are included in the Enterprise Surveys. Cooperatives and collectives are excluded from the Enterprise Surveys. All eligible establishments must be registered with the registration agency. In the case of Sri Lanka, the registration agency is the Department of the Registrar of Companies (DRC). The universe table is the total number of eligible establishments, and the table is partitioned by the stratification groups (industry classification, establishment size, and subnational region) in a country.

Note: The universe table can be found in Table 1 of "The Sri Lanka 2025 World Bank Enterprise Survey Implementation Report".

Producers and sponsors

PRIMARY INVESTIGATORS

Name
World Bank Group (WBG)

FUNDING AGENCY/SPONSOR

Name	Abbreviation
World Bank Group	WBG

Sampling

SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The WBES use stratified random sampling, where the population of establishments is first separated into non-overlapping groups, called strata, and then respondents are selected through simple random sampling from each stratum. The detailed methodology is provided in the Sampling Note

(https://www.enterprisesurveys.org/content/dam/enterprisesurveys/documents/methodology/Sampling_Note-Consolidated-2-16-22.pdf). Stratified random sampling has several advantages over simple random sampling. In particular, it:

- produces unbiased estimates of the whole population or universe of inference, as well as at the levels of stratification
- ensures representativeness by including observations in all of those categories
- produces more precise estimates than simple random sampling for a given sample size or budget allocation, and
- may reduce implementation costs by splitting the population into convenient subdivisions.

The WBES typically use three levels of stratification: industry classification, establishment size, and subnational region (used in combination). Starting in 2022, the WBES bases the industry classification on ISIC Rev. 4 (with earlier surveys using ISIC Rev. 3.1). For regional coverage within a country, the WBES has national coverage.

Note: For detailed sampling methodology, refer to the Sampling Structure section in "The Sri Lanka 2025 World Bank Enterprise Survey Implementation Report".

RESPONSE RATE

Overall survey response rate was 33.7%.

WEIGHTING

Since the WBES uses stratified random sampling, individual observations should be properly weighted when making inferences about the population, since unweighted estimates are biased unless sample sizes are proportional to the size of each stratum. For each WBES, special care is given to correctly compute sampling weights. Whenever the Universe is used to draw the sample (i.e., Sampling Frame is the same as the Universe) it is imperative to accurately adjust the universe within each stratum to account for the presence of ineligible establishments (e.g., the establishment discontinued businesses, or is deemed ineligible due to its business activity or having fewer than five employees). Proper treatment of panel establishments is also crucial. Details about how the WBES sampling weights are calculated are given in the Sampling Note section of "The Sri Lanka 2025 World Bank Enterprise Survey Implementation Report".

Data collection

DATES OF DATA COLLECTION

Start	End
2025-06	2026-02

DATA COLLECTION NOTES

The detailed information on the WBES methodology and data collection is provided in the Enterprise Surveys Manual and Guide (<https://www.enterprisesurveys.org/content/dam/enterprisesurveys/documents/methodology/Enterprise-Surveys-Manual-and-Guide.pdf>). The interviews for the Sri Lanka 2025 WBES were conducted between June 2025 and January 2026. The interviews were conducted in the following languages: Sinhala, Tamil and English. For monetary variables, the currency was Sri Lankan rupee.

Apart from the challenges with participation and call-backs that are standard for all surveys, the Sri Lanka 2025 WBES faced challenges interviewing establishments belonging to the Assam Branch Sri Lankan Tea Association (ABITA). Multiple attempts were made to obtain the permissions requested by the establishments from the Secretary of ABITA and the relevant labor secretaries, but these attempts were not successful. These contacts were marked as refusal to screener in the progress report.

The fieldwork for the Sri Lanka 2025 WBES was implemented by Multi-Tech Solutions Private Limited.

questionnaires

QUESTIONNAIRES

The standard WBES questionnaire covers several topics regarding the business environment and business performance. These topics include general establishment characteristics, infrastructure, sales and supplies, trade, management practices, competition, innovation, capacity, land and permits, finance, business-government relations, exposure to bribery, labor, and performance. Information about the general structure of the questionnaire is available in the Enterprise Surveys Manual and Guide.

(<https://www.enterprisesurveys.org/content/dam/enterprisesurveys/documents/methodology/Enterprise-Surveys-Manual-and-Guide.pdf>).

data_processing

METHODOLOGY NOTES

The WBES datafiles are organized in ways that reflect the corresponding questionnaire. The variables that are standard across countries have the first letter in their name correspond to the questionnaire section where the variable belongs in the questionnaire, i.e., a1 denotes section A. All variables are numeric with the exception of those variables with an "x" at the end of their names. The suffix "x" denotes that the variable is alpha-numeric.

The WBES datafiles contain two establishment identifiers, idstd and id. The former is a global unique identifier of each establishment, while the latter is unique identifier within each survey. The variable idstd can be used to match the WBES

establishment one-to-one across databases. The variables `wweak`, `wmedian`, and `wstrong` corresponding to sampling weights based on, respectively, weak, median, and strong assumptions about eligibility (see Section III.6 of "The Sri Lanka 2025 World Bank Enterprise Survey Implementation Report"). The variable `strata` corresponds to the stratum of each observation.

Additionally, the WBES datafiles contain many standard variables. The variable `d1a2_v4` denotes the main activity of the establishment, as obtained during the WBES interview, coded in the four-digit ISIC Rev. 4. Users should note that this activity may differ from the industry classification given in the Sampling Frame, `a4a`. Users are generally advised to use industry categories based on the realized information in `d1a2_v4`. Additional sampling information is contained in variables `a2` (region) and `a6a` (size). The variable `panel` identifies panel establishments, i.e., those that participated in the Sri Lanka 2011 WBES. The combination of `a4a`, `a2`, `a6a`, and `panel` forms stratum of each establishment, which is contained in variable `strata`.

The last complete fiscal year for each establishment is contained in variables `a20m` (last month of last complete fiscal year) and `a20y` (last complete fiscal year).

Note that when an entry in the WBES database is empty, this means that the question was not asked to the corresponding respondent. This happens when the question is deemed inapplicable, due to skip patterns or other reasons.

Access policy

CONTACTS

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CITATION REQUIREMENTS

The World Bank Group. Sri Lanka - World Bank Enterprise Survey (WBES) 2025, Ref. LKA_2025_WBES_v01_M. Dataset downloaded from <https://www.enterprisesurveys.org/en/data> on [date].

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Metadata production

DDI DOCUMENT ID

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PRODUCERS

Name	Abbreviation	Affiliation	Role
Development Data Group	DECDG	World Bank Group	Documentation of the survey

DATE OF METADATA PRODUCTION

2026-04-13

DDI DOCUMENT VERSION

Version 01 (April 2026)

data_dictionary

Data file	Cases	variables
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study_resources