

## IASSIST REGIONAL REPORT 2011-2012

### EUROPEAN REGION

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#### CROSS-EUROPEAN COLLABORATIONS

One of the main obstacles for the realisation of pan-European Research Infrastructures has been the absence of a suitable legal and governance framework of European level. For this reason a new legal structure, ERIC – European Research Infrastructure Consortium” was developed by the European Commission together with ESFRI, the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures in 2009.

Five European research infrastructures within the social science and the humanities – CESSDA, CLARIN, DARIAH, ESS and SHARE - are currently in the process of becoming, or has recently become, an ERIC.

#### CESSDA – COUNCIL OF EUROPEAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA ARCHIVES

The 2011 CESSDA Expert Seminar was held in October at FORS in Lausanne, Switzerland. 21 persons from 12 countries attended the seminar on the topic of Question Data Banks.

The 2012 General Assembly was held in April at SND in Gothenburg, Sweden. At the meeting a new CESSDA member was welcomed, the Lithuanian Data Archive for Social Science and Humanities (LiDA), based in Kaunas.

In 2012, CESSDA will focus on becoming an ERIC. The General Assembly decided to launch a self-evaluation project of all the member archives. The structured self-evaluations will provide information on how the CESSDA members meet the requirements of the CESSDA-ERIC Statutes, and which members need advice and support on various parts of the activities.

Twelve European countries have signed the Memorandum of Understanding to commit their financial and political support for the setting up of a CESSDA ERIC.

#### CLARIN - COMMON LANGUAGE RESOURCES AND TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

In February 2012 CLARIN became the second European research infrastructure to be granted with ERIC status. Eight countries are committed to the setting up of CLARIN-ERIC: Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Poland, and the Netherlands. CLARIN-ERIC will be hosted in Utrecht, the Netherlands.

CLARIN makes digital language resources available to scholars and researchers of all disciplines, in particular humanities and social sciences. It provides a single collection of data and tools which can be accessed by the user through a web application, requiring only one identity and sign-on. Researchers are gaining access to repositories of data with standardized descriptions and processing tools to operate them, as well as to guidance and advice through distributed knowledge centres.

#### DARIAH – DIGITAL RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES

DARIAH will facilitate long-term access to, and use of, European Arts and Humanities digital research data. The DARIAH infrastructure will be a connected network of people, information, tools, and methodologies for investigating, exploring and supporting work across the broad spectrum of the digital humanities.

Since the completion of the preparatory phase project in 2011, DARIAH has now moved into a transition phase to become an ERIC.

## ESS - EUROPEAN SOCIAL SURVEY

ESS is an academically-driven social survey designed to chart and explain the interaction between Europe's changing institutions and the attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns of its diverse populations. The questionnaire includes two main sections, each consisting of approximately 120 items; a 'core' module which remains relatively constant from round to round, plus two or more 'rotating' modules, repeated at intervals.

Data from its fifth round was released in October 2011. The rotating modules in this round focused on Work, Family and Well-Being, and on Trust in Justice. The sixth round is currently under preparation, and the rotating modules will focus on Personal and Social Well-Being, and Europeans' understanding and evaluations of democracy.

In March 2012 ESS applied for the ERIC status.

## SHARE - SURVEY OF HEALTH, AGEING AND RETIREMENT IN EUROPE

In March 2011 SHARE became the first ERIC. Although SHARE-ERIC is hosted by Tilburg University/Netspar in the Netherlands, SHARE is centrally coordinated at MEA (Munich Center for the Economics of Aging), Max-Planck-Institute for Social Law and Social Policy, Germany. The project aims to help researchers understand the impact of population ageing on European societies and thus to help policy makers make decisions on health, social and economic policy.

Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Germany and the Netherlands are the founding members of SHARE-ERIC, with Switzerland having an observer status. Italy joined in June 2011. Denmark, Spain, France and Portugal are expected to follow soon.

## EUROPEAN PROJECTS

### DASISH - DATA SERVICE INITIATIVE FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE AND THE HUMANITIES

DASISH aims to provide solutions to a number of common issues relevant for the five ESFRI projects in social science and humanities - CESSDA, CLARIN, DARIAH, ESS and SHARE. DASISH has identified four major areas of activity: data quality, data archiving, data access and legal and ethics aspects. The outcome forms the basis for educational activities and for outreach to the communities that are to benefit from the work.

Through DASISH the participating infrastructures will not only obtain new solutions for specific problems and a consolidation of their infrastructure building, but will work out solutions facilitating interdisciplinary cross-walks of their researchers. This will be of mutual benefit for the five infrastructures and the communities they serve.

The 3-year project, coordinated by SND, started in January 2012 and brings together 19 partners from twelve countries.

### DWB - DATA WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

The aim of DWB is to enhance transnational access for the researchers to government micro data within Europe through collaboration between producers of government data and data archives. The barriers the project addresses are those in resource discovery, metadata standards, researcher accreditation, legal frameworks, and use of research data centres for confidential micro data.

The 4-year project, coordinated by CNRS-RQ, started in May 2011 and brings together 28 partners from three communities; the European Statistical System, the CESSDA, and the Research community.

Within the context of the project the *1st European Data Access Forum* was held on 27 and 28 March 2012 in Luxembourg. Through a series of presentations, business cases, working sessions and roundtables, the *1st EDAF* focused mainly on the legal frameworks and the research accreditation process for access to national micro data across boundaries. The ambition of the Forum is to gather the different communities in equal proportion, also involving in the discussions other important stakeholders such as the national data protection commissioners and research funding councils.

#### SERSCIDA - SUPPORT FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL/REGIONAL SOCIAL SCIENCES DATA ARCHIVES

SERSCIDA is designed as a strategic project for supporting the cooperation and exchange of knowledge between the EU countries associated within the Council of European Social Sciences Data Archives (CESSDA) and the Western Balkan Countries (WBC) in the field of social science data archiving. The project addresses the issues of potentials of usage of information-communication technologies for the benefits of scientific research and exchange of knowledge as laid down in the call for proposals topic. The project aims to produce tangible results and improve the capacities for exchange of knowledge and data collected through research in social sciences between the European countries and WBC involved.

The project started in February 2012 and will run for 2.5 years.

#### EUDAT

The project aims to contribute to the production of a Collaborative Data Infrastructure (CDI). The project's target is to provide a pan-European solution to the challenge of data proliferation in Europe's scientific and research communities.

The EUDAT consortium includes representatives from each stage of the value chain that has evolved to deliver scientific knowledge to researchers, citizens, industry and society as a whole. It comprises 25 European partners, including data centers, technology providers, and research communities and funding agencies from 13 countries.

The first EUDAT User Forum took place on 7-8 March 2012 in Barcelona and gathered more than 60 participants, including representatives from 18 research communities across Europe. Since its start on 1st October 2011, EUDAT has been reviewing the approaches and requirements of research communities regarding the deployment and use of a cross-disciplinary and persistent data e-Infrastructure. This analysis initially focused on a first subset of communities from linguistics (CLARIN), earth sciences (EPOS), climate sciences (ENES), environmental sciences (LIFEWATCH), and biological and medical sciences (VPH). The preliminary results of this analysis were presented at the User Forum. Several user communities outside the EUDAT consortium also participated, presenting their data architectures and sharing the functionalities they would require from a common layer of data services.

#### SIM4RDM - SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE MODELS FOR RESEARCH DATA MANAGEMENT

SIM4RDM is a two year ERA-NET project funded by the European Commission's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7). The vision of SIM4RDM is to enable researchers to effectively use emerging data infrastructures by ensuring that they have the knowledge, skills and support infrastructures necessary to adopt good research data management practices. SIM4RDM will achieve this by analysing existing funding programmes and policy interventions within member states and internationally and will then aim to produce models, evaluation frameworks and policy recommendations for both future national interventions as well as pan-European and International co-ordination.

The SIM4DM network is coordinated by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC, UK) and currently comprises of partner organisations in five other countries (FI, HU, IE, NL and NO).

## DDI

### EDDI - EUROPEAN DDI USERS MEETING

EDDI is designed to provide an annual European forum where DDI Users from Europe can gather to showcase their work and their progress toward DDI adoption, as well as discuss any questions or challenges they may have about the standard. EDDI will include presentations, poster sessions, and discussion sessions. The meeting will close with "meet the experts" session in which users will have a chance to talk about their experiences with representatives from the Technical Implementation Committee (TIC) of the DDI Alliance. The philosophy of EDDI is to be an open, inclusive DDI community-building activity.

The third annual EDDI was organized jointly by SND - Swedish National Data Service, GESIS - Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, and IDSC of IZA - International Data Service Center of the Institute for the Study of Labor. The meeting took place December 5-6 2011 in Gothenburg, Sweden. In connection with the meeting a half-day DDI introduction was offered as two parallel courses, one with a business focus and one with a technical focus. Other meetings and workshops in connection with EDDI 2011 was a 3-days workshop on The Challenge of Qualitative Data: Standardizing Metadata, a 3-days meeting with the Working Group on Semantic Statistics: RDF Vocabularies for DDI, a 3-days DDI Developers Meeting, and a Data Without Boundaries Thematic Workshop on Metadata.