

This paper discusses the construction of a new longitudinal database tracking trading firms over time. We match trade transaction data between 1992 and 2011 to administrative databases of firms housed at the U.S. Census Bureau. We use current and historic business register data to improve on previous efforts linking trade transactions data to firms. In this paper, we describe the construction of the database and explore basic features of the data. We find exporting is a relatively rare event among small firms but that most exporting firms are nevertheless small, and that exporting is not as rare an event for the youngest firms compared to the oldest firms. We also find trading firms in the U.S. are more resilient to business cycle shocks.