



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
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Directorate B: Methodology; corporate statistical and IT services
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HOW TO APPLY FOR MICRODATA?

CONTENT:

- 1. ACCESS TO MICRODATA – OVERVIEW**
- 2. APPLYING FOR RECOGNITION AS A RESEARCH ENTITY**
- 3. REQUESTING ACCESS TO MICRODATA (SUBMITTING A RESEARCH PROPOSAL)**
- 4. CONTACT INFORMATION**
- 5. FORMS**
- 6. LINKS**
- 7. ROLES OF DIFFERENT ACTORS IN A RESEARCH ENTITY**

1. ACCESS TO MICRODATA – OVERVIEW

What are microdata?

Microdata are the units of data that aggregate statistics are compiled from. Microdata consist of sets of records containing information on individual respondents or business entities. To protect the anonymity of respondents (persons, organisations), the access to microdata is restricted.

Access to microdata

We grant access to our microdata **for scientific purposes only**.

To apply for access to Eurostat's microdata, your organisation must first be recognised by us as a research entity – a university, research institution or research department in public administration, bank, statistical institute etc.

Contracts and contract amendments on access to microdata signed before 8th of July 2013 will remain valid until they expire.

Applying for access

Step 1 – Apply to have your research organisation recognised as a research entity. You only need to do this once, no matter how many access requests you make subsequently (the procedure takes around 4 weeks).

Step 2 – Apply for access to microdata. Once we have recognised your organisation as a research entity, you can apply for access by submitting a research proposal (the procedure takes around 8 weeks).

How are data provided?

Once we have approved your research proposal, depending on the access type(s) of your choice, we will:

- send your principal researcher files containing anonymised data (scientific-use files) on electronic devices (CD-Rom, DVD, etc.) and/or
- authorise your organisation to access non-anonymised data (secure-use files) in Eurostat's "Safe centre" in Luxembourg.

Access to microdata is only valid for the period specified in the research proposal. At the end of that period, you must:

- destroy any original scientific-use files sent by Eurostat and any confidential data derived from the files, and
- send Eurostat your research results.

2. APPLYING FOR RECOGNITION AS A RESEARCH ENTITY

Eligibility

Eurostat grants access to microdata only to recognised research entities. To qualify for recognition, an organisation must:

- have research as one of its main activities, e.g. universities, research institutions, or
- be a research department within public administrations, banks, statistical institutes, etc.
- be independent and autonomous in formulating scientific conclusions
- have legal personality.

Responsibilities

Before being recognised as a research entity, an organisation must sign a [confidentiality undertaking with the terms of use](#).

The confidentiality undertaking commits the signatory and all researchers having access to confidential data to:

- accessing confidential data only for the agreed purposes and
- guaranteeing the physical security of the data, including prevention and taking action in case of violation of confidentiality.

If you want to apply for research-entity recognition, please fill in [the application form for research entities](#) and send it by email to ESTAT-ENTITIES-ASSESSMENT@ec.europa.eu.

3. REQUESTING ACCESS TO MICRODATA (SUBMITTING A RESEARCH PROPOSAL)

Once your organisation has been recognised as a research entity, its name will be included in [the list of recognised entities](#) on the Eurostat website. You can then request access to microdata by submitting one or more research proposals.

The researchers named in the proposal should be:

- an employee of the research entity (or be working for them as a contractor, only in justified cases) or
- senior (Ph.D.) students under guidance of a supervisor employed by the research entity; supervisor must be identified in the research proposal as a principal researcher and a senior student as an individual researcher;

Drafting of research project description

Please refer to the information available from the individual microdata set pages on Eurostat website before drafting the research proposal description.

Joint projects – network of research entities

Two or more research entities may submit a joint research project. However each partner organisation must be recognized as a research entity in its own right, and sign a confidentiality undertaking.

The joint research proposal must be signed by the principal researcher of just one of the partners (the co-ordinating partner).

Validation of research projects

Before approving research proposals, we will consult national statistical authorities (NSAs). The standard consultation period is 4 weeks.

Changes to research proposals

- Once a research proposal has been accepted, new researchers can be added (provided they sign a confidentiality declaration), and the duration of the project can be extended.
- It is also possible to add new data sets, new releases or new partner organisations to an existing research proposal but the consultation of the national statistical authorities is required in this case.

When you are ready to submit a research proposal and your research organisation has been recognised, please fill in [the research proposal application form](#) and send it by email to Estat-microdata-access@ec.europa.eu.

4. CONTACT INFORMATION

- ESTAT-ENTITIES-ASSESSMENT@ec.europa.eu Mailbox for requests to be recognised as a research entity
- ESTAT-Microdata-access@ec.europa.eu Mailbox for general questions and for submitting a research proposal

5. FORMS

- [Application form for research entities](#)
- [Confidentiality undertaking and terms of use](#) – sample only, not to be filled in (Please read the terms of the confidentiality undertaking from the sample. You will receive these documents for signature after recognition of your research entity.)
- [Research proposal application form](#)
- [Individual confidentiality declaration](#) – sample only, not to be filled in (Please read the terms of the confidentiality declaration from the sample. You will receive this document for signature after the first evaluation of the research project proposal by Eurostat.)

6. LINKS

- [List of recognized research entities](#)
- [Guidelines for the assessment of research entities and research proposals](#)
- Datasets dedicated pages:
 - [European Community Household Panel \(ECHP\)](#)
 - [Labour Force Survey \(LFS\)](#),
 - [Community Innovation Survey \(CIS\)](#),
 - [Structure of Earnings Survey \(SES\)](#),
 - [European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions \(EU-SILC\)](#),
 - [Adult Education Survey \(AES\)](#),
 - [European Road Freight Transport Survey \(ERFT\)](#),

- [European Health Interview Survey \(EHIS\)](#)
- [Continuing Vocational Training Survey \(CVTS\)](#)
- [Community Statistics on Information Society \(CSIS\)](#)

7. ROLES OF DIFFERENT ACTORS IN A RESEARCH ENTITY

Duly designated representative of the entity

- signs the application form for the research entity;
- signs a confidentiality undertaking and initials the terms of use;
- is someone with the authority to make commitments on behalf of the organisation, e.g. a university chancellor, research vice chancellor, managing director, president or similar.

Contact person in the research entity:

- is identified in the application form for the research entity and confidentiality undertaking;
- coordinates submission of research proposals at the level of the entity;
- countersigns each research proposal submitted by researchers linked to the entity; the contact person confirms by his/her signature that all persons named in the research proposal are employed by, or are formally related to (e.g. PhD students), the research entity;
- informs researchers named in the research proposal about the obligations laid down in the terms of use of confidential data;
- in a network project, confirms participation of individual researchers from the entity, if another research entity is co-ordinator;

Principal researcher:

- submits and signs the research proposal and the individual confidentiality declaration;
- identifies individual researchers participating in the research project;
- receives the medium containing confidential data for scientific purposes;
- is responsible for the lawful access to confidential data for scientific purposes for all researchers named in the research proposal;

- protects confidential data for scientific purposes in accordance with the conditions specified in the relevant documents (confidentiality undertaking and terms of use, and individual confidentiality declaration);
- informs Eurostat of any changes to the research proposal;
- follows the guidelines for publication attached to the data;
- at the end of the project:
 - o provides Eurostat with a copy of all reports, which have been produced using the data;
 - o destroys received microdata and derived files after expiration/completion of the research project;

Data manager indicated in the research proposal (if different from principal researcher):

- receives the medium containing confidential data for scientific purposes;
- is responsible for the practical access to confidential data for scientific purposes for all researchers named in the research proposal;
- protects confidential data for scientific purposes in accordance with the conditions specified in the relevant documents (confidentiality undertaking and terms of use and individual confidentiality declaration);
- destroys received microdata and derived files after expiration/completion of the research project;

Individual researcher(s) named in the research proposal:

- sign individual confidentiality declarations (each separately);
- protect confidential data for scientific purposes in accordance with the conditions specified in the relevant documents (confidentiality undertaking and terms of use and individual confidentiality declaration);
- follow the guidelines for publication attached to the data.