

2015 *eabh* archival workshop

in cooperation with Czech National Bank & Czech Banking Association

INFLATION, MONEY, OUTPUT

Economic and financial data underpinning analysis and policy-making.

14 May 2015

kindly hosted by Czech National Bank, Prague



Call for Papers

Reliable and timely economic and financial statistics are of paramount importance today. Any release of the latest inflation, growth or employment figures is eagerly awaited by the media, policy-makers and academics alike. These statistics inform and even determine business (investment) decisions and economic and monetary policy-making. They also have an important psychological effect, as they shape future expectations.

Quite often such statistics originate with financial institutions themselves. Indeed, central banks, commercial banks and insurance companies have been systematically collecting and compiling economic and financial data since at least the 1920s, if not earlier, in support of macro-economic analysis and policy-making. No doubt, many of these institutions will have in their archives data collections pre-dating automation (e.g. data charts filled in by hand).

The purpose of this workshop is to gain a better understanding of what is actually available in financial institutions' archives, and to identify promising areas for future research or action.

The theme of financial/economic data-gathering and preservation by financial institutions can be approached in a number of ways:

- **What has been gathered?** What economic and financial data were gathered, in what form and from what sources (own data collection or use of existing series)? When did this collection / compilation start? Did financial institutions cooperate with other organisations for data-collection purposes? What (uninterrupted) series are available? How did the scope and focus of data gathering evolve over time? How and why were some of these series changed, transformed and even stopped?
- **For what purpose?** What purpose(s) did data-gathering serve? A link can probably be made to the emergence of economic research departments within central banks and commercial institutions. Who were the leaders and followers in this area? How were these data used internally and/or were they published (for the benefit of shareholders, to serve the public interest, etc.)? Are there perhaps differences between published and unpublished series and their interpretations? How and when did such data series influence business decisions and policy-making?
- **How are historical data being made accessible / usable?** We expect that many interesting data series slumber somewhere, hidden in the archives. No doubt, historians and academic economists would love to get their hands on some of these series. Are there any examples of this being the case? What experience does your institution have with making such series accessible and usable? What were/are the methodological and technical challenges? How easy or difficult is it to interpret the available historical data correctly?

We look forward to paper proposals that address any of these and related issues, hopefully from a broad range of institutions (central banks, commercial banks, insurance companies) from all over Europe and beyond. We would welcome papers that include some reflection on how archival data series and collections can be used for current historical and economic research purposes.

Paper proposals should be no longer than 500 words (1 A4-page), preferably in English. They should be sent to c.hofmann@bankinghistory.de by **31 December 2014** at the latest. Please indicate clearly your full name, affiliation and contact details. All proposals will be reviewed by the scientific committee organising the workshop: Melanie Aspey (Rothschild Archives), Piet Clement (Bank for International Settlements) and Jakub Kunert (Czech National Bank). Authors will be informed about the committee's decision by 31 January 2015. The final papers should be submitted by **1 May 2015** at the latest and will be published on the *eabh* website.