



Challenges in providing access to micro-data for research purposes

From risk avoidance to risk management

June 2013

Purpose of the session

- ① Discuss risks and risk management for micro-data access
- ① Propose further work to advance approaches for managing risk in micro-data access

Context

- ⦿ Growing demand for micro-data access
- ⦿ Traditional methods for managing risk are cumbersome

Papers

- ⊙ Australia: Innovative micro-data access – confidentiality on the fly
- ⊙ Canada: Risk management for micro-data access: two Canadian examples
- ⊙ Italy: Micro-data: a crucial asset for statistical system
- ⊙ Netherlands: Micro-data services in the Netherlands
- ⊙ Mexico: Project of micro-data access of the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico
- ⊙ Azerbaijan: Challenges in access for micro-data for scientific research purposes
- ⊙ Brazil: Improvements on risk management for micro-data access at the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics
- ⊙ Denmark: The rationale for micro-data services at Statistics Denmark.

Approaches to micro-data access

- ⊙ National approaches vary, but shared view that:
 - ⊙ The NSI is a trusted guardian of sensitive data.
 - ⊙ Legislation is a foundation for managing access.
 - ⊙ Micro-data access is a specialised service for competent and trustworthy researchers.
- ⊙ The central risk is the release of confidential information

Issues

- ⊙ Micro-data as part of the business of an NSI
- ⊙ Public attitudes towards data privacy
- ⊙ Researcher advocacy for improved access to micro-data
- ⊙ Administrative and integrated micro-data

Challenges: risk assessment

- ◎ Common concerns of NSIs, to protect the confidentiality and privacy of respondents and ensure continued supply of data
- ◎ Maturity of risk analysis (impact and likelihood)
 - Do we have a strong evidence base for our current practices, and would a formal micro-data access risk analysis model be of benefit to NSIs?
 - Does micro-data access challenge the traditional boundary between the work of NSIs and that of other organisations that carry out research and analysis?

Challenges: effective services

- ◎ Meeting user expectations without undue risk
 - How do NSIs identify the expectations of micro-data users?
 - How have researcher expectations affected the provision of micro-data access in each of our countries?
 - What are the key features of micro-data access services which manage risk effectively while providing access that satisfies research users' requirements?

Challenges: involving researchers

- ⊙ High standards are set for researchers, including technical and ethical requirements
 - Are researchers developing greater expertise in the data than NSIs?
 - How can NSIs make researchers active partners in risk management?
 - Does the role of the NSI in risk management change as expertise and knowledge of the data moves from the NSI to the researcher?