Directorate General Economics, Statistics and Research

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0. General Operating Rules
BELab operational guides

Statistics Department. BELab Unit

ÍNDICE

1 Introduction

Microdata bases are a valuable source of information about the behaviour of economic agents. Their use may provide for a better and deeper understanding of reality. So that the research community may have greater access to high-quality microdata, the Banco de España data Laboratory (BELab) has been set up to pave the way for non-commercial research projects.

2 Available data

Updated information on the sets of microdata available at the Banco de España laboratory, together with user guides and interactive information for exploring the laboratory's databases in detail, can be found on the BELab website.
Further, to facilitate de design of the code and reduce the time spent at BELab, researchers may make use of a sample file with fictitious data of all the variables for each of the sets of microdata available.

3 Modes of Data Access

There are two modalities of data access:

- On-site access (data room) through a secure room within the Bank of Spain, with isolated computers. Available at the Bank of Spain facilities in **Madrid** and at the **Barcelona** branch office.
- Remote access, which allows controlled access to the databases without the need to travel to the secure room located at the Bank of Spain facilities. This mode of access requires the signing of additional documentation, which will be sent to the researcher once their request has been approved.

The possibility of remote access will be determined by the level of data sensitivity. The "Available Data" section of the BELab website provides information for each database regarding whether remote access is available.

4 Who can access BELab?

Any researcher affiliated with recognized institutions in the field of research, who are conducting projects for scientific purposes, as well as doctoral candidates and master's students aiming to develop their doctoral thesis or master's final project using BELab data.

5 How to gain access to the data?

Researchers interested in accessing BELab must submit a curriculum vitae outlining their research activities along with the application form, where the research purpose will be explained. Both documents should be sent through the contact form available on the Banco de España's website.

A Technical Research Evaluation Committee of BELab will assess the application and communicate their decision via email to the provided address.

6 Data confidentiality and conditions of use

The information within BELab is confidential. The confidentiality rules that researchers must adhere to in order to access the data are specified in the application form. Specifically:

Use the microdata from BELab solely and exclusively for the study for which they have been requested, and without any commercial purpose.
Do not redistribute the data to a third party.
Refrain from any actions that may breach confidentiality.
The researcher assumes full and exclusive responsibility for the use of the provided data.
Access to the data will conclude as soon as the study for which access was granted is completed, or upon reaching the designated end date.

For remote access, there are additional clauses that will be provided if this modality is requested.

7 Data room locations

- **BELAB**

  Alcalá 522, 4th floor
  28027 Madrid
- **BARCELONA BRANCH OFFICE**

  Plaza de Cataluña, 17
  08002 Barcelona

8 Software available in BELab workstations

The laboratory workstations are equipped with statistical software for data processing, such as Stata, R, Python, and Octave. These workstations are isolated and do not grant access to the internet or email. Therefore, the installation of libraries and packages not already present on these workstations must be requested through BELab's technical staff.

9 Protocol for output extraction

When a researcher needs to extract information from BELab, they should get in touch with BELab personnel to initiate the review process. For further details, please refer to the Output Control Guide.

10 Policy for the storage of data used in the project

Regarding the storage of data used in a project, three types of information are distinguished:

- Original Data: The original data matrix used in the research project will be stored for a minimum of five years. With each update, a new version will be saved with a new DOI.
- Intermediate Data: Once the researcher confirms the completion of their project and leaves the laboratory, this information **will be deleted.**
- Final Data: Final programs and output from each research will be saved. This information will be stored for a period of five years.