

**International Comparison Program  
Executive Board  
Policy Paper No. 3**

**Access to ICP Micro Data and  
Unpublished Results**

**October 18, 2006**

## Table of Contents

Preface	3
Introduction	4
<u>Sections:</u>	
1. Summary of Recommendations & Executive Board Actions	5
2. Why Do We Need a Policy on Data Access?	8
3. Access to Individual Price Observations	10
4. Role of the Regional Coordinator and Governance	11
5. Custody and Archiving	11
6. Access to Micro Data	12
7. Access to Aggregate Data and Recommended Detail for Publication	13
8. Ring Comparison	15
<u>Appendices</u>	
Appendix 1: Recommended Detail for Publication	16
Appendix 2: Proposed Processes to Access Micro Data	18

## **Preface**

A Data Access Working Group was formed by the Executive Board to review issues related to access to Price Observations, Average Prices, Basic Heading PPPs and Expenditure Weights. The group prepared a report summarizing the issues and providing recommendations. Separately, the Global Office drafted a policy paper on data access issues for the Executive Board. These two documents are now consolidated into the current “Access to ICP Micro Data and Unpublished Results” policy paper.

### **Members of Data Access Working Group:**

Louis Marc Ducharme (Chair)  
Mohamed Abulata (CAPMAS, Egypt)  
Addulrhaman Al-Mansouri (ICP, Kuwait)  
David Fenwick (ONS, U.K.)  
Vasily Kuznetsov (ICP, Russia)  
Vishnu Kumar (ICP, India)  
Eduardo Pereira Nunes (IBGE, Brazil)  
Jacob Ryten (ICP, Executive Board)  
Fred Vogel (ICP, Global Manager)

## Introduction

Last December, a Data Access Working Group was established and its members selected by the Global Office, in close consultation with the Chairman of the ICP Executive Board. The Working Group was mandated to develop a policy for the protection of the integrity of the International Comparison Program (ICP) micro data<sup>1</sup> holdings and to formulate data access guidelines for researchers and for the general public.

The Working Group met on February 6, 2006 in Washington and in keeping with its mandate, it deliberated on the full range of matters related to micro data submissions to the regional coordinators and to the Global Office, as well as the recommended guidelines for publication in the context of regional programs.

The Working Group presented its report to the ICP Global Office which subsequently shared it with the Executive Board on March 6, 2006. The report was also circulated to regional coordinators and the Technical Advisory Group (TAG). Following the meeting of the Executive Board, it was agreed that the Working Group would add to its report a section on the specific process of data access and a proposition on an aggregation structure for the Global Publication. The recommendations to follow begin with those from the Working Group's report, with amendments to reflect additional input received.

The Policy for Access to Micro Data and Unpublished Results as approved by the ICP Executive Board applies to all ICP countries and regions. The regions include Africa, Asia, the CIS, Latin America, and Western Asia. Access to Eurostat and OECD micro data and unpublished results will be based on their established policies and procedures.

The procedure for gaining research access to basic heading PPPs and national expenditures, when countries of one or more of the ICP regions and of Eurostat and the OECD are involved in the data request, begins with a written request to both the Global Office and the Eurostat/OECD. Procedures as approved by the ICP Executive Board on October 18, 2006 will be followed and are documented in Appendix 2.

This report is divided into 8 sections. The first section is a summary of recommendations and Executive Board decisions. The next five sections deal mainly with the issues of access to micro data, its custody and archiving. The role and governance of each body (national and regional coordinators) are also outlined. The last two sections of the report deal with the access to aggregated data and publication, and finally the peculiarities of the Ring Comparison.

The report presents the views and recommendations of the working group on the two main issues of its mandate and takes into account as well the opinions and views of a larger group of experts.

---

<sup>1</sup> For a definition of micro data, see Box 1.

## 1. Summary of Recommendations and Board Actions:

### A. Policies for Data Sharing and Access between National Statistical Offices, Regional Coordinators, and the Global Office

1. It is recommended that the national coordinator send to his regional coordinator micro data (Level 2 as defined in Box 1) for the purpose of data validation. It is also recommended that the data be sent to the regional coordinator at least quarterly for validation purposes<sup>2</sup>. It is also agreed that the regional coordinator will destroy all working files and keep only the final version of the annual data, once vetted by national authorities.
  - a. Recommendation approved. It is further recommended that letters of agreement be exchanged between national and regional offices defining the conditions under which individual prices are to be submitted to the regional coordinator.

The recommendation is also amended to clarify that the preliminary average prices will be submitted to the Global Office for review with other regional coordinators to ensure all are following similar methods. The Global Office will destroy all such files after validation.
2. When there are disagreements between the regional coordinator and the national coordinator, it is the view of the working group that the national coordinator should have the final word and that the regional coordinator should not modify a number against the will of the national coordinator. However, in a case where the number is maintained, the working group felt that the regional coordinator could decide to give it a low (or a zero) weight in the computation of the PPP to avoid affecting the other countries' results.
  - b. Recommendation approved. The regional coordinator has the responsibility to ensure that inconsistent data from one country do not contaminate the comparison between other countries, and to inform the country of the data problems. If agreement is not reached, the numbers should be maintained in the database after neutralizing their effects.
3. Once the ICP round is completed, the working group recommends that the final micro data be archived. (All previous micro data files should be destroyed).
  - c. Recommendation approved. Access by researchers will be provided as outlined in Appendix 2.

---

<sup>2</sup> This practice already exists for most of the countries participating in this round of the ICP (with the known exception of the countries of the CIS, China and Singapore).

4. Given the importance of the role of the archivist, the working group recommends that the archivist represent a permanent and accredited institution which need not be the same as the one to which the regional coordinator belongs.

d. Recommendation approved.

5. The working group stressed the importance of ensuring that the custody of the data rest with a specific body within the institution in charge, which would act as a national statistical office capable and authorized to deny access to any unauthorized demand, irrespective of whether or not it came from within the same institution.

e. Recommendation approved.

## **B. Researcher Access to Individually Reported Price Observations and Average Prices**

6. The working group felt that there should be unrestricted access to the average prices of generic products (without brand identifiers) and their characteristics, so long as the average price was based on more than 5 price observations.

f. Recommendation not approved because of the lack of restrictions on publication, in addition to the perception of loss of confidentiality.

Access to the national annual average prices will follow the same guidelines established in Appendix 2 for individual price observations.

7. The working group proposes that each research proposal should be professionally reviewed. That review process should be handled by designated reviewers who would include academics, ICP experts as well as the regional coordinator.

g. Recommendation approved; the Global Office will also be represented on the review panel as noted in Appendix 2. The guidelines for the approval process outlined in Appendix 2 are also approved.

8. It is recommended that the regional coordinator shall keep the Global Office informed of requests and decisions, so as to promote consistency and equity in the treatment of research projects<sup>3</sup>.

h. Recommendation approved with the amendment that the Global Office maintain a record showing all access that was allowed, and provide periodic reports to all regions and the Executive Board summarizing the requests received, granted and disapproved.

---

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 2 for a detailed procedure for data access.

9. The working group recommends that the Global Office’s publication includes a ‘core’ level of aggregation common to all countries for the following statistics: Purchasing Power Parities, GDP, and GDP per capita expenditures

- i. Recommendation approved with the following amendments.

First, it should be agreed that it is not practical to determine levels of detail to publish before seeing the data. However, based on review of data currently available, recommendations are being made with the understanding that there may be departures to show more detail than shown below. In this case, the regional coordinators and the Eurostat/OECD will be informed.

- Appendix 1 shows the Working Group’s recommendations and the recommended level of detail that will be included in the Global report;
- Regional reports can be shown in more detail to show items important to their economies;
- More detail showing rankings, etc, at more detail than shown in the data tables may be shown in the narrative comments;

10. At this stage, the working group thought that in order to avoid having two sets of official numbers for the same country, the micro data provided to the Global Office for Ring calculations should not be accessible to researchers.

- j. Recommendation approved. Researchers serving as consultants for the Global Office under World Bank rules of access and accountability will have access for analysis and evaluation purposes, and to seek improvements in the linking methodology for future rounds.

### **C. Other Issues and Recommendations including Access to Basic Heading PPPs and Expenditure Weights**

The working group primarily focused on policies for access to micro data and level of details to be published. As a result, additional guidelines are required for access to unpublished data which includes Basic Heading Expenditure Weights and Purchasing Power Parities. While the Executive Board approved stringent procedures to limit access to micro data, it also expressed the sentiment that access to basic heading expenditures and parities be more open.

The procedure for gaining access to basic heading PPPs and expenditure weights will be similar to that outlined in Appendix 2 with one exception. The Global Office will have the authority to grant access without consulting the panel of experts, but will seek the concurrence of the regional coordinators. This follows the Executive Board directive to allow more open access to basic heading PPPs and expenditure weights.

The Regional Offices will have direct access to the data without consulting the panel of experts for the purposes of research and analysis. The data access will be limited to regional office staff involved in ICP. Non-ICP staff within the same organization will be subject to the standard procedure for gaining data access approval. Researchers will not gain access to micro data nor have unpublished results until after the global results been published.

Product specifications for the regional and Ring comparisons can be made available upon request. The global specifications for health, education, construction and equipment can be provided upon request after the release of global results.

## **2. Why Do We Need a Policy on Data Access?**

The objective of the ICP is to measure comparative price levels and to use those price levels to improve the comparability of household expenditures, as well as that of the other expenditure components of gross domestic product (GDP). The need to follow this procedure is laid out in the UN's 1993 System of National Accounts. The success of this round depends on the capacity of the participating countries to carry out the necessary basic statistical work and to produce reliable, useful and good quality information.

But the reliability and quality of the underlying data cannot be assessed in the absence of an agreed way of conducting mutual examinations of national data and acting in the most transparent form possible without, of course, contravening national laws. On this issue, the Global Office in its document titled "Requirements for Participation in the International Comparison Program" stated:

*"Trust is built on the principle of transparency. Transparency requires that countries within a region be given the opportunity to see the average prices submitted by each other and be able to make sure that the same products were priced, that the selection and coverage of outlets is sufficiently comparable, etc. Beyond inter-country transparency, each regional coordinator needs to see and understand the average prices estimated by other regions to ensure they are following the same methodology and collection principles so as not to bias the global comparison that marks the conclusion of the ICP."*

For this reason, the management of this project is divided between the Global Office and five regions headed by regional coordinators<sup>4</sup>. The regional coordinators are responsible for the coordination of the statistical process in their respective regions and for the horizontal review of the data provided by the national authorities of the participating countries. To do the latter, they need to have access to micro data from the participating

---

<sup>4</sup> National and regional coordinators in the text do not refer to individuals. Instead, National Coordinators refer to national statistical offices or their corresponding institutions. Regional Coordinators are the institutions that assumed the role and responsibility of coordinating regional activities for the ICP.

countries of their regions, which is the reason for developing a clear policy for data submission and data access to micro data holdings.

Having good and reliable data is a necessary condition for success, but it is not sufficient. The outgoing data must be useful. The best way to ensure usefulness is to promote data use so that a wide range of users becomes aware of comparable parity-adjusted GDP data. Unfortunately, until very recently, users were divided about the usefulness of such data but united in their distrust of the data's reliability. In order not to repeat history, we must show a determined effort to make our data public, while ensuring that it is used appropriately; that it does not violate agreed rules about confidentiality, and that we have a reasonable and understandable policy on how and by whom data access should take place. This is the subject of the first part of our mandate: *Develop a policy for access to aggregate data and recommended detail for publication.*

Guiding Principle for Data Access:

Given the above, if we want to promote the use of PPP's, the principle guiding the policy of data access should be to promote the appropriate use of the data by facilitating access while respecting the confidentiality and integrity of the micro data. This also means that the confidentiality and data access rules of any individual participating country should not be compromised.

**BOX 1 – Defining Micro Data**

In the context of the ICP, there are two sets of micro data. The first one deals with the individual price information and its associated characteristics which define the price collected (e.g. qualitative and quantitative description of the product or service, characteristics of outlet and neighbourhood, etc.). The second one relates to the detailed expenditure weights that are derived from the national accounts which will be used to aggregate the data.

The first set of micro data (price information) can be transformed and presented at various levels that are progressively less detailed:

Level 1: At this level, the NSO micro database contains the price data collected and edited by the NSO with all its characteristics and survey identifiers.

Level 2: The micro database contains the price data collected and edited by the NSO **without** any outlet name identifiers.

Level 3: The micro database contains the average prices with its associated price dispersion measures (number of observations, standard deviations, minimum and maximum prices, etc.)

The micro data of Level 1 is bound by national laws and is strictly confidential and cannot be shared outside the NSO. Level 2 can be provided to the regional coordinator under very strict rules, and Level 3 can be shared with the Global Office also under

specific rules. The information related to the expenditure weights derived from the official figures of the national accounts relates to the Level 3 of the micro dataset.

#### **Micro Data:**

For the purpose of this report, micro data are referred to as Level 2, that is, the individual price observations, the characteristics of the product, the outlet and the neighborhood, but without any outlet name identifier. Micro data also include, for the purpose of the ICP, the expenditure weights at the level of Basic Headings.

### **3. Access to Individual Price Observations:**

National statistical offices have comparatively little experience with collections of micro data that must be compared with those of their neighbors at the most disaggregated level possible. Given the nature of the exercise, quality and reliability can only be assessed in the context of the results reached by neighboring countries. It is the role of the regional coordinator to help countries find out how well they stack up against their neighbors by performing horizontal reviews.

In an ideal world, the participating countries should be able to send all their micro data to the regional coordinator who would be responsible to perform the regional comparative analysis, while protecting the confidentiality and integrity of the data. This may not always be the case. National Statistical Offices or their equivalents are often bound by a legislative framework which makes it difficult to share micro data with third parties, let alone third parties who reside abroad.

In the case of the data collection of consumer products and services, information that identifies by name and unambiguously the outlet – establishment, shop, counter or individual – from where or from whom the price information was gathered, is sensitive information. The price itself is more than often public information, but once it is associated with an identifiable respondent it becomes strictly confidential.

The Working Group suggests that a solution to this problem consists in eliminating all references to the respondent other than the most generic. National agencies would provide the regional coordinator with information about the product and its characteristics, its price, and general information about the neighborhood and type of outlet without any identification of the respondent. In this case, the regional coordinator is in no way inhibited from calculating the Quaranta tables, and intelligent editing of the information processed can take place without the dangers of undue identification. It is, therefore, recommended that countries send their micro data to the regional coordinator for the purpose of data validation. This practice exists already for most countries (with the known exception of the countries of the CIS, China and Singapore).

It is suggested that the data shall be sent to the regional coordinators at least quarterly for validation purposes.

#### **4. Role of the Regional Coordinator and Governance:**

The working group argued that one of the main roles of the regional coordinator is to help the participating countries of the region to validate the quality of the data. Having access to micro data, the regional coordinator can perform data validation and identify inconsistencies within and amongst countries. Two types of validation may be performed.

The first one is to identify the inconsistencies in specification, that is, ensuring that the specification established for the purpose of the exercise was followed by each individual country. This kind of validation can normally be dealt with bilaterally between the regional coordinator and a given country.

The second type of validation has to do with incoherence in data results. In order to ensure transparency and “buy in” from all participating countries, these types of validation should be done multilaterally during the post-mortem regional meeting. Incoherence and odd results can only be resolved when participating countries of a region (or sub-region) can compare and discuss each other’s results.

After discussions have been held multilaterally, there may still be some disagreements between the national coordinators and the regional coordinator about the validity of a number. It is the view of the working group that the national coordinator should have the final word and that the regional coordinator should not modify a number against the will of the national coordinator. However, in the case where the number is maintained, the working group thought that the regional coordinator could decide to give it a low (or a zero) weight in the computation of the PPP to avoid affecting the other countries’ results.

#### **5. Custody and Archiving:**

Given that the regional coordinator will have access to micro data from the participating countries of the region, he should in turn be held responsible and accountable for all the micro data submitted in the course of the ICP round. The regional coordinator shall therefore ensure that the micro data are secure and that access is strictly limited. The working group suggests that the regional coordinator indicate explicitly, in the Memorandum of Understanding signed with the participating countries, the responsibility and accountability of his office as a custodian of all data submitted in the course of the ICP and make a convincing case that:

- The office has a secure location to which access is strictly limited to authorized personnel associated with the ICP and;
- The computer or server which will host the micro data is secure.

Once the ICP round is completed, the working group recommends that the final micro data be archived. (All the previous micro data files should be destroyed). From that moment on, the archivist becomes responsible for maintaining the data base until the next round. Maintaining the micro data implies that the archivist will ensure that the data are available on a version of a software platform which is technically supported by a software provider.

Given the importance of the role of the archivist, the working group recommends that the archivist represent a permanent and accredited institution which need not be the same as the one to which the regional coordinator belongs.

## **6. Access to Micro Data:**

The working group considered two types of access to micro data. The first type implies access for only one specific country. In this case, it is recommended that access be granted directly by the national coordinator.

The second type involves access to micro data for a sub-set of countries within a region. In this case, the request should come to the regional coordinator who will consult with the national coordinators and review the proposal under strict conditions.

The first condition for access to micro data is that the researcher (or group of researchers) must present respectable credentials. It must identify a known sponsoring institution. The researcher must present an articulated project that:

- Describes the research question;
- Demonstrates how public knowledge is benefited by the project;
- Demonstrates that the data requested are essential to support the project's inferences and;
- Outlines what data will be published.

It is the view of the working group that access to micro data should be considered only for research that has no legal, regulatory, or generally punitive purposes. In addition, the regional coordinator should establish the modalities of access and its intended price supported by analysis of cost of data access.

The working group proposes that each research proposal should be professionally reviewed. That review process should be handled by designated reviewers who will include academics, ICP experts as well as the regional coordinator. Also, the published results will have to adhere to the same principle of confidentiality applicable to the published data. That means that the researcher using micro data will have to publish his results at the aggregate level as established by the ICP Global Office. Finally, it is

recommended that the regional coordinator shall keep the Global Office informed of requests and decisions so as to promote consistency and equity in the treatment of research projects<sup>5</sup>.

#### Data submitted to the Global Office.

Once the validation of the results of the regional comparison is completed, the regional coordinator will send on the results of the Quaranta tables, average prices with dispersion measures (CV, min and max, number of observations), and the expenditure weights for all basic headings. The working group recommends that these results be sent quarterly to the Global Office for validation purposes and in preparation for the regional coordinators meeting organized by the World Bank. All the preliminary data sent to the Global Office should be destroyed after the validation exercise is done. Only the final data file sent to the Global Office should be used for publication and archiving purposes.

### **7. Access to Aggregate Data and Recommended Detail for Publication:**

Following our guiding principle, the success of the first round of the ICP will depend on the appropriate use of data by the widest audience possible. Given that the first round is the first experience for many countries, that the number of observations for any given product is often quite small, and that in many cases the product specification has been poorly defined or is simply not fully comparable, the quality of the resulting data is often deficient at the product level and for many of the basic headings. It would be detrimental to the image of the ICP and to its future sustainability to publish excessively disaggregated data. On the other hand, publishing exclusively a handful of aggregates would defeat the purpose of the exercise. There must be a balanced solution between these two opposite objectives, based on agreed criteria.

The working group recommends that the Global Office publication includes a ‘core’ level of aggregation common to all countries for the following statistics: Purchasing Power Parities, GDP, and GDP per capita expenditures. Also, the publication should include additional headings which may vary by region reflecting different regional realities. Finally, the publication should also include appropriate analytical measures describing the data presented in the various tabulations. The working group is not recommending the publication of average prices, volume indices, product specifications and descriptions, and collection questionnaires.

In establishing the ‘core’ level of aggregation, the working group recommended a few guiding principles:

- The results published should be plausible. If the results challenge common sense, they must be accompanied by a credible explanation.

---

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix 2 for a detailed procedure for data access.

- The proportion of the average expenditures for one country when compared among the other countries of the region should be at least in the same range as the dispersion thereof.
- The aggregate level should have some economic or social usefulness. For instance, aggregating footwear with household repairs and maintenance is not useful.

In its preliminary report, the working group recommended that the Global Office use the preliminary consumption data obtained from the first two quarters from 2 or 3 regions to establish empirically the core level of aggregation, by comparing among countries average expenditure with their respective dispersion. The results of this empirical test showed that the quality of the data varied greatly from one region to another, and between the different chapters and basic headings. The recommendations are contained in Appendix 1.

The working group recognised that after all the effort that has gone into the current ICP round, publishing the Global list at a higher level of aggregation than the previous rounds would be perceived by many as a step backward. Also, having one unique list may prevent some regions from publishing interesting results at a more disaggregated level. For this reason, the working group recommends that each region be given the option of disaggregating the Global list to include headings that may be of significant economic interest, as long as the quality of the data remains relatively acceptable.

#### Custody of aggregate data

The custody of the aggregated data submitted to the Global Office, including the micro data of the Ring data, should be given to the institution in charge of the next round of the ICP. The working group stressed the importance of ensuring that the custody of the data rest with a specific body within the institution in charge, which would act as a national statistical office capable and authorized to deny access to any unauthorized demand, irrespective of whether it came from within the same institution or not.

#### Access to the aggregate data base from the Global Office

The working group felt that there should be unrestricted access to the average price of generic products (without brand identifiers) and their characteristics, so long as the average price was based on more than 5 price observations. It was stressed that in this case, the Global Office is not accountable for average prices provided and that it would stand only behind the parities published.

### **8. Ring Comparison:**

For the Ring Comparison exercise, the Global Office will rely on the regional coordinator for the first data validation and will subsequently play a similar role to that of the regional

coordinator, as it will be doing the coherence analysis between the Ring countries. It is the view of the working group that the Ring countries should send their micro data to the Global Office for the purpose of data validation. With the exception of one region and one country, it was agreed that individual micro data would be provided to the Global Office under the same conditions as those established for the regional exercise.

The working group thought that in order to avoid having two sets of official numbers for the same country, the micro data provided to the Global Office for Ring calculations should not be accessible to researchers.

## Appendix 1: Proposed Publication Classification for ICP 2005 Preliminary Report

<b>Working Group Recommendation</b>	<b>ICP 2005 for Global Publication</b>
01 <b>Actual individual consumption:</b>	<b>Actual individual consumption:</b>
02 Food and non-alcoholic beverages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Food:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bread and cereals               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rice</li> <li>Bread</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Meat</li> <li>- Fish</li> <li>- Milk, cheese and eggs</li> <li>- Oils and fats</li> <li>- Fruit, vegetables, potatoes</li> <li>- Other food</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Non-alcoholic beverages</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coffee and tea</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Food and non-alcoholic beverages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Food:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bread and cereals               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rice</li> <li>Bread</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Meat</li> <li>- Fish</li> <li>- Milk, cheese and eggs</li> <li>- Oils and fats</li> <li>- Fruits, vegetables</li> <li>- Other food</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Non-alcoholic beverages</i></li> </ul>
03 Alcoholic beverages, tobacco and narcotics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Alcoholic beverages</i></li> <li>• <i>Tobacco</i></li> </ul>	Alcoholic beverages, tobacco and narcotics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Alcoholic beverages</i></li> <li>• <i>Tobacco</i></li> </ul>
04 Clothing and footwear <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Clothing</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Footwear</i></li> </ul>	Clothing and footwear <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Clothing</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Footwear</i></li> </ul>
05 Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Rent</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Public service</i></li> </ul>	Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels
06 Household furnishings, equipment and maintenance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Goods</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Services</i></li> </ul>	Household furnishings, equipment and maintenance
07 Health	Health
08 Transport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Personal transport equipment</i></li> <li>• <i>Combustible</i></li> <li>• <i>Transport services</i></li> </ul>	Transport
09 Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Telephone services</li> </ul>	Communication
10 Recreation and culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Periodicals and books</li> <li>▪ Audiovisual and photographic equipment</li> </ul>	Recreation and culture
11 Education	Education
12 Restaurants and hotels	Restaurants and hotels
13 Miscellaneous goods and services	Miscellaneous goods and services
14 Net purchases abroad	Net purchases abroad
15 <b>Actual collective consumption</b>	<b>Actual collective consumption</b>
16 <b>Gross fixed capital formation<sup>(</sup></b>	<b>Gross fixed capital formation<sup>(</sup></b>
17 Construction	Construction
18 Machinery and equipment	Machinery and equipment
19 <b>Changes in inventories and valuables</b>	<b>Changes in inventories and valuables</b>
20 <b>Balance of exports and imports</b>	<b>Balance of exports and imports</b>
21 <b>Gross domestic product</b>	<b>Gross domestic product</b>
<b>Of which:</b>	<b>Of which:</b>
22 <b>Final consumption expenditure:</b>	<b>Final consumption expenditure:</b>
23 <i>Household final consumption expenditure</i>	<i>Household final consumption expenditure</i>
24 <i>Government final consumption expenditure:</i>	<i>Government final consumption expenditure:</i>

25	<i>Collective consumption expenditure</i>	<i>Collective consumption expenditure</i>
26	<i>Individual consumption expenditure</i>	<i>Individual consumption expenditure</i>
<b>TYPE OF PRODUCT</b>		
27	<b>Total goods:</b>	<b>Total goods:</b>
28	Consumer goods:	Consumer goods:
29	Non-durable goods	Non-durable goods
30	Semi-durable goods	Semi-durable goods
31	Durable goods	Durable goods
32	Capital goods	Capital goods
33	<b>Total services:</b>	<b>Total services:</b>
34	Consumer services	Consumer services
35	Government services:	Government services:
36	Collective services	Collective services
37	Individual services	Individual services
38	<b>Gross domestic product</b>	<b>Gross domestic product</b>

## Appendix 2: Proposed Processes to Access Micro Data

Micro data are defined to include individual price observations without any outlet identifiers and the national annual average prices, the number of observations, and the variance coefficient. Requests to access micro data can be done in various ways:

### 1. Request to access micro data of a single country

In this case, the request is made directly to the national coordinator which is normally the National Statistical Office or the institution responsible for the collection and custody of the data. In this specific case, the procedure to access micro data should respect the national rules in place.

### 2. Request to access micro data for more than one country from the same region

In this scenario, the access should be requested directly from the archivist of the data for the region. In cases where the archivist is a different institution than that of the regional coordinator, the latter should be informed of the request.

A. The first step for the researcher is to submit a written proposal to the archivist (or regional coordinator) that should include the following information:

a. Abstract of the project:

b. Detailed project description:

Background:

- The context of the research proposal;
- Why the research is important and interesting;
- The state of the literature on the topic;
- How the research proposal can shed new light on the topic;
- Statement of expected benefits to the ICP and/or the Region;

Analytical framework:

- What will be the method or model used and what are the assumptions of the research?
- What are the adequate data to exploit the model and/or to test the assumptions?
- Justification of the necessity of getting access to the micro data.

Output:

- What are the expected results and how will the results be used?
- How and where will the aggregate results be disseminated?

c. Research team:

- Curriculum vitae of the researchers involved in the research (stressing their relevance for the proposed project) ;
- Letter from a recognized institution (or researcher) indicating that they support the project (on its merit and/or financially).

B. The second step is the evaluation process of the proposal by a review committee. In order to ensure equity and coherence in the decision making, the committee should be composed of a:

- Representative of the archivist;
- Representative of the regional coordinator if different from the archivist;
- Representatives of NSO of the region;
- Representative of the Academia or ICP expert;
- Representative of the ICP Global Office.

The object of this second step is to establish for each project:

- Its relevance;
- Its intellectual merit;
- The adequate use of data;
- The feasibility of the project.

Generally speaking, the projects should be evaluated on the basis of the contribution that the research is expected to make to advancing knowledge and understanding of the policy issues driving the ICP.

a. Relevance and intellectual merit of the research proposal:

- More specifically, the relevance and the intellectual merit of a project depend on the extent to which the results of the project will contribute to the knowledge base of the PPP methodology or a related area of research.

b. The adequate use of data and the feasibility of the project:

- The need for use of the micro data must be clearly demonstrated and the results must be publishable while protecting all the confidentiality requirements;
- The research team must demonstrate expertise and publication record in the topic area;
- The proposed research project must be financially feasible. If the request for access to micro data necessitates important data manipulations, the custodian institution or the regional coordinator may not have the resources to develop and prepare the data files. In these cases, this cost should be borne by the researcher;
- Finally, some assessment of conflict of interest should be made. The data should only be used for statistical purposes with the requirement that the results of the research be published and made available to everyone. In other words, the data access should not be for proprietary or internal use by the researcher or the organization for which the researcher is doing the work.

C. Step three is to approach the NSO of the countries for which micro data are requested to get approval, unless the regional coordinator has authority to represent country interests. The committee could review the proposals and make decisions without physical meetings, using electronic mail and teleconferences. To ensure consistency in decision making, it is important to send the record of decisions to the Global Office.

D. Step four is the declaration of confidentiality. Once the project is approved by the review committee, the researcher must sign a declaration of confidentiality stating clearly that:

- The results of the research will only be published at the aggregate level as established by the ICP Global Office;
- The quality limitations of the data at that level are understood and should not be used in a way to discredit the published results;
- The micro information used in the process of the research will never be disseminated in the public domain in any form;
- Non-compliance to these rules may lead to legal consequences and will exclude the researchers or their organizations from any further access to micro data.

### **3. Request to access micro data for more than one country from the different regions**

- The same process described above is applied, with the main difference being that the Global Office holds the chair and must get all the relevant regional coordinators involved in the decision process.