Library Services, University of Birmingham

Finding Statistics and Newspapers

This worksheet offers a number of activities aimed at giving you an insight into (as well as opportunity to use) a number of electronic statistical and newspaper resources as well as tips on assessing quality of information. ***You do not need to work through the activities in order, but select the activities which you think will be most useful to you***. The activities are as follows:

Activity 1   Page 2   UK Statistics: Using National Statistics Online
Activity 2   Page 3   International Statistics: Using ESDS International
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Activity 4   Page 6   Other Official Electronic Data Sources
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To complete activities 2 and 5 you will need your University Active Directory (ADF) username and password. You will need to register in advance (if you haven't done so in the past) to complete activity 2.

By the end of this session, you should be able to:

☐ Describe the difference between official and non-official statistics and recall key resources to use to obtain each type

☐ Use a number of online official statistical resources (such as National Statistics Online and ESDS International)

☐ Use The Economist Historical Archive, ABI/INFORM Global (ProQuest) and Nexis UK effectively to find articles which have featured in The Economist, the Financial Times, other broadsheet newspapers as well as international, local and trade press

☐ Recall how to access older newspaper articles using the microfilm newspaper collection in the Main Library

☐ Assess information to determine whether or not it may be of value to your research

Please do feel free to ask questions. You can take this worksheet away with you at the end of the session for future reference.

ACTIVITY 1: UK Statistics: Using National Statistics Online

National Statistics Online is produced by the Office for National Statistics and other governmental departments. It provides access to a wide range of statistics without having to trawl through a host a different government department websites.

- Use eLibrary > Find Resource to locate National Statistics Online or go directly via their website: www.statistics.gov.uk.

- In the centre of the screen you will be presented with information which has been released today. Note the number of releases today and the range of topics they cover.

- Click on 'Release Calendar' from the top navigation bar. Note you can search releases both forward and backward in time. Enter your keyword(s), dates, theme and department. For example: search for *unemployment* between 01/01/1998 and 01/11/2010. How many results are found? Does data go back as far as 1998? Look at one of the reports.

- Return to the homepage and click a theme from the left-hand menu (for example Labour Market). Within the theme, select a topic (for example productivity). Within the results you will see a series of tabs: for example: publications, overview etc. as well as some related links in the right-hand menu. Select some of these tabs and links and investigate the sorts of information available on this topic.

- From the homepage select the Statistics Producers tab which shows you which government departments are responsible for producing statistics. You can then link to their individual website. Also contained are some more departments and organisations which publish and / or collect statistics.

- The website looked at so far is the new interface for the Office of National Statistics website. However it is recommended that you have a look around the old interface as additional data can be found there which is not currently available on the new interface. In addition, the old interface allows you to browse within a category much more and perhaps identify data most relevant to your research. To enter the old interface click on 'Office for National Statistics' towards the top of the homepage.

- Select Economy from the Browse By Theme drop-down menu on the left-hand side and click Go. Select Prices > Consumer Prices. You will see various data and publications on this topic. Investigate some of these or use this principle to browse for a topic of your choice.

- Return to the old interface homepage and look at some of the Key Statistics: for example, GDP. Note when this page was last updated and the various links on the subject which are available in the right-hand menu.

- Return to old interface home page and click on the 'Neighbourhood' tab at the top of the screen. On the right-hand page of the screen you arrive on enter a postcode (if you can't think of one try the University's: B15 2TT). This will give you a neighbourhood summary of the area and include things such as work and housing information.

- Now return to the 'Neighbourhood' homepage again and once more enter a postcode, but this time into the left-hand side of the page. Select Ward and then search. This will give you a wide range of statistics relating to the area.

- Finally, return to the old interface homepage and select the 'UK Snapshot' tab from the top of the screen. Under 'Brief Analysis' select 'Economy'. This page includes brief updates on economic statistical finding as and when they occur. Topics include: Balance of Payments, GDP Growth, Inflation and UK Trade.

ACTIVITY 2: International Statistics: Using ESDS International

ESDS International is a service of the Economic and Social Data Service (ESDS) for Further and Higher Education. It consists of a portfolio of statistical databanks that collectively provide global economic, social and environmental data. Data is aggregated to country or regional level and is available as far back as 50 years. Although described as 'International' this resource also provides data for the UK.

- Use eLibrary > Find Resource to locate ESDS.

- If this is the first time you have been into ESDS you will need to register (if you have been into the site before, proceed to the next bullet point):
  - You should be on the 'Data' tab within the Economic and Social Data Service (you must go via eLibrary > Find Resource, but the URL for this page should read: https://www.esds.ac.uk/aandp/access/re_register.asp)
  - Ignore everything on this page except the sentence about registering under the heading 'New user'. Click on the 'Registration Form' link
  - Fill in the requested details on the form
  - Submit form and wait for a confirmatory e-mail (5-10 minutes)
  - To complete the registration click on the web link contained within your confirmatory e-mail (if this doesn't work copy and paste the address into your browser)
  - You will then receive an e-mail (containing a copy of the End User Licence) telling you that your registration is complete
  - Next time you log into ESDS from eLibrary you should be taken straight to 'Your Account' page within the 'Data' tab without the need for further log on details.

- Select the ESDS International hyperlink. You should arrive on the 'About' tab within ESDS International.

- Select the 'Data' tab. Read about the differences between **Macro** and **Micro** data. What is the difference between the two?

- The data has been produced by a number of different organisations. Use the link: www.esds.ac.uk/International/access/dataset_providers.asp to find out more about each of the organisations and the type of data they contain.

- Return to the 'Data' tab and select one of the quick links to a macro dataset which you think may be of interest (for Business and Economics the OECD, IMF, World Bank and UNIDO datasets are likely to be of the most use).

- On selecting a dataset, a screen similar to the following will appear (this example is for the IMF International Financial Statistics (IFS):

	IMF International Financial Statistics (IFS)
Creator	International Monetary Fund (IMF)
Countries covered	Over 200 countries worldwide
Subjects covered	The IFS database contains approximately 32,000 time series on economic topics including balance of payments, banking and financial systems, labor, exchange rates, fund position, government finance, interest rates, international liquidity, national accounts, population, prices, production, and trade.
Periodicity & time range	Most annual data begin in 1948; quarterly and monthly data generally begin in 1957; most balance of payments data begin in 1970.
Citation information	Publications based on ESDS data collections should always acknowledge the data source with a citation in the reference section. The bibliographic citation for this database is: International Monetary Fund, International Financial Statistics, ESDS International, University of Manchester
Further information	IMF IFS dataset user guide : for further information on the dataset Guide to accessing IMF IFS via Beyond 20/20 WDS
Access data	**** Access IMF IFS via Beyond 20/20 WDS ****

- Check that data is available for the country you are interested in by clicking on the 'countries covered' hyperlink.

- View (or may be easier to print) the 'Guide to accessing IMF IFS via Beyond 20/20 WDS' from the 'Further Information' section.

- Follow the instructions on the guide and download the data required (if you don't have a specific idea of data you would like to download, just practice using the example given in the guide).

  Tip:
  The guides can vary from one dataset to another, particularly between different data providers, so it is always advisable to use the specific guide for the data set you are interested in.

ACTIVITY 3: European Statistics: Using Eurostat

Eurostat is the Statistical Office of the European Communities located in Luxembourg. Eurostat doesn't collect data (data is collected, and verified, by the statistical agencies of member states) but looks to consolidate it and make it comparable so as statistics from one country can be compared with like statistics from another.

- Go to http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat which is Eurostat's homepage

- In the centre of the screen the latest news releases and statistics are available. In the left-hand menu you will see links to the most popular database tables.

- Select the 'Statistics' tab and then 'Browse / Search' from the left-hand menu or click the 'Statistics Database' link to go to the browse / search screen directly

- The browse screen has two main parts to it: Tables and Database: the former are Eurostat created tables containing overview data on a specific variable for all countries and over a set period of time. The Database option for a given data set allows the user to define what data is required (i.e. countries, time period etc.) and provides a greater level of detail than the Tables option

- Select an example of your choice from the Tables by Theme browse facility or select Tables by Theme > Economy and finance > National accounts > Annual national accounts > GDP and main components > Real GDP growth rate. Click on the icon to the left of this variable. A table is produced.
    - View the table, noting that it includes forecasted values for 2010 and 2011
    - View the 'more' button beneath the data title to get a description of GDP
    - Click on the 'Metadata' icon (1st icon) from the 6 icons displayed at the top right of the screen to gain a detailed explanation of all of the data shown and the terms which are used
    - Try saving the data, printing it or e-mailing it to yourself. These operations can be achieved by clicking on the 3rd, 4th and 5th icons in the top right respectively
    - Click on the 'Graph' tab to display the results graphically (you may need to use Mozilla Firefox). Use the toolbox to the right of the graph to choose the graph type, countries displayed, years displayed etc.
    - Click on the 'Map' tab to display the results via colour code on a map of Europe. Again use the tool box to display this data as required.
    - Find out more by clicking on the 'Demo' icon (top right of the screen)

- Select an example of your choice from the Database browse facility or select Database > Economy and finance > National accounts > Annual national accounts > GDP and main components > GDP and main components: current prices. Click on the icon to the left of this variable. A table is produced.
    - View the table
    - Click on the 'Metadata' icon (1st icon) from the 8 icons displayed at the top right of the screen to gain a detailed explanation of all of the data shown and the terms which are used
    - Try saving the data or printing it. These operations can be achieved by clicking on the 3rd and 4th icons in the top right respectively
    - Click on the 'Select Data' tab to choose what data you would like to display. The GEO tab allows you to choose the countries (or group of countries) required, the INDIC_NA tab allows you to choose the variable you are interested in, the TIME tab allows you to chose your time period and the UNITS tab lets you choose the units you would like the data displayed in. Click 'update' to display your changes

- Find out more by clicking on the 'Demo' tab (note: demo doesn't work in Mozilla Firefox without an additional plug-in: works fine in internet Explorer though)

- From the 'Browse / Search' screen expand out the 'New Items (Sorted by Code' menu and try one of the variables – for example: 'Broadband and Connectivity – Households'

- Return to the Eurostat homepage and select the 'Publications' tab. Use the menu on the left-hand side to navigate around and view the sorts of publications available to you

- Return to the Eurostat homepage and select the 'About Eurostat' tab to find more out about Eurostat.

ACTIVITY 4: Other Official Electronic Data Sources

You may wish to try using some of the following sources of information:

- **International Statistical Agencies** provides a listing of national statistical agencies worldwide compiled by the US Census Bureau. The links take you to the English version of a site (where available)
  - www.census.gov/aboutus/stat_int.html

- **United Nations Statistical Division** provides many useful links. For example click on the Statistical Databases tab and you will see a link on the left hand side of the next page to 'National Statistics' which will take you to a database of national statistical agencies. Use Internet Explorer to avoid the need to download a plug-in
  - http://unstats.un.org/unsd

- **Governments on the WWW** provides links to governmental departments, agencies, political parties etc. worldwide; for tracking statistics not produced by the national statistics agencies
  - www.gksoft.com/govt

- **Market Access Database** produced by the Trade, European Commission. This database provides imports value and quantity as well as exports value and quantity between user-specified EU and non-EU countries and for a given product. Select the Statistical Database from the Home Page. Data back to 2002.
  - http://mkaccdb.eu.int

- **International Monetary Fund** is an organisation of 185 countries that works to foster global growth and economic stability. Click on the Data and Statistics tab to view the wide range of data available. Some data is free of charge others, such as International Financial Statistics, ask you to 'order here'. No need to order as many are available via ESDS International
  - www.imf.org

- **The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development** consists of 30 governments and provides a huge amount of economic and social data. Select the Statistics link from the left-hand menu. Like for IMF, some of the more important subscription-based OECD data can be found on ESDS International
    - www.oecd.org

  In addition, SourceOECD (available via eLibrary > Find Resource) is the online library of the OECD. The University has access to only part of the database. Click on the "Update my subscriptions" link at top right of screen; a tick next to a resource means we have access.

- **Official Statistics on the Web** is a useful starting point for statistical resources on a topic. You can browse by country, topic or subject. Some resources are subscription based (in which case you won't get access) whilst others are free.
    - www.offstats.auckland.ac.nz

ACTIVITY 5: Newspapers

Library Services subscribe to a number of newspapers both in electronic and print format. Print format newspapers can be located in Zone 2D in the Main Library.

Activity 5A: Nexis UK

The **Nexis UK** database contains the full text of newspapers from across the world as well as UK national and local newspapers (full-text from today as far back as the mid-1980s depending on the newspaper). The database also contains fully searchable company information and reports. Information regarding a particular country can also be found in this database. Use the *Resource Name* tab (within the *Find Resource* section of eLibrary) to locate this resource.

A guide for this resource can be found at:
http://www1.lexisnexis.co.uk/customerservicecentre/lexisnexis/ln_pdfs/LN_UserGuide.pdf

- Once inside Nexis UK enter a search term (or terms – these can be combined using Boolean logic like was demonstrated in last week's session) of your choice into the search box. Use the 'sources' dropdown menu to choose the type of newspapers required and refine as appropriate in the box below. Select your dates. For example search for articles mentioning the word on *easyJet* from UK broadsheets in the last week. How many articles are found? Which of the broadsheet newspapers contain the most coverage? Follow some of the hyperlinks to the full-text of the articles.

Activity 5B: Financial Times

Access to the Financial Times newspaper is available electronically through ABI/INFORM Global (ProQuest) from 1996 (documentation of ABI/INFORM Global was given in last week's session). There is also further access to the Financial

Times for the last 5 years through the ft.com link in eLibrary. Access is also available in microfilm format (in zone 2D of the Main Library) back to 1950.

- Use eLibrary > Find Resource to search for **Financial Times** 1996+ (ProQuest) and **ft**.com. Consider the topic of *MG Rover* or *LDV vans* and use both of the resources to search in the FT for articles on this subject. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each service?

Activity 5C: The Economist

New for 2009, **The Economist Historical Archive** provides electronic full-text access to **The Economist** from 1843 to 2006. This renowned weekly newspaper covers issues in economics, trade, business, politics and current affairs worldwide. Accessible by typing 'Economist Historical Archive' into *Find Resource* (Nb: for more recent editions; i.e. issues published between 2007 and 2010, type **The Economist** into *Find eJournal*).

- Go to eLibrary > Find Resource and locate the Economist Historical Archive. On the Gale databases screen, select The Economist Historical Archive 1843-2006.

- Click 'Begin Searching' and then expand the search screen out by clicking 'more'. Search for articles on a topic of interest to you, or search for *Cadbury*. Change the date range to 01/01/1990 to 31/12/2006. How many results are found?

- Refine your search down and select only the 'News' matches using the left-hand menu. View one of the results – note how the word *Cadbury* is highlighted where it is mentioned in the article

- Go to eLibrary > Find eJournal and locate The Economist. Select either the Business Source Premier or ABI/INFORM Global route. Select within the publication for the same topic as above (e.g. *Cadbury*). How many articles have been published since 01/01/2007 and when was the most recent article published?

Activity 5D: Other Electronic Access to Newspapers

- Access to The Times newspaper is available between 1785 and 1985 using The Times Digital Archive. Search for a topic of your choice or try *British Leyland*. View some of the matches which are found.

- Repeat the previous bullet point but for The Guardian and The Observer newspapers. These are available between 1821-2003 and 1791 and 2003 respectively via ProQuest Historical Newspapers. The interface is very similar to the new interface for ABI/INFORM Global that we looked at last week.

- There are many other Newspapers available electronically. For a full list use the *Find by Type* tab within the *Find Resource* section of eLibrary and select **Newspapers and News Services** from the *Type* drop down menu. Click Go. Click on the title link to access a newspaper of interest.