

Data Access and the UK National Data Strategy – national and international dimensions

Peter Elias

Workshop on Data Access to Micro-Data
Nürnberg, 20th August 2007

Plan of the presentation

- the UK National Data Strategy – what is it and how was it developed?
- progress towards implementation of the National Data Strategy
- the internationalisation of data resources
- next steps – plans for the future

The UK National Data Strategy

The *UK National Strategy for Data Resources for the Social Sciences* is a plan to develop and maintain a robust data infrastructure, ensuring that relevant and timely data are available to inform and address future research priorities in the social sciences.

Why did we need a National Data Strategy?

- No clear mechanisms to link future research to data resources.
- Funding of the increasing portfolio of resources is beyond the means of single agencies.
- Duplication of efforts in some areas.
- Problems of data access, availability.

The UK National Data Strategy - how was it developed?

- Identifying the key research challenges.
- Fact-finding activities.
- Establishing the UK Data Forum.
- Short term/medium term actions to promote and develop the strategy.
- Consultation process/revisiting priorities.

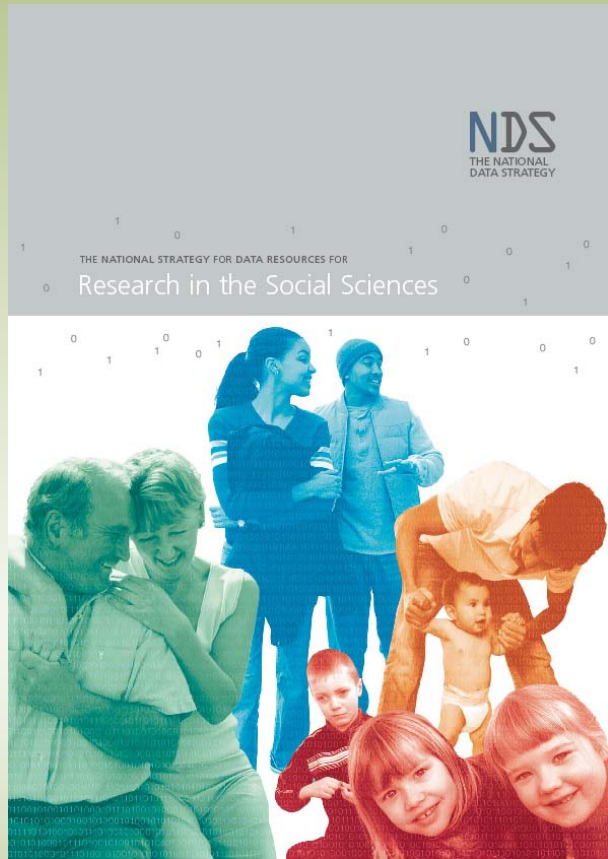
Identifying key research challenges

- Ageing population
- Migration
- Globalisation and the emerging economies
- Childhood development and education
- Carbon economy and environmental change

Main elements of the strategy

- Variety of data types to be supported
- Emphasis on collaboration, data sharing and co-funding
- **Need to improve data access**
- Need to bridge current disciplinary boundaries
- ‘Internationalisation’ of the research agenda

Further information



Work commenced in
October 2004

Next three year plan now
being developed

Double click opposite in
'Normal' view to download,
or contact
Peter.Elias@warwick.ac.uk

What progress are we making in implementing the National Data Strategy?

Longitudinal data resources

- commissioning the world's largest longitudinal household study (see www.esrc.ac.uk/ukhls).
- examining the scientific case for a new child cohort study to start around 2011/12.

What progress are we making in implementing the National Data Strategy?

Census and population survey data

Plans to provide improvements in access to Census 2011 data and the new Integrated Household Survey

Working with the new Statistics Board (successor to Office for National Statistics) to define 'approved researcher' status.

Progress in implementing the National Data Strategy

Administrative data

Undertaken a detailed review of the research potential of administrative data held by selected agencies, covering pensions, social security, health, businesses and vital statistics. Report published detailing the scale of these resources, their potential for research and access issues. Proposals for an *Administrative Data Service* about to be sought.

An Administrative Data Service: key elements

- Assisting (feasibility, desirability)
- Negotiating (access, conditions)
- Guiding (training, disclosure checking)
- Developing (links between admin. sources)
- Documenting (data, metadata)
- Quality assessing (fitness for purpose)

Progress in implementing the National Data Strategy

Data access

Establishing a more flexible data access regime via '*Special License*'.

Developing remote access to secure microdata. Bids about to be sought to provide a *Secure Data Service*.

A Secure Data Service: key elements

- A secure environment for potentially disclosive data.
- User authentication.
- Remote access to data and analytical software.
- Checking of research outputs prior to release.
- Training in access procedures and recognition of non-permissible research outputs.

Progress in implementing the National Data Strategy

Organisation-based data

- Plans for a review of availability and research potential of commercial transactions data.
- Plans for the ‘Management Practices Survey’
- Plans for a further Workplace Employee Relations Survey

Progress in implementing the National Data Strategy

Linked biomedical/socio-economic data

Working with the medical research and funding communities to establish 'gateway procedures' to key linked resources (1946 cohort, 1991 birth cohort, 2002 biomedical sweep of 1958 birth cohort), exploring the possibility of collecting 'biomarkers' in UKHLS (the new longitudinal study starting in 2008) and in any new cohort study.

Progress in implementing the National Data Strategy

International data resources

- Working with Eurostat and DG Research to improve access to EU harmonised statistics.
- Significant database purchases from IMF, OECD, World bank, etc. Further funding for ISSP and ESS.
- Microdata scoping studies (China, Brazil, India, South Africa) – now leading to a major research programme.
- Working to establish an International Data Forum.

Plans for the next three years

- establishing and monitoring the Administrative and Secure Data Services
- securing the future of UK's major longitudinal studies – promoting research methods networks attached to the studies
- developing facilities for cross-cohort analysis of the British Cohort Studies – assessing the case for a new cohort study
- scoping work for a new Spatial Data Service
- exploring access/use of organisation-based data resources
- the 'emerging economies' initiative
- FP7, ESFRI, the ERA Green Paper and the IDF

The development of research infrastructure for the social sciences in the 'European Research Area'

- the role of ESFRI
- the ESS, SHARE and CESSDA
- the failure of EROHS
- the need for a more coherent and strategic approach to the development of research infrastructure

What kinds of access do social sciences researchers need?

Access to ongoing survey data resources, development of new resources

Access to census and survey microdata, metadata and time series data

Access to administrative data resources

Access to holdings of sensitive microdata in 'safe-settings'

What data access facilities do we have (or are developing)?

ESS

SHARE

GGP

CESSDA

IPUMS

LIS/LES

What do we lack?

CESSDA
IPUMS

ESS,
SHARE, GGP
multinational
establishment
based survey,
multinational
household
panel survey

Network for
access to
national
administrative
data resources

LIS/LES
Network for
access to
national
microdata in
'safe-settings'

What do we need to do to create/develop these resources?

Set up design networks for: multinational establishment based survey; multinational household panel survey

National funding for CESSDA and IPUMS

Set up network to promote/share information on access to national administrative data

Set up network for access to sensitive microdata in 'safe-settings'

What is the strategic importance of these developments?

- to facilitate research at the boundary between the medical, biological and social sciences (genetics, mental health, lifestyle, etc.)
- to stimulate cross-disciplinary research on child development, education and social change, environmental challenges
- to encourage major research projects on the nature and impacts of migration
- to stimulate comparative cross-national research
- to encourage international research on global problems