

Session 4

Microdata a push for transparency?

Discussion

“From collecting to sharing”

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Micro data: a push for transparency?

3 QUESTIONS

- **A set of 3 different questions**
 - *Whether microdata represent a drive for greater transparency on financial markets and its players, i.e . contribute to better understanding of economic and financial developments?*
 - *Which also brings sharing data and bringing in the researchers.*
 - *If yes, how to deal with the constraints for compiling them and providing access as it entails issues regarding confidentiality ?*
 - *What are the respective roles of the different European, international and national authorities in that respect and how can they steer new developments?*
- **Comments and questions along these 3 dimensions**
 - *Putting in perspective the 3 presentations within this framework*
 - *Taking as a background, developments in other domains of public policies and research where microdata play an important role*
 - *From the research perspective and data archives experience*
- **A red thread: any specificity for more sharing bank and financial microdata ?**
- **As a contribution to the discussion: recommendations from experiences in other domains**

A DRIVE FOR TRANSPARENCY AND BETTER UNDERSTANDING ?

- **Obviously yes !** For all stakeholders: supervisors, policy makers, public debate and researchers
- **Even for macrodata, granularity is crucial**
 - **Louis-Marc Ducharme paper:** IMF changes and examples
 - Attention to microdata should not entail less development regarding granularity for macrodata
 - Different levels of granularity: harmonisation and metadata needed
 - Question: how much is available and just requires to be disseminated vs how much would require more efforts at various levels to be implemented ?***
- **Microdata: as in other domains, need to understand mechanisms, behaviours, relationships...**
 - **Loriana Pelizzon paper(s)** *provide examples with various data sources*
 - *Mostly individual data (ie not personal data even if several of interest, some of them accessible via NSIs)*
 - *However might raise confidentiality issues (mostly business confidentiality and professional confidentiality rather than privacy protection)*

HOW TO DEAL WITH CONFIDENTIALITY ISSUES ?

1) IN MANY CASES, NO CONFIDENTIALITY ISSUES ! BUT ACCESS ISSUES

- **Macrodata: free access since January 2015 to IMF data !**
- **Microdata: In many cases microdata in the domain do not raise confidentiality issues**
 - **However many remain not available (even for supervisors) or raise some access issues**
 - A great variety of data and data holders/data providers also including private companies
 - Different practices regarding:
 - Dissemination, level of aggregation provided even when not entailing confidentiality issues
 - Formats and metadata also raising quality issues in some cases
 - Modes of access and fees
 - Work to compile data and fees might be important for research
 - Whether paid on individual basis (research project) or more collective basis, universities data libraries/data centres : ex SAFE/ Goethe university data centre, EUROFIDAI in France
 - ***Loriana Pelizzon papers: researcher's experience for access and use of microdata ? Confidential or not ? Mode of access ? Difficulties ? Costs ?***

HOW TO DEAL WITH CONFIDENTIALITY ISSUES ?

2) CONFIDENTIAL MICRODATA

- **Not starting from scratch ! Solutions exist based on secure access systems, trade-off between security and users' needs and trust between partners**
- **Mariana Kotzeva paper:** the ESS example for providing access to official microdata for research
 - terminology issues, changes made in the legal frameworks, procedures and criteria for approved institution and project, modes of access

Question: Took a long time time, still not fully implemented (on site only)
Any lessons for the Central Banks domain ? Possible coordination ?
- **A general trend towards access to secure access to confidential microdata making possible to balance confidentiality and reuse and research needs**
 - Many changes made in the legal frameworks at national and European levels
 - An increasing number of NSIs and ONA provide access
 - Now increasingly also for health (medico-administrative) data, tax data, administrative data
 - Current developments regarding transnational access to confidential microdata (FP7 Data without Boundaries /DwB project 2011-2015)
- **Already a developing trend in the bank and financial domain and strong pressure:** ECB, many Central banks, other authorities do provide some access, though still uneven and difficult to compare
- See for instance Olena Havrylchuk overview for the CBs and Gunther Capelle-Blancard report for France

HOW TO DEAL WITH CONFIDENTIALITY ISSUES ?

3) LESSONS FROM OTHER DOMAINS (SEE FP7 DWB PROJECT) AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Agree on terminology** : *confidential vs direct, indirect identification*
- **Legal frameworks can be interpreted, can be changed when necessary**
 - No legal frameworks initially included re-use for research and studies, however interpretation possible if no formal exclusion
 - Specific institutional implementation for each type of data (official microdata, administrative data, tax data, medico-administrative data, other government agencies data) generally required successive changes for each legal framework
 - However issues rather similar: no statistical mandate, professional secret, professional confidentiality, business confidentiality etc... were not obstacles for changes
- **Look for transparency and harmonisation of criteria, procedures, application forms for approved research projects (ESS ?)**
- **Make information visible !** (ECB vs Bundesbank website !)
- **Metadata and support to users: important and time-consuming issues**
- **Consider avoiding duplication of access systems as well as linkage issues at national and transnational levels (that will require networks of RDCs)**
- **Harmonise practices (surveillance, output checking ..)**
- **Sharing the burden and cost model ?** Consider cooperation with research infrastructures (CESSDA data archives)

RESPECTIVE ROLES: INTERNATIONAL, EUROPEAN AND NATIONAL AUTHORITIES ?

- What's the good level to move forward ?
- While several CBs and other authorities have moved, some other emphasize they cannot move as they are linked to the European framework constraints
- ESS experience: both levels are important
- And international level must not be forgotten, particularly in this domain

CONCLUSION

- A sector where collecting microdata remains an important issue
- While in the same time sharing them is on the agenda
- Remains a bit apart from the open data movement (even for macrodata)
- Balance between security/confidentiality and needs
 - Not starting from scratch: A lot of experience in other domains
 - Developments already on the road
 - Implementing secure access is a driver for implementing legal changes
- How to move forward on these issues should be tackled more collectively
 - Regular exchanges with all stakeholders should be on the agenda and consider linking with institutions offering secure access in other domains both for experience and possible linkage issues to be dealt in the future

Thanks !

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More on the FP7 DwB project 2011-2015:

<http://www.dwbproject.org/>