



International Association for Social Science
Information Services & Technology

Regional Report

Canada 🇨🇦

Respectfully submitted:

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Regional Secretary for Canada

A large, abstract graphic at the bottom of the page. It consists of several overlapping, semi-transparent polygons in various colors: olive green, yellow, light green, light blue, orange, red, and purple. The shapes are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and movement, resembling a stylized, multi-colored arrow or a series of connected geometric blocks.

2011

REGIONAL REPORT FOR CANADA

2010-2011

Save the Census Long Form! Save the Census Long Form! Save the Census Long Form!

While there was a great deal of activity pertaining to data over the last twelve months, it was the cancellation of the *2011 Census Long Form* (substituted by the voluntary *NHS: National Household Survey*) which garnered everyone's attention across the nation and beyond.

This report is a compilation of noteworthy material and, with the exception of the Census news, there is much to be celebrated.

NATIONAL

CAPDU: CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC DATA USERS

In the words of Susan Czarnocki, CAPDU President "We have just gone through the biggest disruption to public data that we could imagine: the loss of the mandatory long-form census. The CAPDU [[Census Crisis](#)] web page on this issue is a testament to the good work that gets done by volunteers at moments of crisis."

The decision appears to have been taken by the Prime Minister himself who was not swayed by countless appeals from public and private groups, individuals and organizations including CAPDU and IASSIST. A very good site [datalibre](#) was established and contains much of what was written about the census. While users expect that the results from the *NHS* will be biased and there will be less small area data, Statistics Canada remains optimistic about their ability to produce useful data from the census.

Census Day was May 10; the mandatory form which could be completed electronically or in paper was distributed to all households. The *NHS* was presented (simultaneously – a change from the previous announcement that this would happen in June 2011) to one in three households.

Restore the Census Long Form! Restore the Census Long Form! Restore the Census Long Form!

CARL: CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF RESEARCH LIBRARIES

Ryerson University became the 32nd member of CARL in May 2010. (This did not make it into the 2009-2010 report.)

CARL has created a working group to draft a proposal to the *Canada Foundation for Innovation* (CFI) for funding to establish a *National Collaborative Research Data Management Infrastructure*. Lynn Copeland, recently retired University Librarian from Simon Fraser University, has been hired to be the lead author of this proposal. A subcommittee is dedicated to developing a data model for the proposal. Three IASSIST members are on this six-member subcommittee: Michelle Edwards, Chuck Humphrey and Wendy Watkins. The overall working group has been building a network of partners for the proposal. For example, a subgroup made a presentation at a national meeting of CUCCIO (CANADIAN UNIVERSITY COUNCIL OF CIOs) in February this year; meetings have been held with *CANARIE* (*Canada's Advanced Research and Innovation Network*) and *Compute Canada*. A researchers' forum was held in March with twenty-two invited researchers from a variety of domains to discuss data issues in their research.

The CARL *Research Data Management Workshop* was offered in Regina as part of the ACCOLEDS regional training in December. This version of the Workshop introduced a group activity around providing assistance with a data management plan.

CISTI: CANADA INSTITUTE FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION

The *Research Data Strategy Working Group*, an initiative of the Executive Director, has been developing a *Data Summit*, which it will host in September 2011. This Summit will invite senior managers and decision makers from government, industry, post-secondary institutions and the research sector to a two-day workshop on developing a national data management plan for Canada. The primary outcome of this *Summit* is intended to be a road map for moving Canada ahead since the *National Data Archive Consultation* and the *National Consultation on Access to Scientific Research Data* in the last decade.

DIGITAL ECONOMY

The federal government launched an online public consultation aimed at creating a [Digital Economy](#) strategy for Canada. More than 2000 Canadian individuals and organizations registered and made submissions. The suggestion to create data.gc.ca to provide open access to Canada's public sector information and data had the second largest number of votes was made by Tracy Lauriault (datalibre.ca blogger). Well done everyone.

DLI: DATA LIBERATION INITIATIVE

Much has happened in the last year. The formation of the *Microdata Access Division* within Statistics Canada, which is comprised of the DLI, the *Research Data Centres* and the *Real Time Remote Access Program*, is the biggest change. This is an excellent combination of programs as it now provides multiple means to access microdata.

Additionally the Microdata Access Division is finally able to offer access to the PUMFs Collection Service to organizations external to the DLI and they may share the data within their organizations. A listserv similar to DLList has been set up for subscribers to this initiative.

The DDI centre moved from the Research Data Centre Network to Statistics Canada. DLI now has metadata coders working on tagging documentation for master files that are in the RDCs. A DDI 3 editor and tools for researchers using DDI metadata have been released or are nearing release.

Current membership stands at 77. The DLI continues to identify and contact potential new members including Quebec CEGEPs (Collège d'enseignement général et professionnel). To date, there are no CEGEPs on the list of members.

Members are serviced by an exceptional staff in Ottawa (and Halifax) who provide training and support by sending out product announcements, responding to often challenging questions posed on the DLI Listserv and supplying technical support enabling access to the surveys complete with fully bilingual metadata marked up in DDI compliant format and available through Nesstar on the Statistics Canada web site. Additionally, DLI supports training in all regions of Canada; the importance and value of this component cannot be stressed enough; much of the training is done on a peer-to-peer model.

This year training occurred in the western region: ACCOLEDS: A COPPUL (CONSORTIUM OF PRAIRIE AND PACIFIC UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES) CONSORTIUM OF LIBRARY ELECTRONIC DATA SERVICES in December at the University of Regina.

In conjunction with IASSIST 2011 being held in Vancouver, the DLI again organized quadrennial national training and the response was tremendous with the largest contingent of Official Contacts attending ever. The *DLI National Training Day* was held May 30th and the *DLI Bootcamp* occurred on May 31st.

The DLI External Advisory Committee met twice this past year.

INAC: INDIAN AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS CANADA AND IPY: INTERNATIONAL POLAR YEAR

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and the Canadian International Polar Year (IPY) held a competition in June 2010 to identify data centres for the Canadian Data Assembly Centres Network. Six centres were chosen: three federal agencies, CISTI, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and Natural Resources Canada (NRCan); three academic institutions, University of Waterloo, Ontario Council of University Libraries / Scholars Portal (OCUL/SP) and the University of Alberta (UA). These Centres are responsible for receiving the data from all funded Canadian IPY research, preparing it for preservation, preserving the data and providing access to the data. The UA Libraries and OCUL/SP are in the final stages of developing a preservation backbone for this project based on an implementation of the [iRODS](#) grid file system operating over a closed lightpath connection on the high-speed optical research network in Canada. This project is seen as a possible pilot for some of the infrastructure to be proposed by CARL's CFI committee.

OPEN DATA PILOT PROJECT

The Canadian Government joined a number of Canadian cities and other countries by launching its [Open Data Portal](#) for the Canadian Government. See also: [external sites](#) for links to U.S. site and other countries and communities. Interestingly enough, the Canadian Government is also in the process of launching an initiative to identify and document (in a very basic way) all government data holdings. Ernie Boyko has been working with the Policy Research Data Group (part of a multi-department effort under the umbrella of the Policy Research Initiative) to help the policy departments prepare an inventory of policy relevant data.

RDC NETWORK: RESEARCH DATA CENTRES NETWORK

See: DLI: Data Liberation Initiative.

REGIONAL

BRITISH COLUMBIA

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY AND UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

IASSIST members Mary Luebbe, University of British Columbia and Walter Piovesan, Simon Fraser University prepared to host the *IASSIST 2011 Annual Conference: Data Science Professionals: a*

Global Community of Sharing. They were assisted by a great number of other members from across the membership.

ALBERTA

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

The fifth *Winter Institute on Statistical Literacy for Librarians* was held February 23-25th. Librarians are facing more statistical information than ever before because of the electronic dissemination of statistics over the Internet. Concomitant with this are greater demands for statistics from user communities. Greater availability to statistics online, however, has not made this information necessarily easier to find or to retrieve. This Institute provides training in the strategies and tools for finding statistics and providing them in formats directly useful to users. The thirty registrants came from Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Ontario.

SASKATCHEWAN

UNIVERSITY OF REGINA

The sixth *National Summer Institute for Statistical & GIS Analysis* (Health Data in 2010) was held June 20-26. Marilyn Andrews was a presenter. Unfortunately, plans for the seventh institute ended abruptly when it was discovered that the federal government's funding for the program had ceased.

ONTARIO

OCUL: ONTARIO COUNCIL OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES:

<odesi>: ONTARIO DATA DOCUMENTATION, EXTRACTION SERVICE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Established in 2007, <odesi>, is a digital repository for social science data, including polling data. The <odesi> collection continues to grow through the support of Scholars Portal's MarkIt! program, where students are employed marking up new datasets and performing quality control checks on the collection. The <odesi> project works in collaboration with Statistics Canada's *Data Liberation Initiative* ensuring that there is no duplication of effort in marking up the files.

OCUL: ONTARIO COUNCIL OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES: OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION AWARD

Bo Wandschneider was recognized for his leadership and tenacity on the Ontario Data Documentation, Extraction Service and Infrastructure Initiative <odesi>, for chairing DINO (Data in Ontario) since 2004, and for his contribution within international organizations. The jury agreed that Bo has "significantly advanced the vision of OCUL to provide comprehensive data services and data expertise to our faculty, students and staff." Congratulations Bo!

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO

In August the University of Western Ontario's Data Resources Library physically amalgamated with the Serge A. Sauer Map Library to create Western Libraries' Map and Data Centre. Over the next year, a new space for the Centre will be built in The D. B. Weldon Library, and the Map and Data Centre will leave its current location in the Social Science Centre.

The Equinox Data Delivery System, developed by UWO in partnership with CREPUQ: *Conférence des recteurs et des principaux des universités du Québec*, continues to provide access to more than forty-five Canadian post-secondary institutions to data and geospatial files from the Data Liberation Initiative, the *DMTI Smart Program* and other Canadian data initiatives.

INTERNATIONAL

[U.S.] ARL: ASSOCIATION OF RESEARCH LIBRARIES E-SCIENCE INSTITUTE

Chuck Humphrey joined the ARL E-Science Institute's faculty and is preparing for three events spanning December 2011 – January 2012. Participants will be helped in developing a strategic agenda for E-Science at their local institutions.

CNC/CODATA: CANADIAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE / COMMITTEE ON DATA FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The *Canadian National Committee on CODATA* continues to meet annually in Ottawa. Ernie Boyko is a recent member of the committee and Wendy Watkins continues in her role as observer. It is gratifying to see CODATA in Canada (like IASSIST, CAPDU and CARL) is pursuing activities for the purpose of educating and supporting researchers in the preservation of research data. The *International Polar Year Project* is being used as a model.

Noteworthy is the *CNC/CODATA Sangster Award*. This \$3000 award enables a Canadian graduate student, or a recent graduate, to attend and present his/her work at International CODATA

conferences. The award was established by *CNC/CODATA* member, Dr. James Sangster of Sangster Research Labs. This year, Dr. Sangster was unable to contribute the full amount of the award. Fortunately, it was supplemented by Alberta Sulphur Research Ltd., thanks to the efforts of Rob Marriot (an employee of Alberta Sulphur Research and a *CNC/CODATA* member). Wendy Watkins is a member of the selection committee for this award.

IHSN: INTERNATIONAL HOUSEHOLD SURVEY NETWORK

Participants from around the world including various Canadians have been working on international projects with both the World Bank and the IHSN. The IHSN has identified the *Data Liberation Initiative* project as a best practice that other countries should be informed about. As a result, Ernie Boyko and Wendy Watkins are now busy writing the history of *DLI* with the hope that other countries may be inspired to improve access to survey and census data by universities and research institutions. Watch for this report; it will be released on the IHSN web site later this year.

(<http://www.ihsn.org/home/index.php>)

CONCLUSION

Clearly, it's been a busy year in numerous areas. Canadian IASSIST members acknowledge, with sincere appreciation, the role IASSIST assumed by responding to the cancellation of the *2011 Census Long Form*.

This report was compiled based on contributions from several members. My thanks are extended to each of them (I have refrained from including names as I would not wish to inadvertently forget someone).