



RESEARCH DATA CENTER

accesso ai microdati per la ricerca economica

# Guidelines for using microdata at the labBI laboratory



BANCA D'ITALIA  
EUROSISTEMA

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## **Overview**

LabBI is a laboratory set up by Banca d'Italia, which allows authorized researchers to search and perform statistical and econometric analyses on a [large set of microdata](#) that are anonymized for confidentiality reasons.

The laboratory is located on the premises of Banca d'Italia and is accessible to people with physical disabilities.

### Location:

Via Nazionale 187 – 00184 Rome – Italy

Research Data Center and Innovation Lab Division, Statistical Analysis Directorate (1<sup>st</sup> floor)

### Business hours:

Monday to Friday, from 10 am to 1 pm and from 2 pm to 5 pm

## **How to access labBI**

Researchers wishing to access microdata are required to submit a research project as per the instructions posted on our website: <https://www.bancaditalia.it/statistiche/basi-dati/rdc/accessomicrodati/index.html?com.dotmarketing.htmlpage.language=1>.

LabBI data may be processed for scientific research purposes only. Any and all other uses are prohibited, including for commercial purposes or profit.

The following can apply for access to labBI data:

- Individuals working in academia (professors, post-doctoral students, PhD students, research fellows);
- Researchers at other national central banks or national and international research organizations;
- Undergraduate/graduate students working on their thesis or dissertation (under their supervisor's responsibility).

Access to labBI banking data can only be granted to employees (as opposed to students) of a research organization that has signed a confidentiality agreement with Banca d'Italia.

**Researchers applying for access to labBI data undertake to comply with specific terms and conditions.<sup>1</sup> In addition, while working at labBI, they must comply with its rules of conduct, which are available onsite.<sup>2</sup>**

Access to workstations is restricted to researchers who can work on their own, both in terms of using the hardware and software available at labBI and of understanding data and processing output. Applicants will receive an email from the RDC to confirm that their research project has been approved and access granted for 24 months (with a possible extension). The email message will include user credentials for access to the RDC portal, where you can book your onsite research sessions. Workstations will be allocated based on the order of reservations for a specific day.

## **Technical features of the operating environment**

The laboratory is isolated from the outside, with no internet connection. It is not possible to carry out input/output operations (e.g. using a USB port or printer) other than those involving the use of a keyboard, mouse or monitor.

Default applications include Microsoft Office and statistical software (STATA and R).

Additional software may be made available upon request ([ricerca.microdati@bancaditalia.it](mailto:ricerca.microdati@bancaditalia.it)) with five days' prior notice.

Researchers will receive their username and password when first accessing the laboratory. The operating environment is based on the Microsoft Windows platform and runs on the D:/data drive. It contains a folder with a user-specific name, where all project files can be saved.

The D:/data/[user] folder contains three subfolders with specific functions, which must not be deleted or renamed:

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<sup>1</sup> For banking microdata, your employer too is bound by confidentiality provisions, based on regulatory requirements.

<sup>2</sup> For instance, personal electronic devices (personal computers, tablets, phones, smartwatches, cameras, etc.) are not allowed.

- [user]/Input: contains the microdata files and the related metadata required for the research project, which are uploaded by Research Data Center (RDC) staff members;
- [user]/Work: contains the intermediate files and user's processing output;
- [user]/Output: contains the research project output that the user intends to submit for assessment and release.

Please save here final output files only (see the section 'Processing output'). Do not save any intermediate files in the /Output folder (these must be saved in /Work). Please also save here final processing code files.

## **Use of external codes**

Researchers can ask for external code files to be uploaded to the operating environment, using the templates available on Banca d'Italia's website. These files must be in text format and must be sent to [ricerca.microdati@bancaditalia.it](mailto:ricerca.microdati@bancaditalia.it) with five working days' prior notice.

## **Association of external data files**

A repository file can be saved in the operating environment, to be combined with the microdata made available by the DRC, upon the researcher's request. Repository files must be sent to [ricerca.microdati@bancaditalia.it](mailto:ricerca.microdati@bancaditalia.it), with information on their nature, upon submission of the research project (or later).

The RDC will send you an email with the outcome of the assessment. Any requests to upload these files (in text or .csv format) must be sent with seven working days' prior notice.

## **Processing output**

When processing Banca d'Italia microdata at the laboratory, you are required to ensure that your analyses do not allow for the re-identification of individual statistical units and that no specific values or individual characteristics are disseminated. Please check the guidelines made available by Banca d'Italia on its website to help users create output that complies with confidentiality

requirements: [https://www.bancaditalia.it/statistiche/basi-dati/rdc/accessomicrodati/output\\_checking\\_rules\\_EN.pdf](https://www.bancaditalia.it/statistiche/basi-dati/rdc/accessomicrodati/output_checking_rules_EN.pdf). The same guidelines apply to the remote processing system.

When using the laboratory, you are also required to comply with the following criteria to facilitate the output assessment process:

- Verifiability and reproducibility: the final version of the code file, ordered and appropriately annotated, shall only contain output submitted for assessment. In addition, the output produced must be the same for each execution;
- Restraint: only submit output that is necessary for the final publication; do not submit any provisional or intermediate output for assessment;
- Responsibility: you are responsible for the accuracy of the codes and analyses they produce.

Please note that it is not possible to submit excel output files (.csv or .xlsx format).

As mentioned in the section 'Technical features of the operating environment', any output to be submitted for assessment must be saved in the dedicated folder and sent to [ricerca.microdati@bancaditalia.it](mailto:ricerca.microdati@bancaditalia.it).