

Foreword

This volume is part of a wider effort led by the OECD Directorate for Science, Technology and Innovation to provide new cross-country evidence on employment dynamics and productivity based on firm-level micro-data. In this context, the OECD is co-ordinating two distributed micro-data projects – DynEmp and MultiProd – that rely on micro-aggregated data from a broad cross-section of countries for comparable cross-country analyses on employment dynamics and productivity, respectively (see www.oecd.org/sti/DynEmp.htm and www.oecd.org/sti/ind/MultiProd.htm). The innovative methodology applied by the OECD allows for the collection and analysis of harmonised data based on confidential administrative sources or official representative surveys. Both DynEmp and MultiProd rely on the active participation of a network of national experts who have expertise in these different areas and who have access to the relevant micro-data sources in their respective countries.

The projects allow for the assessment of the effects of national policies and framework conditions on different firm-level outcomes. On the one hand, the cross-country dimension of the project overcomes one of the great shortcomings of studies which rely on data from a single country, namely the relatively limited variation in policy settings. On the other hand, unlike cross-country studies that concentrate on outcomes at higher levels of aggregation, the methodology allows for the analysis of the heterogeneous responses of different economic actors to the very same policy settings. The OECD has a particularly important role to play in helping to bridge this gap. The distributed micro-data approach offers a unique chance for building and exploiting longitudinal databases, and for going beyond cross-sectional cross-country comparisons or aggregate industry-level analysis. In this framework, DynEmp and MultiProd allow for the generation of data suitable for analysing specific economic policy questions at different levels of aggregation (sectoral, geographical, or based on the size and age of firms).

However, DynEmp and MultiProd, by their very nature and to ensure comparability, have to combine the availability of data in the majority of the participating countries with a shared interest in the policy questions under investigation. For this reason, this book builds upon the great expertise of the DynEmp network's members in order to push further the boundaries of the DynEmp project, focusing on three different directions: data needs, methodology, and – most importantly – policy questions.

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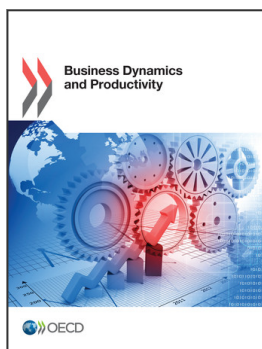
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New Zealand	Corey Allan, Lynda Sanderson, Richard Fabling	Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, independent researcher, Motu Economic and Public Policy Research Trust
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