



E' work cycle

Work Group WG E1

**“The socio-economic research data in the study of IS:
Interaction mechanisms and documentation of decisions”**

Work Group Summary description

Coordinators: Giannis Kallas, Research Support Manager NCSR
Ilias Mantzouneas, Head of Research, Depart. of Economic Activity IEIR.

Raporteurs: Dimitra Kondili, Sociologist, NCSR
Maria Topali, Member of Mediation Office NCSR

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The organization of the discussion that was named Work Group (WG) E1 with the topic “The socio-economic research data in the study of IS: Interaction mechanisms and documentation of decisions” in the framework of the e-business forum, was assigned to associates of the National Center for Social Research (NCSR) and of the Institution for Economic and Industrial Research (IEIR) jointly. Scientists with experience in the collection and management of empirical data participated, as well as representatives from private and public agents, which produce, distribute or use, as far as to the knowledge of the organizing parties, empirical socio-economic data. The discussion was coordinated by Giannis Kallas for NCSR, Research Support Manager and Ilias Mantzouneas for IEIR, Head of Research, Department of Economic Activity.

The basic questions that were discussed started from how socio-economic data contribute or may contribute in the study of Information Society in our country. Then the problematic was enlarged to include the more specific issue of socio-economic data: how they are produced, stored, exploited-diffused in our days, mostly those that are critical in studying the Information Society. But even these questions were faced in the light of the new ICT and the Internet: meaning, we discussed how ICTs and the Internet, with the “digitization” and electronic diffusion of data, affect the procedures that were mentioned above: production, storage and exploitation-diffusion of socio-economic data, especially concerning the study of the IS, with their help.

From the total of produce data in the whole country, the reference field of the discussion was limited in “**documentation type**” data, that is the ones that are either produced in the framework of research or administrative activity, are produced “on purpose”, that is with the aim of answering specific questions that have been posed a priori. Finally, we tried to examine the possibilities to develop **formal and informal mechanisms of systematic cooperation** between agents with research activity and agents with business activity. The finding on that last procedure was described in a relevant “Cooperation Protocol”.

The discussion reached the conclusion that the efficient study of the IS demands: a lot of data resulting from different sources, reliable (quality so: open to criticism and discussion), digitized, that is: documented and stored in a way that allows: a) access (open and affordable), b) combination (unification tools, SDB methodology, Internet), continuation in time: ensuring the public and open character and the classification in regulations of collection – storage – processing – access, even for the privately collected data.

In what concerns the problems of data storage, processing and finding, the following were principally found: abundance and dispersion of sources (public services files, banks, gallop private companies, research institutions, ESYE, Universities etc), serious problems of standardization, codification and adoption of norms, problems of access, problems of protection, problems of communication between producers and users, variety of data, “drilling” cost (often more important than the production cost), lack of training in management of knowledge and insufficient documentation.

As specific problems of the Greek area, the following were noted: the culture of Greek public servants does not provide easy and systemized access, the “culture of no documentation” or of “insufficient documentation” which is promoted by isolated groups, i.e. economists (work based on models), until the administration in its every form (local, general, private, public) and the political leadership, and the called “culture of isolation” or the “culture of no cooperation and trade” (a phenomenon that is observed, according to what was stated in the framework of the discussion, in the academic-research community as well as in the administrative-employee practice).

The E1 work group reached a lot of conclusions-proposals for the political leadership as well as for persons and agents, private or public, in order to solve the problems that were

noted. The general “attitude” was summarized into the fact that measures “from above” are in no way adequate, neither are initiatives of a central character. We need unsolicited efforts by agents and persons, especially in order to alter the negative mentalities that were observed. In this sense, the formation of network that will examine the possibilities of certain good practices in this field, was deemed particularly important.