



THE EUROPEAN PROCESS OF ENHANCING ACCESS TO EUROSTAT DATA

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Outline of the presentation

- Current situation
- New legal framework for access to confidential data for scientific purposes
- Access facilities

Regulation 223/2009 on European statistics – basic law

- ❑ The regulation 223/2009 defines, amongst others, the basic principles of:
 - ✓ the development, production and dissemination of European statistics,
 - ✓ access to confidential data for scientific purposes
- ❑ Access to confidential data for scientific purposes is enabled under the following conditions (Article 23):
 - Only indirect identification possible
 - Access for statistical analyses for scientific purposes
 - Approval of NSIs required for each access request

Regulation 831/2002 on access to confidential data for scientific purposes – rules and conditions of access

- ❑ Research entities: mainly European universities and research bodies
- ❑ Access covered by contracts
- ❑ NSA should provide their consent for each research project
- ❑ Datasets available enumerated in the Regulation
- ❑ Two modes of access are enabled:
 - Delivered access of anonymised microdata to research institutions
 - Access in Eurostat safe center in Luxembourg

Current process

- NSAs collect data according to harmonized definitions/methodologies
- NSAs transmit files to Eurostat for the sake of production of EU statistics – in some domains (mainly household statistics) microdata are transmitted
- Data have to be listed in the Regulation 831/2002
- Methods of anonymisation are agreed with MS and other participating countries
- Files are prepared by Eurostat
- Eurostat handles access requests and releases data according to appropriate procedures

What is available, what is delivered ?

- ❑ 12 surveys listed in the Regulation 831/2002 but only 6 currently released:
 1. European Community Household Panel (ECHP)
 2. Labour Force Survey (LFS)
 3. Community Innovation Survey (CIS)
 4. Structure of Earnings Survey (SES)
 5. Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (SILC)
 6. Adult Education Survey (AES)

- ❑ Other datasets: CVTS, CSIS, EHIS, Transport data (as from July 2013), HBS – later this year, FSS (suspended)
- ❑ Delivery of micro data : 300 contracts and amendments in 2012, number of access requests constantly increasing
- ❑ Access in Eurostat safe center : few contracts per year (CIS and SES data)

Why the new regulation was needed?

- To adapt it better to the Regulation on European statistics
- To allow for new modes of access
- To offer more datasets
- To improve access procedures
- To avoid admissibility procedure (procedures for entities that are not defined as research entities by the regulation 831/2002)
- To increase flexibility and sustainability of the microdata access system

Principles of the new draft Regulation

- Users: recognized research entities
- Purpose: statistical analysis for scientific purposes indicated in the research proposal
- Datasets available:
 - scientific use files (delivered access)
 - secure use files (access in secure environment)
- Access provided by Eurostat or another accredited entity: **access facility**
- Approval of access by MSs
- Transparency and efficiency

Process

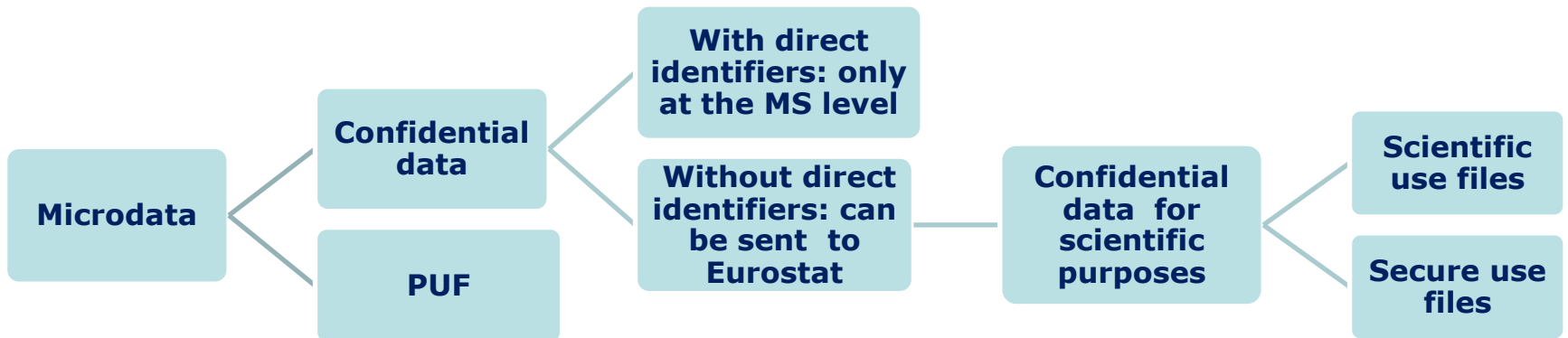
1. Recognition of research entity

- Application form, confidentiality undertaking and terms of use to be signed by the head of research entity
- Assessment by Eurostat
 - **Publication of the name of research entity on Eurostat website**

2. Research proposal

- Application form and confidentiality declaration to be signed by researchers having access to confidential data
- Consultation of the national authorities
 - **Opening of the access**

Microdata / confidential data



Confidential data for scientific purposes

- ❑ **Scientific use files:** confidential data for scientific purposes on which methods of statistical disclosure control have been applied to reduce to the appropriate level and in accordance with current best practice the risk of identification of the statistical unit
- ❑ **Secure use files:** confidential data for scientific purposes on which no further methods of statistical disclosure control have been applied
- ❑ **Statistical disclosure control methods** - methods to reduce the risk of disclosing information on the statistical units, usually based on restricting the amount of or modifying the data released

Access facilities – types of bodies

1. National statistical institutes
2. National statistical authorities
3. Other access facilities

Accreditation process

- Requirements specification (purpose of the access facility, organisational structure, standards for data security and data management)
- Call launched by Eurostat
- Assessment of applying bodies
- ESS Committee's opinion
- Contract between Eurostat and access facilities

Still to be discussed/decided

- Detailed requirements
- Sharing of tasks/costs between Eurostat and access facilities
- Data to be released
- Output checking issues

Access via safe centres in the NSIs

ESSnet on decentralized and remote access to confidential data in the ESS:

- **Access via safe centres located in the participating NSIs**
- **Remote access to the data stored at Eurostat secure environment**
- **Prove of concept of access facilities**

Service centre for official statistics

- Single entry point
- Metadata information
- Collaboration platform for researchers
- Trainings

Guidelines for the assessment of research entities, research proposals and access facilities

- Practical solutions, procedures
- Description of datasets
- Requirements for the safeguards in place
- Models of:
 - **Application forms**
 - **Confidentiality undertaking**
 - **Terms of use**
 - **Individual confidentiality declaration**

Impact of new draft regulation on NSA

- 6 weeks standard consultation period reduced to 4 weeks
- same consultation procedure as before

Impact of new draft regulation on researchers' community

- ❑ Current directly admissible bodies need to be recognized as research entity
- ❑ No exception for Commission's and NSA's contractors
- ❑ Strengthened responsibility of research entity for hosting confidential data
- ❑ Shorter delays and smaller administrative burden once the confidentiality undertaking is signed



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Thank you for your attention!