Charter of the Working Group on Social Sciences

Version 1.0 of 20. 12. 2023 by group leader in collaboration with the members of the group.

1. Introduction

The Working Group on Social Sciences focuses on datasets that are relevant to the social sciences, regardless of their disciplinary origin. In particular, the focus is on data produced by basic and applied research departments within sociology, economics, political science, social geography, demography, psychology and other social science disciplines. Interdisciplinary collaboration is also of great importance, for example in the fields of health, environmental studies, transport, security, historical sciences and many other areas. The importance of interdisciplinary approaches involving the study of social aspects is now also being demonstrated in dealing with the crises associated with the covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. Research data come from representative sample surveys, are collected by many other methods of scientific research, and are also produced as a product of the advancing digitisation of society. The availability of administrative data for research purposes is also growing in importance.

Data sharing is an essential condition for the development and international competitiveness of social science research, which relies heavily on temporal and international comparisons and links data from different sources. Therefore, although data sharing in the social sciences has a relatively long history and is at a high level, data are made available in a distributed way that makes it difficult for researchers and students to use them, and many relevant data remain inaccessible. Linking relevant resources into a single ecosystem based on a rigorous implementation of FAIR data principles to ensure the usability of data for secondary analysis and creating channels for incrementally connecting other data sources will benefit all partners in science and applications.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the group are as follows:

- To set up procedures and processes for the implementation of relevant data sources into the national environment for storage and processing of scientific data, taking into account the specifics of social science data.
- Identify important interdisciplinary linkages and supporting information resources relevant to the analysis of social science survey data.
- Explore and propose options for storing and making available sociological data generated both within and outside the social science research field.
- To define the possibilities and principles for teaching data handling to users.

3. Outputs and their applications

The group will create a platform for formulating solutions to the following issues:

- Establishing and defining metadata, standards with respect to international practice, linking to EOSC-CZ; harmonization of processes for EOSC and EOSC-CZ; implementation of National Repository Platform (NRP) standards (including user identity verification).
- Completion/upgrading of existing thematic, subject repositories based on outputs from the working group.
- Landscape analysis, creation of a network of academic repositories, addressing legal issues related to NRP, data management models - discipline specific related to NRP, data acquisition.
- Addressing infrastructure for sensitive data in relation to the NRP.
- Defining FAIRification of social science data, addressing issues of data documentation production, data quality, FAIR verification and quality; data versioning and editing.
- Linking data from external, non-academic sources, software options, documentation.
- Subject specific training - data sources and data management.
- Identify intersections and opportunities for collaboration with disciplines outside of social sciences (e.g., medical research, security research).

4. Membership

Anticipated members are social scientists, professionals involved in the processing and storage of scientific or administrative data, and members of social science research infrastructures. At the same time, the working group is also open to other disciplines outside the social sciences that are interested in collaborating and exploring possible intersections.

The Charter can be extended to include other parts, upon agreement with the EOSC-CZ Secretariat.