Boosting the accessibility to central banks’ statistics

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II Meeting of the FIF
Lisboa | 5 May 2016
1. A call for enhancing the statistical communication function of the ESCB*

2. Paving the way for ESCB statistics to be easily accessed, increasingly used and well understood [by the specialized users and citizens in general]

3. Presenting “Our statistics”

4. Concluding remarks

* The European System of Central Banks (ESCB) is composed of the European Central Bank (ECB) and the 28 National Central Banks of the European Union Member States
The information overflow on the internet increases the **difficulty of users** to pinpoint the relevant statistics.

People increasingly do not know **which statistics to trust and use**.

Finding good quality statistics is becoming a **more complex task for users** and a **challenge for official statistics’ producers**.
Since the creation of the euro, in 1999, the ESCB have been producing and releasing **high quality statistics**, supported by harmonized statistical concepts and compilation procedures.

Suited for supporting Monetary Policy decisions, ECSB statistics have had a limited use outside the NCB’s “club” due to a very traditional approach on its promotion.

Statistics needs to be encapsulated in an **user-driven communication strategy** and not passively released in the NCB’s websites.
The state of affairs in 2012

Indicative assessment of the average level of current ESCB statistics accessibility
In percentage of current practice by similar institutions = 100%  |  December 2012

Source: ESCB Task Force on accessibility to statistics
Besides developing new statistics or enhancing the current ones, the ESCB has assessed the urgency of putting a clear focus on making statistics more accessible by means of improving its statistical communication function.

- The Statistics Accessibility and Presentation Group (STAP) has been taking care of this process since 2013.
- All the initiatives so far have relied on a collaborative working model involving NCBs, OECD and Eurostat.
Some challenges

- Majority of visual learners
- National data have gained much more relevance due to the financial crisis. Less desire for euro area statistics
- Comparisons between countries are highly pursued
- Researchers ask for access to microdata
- Increasing appetite for “fast-food” statistics
- Journalists want the latest data to be put in perspective
- The use of national languages matters
Some answers

- Tailoring statistics to specific **market segments**
- Presenting statistics in an **appealing way**: story telling, interactive graphics, infographics, country comparisons, statistical videos, animations and games, ...
- Facilitating the **re-distribution** by data vendors
- Serving the **research community** by facilitating the access to granular data, subject to confidentiality rules
- Exploring **dissemination channels** (e.g. social media, mobile,...) for better reaching specific market segments
An interesting example of how international cooperation (in this case between the ESCB and the OECD) can bear fruits with significant synergies in the sharing of tools, functionalities and experiences

To allow easy comparisons of public available statistics between euro area countries

www.euro-area-statistics.org
October 15th 2014, during the ECB Statistics Conference

More than 5,000 national series

≈100,000 unique visitors have accessed the website so far

Numerous references in online newspapers, blogs, social media and hyperlinks in websites of 17 euro area NCBs

Hosted in the cloud

Re-uses the same technological infrastructure of OECD “Compareyourcountry.org” → reduced time-to-market

Allows different views: trends, rankings and maps
Available in the 23 EU languages

Current groups of indicators. More to come...

With a simple copy & paste all the functionalities of “Our statistics” are integrated into your website or blog.
¿Por qué España y Grecia se recuperan? El problema es la deuda, no la deflación

La eurozona no debe ocultar el problema real, el elevado endeudamiento, mirando hacia la deflación como si fuera el principal riesgo al que se enfrenta Europa.

Example: elEconomista.es
Embeds “Our statistics” and writes the story
Since day 1, the usage of is monitored by means of a web-analytics software: **PIWIK**

Monitoring is indispensable for profiling the audience

An example for the first quarter of 2016:

**TOP 10 most used national languages in 2016 (pageviews)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Pageviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>11,946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>11,610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>5,380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuanian</td>
<td>2,205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakian</td>
<td>1,954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>1,308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>1,023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvian</td>
<td>997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>816</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*English was used in 40,882 page views during 2016*
1. It is crucial to understand the barriers for accessing statistics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Issue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too much information available</td>
<td>Do not know where to find the information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannot understand the information</td>
<td>Cannot access the information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not know if the information exists</td>
<td>Do not know if the information is accurate and from a trusted source</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. “One-size-fits-all” approaches are not effective: different users have different needs, different ways of accessing data and different levels of statistical proficiency

3. By implementing a pro-active user driven communication concept, statistics will be easily understood, accessed and used, redistributed throughout the society and referred to in the academic and political debate as part of supporting the evidence based decision-making process
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION