



# **OECD Project: Assessing the Feasibility of Micro-Data Access and Entrepreneurship ICE**

**Nadim Ahmad, Statistics Directorate, OECD**

**Copenhagen 22-23 February 2007**

# Background

- Increasing desire for micro-data access in analysis and policy formulation, accelerated by cheaper and faster computer power .....which in turn have increased capacity and potential for NSOs to provide access.
- ‘Conservative’ rules relating to access however have led users to conduct own surveys = additional costs on users & respondents, and, so, the economy, which are often of lower quality than micro-data held by NSOs = risks of inappropriate policy measures & of NSOs being overtaken by events or marginalised.

# The OECD's Feasibility Study - Options

- Overview
  - Snap shot indicators
  - Longitudinal indicators
  - Bilateral projects
  - Remote Access
  - Transmission of micro-data
    - (5(i)) – Accessing private data sets

# Synthesis of Questionnaires

- Most countries provide access to some micro-data
- Typically public-use files
- With ‘anonymised’ micro-data available at on-site Research Centres
- A few countries (e.g. Aus, Dnk, NLD, Swe, Bra) currently have remote access facilities but the mechanisms and data need further investigation and others are investigating their potential (recognising constraints posed by on-site access)

## Synthesis – Social versus Economic

- Typically, accessible data is social rather than economic
- But, in most countries, the legal conditions governing access are, de facto, the same for both social and economic data.
- Difference reflects greater difficulty in preserving confidentiality in economic data sets. Indeed, small countries highlighted their particular difficulties with economic data distributions.

## Synthesis - Trust and Educated Users

- But many countries have been able to overcome disclosure problems by creating an educated and trusted user network, supported by penalties.
- And, in practice, this works. Hardly any breaches.

## Synthesis – Country Views

- Many countries viewed remote access as a feasible option, but one that could not be implemented in the short-term due to technical (and not legal) constraints.
- Most countries welcomed the development of new indicators that provided additional information with no increased risk of confidentiality breaches but the scope of longitudinal indicators is limited by coverage of longitudinal datasets.

# OECD Conference on micro-data access Luxembourg, October 2006 – Feedback and Conclusions

- Re-affirmed ‘synthesis’ position. Positive response to development of indicators and remote execution methods. Remote access also supported but with recognition that this was someway in the future.
- Pre-requisites for the OECD were to develop, governance rules for micro-data access, including generic mathematical rules to facilitate remote access options.

# Conference – Feedback and Conclusions

- Endorsement of two-stage approach for short to medium term
- **Stage 1:** For the OECD to develop with NSOs/analysts a list of indicators that could be produced without compromising confidentiality. E.g. for business statistics providing information relating to distributions, variances, co-variances, regression coefficients etc that could be delivered via remote execution and/or standard data collection mechanisms (e.g. integrated with SDBS collection).

## Conference – Feedback and Conclusions

- **Stage 2:** To begin to develop remote access options with countries that have facilities available and examine how these could be replicated in other countries over the medium to longer term: examining, in particular, e-mail and automated systems.
- A key deliverable being the development of *confidentiality rules* and common metadata sets.
- Pre-requisites would be: *Governance Rules* for OECD access and OECD user-education program.

## A Centre for micro-data access

- A Centre that would co-ordinate OECD micro-data access.
- Requires strong support from NSOs, and development of governance rules.
- Plan is for the Centre to become the conduit for research activities requiring micro-data, either by accessing existing micro-data or by co-ordinating and initiating data collection/surveys in new areas. Potential for areas such as entrepreneurship is rich.

# Micro-data and Entrepreneurship

- What can we do?
- Stage 1 relates to identifying indicators that NSOs could be encouraged to produce using currently available micro-data (BD program is an example of this).
- What other indicators can we/should we collect?
- Proposal is for ICE and EIP Steering Group to identify possible new indicators and explore possibilities with NSOs – can also feed into OECD CIS micro-data analysis. List of required indicators already being formulated forms the first step.

# Work Plan

- Ultimate Objective is for a final report to CSTAT next June.
- Delegates encouraged to assist with indicator development work, sending proposals (including frequency) to **nadim.ahmad@oecd.org**
- Full conference proceedings, papers, presentations, minutes, conclusions can be found on Statistics Directorate site at **[https://www.oecd.org/document/27/0,2340,fr\\_2649\\_201185\\_37502683\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](https://www.oecd.org/document/27/0,2340,fr_2649_201185_37502683_1_1_1_1,00.html)**