

Lana Burke

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Final Report

## Data

### Data overview

A curated list of 315 studies related to contemporary, 21st-century humour practices, attitudes toward democracy, and modes of civic engagement in the six Democratic Literacy and Humour (DELIAH) consortium countries (Belgium, Estonia, Germany, the Netherlands, Slovakia, and Spain). The dataset includes studies published in English or in the official language of the country the study refers to.

Each record in the dataset includes basic bibliographic information (author(s), title, and where and when it was published) as well as classification fields such as “medium of humour practices,” “attitudes toward democracy,” “modes of civic engagement,” “topic of humour,” and “groups.”

### Data origin

The data originate from a two-step collection process conducted by DELIAH. First, the team carried out a literature review using a combination of narrative and systematic search strategies to account for differences in language and scholarly practices across the six countries. This step used predefined search strings to identify relevant studies. In the second step, DELIAH conducted country-specific, ad hoc searches to capture additional relevant publications (Engelken-Jorge, Moreno, & Castañeda-Zumeta, 2025, pp. 3–4).

### Key stakeholders

DELIAH is the creator of this dataset and the primary stakeholder. DELIAH plans to share its findings through toolkits, academic resources, and policy recommendations on [deliah.eu](https://deliah.eu).

Additional stakeholders include academics and researchers interested in humour, civic engagement, and democracy, especially those studying these topics within the European Union, and particularly within the six DELIAH focus countries.

## Data: amount and contents

Two files: one data file (an Excel spreadsheet with 315 coded bibliographic records) and one documentation file.

## Data: file format

An Excel file (.xlsx) for the data file and a PDF (.pdf) for the documentation file.

## Data: software requirements

No specialized software is required. The dataset is provided as an .xlsx spreadsheet, so it can be opened and reviewed in common spreadsheet programs.

## Data: usage restrictions

According to the documentation, the dataset is licensed under the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](#), which allows reuse and adaptation (including commercial use) as long as appropriate attribution is provided (Engelken-Jorge, Moreno, & Castañeda-Zumeta, 2025).

# Metadata

## Metadata included

The dataset is accompanied by a PDF that documents the data sources used to identify studies for each consortium country and defines the controlled vocabulary terms used in the dataset's classification fields. (Engelken-Jorge, Moreno, & Castañeda-Zumeta, 2025, p. 6).

## Metadata: location

The metadata is in a separate PDF file and not within the dataset file itself.

## Metadata: comprehensiveness

The metadata is fairly comprehensive. It defines each controlled vocabulary term and includes brief narrative sections describing the methodology used to gather and curate the dataset, as well as documenting key data decisions.

## Metadata: structure and standards

The dataset documentation functions as a project-specific codebook and does not seem to be following any metadata standard.

## Potential improvements: metadata and data

Although the project provides a strong “About” section in the Zenodo record, I think the dataset would be more discoverable if the record included additional keyword tags to improve visibility through Zenodo’s search and browsing features.

Currently, the Zenodo record is tagged only with the keyword “humor” under Zenodo’s keyword/subject tags, and it includes a single tag—“democracy”—under the MeSH, GEMET, and EuroSciVoc keyword sections.

## Potential improvements: findability and reuse

The project provides a substantial amount of supporting information; the PDF combines the codebook with methodology and scope notes, but is titled *Database of humour practices assembled and catalogued*, which may cause users searching specifically for controlled vocabulary terms or methodology documents to overlook it. One helpful approach would be to split this PDF into two separate documents and give each a clear, descriptive title indicating its contents.

It would also be useful to include the controlled vocabulary terms within the dataset file itself (for example, as an additional tab within the spreadsheet) to make them easier to find and reference.

## Publications based on data set

Reviewing the Zenodo deposit page, there are no citations listed. I also entered the title of the dataset into Web of Science and also found no results.

## Publications listed or provided with data set

[DELIAH's own substack newsletter](#) archive is linked on the Zenodo deposit, as well as a link to [DELIAH's LinkedIn](#) and the [DELIAH website](#) for the research project.

## Related publications or studies: unlisted

When searching Google using the dataset title, the seventh result was a Zenodo deposit for a DELIAH paper that cites this dataset within the paper (though it is not explicitly cited or listed on the Zenodo deposit page). In that paper, the dataset is described as one part of the project's research output, alongside a narrative meta-analysis as the complementary second component.

I was surprised that these two deposits are not formally linked on Zenodo: neither Zenodo record explicitly references the other, even though both appear in the DELIAH Zenodo Community (and the meta-analysis is also additionally listed in the EU Open Research Repository community).

## Repository Policies & Procedures

### Repository fit: data set

The DELIAH project examines humor and politics across multiple European countries, which made it challenging to find a repository that aligned with all aspects of the project. The Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) is a strong fit because it accepts international projects and, as its name suggests, also holds projects on social science and political research.

### Repository submissions and collection scope

[Any researcher can deposit data into ICPSR](#), with options to either self-publish or to have the data professionally reviewed and curated by ICPSR. "ICPSR intentionally casts a broad net in order to add a wide range of data that would be of interest to the diverse fields representing the social and behavioral sciences," according to the [collection development policy](#), but also defines out-of-scope data as:

- Non-social and behavioral research data

- Data that requires a purchase to access
- Limited-access data - “ICPSR generally does not accept data requiring limitations on use, with the exception of data with access conditions intended to protect the privacy and identity of study subjects.”
- Data that is available elsewhere
- Copyrighted data
- Data that is beyond ICPSR’s technological capacity

### Repository data submission: limits, domain, and format

ICPSR specifically notes its collection development policy that it will not accept “data that cannot be connected with or used to expand upon the scientific investigation of the social and behavioral dimensions of human lives (both antecedents and consequences)” and that “much data in the physical sciences are out of scope for ICPSR.”

Also, within the collection development policy, it states, “There may be instances where ICPSR rejects data due to technological limitations. For example, some data may require a specific proprietary software to review the data that is not currently available at ICPSR.”

ICPSR does not list specific file formats or data types that it categorically refuses. Instead, its collection development policy includes a “Data Formats Accepted” section that emphasizes preferred formats—primarily those that are widely usable and accessible. For example, ICPSR states that it “prefers data in a readily useable [sic] format, accessible in a variety of computing and technological settings.”

### Repository guidance for Submission Information Package (SIP)

ICPSR provides extensive guidance through its [Depositor Checklist](#) and its [Guide to Social Science Data Preparation and Archiving](#). The checklist offers a high-level overview of recommended submission components, while the guide is much more detailed and is likely to answer most questions a researcher would have when preparing a Submission Information Package.

### Repository submission assistance

ICPSR does provide human support to submitting researchers, if desired. Researchers can choose to deposit via self-publishing, or they can opt to have their data professionally reviewed and curated by ICPSR staff at no charge through ICPSR’s curation services.

## Repository submission metadata: structure, standards, and format

It is noted in the Guide to Social Science Data Preparation and Archiving that ICPSR uses Data Documentation Initiative (DDI) for its metadata: [“For all but ICPSR’s most basic level of curation, dataset documentation involves creating variable-level DDI XML markup, which improves discoverability and enables precise searching.”](#)

## Repository data access mechanisms

### Repository data access: download restrictions

Many ICPSR projects are openly accessible and do not require a login for download. However, some projects are available only to users affiliated with ICPSR member institutions. In addition, certain projects include restricted-access files. When a user attempts to download a restricted-access file, a pop-up explains that access requires completing a Restricted Data Use Agreement and submitting an application.

The [project with restricted-access files](#) that I reviewed specified that the requester generally must:

- Hold an appointment at a research institution
- Meet any stated degree requirements (in some cases, a doctoral degree is required)

The application materials must include:

- project description
- IRB approval
- approved security plan
- roster of all research and IT staff who can access or view the data or the computer where the data are hosted
- confidentiality pledges for all people listed on the roster

Some restricted datasets may also require CVs for the researchers involved.

## Repository data access: mechanisms

Files can be downloaded directly, often in multiple formats such as PDF, R, and SPSS, or “Preview” can be selected to open files in the browser. Depending on the project, additional buttons labeled “Explore Data” and “Analyze Online (SDA)” may appear. The “Explore Data” button opens tabular data in the browser, while Analyze Online (SDA) is intended to launch an [interactive, web-based analysis interface](#) typically used for survey datasets. However, in the studies reviewed for this profile, selecting the SDA option triggered a pop-up stating, “*This study offers no online analysis.*”

## Repository metadata display standards

[“ICPSR’s core study-level metadata are based on the Data Documentation Initiative \(DDI\), a widely adopted metadata standard for the social and behavioral sciences, which ICPSR helped establish and now leads.”](#)

Subject Terms listed on study pages follow the ICPSR Subject Terms Thesaurus and the Library of Congress Subject Terms, and Geographic Terms follow ICPSR Geographic Names Thesaurus and the Getty Thesaurus of Geographic Names.

## Repository Dissemination Information Package (DIP)

[According to ICPSR](#), for a fully-curated study, they provide:

- A study homepage
- A Digital Object Identifier (DOI)
- Usage information
- Impact measurement (monitors citations)
- Online analysis when applicable
- Restricted access management

In addition to the above, ICPSR’s dissemination package commonly includes downloadable study files in multiple formats and a DDI-based metadata record/documentation to support discovery and reuse.

## Recommended data citation (APA 7th Edition)

Engelken-Jorge, M., Moreno, C., & Castañeda-Zumeta, A. (2025). *Humour practices and European attitudes toward democracy: Data documentation* (Version 1) [Data set]. DELIAH. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15756409>

## Considerations for long-term preservation

The file formats used (Excel and PDF) are well-established and well-maintained formats that are easily accessible to most users; as such, there are no known potential threats to the long-term preservation of this data set.

## Copyright statement

The dataset is licensed under the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which allows reuse and adaptation (including commercial use) as long as appropriate attribution is provided to the original creators.

## Human subject statement

The dataset does not contain personally identifiable information and does not require additional considerations around human subject confidentiality.

## References

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