The IASSIST QUARTERLY represents an international cooperative effort on the part of individuals managing, operating, or using machine-readable data archives, data libraries, and data services. The QUARTERLY reports on activities related to the production, acquisition, preservation, processing, distribution, and use of machine-readable data carried out by its members and others in the international social science community. Your contributions and suggestions for topics of interest are welcomed. The views set forth by authors of articles contained in this publication are not necessarily those of IASSIST.

Information for Authors:
The QUARTERLY is published four times per year. Authors are encouraged to submit papers as word processing files. Hard copy submissions may be required in some instances. Word processing submissions may be sent via email to: kbr@sam.sdu.dk. Manuscripts should be sent to Editor: Karsten Boye Rasmussen, Department of Organization and Management, University of Southern Denmark, SDU-OU, Campusvej 55, DK-5230 Odense M, Denmark.

The first page should contain the article title, author's name, affiliation, address to which correspondence may be sent, and telephone number. Footnotes and bibliographic citations should be consistent in style, preferably following a standard authority such as the University of Chicago press Manual of Style or Kate L. Turabian's Manual for Writers. Where appropriate, machine-readable data files should be cited with bibliographic citations consistent in style with Dodd, Sue A. "Bibliographic references for numeric social science data files: suggested guidelines". Journal of the American Society for Information Science 30(2):77-82, March 1979. Announcements of conferences, training sessions, or the like, are welcomed and should include a mailing address and a telephone number for the director of the event or for the organization sponsoring the event.

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Volume 25 Number 2 Summer 2001

The “New Archives Forum” at the 2001 IASSIST/IFDO Conference
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A. Tabuna

Title: Newsletter - International Association for Social Science Information Service and Technology
ISSN - United States: 0739-1137 © 2002 by IASSIST. All rights reserved.
The chairs of the session have succeeded in publishing the collection of papers. The reason for re-publishing the session in the IASSIST Quarterly is to spread the word about the archive movement in Eastern Europe to a broader audience of the full IASSIST membership and IQ readers.

In this brief introduction I will take the opportunity to thank the chairpersons and editors Brigitte Hausstein and Paul de Guchteneire for their effort and also to thank the authors from several countries in the Eastern Europe. For a more detailed introduction to the papers you may refer to the introduction by the chairpersons.

Karsten Boye Rasmussen - March 2002
Janez Stebe & Irena Vipavc (Social Science Data Archive at the Faculty of Social Sciences University of Ljubljana - ADP) discussed how the new archives could take advantage of experiences of the already existing data archives in the world and Heston Phillips & Patience Tshose spoke about how the data service was managed and organized in the South African Data Archive (SADA) which has been existing since 1994. The Forum discussion introduced to a variety of topics in the design and implementation of new data archives in Eastern Europe. The Forum member reported about their experiences in, results and the difficulties of creating a data infrastructure in their countries. In short reports they gave an overview of the current situation.

Jindrich Krejci (head of the Sociological Data Archive in Prague, Czech Republic) mentioned that the Czech archive had been established in 1998 within the framework of the project “Social Trends” funded by the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic. Now it is part of the Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences and since 2001 a member of CESSDA (Council of European Social Science Data Archives). Ildiko Nagy (Data Archive Department of TARKI, Budapest) introduced the Hungarian Social Research Informatics Center, the first data archive in Eastern Europe. Ludmila Khakhulina (deputy director of the research center VCIOM, Moscow) and Larisa Kosova (head of the information department of the VCIOM) presented their project “Creating a public data archive in Russia”. Nina Rostegaeva (head of the Data Bank of Sociological Researches - DBSR) reviewed the historical background of the data archive at the Institute of Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow, that had been founded in 1986 and describes the future plans. The Estonian Social Science Data Archive in Tartu (ESSDA) was introduced by Andu Rämmer. The Archive was set up in 1994 and became a member of CESSDA in 1997. At the moment it is struggling very hard to keep alive because of the lack of permanent funding. Ausma Tabuna (head of the Latvian Social Science Data Archive, Riga) described the same situation in Latvia. The idea of establishing a data archive in Slovakia and Romania is relatively new, therefore Katarina Strapcova, (Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences, Bratislava, Slovakia) and Adrian Dusa (Institute for Quality of Life Research, Bucharest) presented their first views on this issue and informed about their plans for the future. Ekkehard Mochmann (IFDO President, ZA Cologne) opened the discussion by noting that obviously all data archives - old and new ones - are facing the same problems. They have to cope with financial restrictions, insufficient technical equipment as well as with the lack of well-trained archive specialists. He emphasized that beside financial support these new archives needed also special training in data processing and documentation techniques. In this respect it would be necessary to provide a platform for new archives in Eastern Europe to exchange experiences in producing and storing metadata. He offered to set up a discussion group on New Data Archives on the IFDO homepage. Paul de Guchteneire appreciated the support for new archives in Eastern Europe provided by GESIS/Central Archive Cologne, the Finish and Swedish Data Archive. He expressed his hope that this kind of support (he called it “Twinning”) would be growing and he pointed out that the UNESCO/MOST would also promote both the establishment of further data archives in those countries where such facilities are weak and the establishment of a network of data archives from Eastern and Western Europe. In her closing speech Brigitte Hausstein underlined: “The Forum has been the first opportunity in the last years for data archive specialists from Eastern Europe to meet and share experiences. On the one hand the Forum provided a comprehensive view of the progress achieved in the field of establishing data archives in Eastern Europe. On the other hand there is a common understanding of the fact that the new archives still need support provided by the international data and network organizations and experienced data archives. The GESIS Branch Office will continue to foster the cooperation between data archives from Eastern and Western Europe by offering workshops and training facilities”.

The Czech Sociological Data Archive

The Sociological Data Archive (SDA) of the Institute of Sociology in Prague collects computerized data files from quantitative sociological surveys. Its main objective is to make Czech sociological data publicly available for academic, educational and other non-commercial purposes. Other activities of the SDA include the promotion of data dissemination and secondary data analysis, and support for special research projects. The SDA is the only institution of its kind in the Czech Republic.

Institutional settings
The SDA has been open to the general public since September 1998. It was established within the project “Social Trends” (Research - Archives - Publication - Graduate Training) of the Institute of Sociology. The project was headed by Dr. Petr Mateju and sponsored by the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic.

Since 1999 the SDA has been an independent department of the Institute of Sociology, a non-profit social research organization operating within the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic. Between 1999 and 2000 the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic financed a new SDA project. Thanks to it, the SDA has developed into an infrastructure capable of providing data and other services on the customary level. In spring 2001 the SDA became a member of the CESSDA (Council of European Social Science Data Archives).

At present the SDA team includes three younger researchers; the archiving work is also supported by co-operation with other research teams of the Institute of Sociology. Current institutional settings of the SDA are defined in the Statute of the Institute and operational costs are covered from its budget.

WWW links:
SDA: http://archiv.soc.cas.cz/
Institute of Sociology: http://www.soc.cas.cz/
Social Trends: http://www.soc.cas.cz/trends/

History of the Czech social survey research and data archiving
The Czech social research has a long tradition, but the continuity of its development was deeply affected by the communist regime (1948 - 1989). The history of empirical surveys in former Czechoslovakia dates well before the 2nd World War (the 1930s). In 1946 the American Gallup Institute inspired the creation of the Institute of Public Opinion Research which started systematic opinion polling. In the 1950s, with the exception of official statistics all activities in the field of social research were stopped on account of ideological reasons. Sociology itself was denounced as a “bourgeois pseudo-science”, and all sociological institutes and faculties were closed down. In the 1960s research activities had been re-established, but after 1968 were restricted again during “normalization” and put under the control of the communist party.

The transformation of Czech academic institutions of social sciences began soon after the “Velvet Revolution” in 1989, but the results in some areas have not yet reached satisfactory levels. Furthermore, commercial survey research and public opinion polling on social topics has developed after 1989.

Archiving data from survey research
In the Czech Republic the SDA is the only institution which systematically provides access to data files from quantitative sociological surveys. Before its formation, data files from sociological research projects were usually under the control of individual research teams. There was no systematic index of existing files, and poorly protected data were at risk of being lost or damaged. People interested in a specific data file had to negotiate with its owners. The lack of documentation and unsuitable formats often made it difficult to gain immediate access to data.

A debate concerning the formation of a social data archive in former Czechoslovakia was opened in the late 60s. At that time, the first efforts to establish an archive were related to the re-birth of Czech sociology and the growing popularity of survey research. Unfortunately, after the Russian invasion in 1968 the communist control over social sciences was gradually reinforced. In the period of 1970 -
1989 the idea of systematic social data archiving re-emerged, but it did not find a wide support among social scientists in view of the danger of abusing data for the purposes of the communist regime. A serious discussion on the establishment of a publicly accessible data institution continued after 1989. There were several attempts to establish the archive, and finally, the project “Social Trends” was successful in concentrating the necessary financial, personnel and institutional means, brought former ideas to fruition and founded the archive.

**Official Statistics**
In the field of official statistics data services are provided by the Czech Statistical Office (CSU). The CSU publishes Statistical Yearbooks, regular reports entitled the Indicators of Economic and Social Developments in the Czech Republic, booklets “The Czech Republic in Figures”, and a series of publications devoted to the labor market, family budgets, demography, etc. It is possible to access CSU’s micro databases but it must be negotiated on an individual basis after contacting the Office. Several data modules from the surveys organized by the CSU are part of international programs of EUROSTAT, CEPS/INSTED, CESTAT, etc.

**Qualitative data**
In recent years two qualitative data archives have also been established. The Czech Archive of Qualitative Data and Documents at the School of Social Sciences of Masaryk University in Brno was opened in 1999. Its objective is to establish a publicly accessible information database of qualitative data collected in the Czech Republic. In 2000 a qualitative research project on “alternative culture” resulted in the establishment of the Digital Archive of Soft Data MEDARD at the Virtual Institute in Prague. Information on both archives is available online.

**WWW links:**

**SDA: Archived data**
The SDA brings together computerized data files from quantitative sociological surveys. At present the data catalogue includes approximately 160 titles, some of which are, however, English versions of original Czech data sets. Data holdings include data files collected by the Institute of Sociology and other Czech organizations conducting state-financed sociological research, data from Czech publicly available opinion polls and from international surveys with Czech participation. The main access to the data library and other SDA’s services is provided on the Internet.

The data processing launched by the “Social Trends” project focused on comparative projects in which the Czech Republic has been participating since 1990 and on research monitoring the main trends of the development of social structures in the Czech Republic. The further collection of data files has been aimed at earlier research projects of the Institute of Sociology, and the SDA has also developed a co-operation with several other research institutes.

The current largest project concerns the archiving of data from the public opinion surveys of the former Institute for Public Opinion Research (IVVM) from the period 1990 - 2000. Since 1990 the IVVM has been organizing monthly public opinion surveys on attitudes to political, economical and social issues. 120 data files from regular surveys and approximately 50 data files from other IVVM research projects have been transferred to the SDA’s library, the data have been transformed into the SPSS format, checked, cleaned and documented. A number of questionnaires from older surveys have to be scanned. The data files from surveys conducted in 2000 and 1999 have already been made available to the general public. Other files are under preparation.

**WWW links:**
- SDA’s data holdings: [http://archiv.soc.cas.cz](http://archiv.soc.cas.cz)...
- than continue into “DATA ARCHIVE”

**Promotion of data dissemination and secondary data analyses**
SDA was founded relatively recently and the tradition of using data services has not yet fully developed in the Czech Republic. International networks of data services are also little known. Therefore, the Archive has to pay great attention to promoting secondary analysis and employment of the existing data sources.

SDA publishes information on available data services in scientific and other periodicals, provides information to universities and public sector institutions, and organizes public presentations of the Archive and data service networks. The team of the Archive also participates in the educational programs of Charles University in Prague. In 1999 a course “Social Data Archives” was lectured at the Faculty of Social Sciences of Charles University. The course will be taught again in the fall 2001.

SDA Info - Archive’s Information Bulletin is issued four times a year in the Czech language and is distributed free of charge. SDA Info provides an outline of available services, gives a more detailed overview of the stored data and research projects, provides references to other social data sources and is dedicated to promoting secondary data analysis.
SDA’s Internet services provide an online access to a number of analytical publications and offer the option of ordering publications from the Institute of Sociology. The directory of references located on the SDA’s server includes useful Internet links to other social data sources, Czech social science information, international survey researches, and general information on the Czech Republic.

In addition to these data services, the Archive has also become a source of more general information on Czech society and social science research. In some areas the Czech social science infrastructure has not yet been developed, and until recently the English language sources of general information on the Czech Republic were also limited. Especially for foreigners, it is sometimes hard to orient themselves in the available sources. As a result, the Archive often answers questions from completely different fields of interest than sociology.

Support of special research projects
SDA has co-operated in organizing research projects prepared within the Institute of Sociology - especially the Czech portion of international projects such as the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), the Second International Adult Literacy Survey (SIALS), and the European Value Study (EVS).

International collaboration
The SDA has co-operated mainly with the Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung (ZA) in Cologne and with the GESIS Branch Office in Berlin. Contacts have also been developed with the Centre for the Study of Public Policy at the University of Strathclyde in Scotland, TARKI Budapest and with the Department of Sociology at UCLA. Additionally, members of the archive’s team participate in several international research projects. At present the SDA intends to join international networks of data services. In April 2001 the SDA became a member of CESSDA (Council of European Social Science Data Archives) and the application for membership in the IFDO (International Federation for Data Organisations) is planned for the near future.

References:


Estonian Social Science Data Archives: Past and Future Perspectives

A peculiarity of the development of social sciences in the former Soviet Union, and especially in Estonia was that conducting of empirical social studies was possible from the 1960s on, while teaching of social sciences and participating in the activities of the world sociological community was hardly possible. Teaching of sociological disciplines as well as engaging of students in the research was extremely limited until the end of the 1980s.

In 1993 a team of sociologists, psychologists, political scientists and human geographers from the University of Tartu made up an initiative group for creating a data bank on social sciences and began to work out the strategy of saving and usage of the research material collected by the Estonian social scientists during the previous decades.

In summer 1994 a project for creating a data bank was presented to the Open Estonia Foundation, or more concretely to the Higher Education Support Project (HESP). The application for support received a positive response; a grant aimed at “Creating Social Science Data Bank for Modernization of Education in Social Sciences and Training in Investigative Journalism” was awarded for years 1994 - 1996.

In summer 1995 the office of the data bank was opened in the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Tartu. The data bank was officially formed as an interdisciplinary centre of the Faculty of Social Sciences in early 1996, and it began to function as a national social science data bank - the Estonian Social Science Data Archives (ESSDA).

The nine-member ESSDA Council includes three persons from Tartu University, three representatives from academic centers outside Tartu University and the same number from non-academic institutions. ESSDA co-operates closely with the Academic Union of Estonian Sociologists as well as non-academic institutions that are conducting social research.

The work done in the initial period of founding ESSDA was discussed at an international conference “Data Archives and their Functions in Social Research in Eastern Europe” held at Tartu University in December 1996.

Representatives from 7 countries attended this conference.

In 1997 ESSDA became a full member of the European Council of Social Science Data Archives - CESSDA.

The data collection of ESSDA consists of more than 200 empirical social studies covering such research directions like opinion polls, youth and media studies, entrepreneurship, rural sociology and many more, carried out between 1971 and 2000.

ESSDA holdings are increasingly being used for academic purposes by undergraduate and graduate students as a basis of secondary analysis. It should be mentioned that up to now sociology undergraduate and graduate students have dominated among the archives customers, but there are also graduate students from the departments of journalism and political science, the Faculties of Philosophy and Medicine, and the Estonian Agricultural University situated in Tartu. Training courses based on the ESSDA’s holdings have been included in the curricula of various disciplines taught at the Faculty of Social Sciences.

In 1998 ESSDA was awarded a HESP grant to introduce the Estonian Social Science Data Archives systematically in the teaching of the social sciences at the bachelor, master and doctoral levels, and in the Open University by using the facilities of the Internet and creating an electronic journal.

The use of the holdings of ESSDA for practical purposes has begun to grow considerably. Here the most important direction is to meet the needs of the institutions of public policy. Permanent contacts have been established between ESSDA and the Economic and Social Information Department (ESI) of the Chancellery of Riigikogu /Parliament of Estonia/. First steps have been made in meeting information needs of local authorities. ESSDA will be acting as a mediator between the institutions of local policy-making and the social scientists’ community. In 2001 the preliminary achievement was reached to deposit state-financed surveys at ESSDA.

ESSDA’s international contacts of different scope have been established with the data archives in different coun-
tries. Representatives of ESSDA have visited data archives in the United States, Sweden, Germany, Hungary, Denmark, Spain, Norway, and Finland. In April 1997 a cooperation agreement was signed with the world’s largest research center of public opinion - the Roper Center at the University of Connecticut. The agreement foresees the exchange of data and training possibilities for Estonian colleagues at the Roper Center. Cooperation with the Finnish Social Science Data Archive (FSD) is speeding up. In connection with the preparations for the creating a common database about Estonian-Finnish joint social science research projects FSD equipped ESSDA with the new www server to promote ESSDA’s transition to the NESSTAR solutions in 2001.

ESSDA’s home page in the Internet helps to spread information about Estonian social research to the international community.

In 1998 ESSDA moved into new rooms provided by Tartu University. ESSDA’s activities have been supported by the Chancellery of Riigikogu /Parliament of Estonia/. By the help of the Open Estonia Foundation ESSDA began to compile the first Estonian social science electronic journal “Estonian Social Science Online”. The assistance from the German data organization GESIS enabled the translation of a number of study descriptions of significant studies into English. In December 1998, modernized ESSDA’s Internet home page was positively mentioned at the competition of civil aid and info pages organized by the OEF.

Due to the chronic lack of finances in 1999 and 2000 ESSDA could only continue the description, systemization and cataloguing of studies. In addition the second issue of the electronic journal “Estonian Social Science Online” was published. ESSDA’s Internet page has steadily been improved and complemented. Mutual meetings and development of co-operation projects with colleagues from the Finnish Social Science Data Archive (FSD) should be mentioned.

1. ESSDA, Room 217/218, 78 Tiigi Street, 50410 Tartu, Estonia. Phone: +372-7-375 931. Fax: +372-7-375 900. E-mail: socarch@psych.ut.ee. Internet: http://psych.ut.ee/esta/
The Social Research Informatics Center, TÁRKI founded the Social Science Databank in 1985, which was a Consortium of different academic and research institutes. The aim of the founders was to create a service-providing center which besides developing the Hungarian empirical sociological research, engaging in research consultancy, and conducting surveys functions as a Databank, that serves the establishment of the information basis of the Hungarian social researches and to improve its methodological coordination.

Since 1992 TÁRKI has its own Survey Department. In 1998 the TÁRKI Incorporation was founded to conduct also profit oriented opinion polls, while the TÁRKI Consortium continues the non-profit data archiving.

At present, there are 9 member institutions of the TÁRKI Social Research Informatics Center, which are the following:

- Eötvös Loránd University of Sciences,
- University of Szeged;
- University of Debrecen;
- Hungarian Central Statistical Office,
- Budapest University of Economic Studies,
- Institute of Political Sciences of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences;
- The Sociological Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences;
- National Institute of Vocational Training;
- High School of Nyíregyháza.

The Databank has been functioning already since 15 years and its main task is to archive and disseminate data and survey documentation, and also the acquisition of data from other research institutions. At present the Databank contains more than 450, mostly Hungarian related, empirical social data sets in SPSS format, suitable for secondary analysis. These data are mostly originated from nationwide representative sample surveys. The archived surveys are conducted by TÁRKI and by other Hungarian research institutes as well. In the Databank there are also some data bases suitable for international comparisons. The users of the Databank can choose from various kinds of topics, such as attitudes, family, social deviance, health care, life-styles, values, consumer patterns, occupations, mobility, ethnic and migrant groups, local governments, stratification, poverty, social policy, social relations, social strata, rural society, religion, elections etc.

**Data Access Categories**

- **A.** Free access and dissemination
- **B.** Free access for Hungarian researchers and research institutes, for others with the owner’s permission only.
- **C.** Free access for the Member institutions of TÁRKI, for others with the owner’s permission only.
- **D.** Access with the owner’s permission only (for max. 5 years)

The Databank also sells the data. The price of the dataset depends on whether it is simple or aggregate, on the date the survey was conducted and on the status of the purchaser. See **Table 1** for the current pricelist of the Databank.

The Databank also operates different thematic databank sections. The aim of creating these thematic sections is to collect and organize those data sets which belong to the same topic. One of the thematic sections is the Historical Archive, which was built jointly with the Hajnal István Kár (HIK), presently it includes 23 economic and social-historical databases. (http://www.tarki.hu/t_adat/index.html)
The Women’s Data Archive was established in 2000. It sums up social scientific research projects concerning women and gender issues and thus makes data and publications, a register of researchers and URLs easily accessible. (http://www.tarki.hu/adatbank-h/nok/index.html)

The TÁRKI Databank operates the New Democracies web site, which provides on-line access to the questions and answers from the multinational New Democracies Barometer database. (http://rs2.tarki.hu:90/ndb-html/)

The Databank also publishes and distributes the CD-ROM version of the Hungarian Household Panel surveys conducted between 1992 and 1997.

Since the date of its establishment, TÁRKI has been laying emphasis on forming close relationship with the major significant social science data archives of the world. At present it is the member of three international data organizations: IFDO (International Federation of Data Organizations), CESSDA (Council of European Social Science Data Archives), ICPSR (Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research), ECPR (European Consortium for Political Research). This membership, due to free exchange of data sets between the member institutions, gives the TÁRKI Databank an opportunity to make international databases available for Hungarian users.

The Databank also joined the Luxembourg Income Study project and the European Household Panel Network of CEPS/INSTEAD in Luxembourg, and therefore it gives free access to LIS databases for Hungarian researchers. These project leading institutions also offer scholarships for researchers interested in international income comparison.

| Table 1 Price list of the TÁRKI Databank June 2001 (in USD) |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Survey conducted 0-12 months before | 250 | 1000 |
| Survey conducted 13-48 months before | 166 | 666 |
| Survey conducted 49 months before | 84 | 333 |
| Discount category I Foreign research institutes Hungarian public corporations | 66% of the list price |
| Discount category II Hungarian non-member research institutions Foreign students | 33% of the list price |
| Discount category III Member institutions of TÁRKI Hungarian students International research institutions | Free |
Since 1988 the TÁRKI has been taking part in the International Social Survey Program, therefore all related international datasets are accessible through our Databank. Further international data sets are the East-European comparative surveys, which are conducted by a research foundation consisting of TÁRKI, a Czech and a Polish research institution. The Central European Opinion Research Group (CEORG) CEORG was founded in 1999 and situated in Brussels.

A significant part of the revenues of the TÁRKI Databank comes from the support of the TÁRKI Inc. and scientific projects. Since 2001 the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund has been one of the main supporter of the Databank. The membership fees of the TÁRKI member institutions and the data access fees altogether make up only 10% of the annual revenues. The planned total revenues for 2001 is about 58000EUR.

The Hungarian social researchers and students of high education are the main user of the TARKI Databank.

**Future plans and problems**

The TÁRKI Databank participates in international social science database projects such as the Consortium for Household Panel Studies for European Socio-economic Research (CHER) financed by the European Commission. This project lasts for 3 years between 2000 and 2002 and it aims at harmonizing several national panel studies with the European Community Household Panel.

The Databank is going to develop the present thematic sections: the Historical Data Archive and the Women’s Data Archive in 2001.

Although the TÁRKI Databank is a public archive it is not supported by the government. Our main problem is connected to the funding of the Databank.

Unfortunately TARKI’s homepage is just partly available in English, so many information cannot reachable for researcher from abroad.

1. Social Research Informatics Center, TÁRKI Databank, H-1112 Budapest, Budaörsi út 45. Phone: 36-1-309-7693, Fax: 36-1-309-7666, nagyildi@tarki.hu, http://www.tarki.hu
A little bit of history

The data archiving process, in Romania, can be best described as an on-going process. We have great expectations and we are doing our best in order to see this happening. But our task is not an easy one, dealing in a more or less close environment. If some Western European countries have 30 or 40 years of history in data archiving, the Romanian saga is just beginning.

Before 1990, the concept of a public data archive was unconceivable. Data were considered secret, with a limited access for only a few granted people. Comparing to that period, after the 1989 revolution there was an ‘explosion’ in social research, with valuable data being collected. Unfortunately, the old instincts are still in the system. Research institutes, private and public, state institutions (like the National Commission for Statistics), even non-governmental organizations still promote a close system policy, even if this means taking the risk of losing the data (in many cases, they are not aware of that risk at all).

A very good example that shows this kind of mentality is a story that happened to a fellow researcher. The National Commission for Statistics distributes a free booklet with information. The trouble is the booklet rapidly disappears because of the small number printed. When the researcher was told there were no more copies available, he asked ‘But why don’t you put them on the web?’ The answer came promptly: ‘No, no, this would mean to make them public!’.

In 1990, the Institute for Quality of Life Research (IQLR), Bucharest was founded. Taking this institute for example, there is an increasing number of studies being pursued and a lot of data collected. Naturally, problems of a comparative nature began to appear. Feeling the potential of a data archive, following western examples, Prof. Catalin Zamfir, Ph.D. – the director of the institute (now the dean of the Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, as well) quickly realized that a Romanian data archive was necessary. About three or four years ago, a team of researchers was formed, with the specific task of creating a data archive. They visited a couple of Western countries with tradition, coming back full of ideas and enthusiasm.

Unfortunately, partly because of the poor Romanian environment, a very sad but common event happened: many of them left the institute, for better paid jobs in the private sector or even leaving the country with the purpose of emigration. The remaining researchers lost their interest and the project got stuck, until recently. A new wave of young graduates from the faculty of Sociology and Social Work were recruited, and new hopes are being raised. Having the support of both IQLR and the Faculty, these premises are very encouraging. A Romanian Social Data Archive (RSDA) was set up, currently being under construction, and some visible results are expected in the next couple of months.

Institutional background

The RSDA will function as part of the IQLR, which is an academic research institute founded in 1990 under the aegis of the Romanian Academy for Sciences and the National Institute for Economic Research.

The IQLR has relations of scientific cooperation with a large number of domestic and foreign institutions, promoting a sustained opening towards mass media. By the quality of its research activity and by the results it obtained, the institute earned its recognition both at national and international levels such as the Presidency and Government of Romania, ministries, from other domestic and foreign research institutes and universities, as well as from several international organizations such as the Council of Europe, UNICEF, etc.

Starting with 1990, the institute publishes on an annual basis, the diagnosis of the quality of life in Romania and evaluates the social policies adopted in our country during the period of transition. It also investigates and offers alternative solutions to the main social and economic problems of present day Romania, by conducting empirical research on local national samples. The institute publishes books, studies, reviews, brochures, and research reports and provides consultancy in its field of expertise.

The research activity of the institute is structured on five main directions as follows:

• Quality of life
• Social policies  
• Disadvantaged groups  
• Human and communitarian development  
• Interethnic relations

The papers elaborated by the IQLR are oriented towards both fundamental and applied research in social sciences and quality of life, adhering to the values of the spirit of European integration and transition to a free-market oriented economy in Romania.

Apart from this valuable support provided by the institute, the RSDA receives financial and logistic support from the Faculty of Sociology and Social Work (the Romanian acronym is SAS), University of Bucharest. The SAS brought a great help in setting-up the Romanian Social Data Archive. Apart from the financial support from the institute that covers the salaries, we received on behalf of the Faculty the rights for using a network of 10 computers in one of the Faculty’s establishments. To maintain this network, the Faculty bought a server with a minimal configuration.

So what do we do about it?
Setting up a data archive is a challenging thing to do. As already mentioned, the Romanian data archive is under construction. Practically, we only had a vague idea about what data archiving is, and a collection of data sets. In this stage, information is the key word, because we have to deal with some problems — some of them probably basic for long established data archives, but still problems for us.

Building a data archive from scratch means that we need answers for some elementary questions, like: — What exactly is a data archive? — How do we store data? — How do we build the metadata base? — How do we put it on the web? — What kind of procedures should we use? — What kind of software?

Of course, we didn’t have those answers; so in order to get a good idea about how to do data archiving we maintain a close contact with the other European data archives. Their experience is very helpful, because they have already been here while ago. The good thing is that we do not have to ‘reinvent the wheel’ again, but to take advantage of the information they can provide and ‘jump’ to the construction phase.

The first major step is to be recognized as an institution on the international level; and in order to do this, applications to CESSDA and IFDO will be pursued. We estimate this happening somewhere in the beginning of 2002, when a workshop for new data archives is planned, which will take place in Berlin. Later on we plan to apply for membership at ICPSR as well. These international connections are very important indeed, as we will be able to have access to the enormous social science heritage in the world. We could not only provide access to the Romanian data sets, but to the other international ones that are similar.

Although we are working on our archive’s development, the process is rather slow. There are several reasons; one of them is that our team is very small, with only three members, plus a part-time system administrator. All the tasks are distributed among these persons. We have to do everything on our own, and the lack of training is slowing the process even more. We will have to spend some time and money with staff training. Defining procedures using international standards cannot be made until the staff fully understands what those standards are and how do they work.

Another reason is the lack of money. Although the institute does pay us, there is no money for some professional help. For example, the team’s members are mainly sociologists, having no experience in web-design. We are currently working on the web page design, but I felt that we are loosing valuable time doing things that we are not trained for, instead of doing really important things. We will eventually do it, but with the cost of loosing time.

One other reason (and I will continue no more after) is that the whole Romanian society is inert. It is very hard to move fast forward in a static society (or even worse, moving backward). We have to adapt our speed to the state institutions’ speed, hoping that private research institutes will move faster.

Our plans
After the system will be set and available data sets archived, we plan an extensive number of visits to the other research institutions, trying to bring more data sets in. Things are easier now for long established data archives in the Western Europe, because the depositors are coming with their data to be archived. Here, we will have a tough job persuading data sets’ owners that is worth depositing; until they will trust us, we will have to run and ‘chase’ data sets. The we will be able to offer an up to date catalogue with the Romanian data sets archived, increasing high quality social research in the academic community.

Another future plan is to get some additional funds, from national and international sources. For a short term, international funds could be a solution, but in a longer perspective, funds from national institutions are necessary. We plan to attract funds from the Romanian Academy for Sciences, from the Education and Research Ministry, and from any other source possible.

Finally, international affiliations will bring the recognition we need in order to say: ‘Yes we do have a Romanian Social Data Archive’. We would like to bring our thanks to the UK Data Archive and Zentralarchiv f¸r Empirische Sozialforschung, for their valuable training and support they provided. Without their help, nothing we have would have been possible.

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Development and Prospects of the Data Bank of Sociological Research

Description of the Data Bank of Sociological Researches

The Data Bank was established in the Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR in 1985. In the first place, the Bank’s principal purpose was the storage of empirical data from sociological studies in a way suitable for repeated use. In 1987 the data bank was given the All-Union status under the sponsorship of the Soviet Sociological Association. The Bank was set up by a number of organizations interested in the joint use of accumulated empirical data. These organizations represented practically all regions of the former Soviet Union. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the territorial scope of the Bank was reduced, and new organizational and financial problems appeared. However, the material accumulated by DBSR reflect more than 30 years of the society’s life and therefore it is of tremendous scientific and practical value. Since 1992, because of the political developments and the resulting breakdown of communication links between the former Soviet republics, the Data Bank had to confine itself to Russia only. It still contains essential information on the Russian society as well as on the other parts of the Soviet Union, from Central Asia to the Caucasus as well as on the Baltic states, Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus. Today taking into account the fundamental changes which have swept our society since 1991, we consider that these data are unique and have historical importance. The secondary analysis of them will allow researchers to trace and locate the origins of many social and economic processes in modern Russia.

In contrast to tendencies of isolation shown by some sociological research centers, our goal is to preserve and improve old links and establish new ones with former member organizations of the Data Bank in other countries. Our position is that scientific and informational space that was formed in the course of many years must not be torn apart by the requests of individual politicians.

The creation of DBSR was preceded by years of methodological studies and applied scientific research into questions of the accumulation, storage and use of sociological information. These problems are reflected in the works of major Russian scientists such as V.G. Andreyenkov, V.I. Molchanov, and others. These studies were conducted in co-operation with leading foreign experts in the field such as R. Bisko, G. Heiman, D. Nasatir, G. Marx, E. Mochmann, G. KJabb etc. Therefore a concept has been developed that has the idea of consolidation and integration of sociological data at its core. This is the principle on which the Bank is based.

Consolidation refers to the accumulation of a large quantity of empirical data, which provides the basis for conducting secondary and comparative analyses of data sets produced in various sociological research centers. It opens wide opportunities for social modeling, numerical experiments, verification and evaluation of methodology, formulation and solution of methodological and methodical problems.

Data integration requires the integration of separate data into a system of interdependent indicators, describing the society as a whole and in its parts. In spite of long drawn-out discussions on the structure of the indicator system for separate sociological phenomena, many problems of methods and methodology remain. The Bank possesses expertise in establishing the systems of indicators.

The problem of storing empirical sociological data has arisen in our country in the late ‘60s at a time when the first large-scale sociological studies were carried out. Only in the early ‘80s however, with the wide spreading of computers, the question of automated information system to serve the needs of sociologists moved into the practical realm. The problem was solved when the fundamental principles of data banks as integrated information systems had been worked out.

“The Data Bank of Sociological Researches” refers to multi-functional information and analytic systems aiming at one goal: the accumulation of various sociological information in a systematic form, including empirical data, for increased efficiency in its use. Among the Bank’s many functions we emphasize the following ones:

- improvement of methods, means of accumulation, and analysis of sociological information;
- methodological research with the aim of standardizing the methods and separate blocks of
indicators for subsequent comparative analysis of the data obtained at different times, from different territories and in different social and cultural environments;
• information and reference resource for sociologists;
• co-ordination of sociological research by informing users of recent research and new empirical data;
• exchange of primary empirical data access;
• providing conditions for secondary and comparative data analyses;
• calculations, based on commercial agreements, including sociological modeling, experimenting etc.

During the development of the Data Bank various factors such as technological progress, continuous increase of the information volume to be stored and growing information needs of sociologists were taken into account. The Bank’s goals and functions determine how information is stored. It consists of the following three databases:

• summaries of studies (topic, time, methods of gathering data, sampling procedures etc.);
• summaries of documents (forms, questionnaires) used in gathering data
• data from empirical studies, stored in computerized form (at present these data do not form one database, but the system in use still allows an unlimited access to this information).

DBSR’s users are research groups conducting theoretical or practical work in sociology. They provide the Bank with materials from their own research and obtain in reverse information they require. In addition, the Bank informs its users about new data received by the Bank and publishes a frequently updated reference: “Bank of Sociological Data” (Bank sotsiologicheskikh dannykh).

The files of empirical data are divided into three classes based on their accessibility for users. Authors wish to reserve their rights to the results of their studies for a period of time, after which their data are placed into a more accessible class.

More than 650 studies conducted by the Institute of Sociology and other research centers from 1966 until 2000 are stored in the Bank. These include over 20 union-wide studies. This research reflects all aspects of society’s life, including the political and structural changes that have taken place over the last few years.

The DBSR encompasses investigations of social tension, national conflicts, stratification of society, emergence of new classes, strata and groups, problems of the transition to a new political and economic structure, problems of family and children, the status of women, problems of youth and education, structural changes in society, ecology, and demography etc. Most of these data sets are available to those investigating Soviet and post-Soviet periods of the society.

Prospects
With advances in the information science and computers as well as the communication technology getting ground, geographical distances are no longer barriers to the communication between researchers from different countries and continents. Modern technology has given a great impetus to the modernization of the Data Bank. The improvements which are being planned are based on conceptions of universal services with interactive access.

These improvements will stimulate the researchers’ interest in developing a national network of sociological information and attract investments. Modern communication technology between various research centers will reduce the costs of creating and maintaining archives. Thanks to it researchers will have access to the Bank’s computing and information resources.

The main efforts in the course of the practical implementation of the above conception will be directed towards the following goals:

• universal and accessible services for users: the creation of an information search system, the establishment of a special database for registered studies, the implementation of interactive information access facilities;
• mobility of data, which presupposes the observation of the storage standards, permitting input, retrieval and information exchange as well as the protection of intellectual property;
• unified telecommunications network connecting various centers where sociological data are stored and analyzed and giving access to the powerful technical and informational resources of DBSR;
• international co-operation and co-ordination of the effort aiming at including the Bank into the world-wide network of archives and banks of sociological data.

Achieving these goals will allow the modernization of the existing system which serves sociologists’ needs, eliminate incompatible database formats, create a network infrastructure for the collection and distribution of knowledge on the society.

Let us discuss some of these goals in greater detail.

Accessible service
Reaching this goal will ensure a convenient and efficient interactive information access and exchange. It will
revolutionize the information search and permit easy access to information resources. It is intended to achieve these goals by creating an interactive information retrieval system.

Yet, well-organized resources and effective means of access can yield the expected benefit only when every researcher is sure that he will find the requested information. For this reason the existing three-level access system of DBSR will be reviewed and changed in favor of greater accessibility (while observing the authors’ rights). Business-like openness of DBSR is the principal idea of universal services.

The information environment is quite variable. Data from empirical studies come in different amounts and in a variety of types. Code-books with distribution tables are also stored there. The machine-readable catalogue connects all types of information contained in the Bank.

The consolidation of stored information and its integration into a database gives full and coherent information on any of the registered projects. Such an environment supports many types of information objects and establishes connections and relations between objects easily discernible. This approach is based on the strategy towards an open architecture of the DBSR, which refers to a collection of a variety of independent information sets united in integrated databases and to the ready access to this information and automated search. An information retrieval system is intended for serving the integrated information environment.

Data mobility
Creating the integrated system requires the unification of the information stored. This can be achieved by developing standards for new data and adjusting the existing data to make them conform. The specifications for the standards for new data is based on established world standards, and this standardization is an impetus for an extensive information exchange. The mobility of data will allow the distribution of initial and secondary analysis in the telecommunications network. Users are thus guaranteed a conflict-free interface. The new standards will cover the elements of the catalogue and the elements of databases making up the integrated medium. First of all, the standards are applied to research data stored in the DBSR as SPSS portable files exported from the mainframe to a PC in a wrapped-up format. The new standard must take into consideration various software options, allow reliable storage and presentation of information, and assure compatibility with the world standards for free export and import of information. In this paper we do not try to describe the particulars of standard levels, but only remark on the range of problems in standardizing data and on the general direction of realizing such a project.

When it comes to ensuring the mobility of data, the question of authors’ rights and the related issue of regulating the access to data is another important consideration. Registration and identification of users, as opposed to the three-level access system, seems to be the most constructive approach.

The mobility of data will promote international cooperation which will in turn, significantly improve the DBSR’s position in Russia.

International co-operation
At the core of all foreign and Russian information centers is the idea of international cooperation. It is especially relevant for Russia, where the support for DBSR’s efforts in transforming data to conform to international standards and following the strategy of the Bank’s development will allow the preservation of unique data on the society in the socialist period and about its subsequent transformation.

International cooperation will be of great benefit for the process of collecting new empirical data on the formation process of the society and will play a decisive role in the integration of local national centers.

References
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In 2000 the Russian Public Opinion Research Center (VCIOM) initiated a project on compiling a national sociological data archive supported by the Ford Foundation. The aim of the project is to work out the content, the organizational and financial principles of the formation and further functioning of the national sociological data archive on the basis of a restricted number of VCIOM surveys as well as of other research institutes carrying out representative sociological surveys.

Beginning from the mid and late eighties, the need for a national archive has been discussed by sociologists more than once. However, it was only by the late 90s that real conditions had been created for the project to become viable. First, at present there are many research companies conducting national and international representative surveys which are of scientific value for a wide circle of researchers. This situation posed new questions related to the long-term data retention, their standardization and availability for researchers. Of course, each research company solves itself these problems dealing with their own databases and their possible users. However, as VCIOM’s experience shows, possibilities of the solution of these problems within each separate company are limited. Second, besides the existing companies, there are more and more researchers and research teams who conduct surveys supported by grants from national and foreign funds. The data obtained in these surveys are used by the researchers themselves and are unavailable for other interested users, which is contrary to the very nature of non-commercial support of research. Third, due to the development of sociological education in Russia for at least 10 years, there is an increasing circle of potential consumers of sociological data, who need access to such data for secondary analysis in the teaching process, for preparing graduation papers, dissertations, articles and monographs. The facts mentioned above make the sociologist’s society move towards compiling a national archive.

However, we realize that this task cannot be solved overnight. It will take at least 2-3 years to create the archive, as well as the effort and goodwill of many interested organizations, first of all those which are prepared to deposit their data in the archive for storage and dissemination and also those which are prepared to give financial, material and organizational support.

1. The expected results of the pilot project are as follows:
2. Data files formed on the basis of the data provided by VCIOM and other organizations which agreed to take part in establishing the archive;
3. The information-retrieval system which will enable the users to find the necessary information;
4. Organizational, technological and financial principles of the archive functioning which will make the archive a social institution (design-project);

The duration of the pilot project is one year – from January to December 2001. The project manager is Dr. L. Khakhulina (VCIOM), coordinator and executive manager – Dr. L. Kosova (VCIOM), consultant – Dr. A. Kryshtanovsky (Higher Scholl of Economics).

It is planned to hold an international seminar to present the results of the pilot project of establishing the national archive and to discuss its main technological and organizational principles. The principal characteristic of the pilot stage of the formation of the sociological archive is the fact that VCIOM, the coordinator of the work, plans to do it together with other interested companies which carry out sociological surveys.

In the course of negotiations with the leaders of the most well-known and highly qualified institutes such as A.Oslon (Public Opinion Foundation), E.Bashkirova (ROMIR), L.Drobizheva, N.Rostegayeva, (Institute of Sociology) M.Gorshkov, N.Tichonova (Russian Independent Institute of Social and Nationalities Problems) showed interest in the participation in the setting up of the national archive. Working together with these organizations it is planned, first, to form data archives which will constitute the “core” of the future archive, second, to agree on the principles of cooperation of the archive and the depositors - owners of the information, on the one hand, and of the archive and its users, on the other hand; these principles will be the basis for the functioning of the national archive. Third, and it is probably the most important item, to form the Board of...
Trustees (Experts) of the program “Sociological Archive”, which will define the main directions of the archive’s work from the scientific and organizational points of view.

Upon completion of the pilot project the work on the sociological archive formation will be continued. It means that the general design-project of the archive, the sociological data files and the information-retrieval system upon completion of the pilot project will be handed over, with all the legal formalities observed, to the program “Sociological Archive” functioning within the framework of the independent institute “Social Policy”.

Priorities in the selection of information at the pilot stage.
In theory, the sociological data archive can and should contain any data obtained in the course of sociological surveys if they meet certain requirements of the archive. Besides, the archive may contain also texts based on these data (articles, monographs, etc.). However, since the time of conducting the pilot survey is limited, we restricted ourselves at this stage to prepare the data files which are the most “popular” from the users’ point of view (assessed by the number of request sent to the VCIOM), namely:

1. Russian data of the last 2-3 years obtained on a national sample
2. Data from comparative international surveys in which Russia took part
3. Electoral surveys

Requirements to the data submitted
These are the same requirements as they are set in other archives of Europe and the USA. Following these rules we get the possibility to become part of the “archive” community. Naturally, it will require additional work in some of the companies to fulfill the requirements. We have worked out the outline of a document based on the general requirements and our experience – “Guidelines for the Depositor” which describes the content and volume of work to be done for transferring the data to the archive. If a company agrees to participate in this work, it receives this document to prepare the data for the archive.

Relations with the depositors
An important issue in the relations between the archive and the depositor is the copyright for the information. We proceed from the general provisions which are as follows:

The archive is a social institution established on the basis of a voluntary agreement of information owners for the purpose of storing and disseminating this information.

It means that the proprietor of the information is its “producer”, while the archive only receives the copyright for the information administrator to perform certain functions, namely:

- storing the information received in the established order, having full responsibility for its physical integrity
- dissemination of the information among the users for secondary analysis according to the provisions discussed with and approved by the producer (acting as the depositor) and the general rules of all the archives.

From the legal point of view the above stated means that the archive and the depositor conclude a contract (agreement) on transferring the copyright for the information, which stipulates the rights and duties of each party.

This contract can stipulate all the conditions related to the transfer of the data to the archive. The body of the contract states that the organization, a potential depositor, agrees to prepare its data and the relevant documentation in accordance with the “Guidelines for the Depositor”. In its turn, VCIOM as the coordinator of the project is obligated to ensure the physical integrity of the prepared data and documentation until they are transferred to the archive (within the framework of the institute “Social Policy”). If an organization prefers not to transfer the data to the project coordinator (VCIOM, in this case) it will submit only the required documentation for the research (study description, questionnaires, methodological reports, etc.), which will be entered in the data-retrieval system of the future archive.

Thus at the initial stage we proceed from the possibility that the archive could be based on a distributed storage of data files. In other words, a certain part, preferably the larger part, is stored in the archive, while the rest of the data are kept in the organizations – depositors, which agree to make the data available for the user in the required quality, format and time.

Another problem in the relations with the potential depositors is the stimulation to deposit their data in the archive. At present, we suggest that the following stimuli should be used. The founders of the archive, on the one hand, have the possibility to present their surveys and their companies to the interested public and to have an open access to the data of other companies in the archive and, on the other hand, they can form the quality standard for surveys which can be accepted by the archive for storage and dissemination.

The practice of relations between the archive and its users within the framework of this pilot project is not elaborated. The VCIOM as the project coordinator does not take upon itself the task of disseminating the information (data) of other companies. First of all because the legal procedure of transferring the copyright for information has not been worked out. We just generally assume that, as is
the practice of all other archives, information is made available for the academic community free of charge, especially under the current circumstances of very modest financial resources of both academic institutes, universities and researchers, professors and students.

As it is the practice of the European archives, the principle of free data provision does not extend to commercial organizations (consulting companies, advertising and PR agencies, marketing organizations, etc.), which may apply to the archive for certain data. The model of relations with such organizations is planned to be different. This question, however, has not been considered from the practical point of view so far.

At present, a data file is being formed, the information-retrieval system is being designed, and the interaction with potential depositors is being worked out.

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Making use of Data on Social Science in Slovakia - First steps to a national Data Archive

Quantitative research is a standard instrument for testing hypotheses, and in the social science in Slovakia one can say, a most frequently used strategy for collecting empirical evidence. The recent development in the area of information technology and the advance in computer assisted statistical analysis, also contribute much to a considerable increase in the quantitative analysis of the electronic data.

At present, in Slovakia there are many potential machine-readable data sources suitable for the secondary analysis. Data are produced mostly by academic and educational institutions, institutions of the state administration, for-profit agencies of public opinion and market research, different non-for-profit foundations and associations.

At the same time, it is possible to observe a growing demand for older research data, for example in the academic environment, forasmuch as a comparative and longitudinal research design increasingly predominates. The Institute for Sociology of the SAS is also a member of several research networks with the focus on a large-scale comparative research (such as the ISSP - International Social Survey Program, the EVS – European Value Study and so on).

Participation in such networks becoming increasingly important, it enables to evaluate the position of Slovakia within Europe (with respect to a different subject matters) in a broader and more complex perspective. Additionally, the co-operation with the partner institutions leaves space also for an exchange of the experiences and knowledge, which, generally, helps to increase professional standards of the scientific investigations and integrates the Slovak scientists within the international scientific community.

An interesting example of the transfer of knowledge is a diffusion of the national data archives within Europe, during the recent forty years. The main ideas of this practical endeavor give many inspirations and useful stimuli to us. This was the starting point to think about the shift from current informal practice of storing the research data in Slovakia to more complex and standardized archiving methods and procedures.

Comparing the benefits of the two approaches to archiving of the research data (the informal and the standardized), there are no doubts about the merits of the latter. The major benefits of data infrastructure are particularly on the following dimensions:

**The archive as an instrument for an easy and independent access to research data**

Nowadays, in Slovakia an informal way of the social data storage is prevailing which makes an access to the relevant datasets too sensible in respect of time and staff changes in a research team. To acquire the dataset assumes to make own search for the history of the relevant research and search for the datasets in the memory of the researchers, than contact the research team which produced the relevant data and negotiate with the researchers about an access to these data. However, this time consuming activity is still not the guarantee to get the data in adequate format and quality, and appropriate for the use in a secondary analysis.

General characteristics of a systematic archiving of available empirical research data (such as: access to a catalogue of the primary data containing the sufficient documentation of the datasets, access to the data itself, datasets are concentrated in one place and in compatible formats, quality check of the data, data security – no inadequate changes or loss of data, transparent rules for data access, exchange and distribution of the datasets and so on) sound really promising for the mastering of the shortcomings mentioned before.

**The archive as an instrument for the control and improvement of the social research**

One of the basic ambitions of the scientist is to support his or her hypotheses with evidence, and to do it in a clear and transparent manner. However, there are several examples of the scientific misconduct in history, that brought forward the problem of the validity and reliability in the social sciences. An independent access to the primary data will enlarge the options for the verification of the results and the testing research instruments or methods, employed in the secondary analysis of the research data. Therefore, the issue of archiving is very topical in Slovakia.
The archive as an information and communication channel

The summary of available empirical research data will provide the users with the overview of the subject areas of the research in the country and the researchers engaged in the research projects. This indirect information enables the users to establish new contacts within the scientific community and enhance the direct co-operation in the field of comparative research.

Newsletters and bulletins, which provide the news about the current research projects, the supply of available data or the offers for a co-operation, these all we see as efficient channels for the information about what has been done and what is new in the area of the empirical research.

All in all, these are the main characteristics, which draw the attention to the problem of the usage of the research data in Slovakia. The recent practical endeavor in this area results in the new project proposal of the Institute for Sociology of the SAS.

The research project ‘The Slovak Archive of Social Data’ will focus on creating a primary data catalogue, and furthermore on a systematic documentation of the existing social science datasets. The catalogue of social data will enable the domestic as well as foreign researchers to orientate in the field of an existing fund of the Slovak primary data, and moreover will simplify the access to the required datasets.

As we are only at the very beginning, we cannot foresee all the problems connected with the establishing of a data archive. In the preparatory phase, our endeavor is focused on increasing the public understanding of the data archive mission. The task seems simple, we need to inform the scientific community (via journals, presentations etc.) and bring the words “archive” and “archiving of social data” in domestic social research vocabulary. Researchers who work with quantitative data and are engaged in the comparative projects, usually understand, and appreciate the mission of social data archive. However, there is a large group of researchers who are not so familiar with secondary analysis, and we need to introduce the mission to them in more details.

The fact is, that the archiving of the social data has no tradition in Slovakia and its benefits are not obvious for everybody. These days, the positive examples of already established and functioning archives in Europe are greatly helping to illustrate the actual profits. Later, when the work on the proposed project will start, the newly established archive itself should serve as a telling example.

We believe that the integration of the new Slovak data archive within the existing network of the social science data archives will open wider opportunities for the co-operation and exchange of the information within the scientific community.

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Here we present the activities of the Social Science Data Archive (ADP) in Slovenia. There are still few such archives, which form the basic infrastructure of national research work, to be found in Central and Eastern Europe. In the process of setting up, a data archive may draw on the experience and support of similar institutions abroad, but the receptivity of the home environment is essential, as discussed in the introductory section. The kinds of past and present research that set a special stamp to the ADP’s collection are described in the following in order to spur interest in using the material it is available.

Introduction
The Social Science Data Archive (ADP) was established on 8th July 1997 by the Senate of the Social Sciences Faculty (FDV) of the University of Ljubljana. As of autumn 1999 the ADP is located in the Faculty’s new building, on the second floor, above the above the Joze Gorican Central Social Sciences Library. The work of the ADP is supervised by the ADP Council. An advisor in the Ministry for Science and Technology (MZT), which is responsible for the information infrastructure, is authorised to follow the ADP’s activities. As a specialised scientific information centre in the field of the social sciences, the Archive is financed from the budget under a contract with the Ministry. In the case of special development, research or educational projects the Archive seeks support offered in public notices. The Archive also derives part of its income from services rendered and remuneration for the use of its database (see Arhiv družboslovnih podatkov 2000).

Besides general restrictions related to ethical rules for the use of data, the Archive may impose special restrictions on access to particular units of material for different types of users. Materials are usually available free of charge and without restriction for educational purposes, while each unit of material is expressly labelled to indicate whether or not the author’s permission must be obtained for use for public or profit-making purposes. Users are obliged to cite the author and the Archive when publishing any of the material.

The ADP has been a member of the Council of European Social Science Data Archives (CESSDA -http://www.nsd.uib.no/cessda/) since 1999. CESSDA provides support in the establishment of new archives, particularly in the form of advice and job-training. The ADP has adopted the method of work common in archives with a long tradition such as the German ZA - Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung and the UK DA - United Kingdom Data Archive with modifications to suit conditions in a small country. Co-operation with CESSDA also means that Slovenian data stored in the ADP is at the disposal of researchers and other users around the world. Similarly, the ADP mediates access to material in other countries for its local users.

The main obstacle to greater international utilisation of Slovenian research material is language. However, English-speakers are advised to consult the ADP Study Descriptions, which are also written in English and contains short summaries, descriptors and other information about the research, to choose materials. The next step is to contact the ADP staff who will advise them or arrange for a translation of the required material. When the study is a Slovenian part of some comparative international research in most cases an equivalent to it can be found in the English originals without much difficulty.

The ADP’s basic function is to store and protect data from damage so that it will be available for secondary analyses in research or for teaching purposes. For the foreign as well as the local user the first question, of course, is how to get data on the data, namely on the study materials the ADP houses that are pertinent to his or her current research purposes. This can be done by searching a new catalogue on the Internet, NESSTAR - Networked Social Science Tools and Resources (http://www.nesstar.org/). In view of its small size, the ADP has opted for the greatest possible standardisation of its procedures to assure a comparable form of documentation and description of the data stored. It was amongst the first to adopt the metadata standard developed in the framework of the Data Documentation Initiative (http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/DDI/codebook.html). Together with the Document Type Definition (DTD) this has allowed the machine-readable social science codebook to be filled in XML - eXtensible Markup Language (Stebe, Omerzu 1999). Standardisation of procedures enables the efforts of larger archives to
construct tools and user-tailored services like NESSTAR to be pooled.

NESSTAR which was being developed with EU sponsorship and through the co-operation of several partner social sciences data archives, in effect amounts to a virtual data library. The ADP has been able to join this project thanks to its admission to CESSDA and because it has adopted the new DDI DTD data description standard completely. The catalogue allows to search in several archives simultaneously at the level of research description, methodology, and variables of the database, on-line exploratory statistical analyses of the selected database and the ordering data by electronic means for deeper analysis are possible.

The Data Holdings
The importance of an archive is judged by the value of the material it houses. The ADP rests in particular on the rich and long tradition of the Slovenian school of empirical sociology which took shape through the work of the Institute for Sociology and Philosophy (ISF) established in 1959. The ISF launched several classical-type studies, which blazed the way both thematically, and personally for particular lines of research which continue to this day, although under different institutional conditions. The main research topics of the ISF were as follows: local communities and spatial sociology, quality of life and social stratification, customs, lifestyles, and especially the influence and use of the mass media, attitudes and values, family sociology, the study of fertility, youth, industrial sociology and so on. Thus, surveys conducted in the sixties and seventies represent a unique source of data on various social phenomena that may serve as starting-points for comparisons over time (Stebe 1999). Researchers like Stane Saksida, Katja Boli, Zdravko Mlinar and Niko Tos were trained in this period and went on very actively into further empirical research which steadily built up long thematic series.

Amongst the most outstanding research is the Mass communication media survey (MKS; Vreg et al. 1962) which was one of the first strictly-designed empirical surveys on mass media and more broadly, on lifestyle, personal use of time, and quality of life in Slovenia. Thematic links to this research may be traced along the line of social stratification to the survey in the seventies on Social stratification, custom, lifestyle and values regarding peace; Democracy and Local Governance - International Studies of Values in Politics a frequently cited survey which also dealt with methodological problems in comparative research of most different social and political frameworks of local democracy such as in the former Yugoslavia (and Slovenia) and India on one side and the USA on the other. (Mlinar et al. 1966 - 1991); in the same way, Political Participation (Barbie Boh et al. 1971) was a major project at the time when comparative research was flourishing. The participation of Slovenian researchers in them shows that they were able to communicate with researchers abroad and capable of achieving the quality standards required in conducting research and presenting data.

The importance of continuity for the safeguarding of data is demonstrated by two examples of research that were designed longitudinally and therefore ensured the preservation of the raw data for their own purposes. The first is the Slovenian Public Opinion Survey (SJM) (Tos 1968 - 1999), which is the best-known and most extensive empirical research in Slovenia. In type it is comparable to the general social surveys abroad and to a great extent it has served in the omnibus design as an infrastructure for fieldwork on individual thematic chapters of deepened conceptually based research. In addition to this, the survey contains topics related to current affairs at different cross-sections and so it reflects politologically relevant attitudes and opinions at particular times. Some of these are more interesting for comparisons over time while others are related to the institutional context of the previous system that collapsed after 1989. Another major survey that has...
been preserved in the ADP is the “Level of Living Survey in Slovenia (LOL)”. The most recent replication of it was in 1994 (Svetlik 1994). Conceptually it is modeled on the Scandinavian surveys on subjective assessments of quality or satisfaction with living in various respects such as residential conditions, employment, and leisure time, in comparison with indicators of objective living conditions. Both series are now fully accessible through the ADP. The Archive’s own contribution is a cumulative Slovenian Public Opinion 1990-1998 Database (Tos 1999) which has been created by combining series of more than 100 identical variables from the SJM surveys from the period between 1990 and 1998. Thematically it is encompassed in the Politbarometer Section. Other domestic serial surveys which continuously generate new data are the research on the Internet (RIS) (Vehovar 1999 for the latest of the series) and the Youth (Ule 1985-1999).

The criteria of relevance of a study for secondary analysis include: the data refers to the general population, the sample is random and sufficiently large, the topics are unique and refer to important issues both substantively and in terms of applicability, and most notably, comparability across time and space. In line with the policy of giving priority to research that according to these criteria is the most interesting for re-use, the focus is placed on acquiring new data from extensions of serial surveys and from international comparative surveys that include Slovenia. Thus the ADP promptly obtains data from the Central and Eastern Eurobarometer Survey (CEEB) (Cunningham 1997, latest in the series), the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP 1999), the International Crime Victimization Survey (ICVS) (Dijk, Mayhew 1997). It also applies for other well-known surveys within international projects like the Fertility Behaviour of Slovenians (Kozuh-Novak et al.1998), the Aufbruch - New Departures+97: International Research on Religion and Attitudes toward the Church (Tos et al. 1997), the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES 1996) - and the European (World) Values Survey (Tos 1999).

To increase the diversity of the subject fields the ADP is negotiating with the Criminology Institute of the Law Faculty, the Pedagogic Institute, the Andragogic Centre, the Centre for Local Communities, and the Defense Studies Centre, which are also major producers of empirical social surveys in Slovenia, to deposit their data in the Archive. The ADP is also linking up with the SICRIS (Slovenian Current Research Information System which makes available information on current research projects in Slovenia; See: http://sicris.izum.si/). The authors of research projects financed from public research funds are obliged to make empirical data from the research available to other interested users. The ADP will collect and disseminate it. The very best gauge for the ADP, that data is worth collecting, is of course the expressed interest in it shown by users looking for data from particular surveys.

In acquiring new material it is important to widen the circle of donors outside the academic domain especially to market research institutions and government agencies which have many interesting databases suitable for re-use. An agreement has been reached with the Republican Office of Information on the use of data from surveys on the EU and the monthly Politbarometer series of surveys (PB). Often social scientists have difficulties obtaining access to government statistical data and one of ADP’s priorities is to define with the Office of Statistics the accessibility of its data in a form suitable for use in the social sciences. Since 1990 independent commercial market research institutes have been established in Slovenia, which produce different kinds of surveys for particular clients which are also interesting for re-use.

References:


ADP - IDNo: SJMPB_98.


1. Janez Stebe, University of Ljubljana, ADP Socia Science Data Archive, Kardeljeva pl. 5, Ljubljana SI-1000, Slovenia. janez.stebe@guest.arnes.si
The first Internet connection in Latvia was created in 1991 during the so-called "putsch" when the connection via satellite from the University of Latvia to Sweden was the only mean of communication with the outside world. Since then the Internet has been developing in Latvia. Still there is a shortage of public financing and IT specialists that hinders further progress in this area. In 1999 “The National Program of Information” and in 2000 a social and economic program “e-Latvia” were approved. The aim of those and several other specific programs is to promote the establishment of the national information structure.

The number of Internet users in Latvia at the end of 2000 was approximately 150 thousand, i.e. 10% of working age population. Internet access is available in 14% of schools and only 5% of public and research libraries. There is also a great lack of computers and still more money is spent on buying hardware than on purchasing software. At the same time the number of Internet users was 50% more that at the beginning of 1999 and the number is increasing rapidly (Economic Development of Latvia. Report. Ministry of Economy, Republic of Latvia, Riga, December, 2000, p.92 - 93). Still we are far from reaching the standards of the leading countries where 60% of population are IT users.

All the above mentioned problems affect the development of the electronic archiving and exchanging of data in Latvia. The establishment of an electronic on-line archive reflects a general trend to move away from paper-based information exchange among the researchers who specialize in social sciences and humanities. Compared to traditional archives, the development of electronic data bases and other electronic services do not develop dynamically in Latvia. There are several reasons for it:

1. The results of many social studies in Latvia are preserved only partly, but due to the insufficient documentation the use of them is very limited.
2. Even sufficiently documented data are accessible only to specialists, as the use of them requires expensive software.
3. The opportunities of scientists to inform the society on the results of their research and the opportunities of the society to obtain the necessary social information are limited.

The Latvian Social Science Data Archive (LSZDA) is currently being developed with the financial support of the Latvian Science Council (the program ‘Social Development and Social Security’, grant No. 93.330) and the SOROS Foundation - Latvia (Transformation of Education Program). Compared to other data archives, the technical aspects of the LSZDA are, for financial reasons, rather limited.

The LSZDA is supposed to serve the following purposes:

1. to gather and maintain social science data that characterize Latvia and the Latvian social scientists;
2. to facilitate the development of the Latvian social sciences and to open access to research results, facilitating the dissemination of data and documentation;
3. to make data available for secondary analysis, to improve the quality of research and the credibility of results;
4. In the area of educational aspects, to serve as an information base for training in the social sciences as well as to provide the analysis opportunities of the sociological data to a broader range of users.

These activities will facilitate the more efficient disposition of resources that are granted for research purposes. The archive also tries to provide Latvian scientists and other interested parties with access to data archives in other countries, as well as provide foreign researchers with opportunities to learn more about Latvia and its social sciences. At the present moment a number of articles (mostly in English) is available. The publications of the Latvian social scientists who worked outside Latvia during the Soviet occupation are represented very widely in the bibliographic file which has more than 1,000 entries covering the time period from the beginning of the 20th century to the 1980ies. There are no limitations for access and all information is available free of charge.
Until 1999 the data collections were accessible only to authorised people who used SPSS software. One of the urgent tasks of the archive was to create a data analyses possibility for a broader range of the people concerned and especially for the students of sociology and other social sciences. In 1999 the data documentation system of the Swedish Social Science Data Service (Gothenburg) was mastered, which allows the analysis of the data collections to those users who have no access to the SPSS software. These data collections can be processed on-line or by maintaining them on a CD-ROM for the users without any background knowledge. In 1999 the data from three modules of the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) were documented (National Identity, Role of Government, Religion), and an agreement has been achieved on the possibility to use this system for the documentation of further studies.

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### IASSIST 2002
#### Accelerating Access: Enhancing Collaboration and Dissemination

**Call for Papers**
The International Association for Social Science Information Service and Technology (IASSIST) invites submissions for papers, panel discussions, poster/demonstration sessions and workshops for its 28th annual conference to be hosted by The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research and the Thomas J. Dodd Center at the University of Connecticut. Mark your calendar now and plan to join us June 11-15, 2002.

IASSIST conferences bring together data professionals, data producers and data analysts from around the world who are engaged in the creation, acquisition, processing, maintenance, distribution, preservation, and use of numeric social science data for research and instruction.

**Conference Themes**
Accelerating Access is a theme that characterizes the ever increasing demand for quantitative and qualitative data through the Internet. Our key goal as data providers is to ensure user communities can gain access to and effectively use quantitative and qualitative resources. The conference this year will focus on the capabilities both of Internet technology and of the wider data community in providing support to and partnering with the research and education infrastructure. The influence of evolving web environments for data producers, data archives/data libraries, and end-users will be a key area of exploration. The conference will include papers on collaboration between data professionals and researchers in metadata dissemination and in integration projects, particularly those that have evolved from emerging standards for describing data and documentation. We will also examine the legal and political barriers to web-based data access, and the role of virtual data access in new and emerging economies.

**Focus of papers and presentations for review:**
- The impact of “born digital” data
- Collaborative metadata dissemination and integration projects
- Data lifespan and integrity in web environments
- DDI standards and new developments
- Documenting qualitative resources to enhance access
- Future of data warehousing and data mining
- GIS and data access
- Impact of Internet technology on social science research methods
- New research/archive networks
- Political implications of data access in virtual communities
- Preparation of complex data for multiple user audiences
- Preserving and accessing research content
- Privacy and confidentiality
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- Universal access to public data
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- Library subscriptions, licensing and data acquisition policies
- Legal barriers to Internet-based data access

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