It’s Out There — But Where?: Tracking Down, Sorting Through, and Utilizing Open International Economic Data

Beyond the Numbers
Economics and Data for Information Professionals
Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis

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Who we are

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What we have to say

- Open international economic information and data
  - The past, the present, and the future
- Best bet resources
  - ... and when to use what
- Promotion and teaching methods
- Remaining in-the-know
- A look ahead
UNdata

- Launched by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) as part of the 2005 project “Statistics as a Public Good”
- Geared for students, journalists, decision makers and analysts, and citizens all over the world
- Official statistics and data produced by countries concerning...
  - Agriculture
  - Employment
  - Energy
  - Industry
  - Population
  - Tourism
  - Trade ...
UNdata

- Keyword searches, Advanced Search platform, Database “Explorer”
- Up to 50,000 records at any one time
- Record view/table view
- Access through an SDMX-based web service, as well as several third-party projects currently providing API access to UNdata
Initially established to meet the needs of the Coal and Steel Community in 1953
Processes and publishes comparable and high quality statistical information on a wide variety of topics at the European level
Information on national accounts, prices, and key indicators
Sectoral and regional statistics, social statistics, and global business statistics
Eurostat

- Statistics Illustrated
- Regional Statistics Illustrated
- Inflation Statistics Illustrated
- Europe 2020 Statistics Illustrated
Eurostat

- Data Explorer
- Tables, graphs, and maps
- Other extraction tools
- Mobile apps
World Bank Open Data

- Data.worldbank.org
- Coordinated by the Development Data Group at the World Bank, with input from the Bank’s regions and Global Practices.
- Finding, managing, and utilizing of World Bank data, including access to macro, financial, and sector databases.
- Primarily classified by geographic regions, income groups, and operational lending categories.
- Data consistency, changes in terminology, aggregation rules, growth rates, and various conversion factors.
World Bank Open Data

- World Development Indicators
- Browse and analyze raw data concerning the World Bank Group’s financing,
  - Information on disbursements and management of global funds.
- Historical information regarding all of the World Bank’s lending projects ranging from 1947 to the present time.
- Open data catalog
World Bank Open Data

- DataBank
- Microdata Library
- AidFlows
- Global Consumption Database
- Open Data Toolkit
World Bank Group Archives

- World Bank documentation (1947 to present)
- Policy/procedure, litigation process, assessment documents
- Onsite records and digital objects
- Highlights
  - Operational Correspondence by Country (includes segmentation)
  - Negotiations process between WBG and government bodies
  - Final evaluations of implemented projects
- Take-away: Context
International Monetary Fund Data and Statistics

- Currency research
- Global, Region, Country Stats
- Financial Access Survey
- Highlights
  - Commodity Pricing research
  - World Economic Outlook
  - Open Data Visualization Tool
- Takeaway- Scale
Comparison + Assessment

- Assessing Resources means Assessing Desired Outcomes
  - High-level vs. Narrow focus
  - Determinants: Location, Mission, Context
  - Example: Researcher tracking effect of commodity dumping...
    - Emerging Markets: World Bank; Currency flux: IMF
    - UNData: Commodity trade statistics by country of origin / country recorded
    - EuroStat: European market size (by labor) vs US Department of Labor statistics
    - WTO for litigation process and special reporting
  - Example: Cuban market entry
    - UNData: Millennium development goals
    - Work Bank data: GDP
    - World Trade Organization - Tariff Data, Goods Schedules
Promotion and Teaching

- Collaboration, collaboration, collaboration
- Showing versus telling
- When less is truly more
... But how??

- Resources’ resources
  - Guided searches
  - Glossary tools
- Social media
- Hear it through the grapevine
- Feedback
A Look Ahead

- Pros > cons
- Our part as librarians and information professionals
Questions??

Thank you for your time, interest, and attention.

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