

New cross-national social survey launched

The European Social Survey (ESS) is a new biennial cross-national social survey that will monitor and interpret Europe's speed and direction of change on attitudes, beliefs and behaviour. Its coverage is wide ranging, aiming to include at least 19 countries and more than 20 in future rounds.

The ESS is jointly funded by the European Commission, the European Science Foundation and academic funding bodies from each participating country. The project is directed by the Central Co-ordinating Team at the Centre for Comparative Social Surveys, City University, in London. There are five other partners from Norway, the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium.

The first released data from round one includes fifteen countries and can be accessed from the ESS data web site hosted by the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD). New data including five new countries will be released late in November. Documentation files are freely accessible, however users will have to

register in order to access the data files. The data is to be used online preferably through the Nesstar Light tool, although requests for data on CD-ROM may be processed by NSD. The data is presented in one large file in SPSS format resulting from the core questionnaire (525 variables and 29,516 overall cases), plus country specific variables in separate files, according to country, resulting from the supplementary questionnaire. There are questions on immigration, citizenship, and socio-political issues. The full technical report includes an interesting chapter on the translation methodology and translation work carried out on the questionnaires.

ESS data are disseminated from a central site at the NSD and alternatively can be accessed from the ESDS catalogue.

ESS data web site: ess.nsd.uib.no

Technical report: naticent02.uuhost.uk.uu.net/archive/tech_report.htm

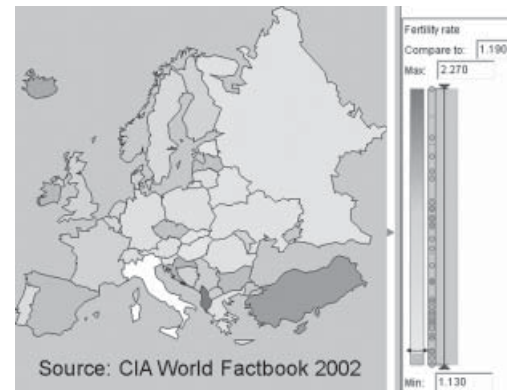
New visualisation interface

November 10 saw the release of ESDS International's CommonGIS pilot web-based data exploration and visualisation interface.

CommonGIS is an interactive web-based geographical information system which provides standard GIS functionality and can be used as a tool for visualisation and exploratory analysis based on geographically-referenced statistical data. It is an extension of the thematic mapping software Descartes and was developed through a European Commission-funded project (ESPRIT Project Number 28983 'Information Access and Interfaces') undertaken by Team Spatial Decision Support (SPADE), the aim of which was to create an online GIS tool accessible and usable for expert and common users alike.

At ESDS International users can access a cut down teaching version of CommonGIS which has a selection of pre-loaded European country level socio-economic data taken from the CIA World Factbook 2002.

Recent decades have seen a dramatic drop in fertility in Europe. Rates have declined to historical lows and are now below replacement level in virtually every European country. United Nations projections indicate that over the next 50 years, the populations of virtually all the countries of Europe will face population decline and population ageing. For example, under current



European fertility rates displayed via CommonGIS

projections, the population of Italy is forecast to decline by 28 per cent by 2050, with 35 per cent of the population being aged 65 or over.

To access the software users must have a Java-enabled web browser, be registered with ESDS and have an Athens user name and password.

UNIDO databases now available

ESDS is pleased to announce the release of the 2003 UNIDO Industrial Statistics and Demand Supply databases to UK academics and researchers. They are now available from ESDS

International via the online delivery software Beyond 20/20 Web Data Server.

The UNIDO Industrial Statistics, presented in three annual databases covering up to 175 countries worldwide from 1963 onwards, contain data on employment, wages, output, value added, gross fixed capital formation, number of female employees, number of establishments and production level broken down by industrial sector.

The two UNIDO Demand Supply databases cover up to 80 countries from 1981 onwards and contain data on domestic output; apparent consumption; imports from the world, developing countries and industrialised countries; and exports to the world, developing countries and industrialised countries.

Following the above new releases, ESDS International is hopeful that work will soon be completed on IMF Direction of Trade Statistics and International Financial Statistics databases.

www.esds.ac.uk/international

2001 Census Key Statistics available through Casweb

The Census Dissemination Unit (CDU) at MIMAS, based within the University of Manchester, is pleased to announce the initial release of the aggregate outputs from the 2001 Census through its Casweb interface. 2001 Census Key Statistics for England and Wales are now available. The release of these data has been subject to several delays, and has only been made possible following extensive work on the preparation and quality assurance of data received from the UK census agencies.

4 Define Regions of Interest - Government Office Regions (GOR)

This stage of the process enables you to define the geographical region(s) for which you require data from Casweb. To progress to the next stage in which you will select the level of geography at which you require data from within these

1 Select Government Office Regions from the list below

- A North East
- B North West
- D Yorkshire and The Humber
- E East Midlands
- F West Midlands
- G East of England
- H London
- J South East
- K South West

Select Countries

Select Unitary Authorities

Start Again

Select output level

2 To display and select lower level zones

Geography Selection Diagram

```

graph TD
    England --> GOR
    GOR --> UA
    GOR --> County
    UA --> STWard
    UA --> District
    County --> CASWard
    County --> DA
    
```

3 When you've made your final selection proceed to:

It is intended to follow this release with other components of the aggregate outputs from the 2001 Census for the entire UK as quickly as the processing and quality assurance of the data, and final agreement of licensing arrangements with the data providers, will allow. Digital boundary data from the 2001 Census will be incorporated into Casweb and made available to users following the release of numerical outputs.

Casweb is available to all members and affiliates of UK higher and further education institutions by using Athens authentication. It aims to meet their particu specific requirements by providing:

- an easy-to-use interface that enables users with varying levels of skill and experience to understand and make selections from the available census data by guiding them

through a series of simple steps;

- integrated access to census data for the whole UK, and from a series of recent UK censuses;
- numerical census data combined with corresponding digital boundary data in a range of standard GIS formats;
- the ability to quickly download large subsets of census data, together with accompanying metadata, in a range of formats suitable for upload into most analytical software for further analysis.

Casweb: census.ac.uk/casweb

SSDR Site Representatives and ESDS Awareness Day

ESDS and the Census Registration Service (CRS) are pleased to announce a new stakeholder group of local site representatives, known as Social Science Data Resources (SSDR) Site Representatives. ESDS has been keen to set up a network of local champions and this new forum is an important addition to the portfolio of advisory bodies and user groups for ESDS and UK census services.

SSDR Site Representatives are primarily social science support staff, such as subject or data librarians, who are typically at the front line dealing with queries from students, staff and researchers, about access to and use of UK data resources. It is anticipated that site representatives will play an important role in helping both formulate and implement new developments, for example by:

- testing and providing feedback on new versions of the ESDS and CRS systems;
- disseminating literature about the services appropriately within their institutions;
- helping host social science or census workshops;
- acting as a port-of-call for social science data-related queries (to supplement the existing helpdesks).

In return site representatives will be the first to hear about new developments from the ESDS and the CRS and will receive:

- copies of UK Databytes;
- privileged access to free social science or census workshops;
- pertinent user statistical information if required;
- on request, ESDS and CRS promotional materials for display in their local institution.

A JISCmail list has been established to facilitate effective communication with and between the site representatives. The inaugural meeting for representatives was held at the ESDS Awareness Day on 5 December 2003 at the Royal Statistical Society in London.

To include organisations not represented contact: booking@esds.ac.uk

For further information including a list of current representatives see: www.esds.ac.uk/support/sr.asp

"... set up a network of local champions..."

"... understand and make selections from the available census data..."

Latest collections available for researchers

New datasets and new editions are continuously added to the UKDA catalogue. The online catalogue may be searched via: a free-text or fielded search, including searching by title, study number, time period, data creator etc.; browsing by subject; a thesaurus-aided search; or by browsing a list of new data releases.

The following brief descriptions highlight a selection of the newly-released datasets:

SN 4754 Home Office Citizenship Survey, 2001

The biennial Home Office Citizenship Survey provides essential data for the Home Office's community policy area. The 2001 survey has a total sample of over 15,000 people aged 16 and over in England and Wales. This comprises a 10,000-plus core sample and minority ethnic boost of 5,000-plus people aged 16 and over. The minority ethnic boost is achieved through a combination of focused enumeration and over sampling in high minority ethnic density areas. The survey questionnaire comprises four modules: family policy, active communities and social capital, race equality and prejudice, rights and responsibilities.

SN 4634 Transnational Seafarers, 1999-2001

The study entails a statistical survey of the global labour market as revealed in crewing patterns and ethnographic research aboard ship to examine the structures, social dynamics and institutional contexts of transnational seafarers' communities.

The main topics covered include condition of labour, family, globalisation, labour market, seafarers, life history, race, seafaring labour force, and work history.

SN 4688 US-UK Working Families : Work, Life and the City, 1996-2001

This study focuses on three overlapping spheres of restructuring in family life: those operating in labour markets, urban housing markets, and gender relations. The methodology compares the everyday practices of working families living in UK and US cities. The main topics covered include household structure, employment, childcare, housing, relationships, social networks, and transport.

SN 4728 E-Living : Life in a Digital Europe : Wave 1, 2001

The survey provides data on the uptake and use of information and communication technologies in six countries (Norway, UK, Germany, Italy, Bulgaria and Israel) in 2001, as the first wave of a two-wave household panel study. The main topics covered include mobile telephony, personal computer and internet uptake and use, indicators of social capital, social networks, quality of life, working conditions and employment and educational experiences, as well as standard socio-demographics.

SN 4739 Qualitative Investigation of the Lives and Labour Market Experiences of People with Multiple Problems and Needs, 2001-2002

This study investigated the labour market experiences of people with multiple and complex problems and needs, questioning how well conventional welfare provision met the requirements of such groups. Problems covered and issues

discussed include the criminal justice system, education, employment, family relationships, homelessness, mental health, multiple problems and needs, physical health, statutory agencies, substance abuse, training, unemployment, and the government's welfare-to-work policies.

For a full list of recently-released datasets see: www.data-archive.ac.uk/home/newData.asp

Descriptions of all datasets can be found from the Search Catalogue web page: www.data-archive.ac.uk/search/searchStart.asp

ESDS Qualidata Online Conference

A one-day conference organised by ESDS Qualidata, *Online Access to Qualitative Data: Opportunities and Challenges*, is to be held on 15 January in central London. The conference focuses on issues surrounding the provision of online access to qualitative data and technical strategies for publishing and exchanging qualitative data. ESDS Qualidata has identified a growing need for a standard framework for providing online access to archived qualitative resources.



In working to fill this gap, a basic prototype methodology using XML standards and technologies, known as Edwardians Online, was developed. The next step is to develop a general and formal application for encoding, searching and retrieving the content of a broad class of social science data resources. The intention of this event is to help feed into this strategy and provide an appropriate model for data archives across the world to utilise.

In the morning, examples of qualitative data resources suited to online applications will be presented. Speakers in the afternoon will address metadata and technical solutions for facilitating the sharing, presentation and exchange of digital qualitative data via the web. The day will be of interest to: resource providers who wish to enable access to their qualitative data; researchers wanting to find technical solutions to publishing or sharing their own data online using non-proprietary tools; those interested in resource discovery and metadata standards for qualitative data; and software developers of packages that are used to manipulate or analyse qualitative data.

For further details of the conference: www.esds.ac.uk/news/qualionline.asp

Edwardians Online:
www.qualidata.essex.ac.uk/edwardians/about/introduction.asp

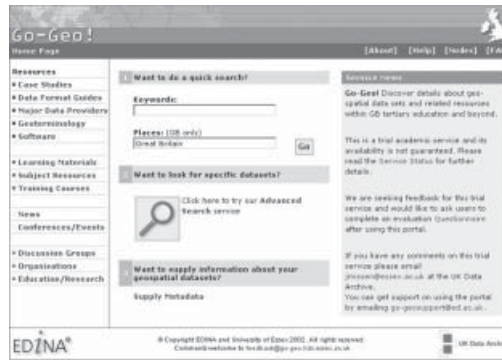
"... identified a growing need for a standard framework for providing online access..."

"... uptake and use of information and communication technologies in six countries..."

Go-Geo! A geo-spatial resource discovery tool now available as a trial service

EDINA and the UK Data Archive are pleased to announce the launch of the JISC funded Go-Geo! trial service for academic users that aims to provide access to standardised metadata describing geo-spatial data. Geo-spatial data is a term used to cover any data with a geographic reference - for example, an Ordnance Survey National Grid reference, a postal address, a place name or the name of an administrative area.

Visit the web site and discover details about geo-spatial datasets and related information and resources within and beyond the UK tertiary



education sector. Users are invited to provide feedback on the trial service and complete the online evaluation questionnaire.

www.geogeo.ac.uk

AHDS History News

Online Historical Population Reports

AHDS History has been awarded funding from JISC to digitise all the published census reports for the British Isles from 1801 to 1931, all the Registrar-Generals' reports for Scotland, England and Wales from 1837 to 1921, as well as 5,000 pages of historical manuscript material from the National Archives.

The Online Historical Population Reports is one of eight major digitisation projects being managed by JISC. The whole programme represents a total investment of £10m to be applied to delivering high quality content online, including sound, moving pictures, census data and still images for long-term use by the further and higher education communities in the UK.

The three-year project will make available the image scans for some 200,000 pages of historical population material, searchable texts, as well as many hundreds of tables integral to these reports. A demonstrator is already under development, and should be available for trials in the summer of 2004. Interested researchers may register to participate in an online consultation to assess user requirements.

Contact: info@history.ahds.ac.uk

New staff at AHDS History

Since the last issue of UK Databytes three new staff have joined AHDS History: Zoe Bliss (Acquisitions and Information), Ed Evans (Collections) and Malyadri Gadamsetty (Technical Services). Details of their responsibilities can be found at the new AHDS web site: www.ahds.ac.uk/history

Forthcoming Events and Announcements

- 10 December 2003:** Social Science Online - The Internet for Psychology, Kings College, London
- 16 December 2003:** Social Science Online - The Internet for Sociology, University of Birmingham
- 15 January 2004:** Online Access to Qualitative Data: Opportunities and Challenges, Royal Statistical Society, London
- 23 January 2004:** First meeting of Health Surveys User Group, Department of Health, Skipton House, London.
- 23 January 2004:** ESRC Seminar Series 2003-5, Methods in Dialogue - Looking back: interpretation, retrospection and secondary analysis, University of East London
- 1-19 March 2004:** Complex Modelling: 33rd Spring Seminar at the Zentralarchiv, University of Cologne, Germany
- 22-24 March 2004:** British Sociological Association Annual Conference 2004 - Sociological challenges: conflict, anxiety and discontent, University of York
- 23 March 2004:** JISC Conference 2004, International Convention Centre, Birmingham
- 25 March 2004:** Social Science Online - The Internet for Economics, Business, Management and accountancy, University of Bristol
- 25-28 May 2004:** IASSIST Annual Conference, University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA
- 24-26 June 2004:** EPUNet 2004, Berlin
- 16-20 August 2004:** RC33 Sixth International Conference on Social Science Methodology, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Further details of these and other events may be found on the ESDS web site.

Season's Greetings

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