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NATIONAL
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TRUSTWORTHY
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Challenges in providing access to micro data for research purposes

Framework of the seminar

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Outline

- Ten years of development
- Who are the main players?
- Key issues
- Ideas for possible follow up

Ten years of development

- In 2003 - first seminar: discussion on risk avoidance/relevance, many open questions and few systematic approaches,
- After that two manuals and good practices were published
 - In 2007- Managing Statistical Confidentiality and Micro data Access: Principles and Guidelines of Good Practice
 - In 2009 - Principles and Guidelines on Confidentiality Aspects of Data Integration Undertaken for Statistical or Related Research Purposes.
- 2013 - second seminar: a number of countries with systematic approach, intensified international cooperation and R&D.

Wide range of products and services have been developed

Products

- Non-confidential micro data:
 - Public Use Files (PUF)
 - Synthetic files
- Confidential micro data:
 - Scientific use files

Services

- Website (non-confidential micro-data and meta data)
- On-site laboratory
- Remote access
- Remote execution environment

Who are the main players?

- Users :
 - Research community (organisations and individual researchers, students) national and cross-boarder
 - Ministries in different roles: analytical/policy making/resources providers
 - International organisations
- Micro-data producers/providers:
 - NSOs and other data producers of official statistics and admin micro-data holders (data integration initiatives)
 - Big data holders as sources but also information providers
 - Respondents trust that data will be protected

Who are the main players? Cont.

- Other partners
 - Data archives – shared service providers with NSOs
 - International organisations - setting the standards, enforcing and mainstreaming the cooperation activities
 - Personal data protection officers assisting in finding the legal solutions and helping to build the trust of society

Key issues

- Increasing demand for micro-data:
 - for forecasting and testing policy decisions (micro simulation models)
 - to analyse the complex phenomena (need for the linkage of different sources) but also regional phenomena (more detailed data). Both requests increase the risk of disclosure.
 - Trans - border research projects requests trans-border access (trust of partners, accreditation, sharing the costs)
- Resources
 - Resources to maintain the micro-data access environment are high.
 - Innovation in methodologies, use of modern ICT, organisation and cooperation proved to lower the costs.

Key issues cont.

- Good management and particularly good cooperation needed at inter institutional, national and international levels
 - Shared services can lower the costs for development and maintenance of infrastructure (human and financial resources, exchange of knowledge)
 - Common standards (like DDI), meta data (single point, terminology, catalogues) = transparency = interoperability = efficiency = creation of demand for micro-data
 - New research profiles (cross-cutting, cross-border)
 - New generation of researchers/new generation of statisticians/new modes of cooperation.

Key issues cont.

- New data sources
 - While official statistics has an advantage concerning international comparability and sustainability of time series, timelines and relevance have been a constant challenge.
 - New data sources such as big data offer the opportunities to improve timelines and relevance.
 - Other initiatives such as open data may also challenge the relevance of NSOs production and their ability to provide the micro-data

Key issues cont.

- Modernisation of the statistical production process
 - Innovative methodologies and tools for data protection such as confidentiality on the fly would increase the availability of data and decrease the workload needed for output checking of the research results.
 - Increased use of GIS can enable NSO's to provide more detailed and richer micro-data.
 - The production process has to be streamlined – micro-data as a product of core business processes.

Key issues cont.

Responsibility for data protection

- NSOs/researchers (in most cases)
- More on researchers side (some Nordic countries)
- Between the NSOs (legislation, circle of trust)

How?

- Organisation and management (authorisation, contracts, training and good cooperation with all players).
- Methods
- Tools

Ideas for possible follow up

- I would like to invite the audience to consider :
 - The possibility to develop a „check list“ for systematic development of micro-data access system.
 - To update the section on good practices in the 2007 Principles and Guidelines of Good practices.
 - Consider the role for HLG on modernisation as vehicle to share innovative solutions.