

Dear European census microdata harmonization workshop participants,

Thank you for helping to make the Barcelona workshop a success. With your support and cooperation we have attained the goals for year 1 of the joint IPUMS/IECM projects. We invite you and your colleagues to inspect the bountiful fruits of the first harvest at www.ced.uab.es/iecm 13 country reports (.doc, .ppt, tables 1, 2, & 3), complete documentation for 23 census samples, plus presentations by statistical office delegates as well as project leaders from the Centre d'Estudis Demogràfics (CED) and the Minnesota Population Center (MPC).

As you may recall, a recommendation of the Barcelona workshop was to invite statistical agencies not represented there to join the initiative. We are acting on this suggestion. Your assistance in this regard is greatly appreciated.

We are pleased to report that the Institut National d'Etudes Demographiques will host the second workshop to be held in Paris, June 7-9. The goal for the INED workshop is to design national harmonizations, for each census microdataset entrusted to the project, of complex variables: occupation, industry, education, geography and family relationships. You are invited to draft reports, using the documentation for the census microdata samples provided to the projects, focussing on the most important comparability issues and deviations from Eurostat's Principals and Recommendations for the 2000 census round. Additional details will be provided in comparability tables to be forwarded to you shortly.

In the meantime, please allow me to update you on the status of the project. Now entrusted to the IPUMS/IECM projects are microdata samples and corresponding documentation for all censuses of 8 countries--Austria, Belarus, France, Greece, Hungary, Netherlands, Romania, and Spain. Five others--Czech Republic, Germany, Slovenia, and the UK--are on track to complete year 1 activities in a timely way.

Please allow us to reassure you that most of the work is done--for the group of 8. Nevertheless your guidance on harmonization issues (for the Paris workshop) and confidentiality questions (for a third workshop, tentatively scheduled for summer 2007) will be gratefully received.

Project Goals, 2006:

a. National Statistical Institute partners:

1. provide data and documentation that is lacking, if any.
2. prepare, for June 2006 workshop, correspondence tables for complex variables: occupation (ISCO-88), industry (ISIC), education (ISCED), geography (national standard for IPUMS-Europe: NUTS3) and relationship to reference person. Instructions will be forthcoming shortly.
3. revise, for June 2006 workshop, "country report" for publication using the Austrian report as a model and including a paragraph or two on each of the complex variables in "2".

b. Minnesota Population Center (IPUMS, funded by US National Institutes of Health)

1. reformat data in preparation for harmonization
2. scan and translate documentation

c. Centre d'Estudis Demogràfics:

1. design harmonizations for ~50 priority variables for each census & country for which microdata samples are entrusted to the projects
2. prepare first version of IECM website, including original source documentation as well as harmonization designs as they are completed.

This is an ambitious plan. Your advice and assistance in achieving it is greatly appreciated.

Thanks to your cooperation and support we think it is attainable. A prototype of our goal is now available at: <https://www.ipums.org/international> In the meantime, we welcome comments and suggestions from you and your colleagues.

Cordially,

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