



Improving Access to Official Statistical Data – Experiences of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office

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The Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO) – as other National Statistical Institutes – is facing a large and steadily growing need for access to official statistical microdata. Hungarian and European researchers have a particular interest in modern, fast and transparent ways of access to official statistics. In order to meet present and future user needs for data access, the HCSO needed to adapt its data access tools as well as procedures. Satisfying user needs is of particular importance for the HCSO, therefore an internal development program has been launched in 2012 in order to evaluate and modernise the ways of data access and the supporting procedures. This modernisation relies heavily on European and international recommendations, good practices and the own experiences of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office. As a key part of the program, the data access channels of the HCSO have been redefined and improved and several internal IT developments have begun. As outcomes of this modernisation program, the HCSO has standardised the procedures for data access, systematised the data access channels, renewed the system of internal data access and data protection regulations with built-in methodological safeguards, restructured the internal organisation for data protection, introduced researcher accreditation, developed an internal IT tool to support management of data requests and increased the amount of publicly available information on data access channels and procedures. In order to further modernise data access and increase the quality of data access services, several additional internal developments are still being carried out in the fields of methodology, infrastructure, organisation, IT security and process management. The paper summarises the main drivers for the modernisation activities in the field of data access, the results of the finished and ongoing internal developments and the main lessons learned by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office.

Keywords: data access; microdata access; modernisation.