

## Finding and accessing data from national social science data services

National data services provide access to extensive collections of data relevant to social and economic research. This guide 1) answers some key questions about finding and accessing data from national data services and 2) summaries national social science data services in Europe.

### Key questions

#### What are national data services and archives?

Social science data services, known as data service providers within CESSDA, typically combine the archiving of research data with activities to make data available for research, teaching and learning. Common tasks include checking the quality of data and metadata, maintaining catalogues, and managing data access through appropriate licensing. Many data services also provide training for both those creating and using data and some operate within institutions that collect data or undertake research.

#### What kind of data is available?

Data services for the social sciences provide access to a diverse range of data. They often disseminate both quantitative and qualitative research data, through predominantly quantitative data from social surveys. Data collections can come from major academic projects including longitudinal and cross-national programs, government or policy focused organisations, and small research teams and individual researchers.

#### Why is data archived?

Research data are continually being archived and factors driving growth in the archiving of data include drives to extend the benefits of public investments alongside growing appreciation for reproducible research. Indeed, publicly funded researchers are now required to archive data in some countries and national data services support researchers to effectively manage and document data.

#### How do I find data?

Most services have an online catalogue for searching or browsing using terms such as ageing (or aging, it can be useful to consider alternative spellings of key search terms). Websites and catalogues are often in multiple languages, typically national languages and English; though, data and documentation may only be available in one language. The European Language Social Science Thesaurus (ELSST) (<https://elsst.ukdataservice.ac.uk/>) can help identify search terms.

#### Why is there not just one catalogue for all data?

CESSDA are building a Products and Services Catalogue for CESSDA members, as part of a wide-ranging plan to establish a common infrastructure. It is due to go into service in 2018. When fully operational, you will be able to search data collections provided by all CESSDA Service Providers.

#### What is NESSTAR?

NESSTAR enables online data browsing and analysis. You can also download tables, graphs, data files and study descriptions. Some data services use NESSTAR as their main tool for searching and accessing data while others have a main catalogue and provide NESSTAR as an additional tool. NESSTAR help pages, accessed at by clicking  at the top of the screen, include helpful guidance.

#### How do I access data?

Access to data varies across national data services and across datasets. Most commonly, users need to register before they can access data. Registration is generally straightforward (often university researchers register using their institutional user name and password (shibboleth)). After registering,

users can often download data directly from the catalogue. Registration is not required for some open datasets, which can be downloaded by anyone from the catalogue. In some cases, users need to complete a request form to access data.

### **Can I access data from any data service?**

Most data services allow users from other countries to access data in the same way as users in the country. Indeed, a guiding principle in CESSDA is that all data holdings will be available to anyone regardless of status, nation or type of use (except redistribution) unless there are known requirements which prevent it. In some cases, the registration process for users outside the country may vary from home users, as those outside may need to apply for a user name and password. Additionally, access by users outside the country can be prohibited for some specific datasets, typically data which is confidential or is subject to national legislative requirements.

### **Are there any restrictions on what data I can access and how I use it?**

Use of data is usually managed by a licence/agreement between the data service and user; users need to understand and accept the terms and conditions to access data. Different access levels to data are common. For example, at one level there may be Open data that can be downloaded by any type of user and without registering (but users agree to acknowledge the source of the information). Other levels of access may impose restrictions such as for non-commercial use or for research use only. The use of data may also need to be registered (a requirement that can help data creators understand the impact of their work). Other common conditions include not trying to identify individuals, households or organisations in the data and not distributing data. In some instances, access may require permission from the data owners. Catalogues may also include archived data that is not available for re-use, for example, due to concerns about privacy and consent issues. Access conditions for each data collection should be displayed clearly in the catalogue.

### **Will access to data incur any cost?**

Access to data, documentation and metadata is generally free. Charges can apply for commercial use and for supplementary services such as burning data to a CD or distributing data by post.

### **How will I understand the data?**

A core aim is that data collections have documentation that allows their use without recourse to the creator. Data services support those depositing data and carry out control checks during the archiving process. Documentation might include user guides, survey questionnaires, interview schedules and fieldwork notes. The documentation can generally be examined online before accessing data. Typically documentation comes as fully searchable PDF documents, but format and quality varies, especially for older studies. Some services (where resources allow) offer support to help users understand data through helpdesks and training.

### **What is data citation?**

When using existing data, it is good practice to cite the data to credit the data creators and allow other researchers to find the data. Many services provide recommended citations for each data collection. In general, a citation should include enough information so that the exact version of the data being cited can be located. Many services give persistent identifiers for their data such as a Digital Object Identifier (DOI), which link to the data used (even if the location of the data changes).

### **What if the local data service doesn't have the data you're looking for?**

If you cannot find data you know exists (e.g. through an academic publication), ask the relevant data service. Such user enquiries can help CESSDA service providers develop their collections; if they don't have it, they may try and find out how to acquire it for onward data sharing.

## National data service: CESSDA Members

### Czech Republic: Czech Social Science Data Archive (ČSDA)

<http://archiv.soc.cas.cz/>

Website: Czech and English, Catalogue: Czech and English

Users from other countries can access all data under the same conditions as Czech users (9.1% registered users outside of Czech Republic in 2015). Access to data is limited by non-commercial use of data. Users can download data in the catalogue (<http://nesstar.soc.cas.cz/webview/>) directly. Online registration is required (no additional supporting information required). In a few cases, special conditions defined by depositors are applied to datasets.

### Denmark: Danish Data Archive (DDA)

<https://www.sa.dk/en/services/danish-data-archive>

Website: Danish and English, Catalogue: Danish and English

Access to data is limited by non-commercial use of data. Users can search catalogue and order data online. Access to some studies requires permission from the data owners. Users from other countries can access data.

### Finland: Finnish Social Science Data Archive (FSD)

<http://www.fsd.uta.fi/fi/>

Website: Finnish, Swedish and English Catalogue: Finnish, Swedish and English (The variables of many quantitative datasets are available in English and more can be translated on request)

Users from other countries can access data. All users can access the data catalogue and download open access data from the Data Service Portal Aila. To access other data, registration is required. Students and staff from a Finnish university, polytechnic or research institute, can register using their institutional username and password. Users outside Finland (and other users without institutional username and password) need to apply for a username by completing a registration form. Usernames and passwords are primarily issued to students and researchers from foreign universities (sent by email within a week, after FSD User Services checks).

### France: PROGEDO (CESSDA-France/ Réseau Quetelet)

<http://www.progedo.fr/>

Website: French and English, Catalogue: French (query in French)

Access to French data through CESSDA-France/Réseau Quetelet. Data are available free of charge for use in research and teaching (commercial use is prohibited) to researchers (including PhD and master students) both in France and other countries. Registration is required to access most data files (Electoral results are freely available online). To request data, users need the name of the distributor (ADISP, CDSP, INED) and reference number of the data (available from the [Réseau Quetelet catalogue](#)). Access to confidential data is available through CASD (<https://casd.eu/>).

### Germany: GESIS

<http://www.gesis.org/home/>

Website: German and English, Catalogue: German and English

Users from other countries can access data. Most data provided by GESIS is limited to academic use. Most GESIS services are available with a simple [registration procedure](#); for some services, users need to apply for access to data. Access to confidential data is available in-house through the [Secure Data Centre](#), though GESIS is currently working on a remote-access solution. Users can apply for a visiting researcher grant at the EUROLAB: <http://www.gesis.org/en/services/data-analysis/eurolab/>.

**Greece: SODANET - Greek research infrastructure for the social sciences**

<http://sodanet.gr>

Website: Greek and English, Catalogue: Greek and English

Users need to register to search the catalogue and access data. Users from other countries can register to access data by completing a web form to provide personal details. Data is provided directly to users.

**Lithuania: LiDA**

<http://www.lidata.eu>

Website: Lithuanian and English, Catalogue: Lithuanian and English

All users can access data with no restrictions including users outside Lithuania. Data is provided directly to users after online registration.

**Netherlands: DANS – Data Archiving and Networked Services**

<https://dans.knaw.nl>

Website: Dutch and English, Catalogue: Dutch and English

All users can access the data catalogue and open access data without registration. Registration is required for some data. To register, a user completes a web form with personal information and must also accept and understand the General DANS Conditions of Use. Registration is usually accepted immediately and users can browse and download data straight away. Access to some studies requires permission from the data owners. Foreign researchers can access data.

**Norway: NSD Norwegian Centre for Research Data**

<http://www.nsd.uib.no/>

Website: Norwegian and English, Catalogue: Norwegian and English

NSD's collection of research data consists of a series of studies conducted in Norway by various researchers and research institutes. Some datasets are freely available online, while others are available to order. It is the researcher or the responsible institution that determines the availability of the data. For data that require an application, data may be ordered via NSDs order form or [bestilledata@nsd.uib.no](mailto:bestilledata@nsd.uib.no). The order is assessed based on the access criteria as determined by the researcher or research institution. Most data sets are available to students and researchers affiliated to Norwegian colleges and universities and some datasets are also available to other users. For further information, see this [webpage](#).

**Slovenia: ADP - Slovenian Social Science Data Archive**

<http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/>

Website: Slovenian and English, Catalogue: Slovenian and English

Users from other countries can access data. Most of the data (95%) is accessible via Nesstar system. Users need to complete an online [registration form](#) (change language if it does not change automatically). There is some restricted access data (mostly administrative data from stati. offices) and sensitive that can only be accessed in safe-room environment. For access to restricted and sensitive data, we ask for official confirmation of status by affiliated University /institution and check user details with CESSDA SP in the user's country.

**Sweden: SND – Swedish National Data Service**

<https://snd.gu.se/en>

Website: Swedish and English, Catalogue: Swedish and English

There are no limits on who can apply to access data; our main target groups are researchers and students at Swedish and foreign universities. Studies in SND's catalogue have different [accessibility](#)

levels (determined by data owners). Access to some datasets requires permission from the principal investigator. Data is provided directly to users. Some studies are available for direct download. Others must be ordered. Data can be sent by e-mail or made accessible on an FTP server. Some studies can be downloaded from SND Online Analysis, which requires users to register and confirm that they understand the conditions of use. They then receive a username and password. To order data (that cannot be downloaded from the website) users fill in an online form (the order form contains a link to conditions governing receipt and use of data files). For studies that require permission of the principal investigator, users must fill in and sign an additional form for SND to forward to the principal investigator. There are different forms for students and researchers or other users. The form for students must also be signed by a supervisor or course coordinator. SND's catalogue also lists studies where data are not available through SND. Contact information or links to the research group are provided. Some of these studies have data available to download from research group websites. For other data, conditions and restrictions may apply.

#### **Switzerland: FORS**

<http://forscenter.ch/en/>

Language: French, English and German

Users from other countries can access data; there are no distinctions between Swiss researchers and researchers based in other countries. Download is usually possible immediately. In some cases however approval of the data producer is needed. Registration is required using e-mail address of institution. Access is usually restricted to researchers within universities and institutes as long as they are connected to scientific research and not commercial. Users not affiliated to a University are considered case by case.

#### **UK: UK Data Service**

<https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk/>

Website: English, Catalogue: English

User from other countries can access data. All users can access the data catalogue and download open access data from the Discover catalogue. To access other data, registration is required. UK university or college users, register using their institutional username and password. Other users apply for a UK Data Archive username and password. Once registration is complete you will be able to download/order data from us. Non-UK users cannot access controlled data via the Secure Lab.

### **National data service: Non-members**

#### **Slovakia: SASD Slovak archive of social science data**

Website: Slovakian and English, Catalogue: Slovakian and English

<http://sasd.sav.sk/sk/>

User from other countries can access data. Some data is available online for academic and information purposes (access categories O, A, B); to access, users complete the online data access form, which defines the conditions of use. For other data (under access category C), users need to complete a form and post it with signature and official seal of the institution to SASD.

#### **Estonia: ESTA-Estonian Social Science Data Archive**

<http://psych.ut.ee/esta/>

Website: Estonian Catalogue: Estonian

Access information unavailable.

**Hungary: TARKI**

<http://www.tarki.hu/en/>

Website: Hungarian and English, Catalogue: Hungarian and English

Users from all countries can access the data collections in the Data Archive for free if they verify the scientific purpose by the user declaration form. Dataset usage is free when it has scientific purpose, but the owner of the dataset can decide about the data access category. The three common data access categories are A – Free access without any limitation; B – Free access for Hungarian scientific research institutions and public bodies and access to others with by the owner's permission only and D – Delayed dissemination (access with the depositor's permission only (for max. 5 years). In the cases of the B and D categories, we ask the depositor to allow the data request. The data is provided directly to the users, via email or a unique created download link. Users need to fill and sign a user declaration form: [http://www.tarki.hu/en/services/da/docs/user\\_declaration.pdf](http://www.tarki.hu/en/services/da/docs/user_declaration.pdf)

**Ireland: ISSDA – Irish Social Science Data Archive**

<http://www.ucd.ie/issda/>

Website: English, Catalogue: English

Any student or researcher from any organisation, country or field of study can apply to ISSDA to access our datasets. Access to some datasets may be restricted in some cases. Data can be requested by returning a completing request form for research purposes to ISSDA via email ([issda@ucd.ie](mailto:issda@ucd.ie)). Datasets are sent out via a secure online download service, called FileSender. The datasets are password protected and encrypted.

**Italy: UniData**

<http://www.unidata.unimib.it/?lang=en>

Website: Italian and English, Catalogue: Italian and English

Users from other countries can access the data, if license permits. Access to some data is available only to UniData members (primarily data from the National Institute of Statistics (Istat)). Where access is allowed, data can be downloaded directly from the website, after simple registration.

**Portugal: Portuguese Social Information Archive (APIS)**

<http://www.apis.ics.ul.pt/>

Website: Portuguese and English, Catalogue: Portuguese and English (not all study descriptions)

Users from all countries can search and access data. Most holdings are open access and available in NESSTAR or to download but access to some data requires user registration, requires e-mail).

**Romania: RODA**

<http://www.roda.ro/>

Website: Romanian and English, Catalogue: Romanian and English (not all study descriptions)

Users from all countries can access data directly. Some datasets are restricted to academic users only and require registration. When registering, a user may need to provide additional information to confirm their identity. Approval of data owners is required in some instances

**Spain: CIS Data Bank**

<http://www.cis.es/>

Website: Spanish, Catalogue: Spanish

Most data is accessible to all users. Data from 1997-2017 can be downloaded free via the CIS website ([www.cis.es](http://www.cis.es)). To download data, users need to give their email and accept the conditions of use. To access older data (1963-1996), users need to apply to CIS Data bank by completing a [form](#)). Charges apply. A special process applies for access to confidential data, requests can be rejected.