



## **Exploring Potentials and Possibilities of Extending the CESSDA Research Infrastructure (RI)**

Work Package 7 of the 2008-2009 CESSDA PPP under the 7th Framework Programme  
(See <http://www.nsd.uib.no/cessda/project/index.html> for information on the CESSDA PPP.)

### ***The Objectives of Widening the CESSDA Research Infrastructure***

The current CESSDA network includes twenty EU member states. The main objective of the work package is to widen this network to include other states. At the same time there is a need to strengthen and develop capacity in the smaller existing CESSDA organisations. The obvious purpose of this activity is to extend the CESSDA-network to each EU-member state and to create and maintain a 'complete' pan-European Social Science and Humanities (SSH) network, including representation from new and candidate EU countries.

Equally, some countries with organisations within CESSDA have specialised research-led project-based teams whose data currently fall outside of the CESSDA network, and a strategy is required for incorporating these resources into the CESSDA RI.

### ***Integrating new national CESSDA members***

The main focus of the work is to bring new national data archives into the CESSDA network and to close the existing gaps of CESSDA membership across Europe. It has to be ensured that the new CESSDA-members are sufficiently qualified to carry out the day to day operations of a national data archive and to fulfil its international functions within the CESSDA-network.

To realise this task it is planned to carry out the following strategic work:

- Identify relevant resources and organisations;
- Analyse capacities, human resources and organisational/institutional settings of these resources;
- Analyse the national data sharing culture and prevailing research traditions in the respective countries;
- Evaluate and discuss models of organisational settings in the potential new members archives;
- Make recommendations for the administrative bodies regarding the potential financial contributions from within and outside the CESSDA network for incorporating new members to the CESSDA RI;
- Develop training and staff exchange programmes for new CESSDA personnel;

- Plan working groups and training teams from the existing CESSDA RI/new staff.

In devising a strategic and operational plan to widen the CESSDA RI's activities, it is important to note that the work will build upon the experience gained in previous co-operation with more than 15 associated partners in many emerging member states initially formed during the UNESCO Workshop on Social Science Data Archives in Eastern Europe 2002 (formerly referred to as EDAN - the East European Data Archives Network, <http://www.edan-data.net>) and coordinated by the German Social Science Infrastructure Services (GESIS, <http://www.gesis.org>). EDAN acted as an informal network designed to unite data archives which are at an early stage of their existence and share common problems, as well as to make sure that the Eastern European data archives will catch up with the advanced Western data archives. For those archives, which were not formal members of CESSDA, the EDAN served as a good organisational framework to co-ordinate efforts for setting up the archive. In close cooperation with CESSDA and IFDO this network has organised a number of special training seminars to help develop data archiving practices. Yet, clearly more work needs to be undertaken on a strategic basis to integrate these organisations fully within an upgraded CESSDA RI.

The strategic work of widening the CESSDA RI includes collaboration with ten Eastern European countries. See <http://www.nsd.uib.no/cessda/project/associates.html> for a comprehensive list of EDAN members and other organisations associated with the project.

### ***Integrating agencies and organisations hosting important data collections outside the CESSDA RI***

Here the work is directed toward widening the existing data-collections within the CESSDA RI. The primary goal lies in setting up a programme for interoperating with agencies and organisations which remain outside of CESSDA yet continue to host important data collections. Due to the rapidly growing number of data stakeholders within the European Research Area these sources will increase in importance. The CESSDA RI will attempt to integrate new types of data holdings from international project consortia, European Social Science networks or research organisations and to provide active assistance in the implementation of best practice standards with respect to resource discovery and access tools, instruments and data documentation. We are planning to undertake governance and logistical work to:

- Identify organisations that would remain outside the CESSDA RI but whose resources would be beneficial to the overall aims and objectives of the infrastructure;
- Explore and evaluate possible forms of cooperation with organisations/resources outside the CESSDA RI;
- Devise programmes for interoperating with these agencies and organisations.

The work will benefit from CESSDA's informal contacts with international project consortia and European Social Science networks with specific data collections (e.g. European Values Survey, World Values Survey and European Social Survey).

It is planned to take stock of the current data resources that facilitate national and cross-national research on issues of European importance, identify the barriers to wider use and sharing of these resources, and seek methods of interoperability with the CESSDA RI.

### ***The Work Plan***

The main sources of information relevant for the work package on widening CESSDA RI will be:

- A workshop on interoperability;
- Country reports from Eastern European partners;
- Online survey;
- Expert interviews;
- Fact-finding visits to potential new members.

A workshop will focus on the collection of information with respect to:

- National data landscape, data accessibility and data sharing culture in the field of social sciences in the region;
- Funding for data access and infrastructure services in the respective countries;
- Organisational/institutional settings, capacities and human resources, and services and facilities offered by data archives/archive initiatives/data resources.

Based on the country reports and on the information presented at the workshop, the prospects for the further development of the archives/archive initiatives/data sources, their training needs and their contribution to the European network will be discussed.

To gain an insight into the situation of potential CESSDA members, and to take stock of their needs and expectations, fact-finding visits to the Balkan and Baltic countries will be arranged. Beside the discussion within the data archives and archive initiatives, the meetings will include talks with empirically oriented researchers, potential data users and representatives of national research funding organisations.

Based on the information collected, and the analysis of the results of the discussions and meetings, an **Action Plan and Business Plan** for setting up new archives will be written. These plans will make recommendations for their administrative bodies, taking into account the strategic measurements, potential financial contributions from within and without the CESSDA network needed to incorporate new members into the CESSDA RI. Special attention will be given to the development of training and staff exchange programmes for new CESSDA personnel. Both plans will contribute to the overall strategic plan for the CESSDA RI and membership requirements for the enhanced CESSDA RI.

#### *Participation in Work Package 7 (contact persons at the national partner archives)*

The project team of Work Package 7 is comprised of staff from five CESSDA members.

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