CSO Productivity Liaison Group
Researcher Access to Microdata

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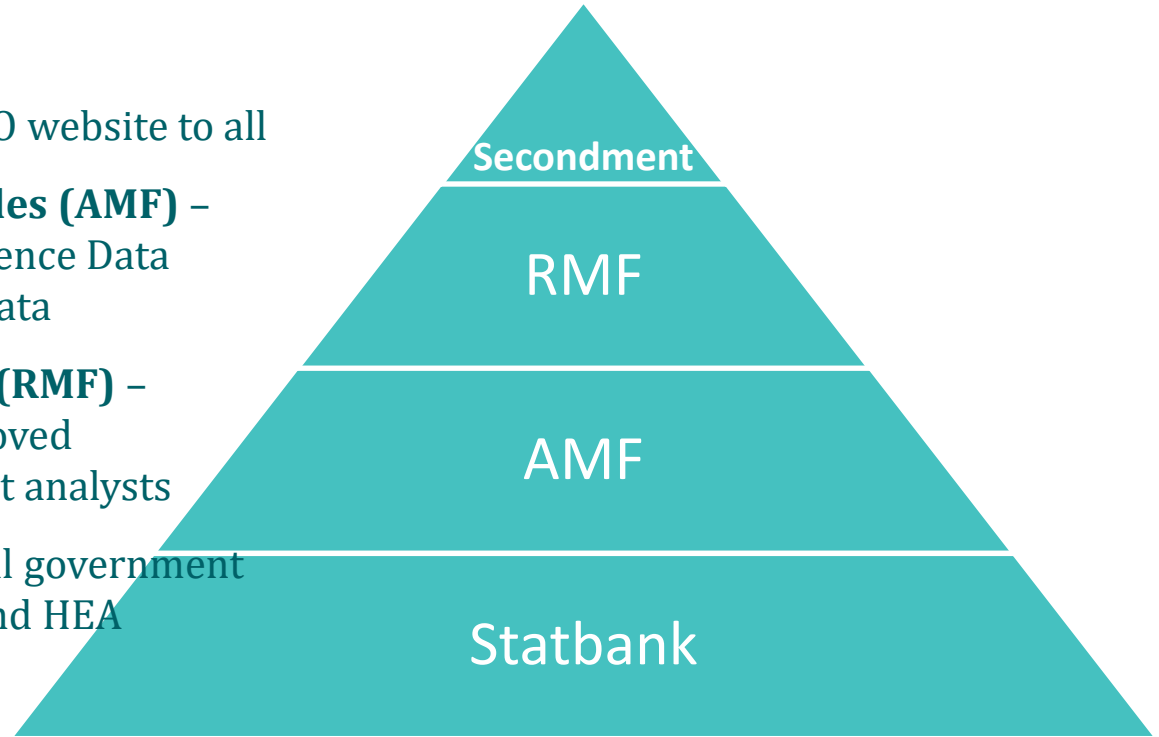**18th January, 2019**

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How CSO facilitates research

- **Statbank** – available via CSO website to all

- **Anonymised Microdata Files (AMF)** – available via Irish Social Science Data Archive – not for business data

- **Research Microdata Files (RMF)** – available from CSO to approved researchers and government analysts

- **Secondment** of professional government analysts – currently Solas and HEA secondments in CSO
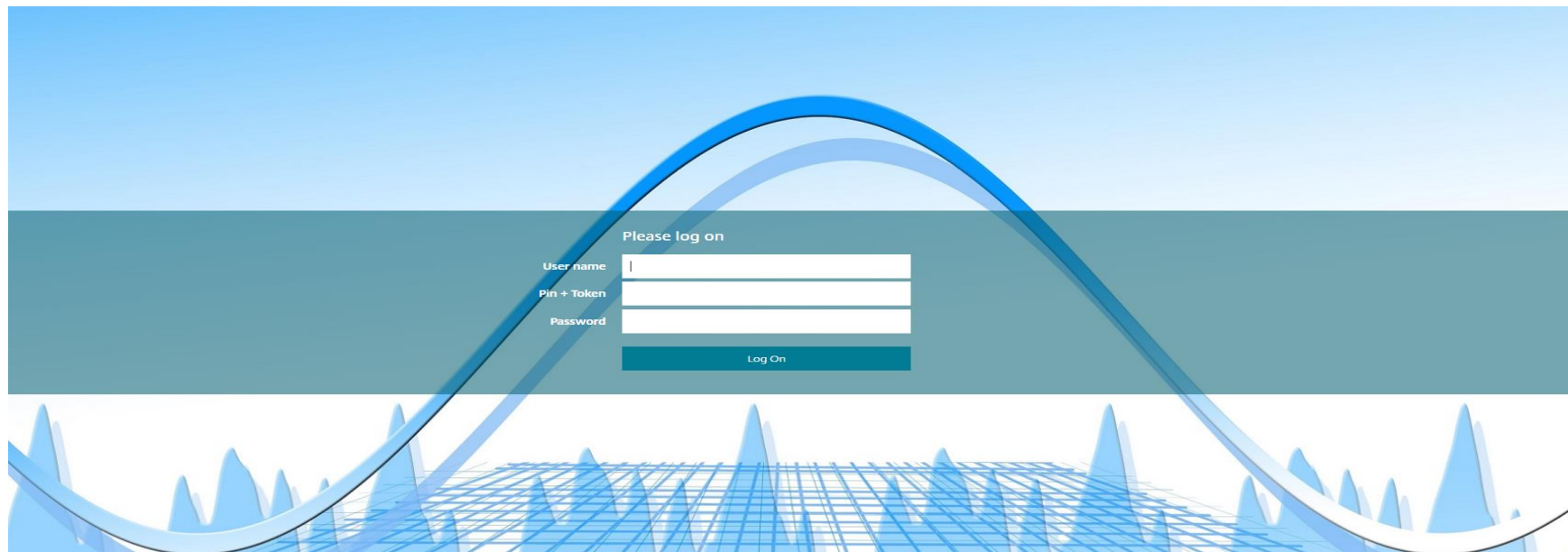
Secondment

RMF

AMF

Statbank

Developments for RMF environment

- GDPR and Data Minimisation

- Globalisation events in 2015

- Stronger focus on security and output-checking

- CSO Researcher Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (**VDI**)

CSO Researcher VDI

CSO Researcher VDI

Software available on Virtual Desktop Infrastructure.

- STATA
- R/R Studio
- Libre Office suite
- ArcGIS
- Limited number of SPSS licences also available where required

All updated as required with latest versions

CSO Researcher VDI

Since 1st January, 2018:

- Used by all off-site researchers

  - SILC, LFS, POWSCAR, SWITCH

From 31st January, 2019:

- Will be used by all on-site researchers

  - Business data, person-based administrative data

Researcher competency and background

- Researcher competency is determined during the application process. Applicants must provide examples to demonstrate their experience in research/analysis using microdata and include references to any publications.

- Applicants are also asked questions about their organisation to assist in the approval process.

Accreditation

- The CSO aims to create a directory of accredited organisations in the near future; this will place greater responsibility on the research organisation and lead to a more efficient approval process for research projects.

CIP, ASI

- These releases provide data detailing the numbers of active industrial enterprises, numbers of persons engaged in industrial sectors, as well as a range of financial information classified by: economic activity, employment size and nationality.

- The RMFs do not include Large Case Units as the enterprises falling under this category are too difficult to anonymise

- Non-respondents in both surveys are now estimated based on Revenue data; previously they were based on imputation and grossing.

- Principal users are Eurostat, government, economists, researchers and internal users

Trade

- The Trade RMF focuses on collection of Non EU and EU trade data for imports and exports. It is collected through Revenue.

- Trade RMF does not include Large Case Units as the enterprises falling under this category are too difficult to anonymise.

- Trade RMF was first released in 2018 (reference years 2013-2016).

- Principal users are Eurostat, government, economists, researchers and internal users

Job Churn

- Explores the dynamics in business employment: the flow of jobs and persons between firms, both within and between sectors.

- Job Churn is derived solely from administrative data sources in other government departments such as Revenue and Department of Enterprise and Social Protection (DEASP).

- The Job Churn RMF was unavailable since 2015 but is now available again for research purposes.

- The Job Churn RMF and any future administrative register RMFs are now accessible to researchers on a sample basis only.

Customised RMFs

- Researchers, when applying for access to business RMFs for a project, currently apply for access to the set of RMFs as CSO does not provide a matched or customised RMF.

- Also, sometimes researchers wish to analyse an additional variable which is not present in the standard RMF.

- Provision of customised RMFs will involve a change to current procedures and an addition of resources.

- The way forward will be identified in consultation with the Irish Economic Association and a researcher forum.

Efficient Renewal Process

- Currently examining: introduction of a renewal process to remove unnecessary duplication of effort, either by the research organisation, statistician or RCU/Data Office when an otherwise unchanged research project is to be renewed.

- Previously, where an existing RMF Project had expired, a new RMF Application Form would have to be submitted and go through the process of approval via Statistician, Senior Statistician, Assistant Director General and Director General. By submitting this form, the Research Organisation Project Manager is declaring that there are no changes to the original application.

- In general, where there have been no other changes, applications to renew RMF access for research projects will not be rejected by CSO.

RMF Approval Group

- Proposed RMF Approval Group to replace current system.

- Reduce application time for research projects.

- Centralise approval process for multi-RMF project applications.

Examples of Projects

- CIP RMF: to examine how firms in Ireland respond to changes in the national and international environment.

- Trade RMF: to determine the number of traders importing/exporting goods where agency controls/checks (eg Department of Agriculture) will be required.

- CIS RMF: has been used to analyse Ireland's trade and multinational activity and the possible implications of Brexit.

Any questions?