International Collaboration for Microdata Access: Lessons from OECD work

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Microdata for research and policy at the OECD - the users' needs

- ## Strong demand for access to microdata

Microdata analysis as a key analytical tool

- ## Broad range of OECD studies based on microdata

e. g. Income inequality; Employment; Business dynamics; Trade; Innovation; Education and skills; Consumption taxes

- ## Several approaches to exploit microdata
  - Networks
  - Safe Centres
  - Public Use Files (PUFs)
  - Confidential files
  - Commercial microdata

OECD research and transnational access to official microdata

- **Access in multiple countries** needed for cross-country analysis

- Challenges
  - **Locating information** on microdata (coverage, variables, ..)
  - **Language barriers**
  - **Different accredition procedures** (terms and length)
  - **Different access systems**
  - **Differences in content and structure of microdata**

How are microdata accessed by OECD analysts

- **Choice based on type, source and planned use of the microdata**
- **Most frequent approaches**
  - Networks
    - National researchers
    - Statisticians in NSOs
  - Public Use Files (PUFs)   official microdata
- **Other approaches**
  - Confidential files (anonymised individual data)
  - Safe Centres
- **Commercial microdata**
- **Special surveys (ex. BEEPS, PISA)**

Main challenges of different approaches to microdata access

	Advantages	Limits
National teams of researchers	Access and analysis done by national experts	Coordination costs
NSO statisticians	Mainstreaming of new microdata indicators	Resource commitment by NSOs
PUFs	Direct access	Lack of data harmonisation
Confidential files	Direct access	Lack of data harmonisation
Safe centres	Direct access	Travel costs
Commercial microdata	**Direct access**	**Quality and costs of microdata**
Special surveys	**Direct access**	**Coverage, costs**

Microdata for research and policy at the OECD – addressing the needs

- In 2011, the CSSP created the *OECD Expert Group for International Collaboration on Microdata Access*

- 26 members: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Greece, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States, Eurostat

Mandate of the Expert Group

- **Increasing coordination and communication between NSOs and other expert groups** to adopt best practices, promote a common understanding and minimise duplication of work in the area of cross-border access to microdata.

- **Establishing procedures for efficient cross-border access to microdata held by statistical institutes** while respecting confidentiality constraints.

- **Advising and making recommendations to Chief Statisticians** on technical and non-technical issues.

Scope of the work

- Collaboration with other international groups and initiatives
- Areas of investigation
  - Common language
  - Legal and policy framework
    - **Sanctions** for breach of confidentiality of statistical data
  - Technical issues

Executive Summary and Final Report available on :
http://www.oecd.org/fr/std/microdata.htm

Main outputs of the Expert Group -1

- Recommended consolidated terminology in microdata access, and metadata standards

- Proposed standardised application process for microdata access

- Description of the process flow for microdata access and analysis of cost recovery models of microdata services

Main outputs of the Expert Group -2

- Analysis of applicability of sanctions in international microdata exchange
- Analysis of issues relating to exchange of administrative microdata
- Review of portfolio of access solutions and dissemination strategies
- Two helpful notions
  - Application of maturity models to guide changes
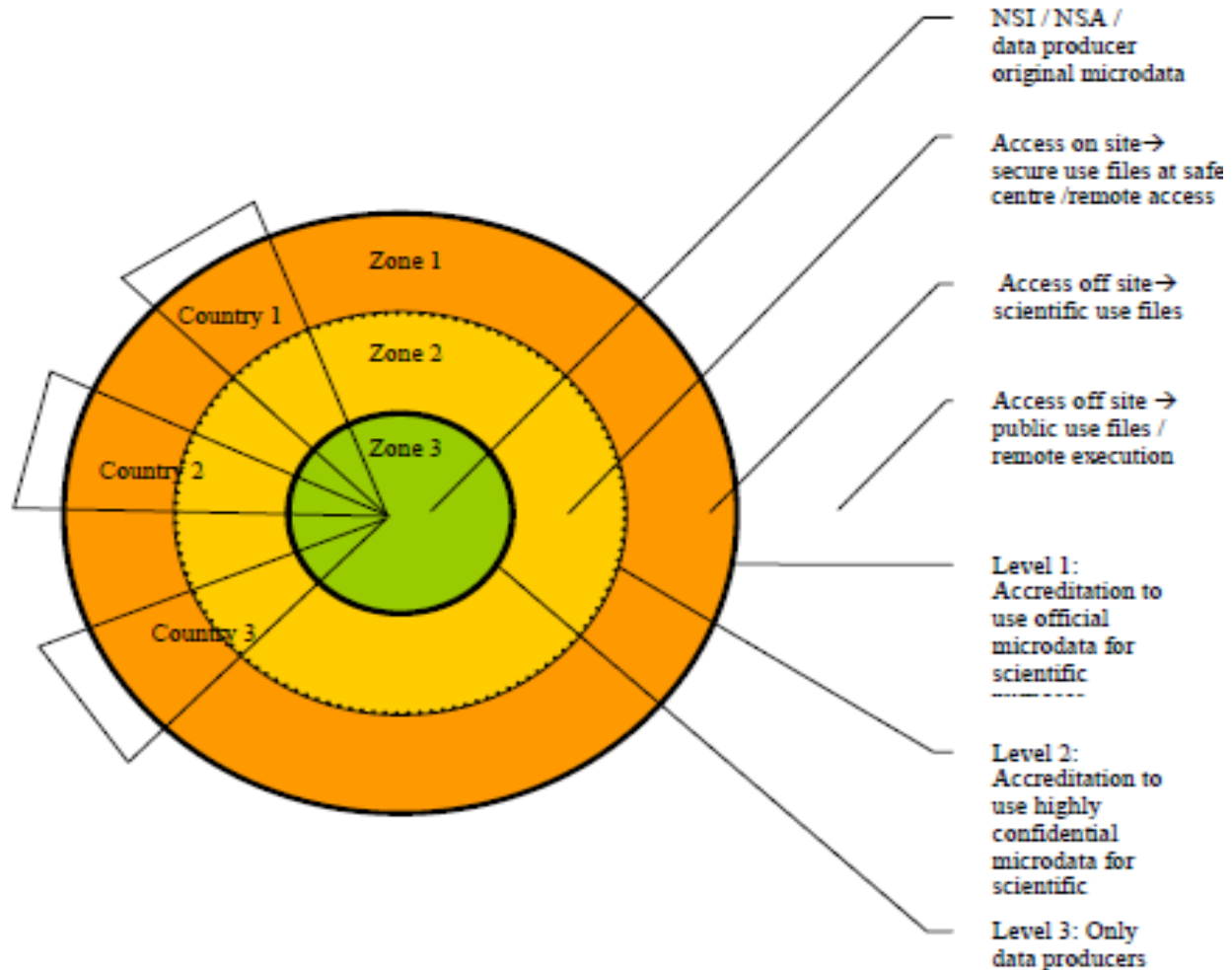 - Development of the "circle of trust" concept

Maturity modeling to guide change - Example: Metadata on microdata

Maturity in (eg. metadata)	Naïve	Heroic	Embedded
Indicator	Some metadata is available in Word format on request	Some datasets have machine-readable metadata available on the NSI website	All datasets have SDMX/DDI metadata, published in a resource discovery service in an Open format

The "circle of trust"

Thank you!

Report available at

http://www.oecd.org/std/microdata.htm