



# Data Services in Social Sciences

## Case Study of SERCSIDA

**Amar Numanović**

Human Rights Centre of University of Sarajevo

# The role of archives in scientific communication

- Communication of knowledge - the archives as a link between researchers
- Diachronic and synchronic communication
- Archives as an assumption of scientific progress
- Digital Archive as scientific communication infrastructure

# Primary data in social science

- Transparency of the research activities and the results of activities
- Secondary data analysis
- The possibility of evaluation of scientific research, the conclusions and methodology
- The possibility of performing new conclusions from the existing primary data (reinterpretation)
- Comparison of the data and conclusions from different studies
- Avoiding troubles when repeating research
- Primary data as an important additional component of new research projects
- Planning of future research

# Problems (BiH)

- Restricted access to primary data
- Primary data remains in most cases in the possession of researchers or institutions
- Inability to gain insight into the activities of other researchers, research results, scientific trends, etc.
- Financial problems related to the research activities and providing research data
  
- The vastness / disorientation
  
- Unsatisfactory level of cooperation between scientists / researchers

# SERSCIDA

## About the project

- SERSCIDA is designed as a strategic project for supporting the cooperation and exchange of knowledge between the EU countries associated within the Council of European Social Sciences Data Archives (CESSDA) and the Western Balkan Countries (WBC) in the field of social science data archiving.
- The project addresses the issues of potentials of usage of information-communication technologies for the benefits of scientific research and exchange of knowledge.
- The project aims to produce tangible results and improve the capacities for exchange of knowledge and data collected through research in social sciences between the European countries and WBC involved.

# SERSCIDA

The main objectives

The main objectives of SERSCIDA are

- **to support the establishment of social science data archives** in order to increase the level of sharing and preserving data collected through research in WB countries
- **to identify potentials and infrastructures for establishment of social science data archives** in WB countries involved
- **to enhance the exchange of knowledge and sharing of data** collected through research in social sciences in the WB countries and EU – CESSDA countries
- **to increase the level of understanding and support for open access policies** through involvement of policy and decision makers in WB countries

## Workpackage (2) **Mapping the existing potentials**

The objectives of this workpackage are to:

- Develop methodology for analysis of existing potentials for establishment of social science digital data archives in the WB region
- Analyse existing potentials and infrastructure for data archiving in the WB countries involved
- Provide recommendations for making use of the existing potentials, if any
- Description of work and role of partners

## Workpackage (3) **Policy dialogue and conference on establishment of social science digital data archives in the region**

### The objectives:

- Support the establishment of basic network of relevant stakeholders (data users, data producers, research financing institutions, CESSDA members)
- Support exchange of knowledge and transfer of experiences between members of CESSDA and potential actors from the Western Balkan countries in establishing data archives
- Support reaching agreement on setting up social science digital data archives in WB countries involved
- Ensure the support and understanding for open access of policy and decision makers in WB countries



## Workpackage (4) **Building capacities for establishment of social science digital data archives**

The objectives:

- Support the elaboration of a detailed action plan (with all aspects included) for establishment of social science digital data archives in the region
- Provide initial training for identified potential institutions on how to set up social science digital data archives

## Workpackage (5) **Establishment of prototype social science digital data archives**

### The objectives:

- Provide main preconditions for setting-up social science digital data archives
- Establish prototype digital data archive ready for testing
- Provide basis for any future activities on establishment of social science digital data archives in the region

## Workpackage (6) **Dissemination**

- **Dissemination** supports the dissemination of information between EU countries and WB countries regarding access to scientific information, preservation, and dissemination policies and practices. It encompasses the establishment of a website that will be continuously updated by an editorial system, production and publishing of information, plus organization of a dissemination conference addressing the future steps in regard to the establishment of social science data archives in WB countries and joining CESSDA, thus enabling the widening of the European network for access to and preservation and dissemination of scientific data in social sciences.

# Why SERSCIDA is important?

- Primary data collected through research in social sciences in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and Croatia, remain mainly in possession of researchers or research institutions that have conducted specific research projects
- Research conducted in the post-conflict period in these countries, especially in social science, are valuable for the European scientific community for they address the issues of transitions in societies, historical legacies, post-communist struggles for societal transformations etc.

• • •

- Data collected through such research, although of high value for social scientists (both in these countries and internationally) for any further exploration, remain unavailable.
- There are no existing or sustainable social science data archives in these countries that would deal with issues of preservation and archiving of those primary data. Research institutions in WB countries are currently faced with the problem of possible loss of valuable research data forever due to the lack of infrastructure and capacities for archiving such data in an adequate manner in line with existing European standards.
- Today, in Bosnia and Herzegovina for example, there is no institution in charge of archiving data collected through the empirical research in social sciences or providing access to those data to other researchers/research institutions within a similar field of interest.

# What do we get?

- Open access to data
- Opening of scientific possibilities
- Creating of communication between researchers in BiH, WBC, but also with researchers from EU and wider
- Transparency of research and possibility of critical thinking
- Comparative approach
- Visibility of researchers within scientific and research community
- Visibility of academic community in wider, European, community
- Preservation of very significant data which are important, not only for BiH, but for historical heritage in general

# Thanks for your attention!

Human Rights Centre: [www.hrc.unsa.ba](http://www.hrc.unsa.ba)

SERSCIDA Project: [www.serscida.eu](http://www.serscida.eu)

Hashtag (Twitter, Google+): #serscida