

# Disclosure Review at the Bureau of Economic Analysis

*Dan Yorgason, October 23, 2024 , FCSM Research and Policy Conference*

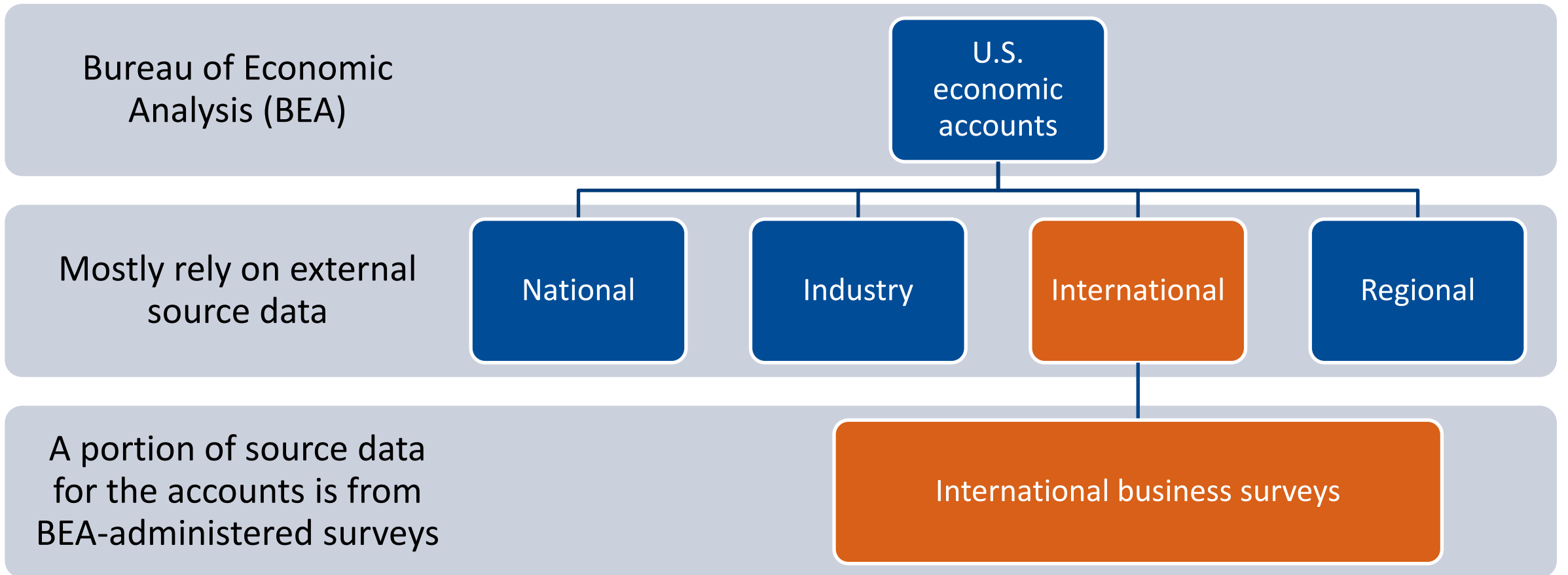




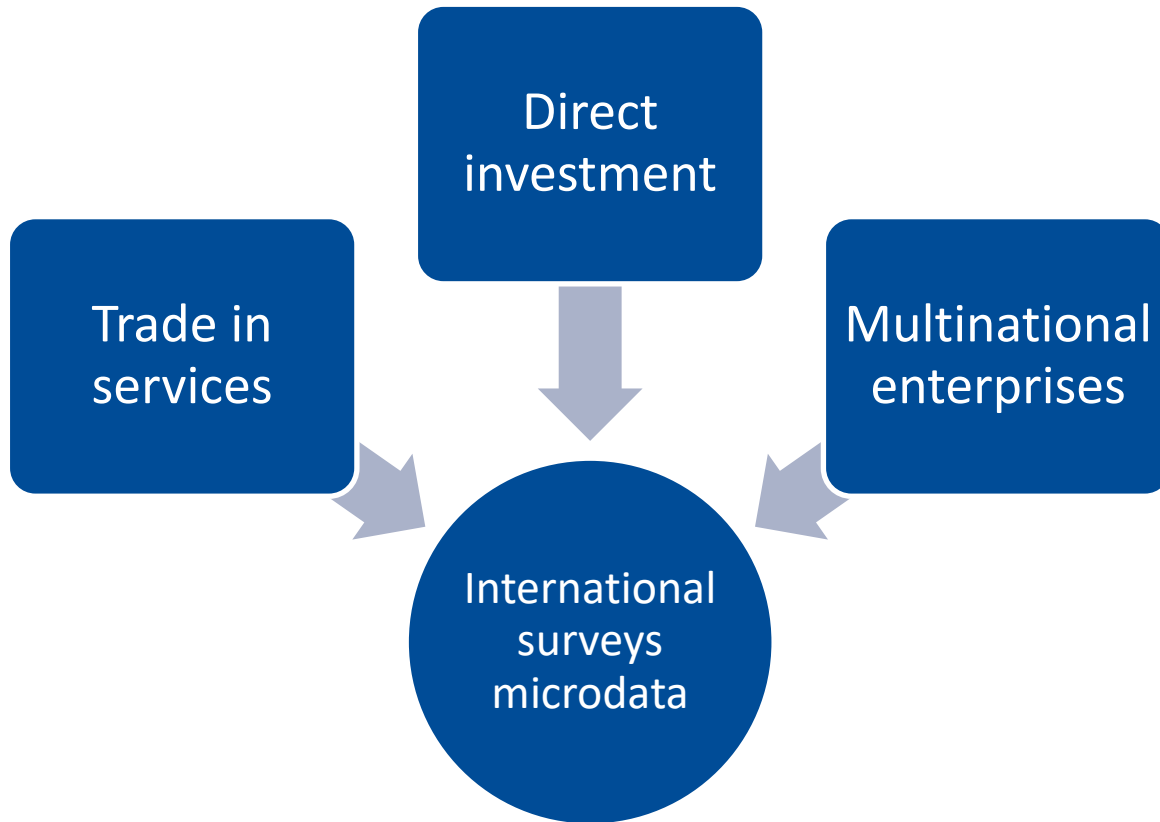
**BEA surveys and  
survey program**

**External  
research with  
BEA microdata**

**Disclosure  
avoidance at  
BEA**



## Collection of microdata



## Uses of microdata

### BEA's economic accounts

- International transactions (balance of payments)
- Other international economic accounts
- GDP and national income

### Joint products with other statistical agencies

- Occasional

### BEA research

### External research

- "Special sworn research consultants"

Long established  
(since early 1990s)

Mostly academic  
researchers

Some research  
from Census or BLS  
staff

Apply through  
Standard  
Application Process  
(SAP) Portal

Conduct research  
in FSRDC or on BEA  
network

Sometimes use  
linked BEA and  
Census data

## Environment

- Widespread dissemination of disclosure avoidance mindset
- Consultation with disclosure review officer or other experts on complex issues
- Decision making authority on disclosure matters for disclosure staff
- Distributed authority allows for agility/speed in addressing new situations
- Solutions can be tailored to fit problems

## Procedures

- Suppression for published tables (based on concentration analysis)
- Concentration analysis for samples used in regressions and related analysis
- Automated or manual selection of complementary suppressions
  - Method depends on product size
  - Review to verify complete coverage
- Periodic review/improvement of automated methods

# Disclosure Avoidance for Specific Cases

## BEA program areas

- Mostly rely on self enforcement by program areas
- For joint projects with other agencies, BEA program areas work with those agencies to establish procedures that meet needs of both agencies

## Internal research

- Researcher analysis and supervisory review

## Special Sworn Research Consultants (SSRCs)

- Set expectations starting with application process and continuing through research and release of research results
- Handbook (based on FSRDC handbook produced by Census)
- Require researchers to produce disclosure statistics
- Review of disclosure statistics and output by BEA staff

Overlap of  
disclosure requests  
with previous  
releases

Serial disclosure  
requests

Dummy variables,  
categorical  
variables

Helping researchers  
understand  
disclosure analysis  
requirements

Review of internal  
research



## Limited need for DRB

- Limited internal and SSRC outputs
- Most disclosure avoidance happens within international accounts

## Primary functions of DRB covered informally

- Expertise/experience of SSRC administrator for disclosure of research outputs
- Program areas build expertise in disclosure of own products
- Disclosure review officer coordinates methods and reviews issues as they arise

## Resource constraints

- Broad disclosure expertise

Thank you!

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