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Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives

Annual Report 2017

Preface

In 2017 CESSDA transferred from CESSDA AS – a non-profit Norwegian company – to CESSDA ERIC – a European Research Infrastructure Consortium. This transition finalised the process to become an ERIC, to set the governance, and to staff the Main Office in Bergen. For the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, this transition was the moment to close down CESSDA AS and carry over responsibilities to the Research Council of Norway. Without the support of the ministry over the previous years, CESSDA would not have succeeded in becoming a European infrastructure.

The project activities carried out by the Service Providers continued, and the three years of investing in several innovative projects started yielding returns. A major milestone was the beta version of the CESSDA Data Catalogue which combines the metadata information on studies (data) that are available at the national Service Providers. The delivery of the Data Catalogue – and completion of several backbone tools – demonstrates that CESSDA is now entering a phase in which this technology backbone is in place, and we can look forward to developing and implementing tools for our users.

Another salient part of our mission is training. Various activities were carried out: e.g. Data Management, Data Discovery, train-the-trainers courses, and activities performed by the CESSDA Training hub at GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, Germany, all coordinated by the Training Working Group. CESSDA continued its Strengthening and Widening activities, even after the completion of the 27-month long European Horizon 2020 project. Successful widening meetings were held in Lisbon and Dublin. Besides outreach to new members, we also continued to work on certification and building trust.

As we stated last year: CESSDA is now ready for the next phase of its development. We hope to receive the same high commitment from member countries, Service Providers and CESSDA Main Office staff as in previous years.

Sincerely,

Ron Dekker, Director

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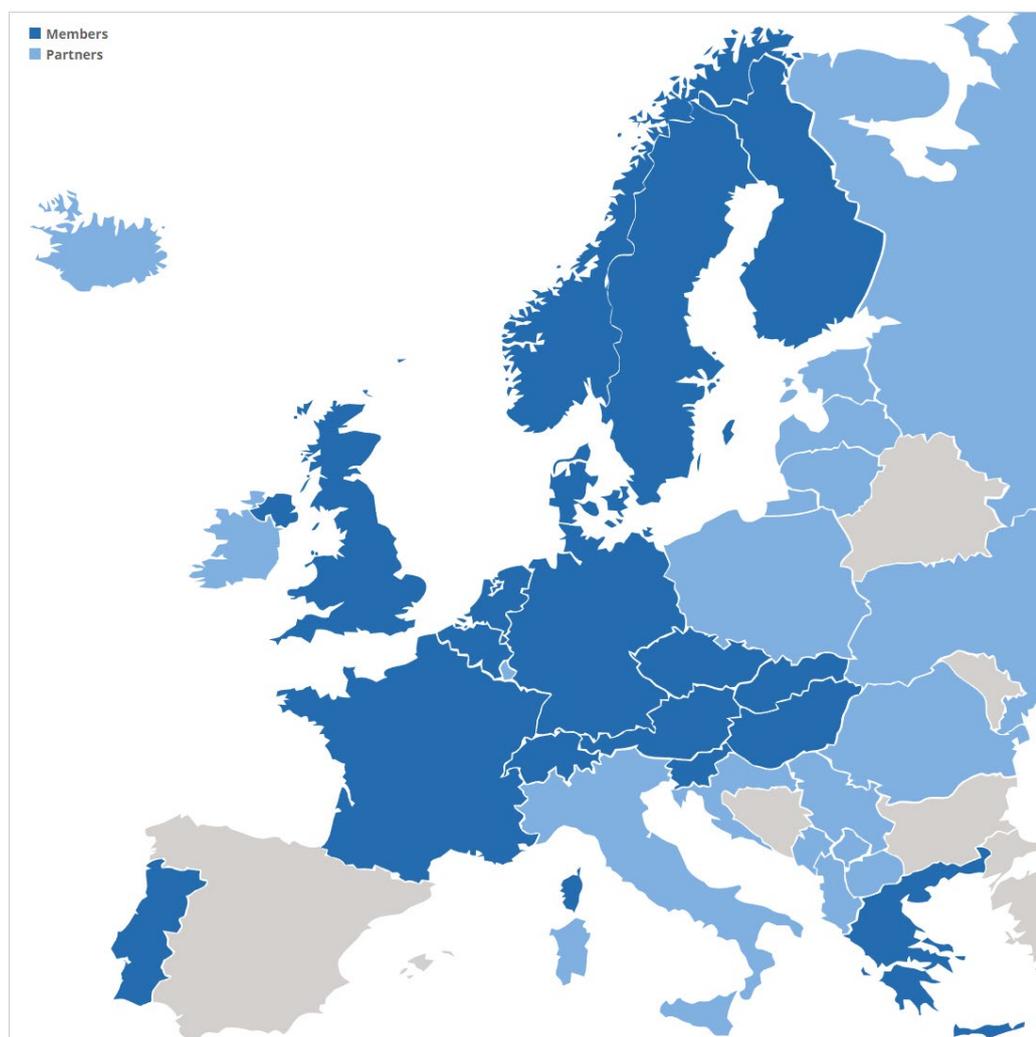
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About CESSDA

The mission of CESSDA is to provide a distributed and sustainable research infrastructure, enabling the research community to conduct high-quality research in the social sciences and contributing to the production of effective solutions to the major challenges facing society today and to facilitate teaching and learning in the social sciences.

In June 2017, CESSDA became an ERIC: a European Research Infrastructure Consortium. There were fourteen founding members and one observer: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Netherlands, Norway, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland (observer), United Kingdom. By the end of 2017, Portugal and Finland had also become members.



About CESSDA

Within CESSDA the formal decision-making bodies are the General Assembly and the Director. The Service Providers' Forum and the Scientific Advisory Board advise the Director. CESSDA has its Main Office in Bergen, Norway that coordinates membership, acquisition, the portfolio of services, standards and the technology for the platform.

CESSDA activities follow four strategic pillars: Technology, Training, Trust and Tools & Services (new in 2017). For each of these lines, we have Working Groups led by and with participation from CESSDA's Service Providers. CESSDA member countries' designated archives (Service Providers) are at the core of CESSDA's activities and work along these strategic lines.

Highlights in 2017

In May, CESSDA hosted its first widening event with 66 representatives from potential member countries (from ministries, research councils and aspiring Service Providers) in Lisbon, Portugal.

On 9 June, CESSDA was assigned the ERIC status and celebrated the occasion with a special launch event, where the official plaque was handed over by the Director General of the Directorate for Research and Innovation of the European Commission, Robert Jan-Smits, on 14 June.

In October, CESSDA hosted its second widening event in Dublin, Ireland, with high representatives of European Commission and the Irish government and research council.

In November, two new members, Finland and Portugal, were welcomed to the Consortium.

[The Austrian Social Science Data Archive](#) launched and was presented to the public in November.

[The Slovenian Data Archive celebrated 20 years ADP](#) in December.

The Finnish Social Science Data Archive held a survey among its users, with [the initial results published](#) in December.

The UK Data Service was evaluated positively, and its 5-year budget was renewed.



Launch of AUSSDA, a new archive for Austria, Vienna, November 2017.

Working Groups Activities

Technical Working Group

CESSDA's technical infrastructure and services are technology intensive but decentralised, requiring a common platform to ensure interoperability and an efficient and sustainable model for the future. This working group plans, monitors and provides advice on the provision and usage of the technical infrastructure so that various tools and services can be deployed in an efficient and effective manner. It consists of representatives from ten Service Providers and the Chief Technical Officer.

This year, the Technical Working Group led two of the Work Plan projects:

- » CESSDA Technical Framework – Phase 3;
- » Products and Services Catalogue – Phase 2.

CESSDA Technical Framework – Phase 3

The Technical Framework consists of two components, the Technical Architecture and the Development Infrastructure. The Technical Architecture is used to provide common standards to guide the design and implementation of interoperable products and services. The Development Infrastructure is a common set of tools, tests and code repositories to foster common development practices, raise standards across the Service Provider community and ensure CESSDA has access to the source code, configuration files and technical documentation that underpin its products and services.

The purpose of the 'Technical Framework – Phase 3' project was to extend both the architecture and the infrastructure and increase awareness of both within the CESSDA Service Provider community and with partners on collaborative projects, such as the European projects (SaW, SERISS and BDE).

It carried out the following activities:

1. Automated and documented the 'Testing of Production' workflow, in particular, the use of pipelines.
2. Issued Technical Architecture document v3 and the User Experience Guidelines for CESSDA Products document.
3. Disseminated guidelines and elicitation of feedback, via presentation at the SaW project workshop in Zagreb.

Working Groups Activities

4. Disseminated guidelines and elicitation of feedback, via meetings with the SERISS project tools developers group in Brussels and London.
5. Disseminated guidelines and elicitation of feedback, via presentations at a cross-ERIC workshop in Berlin on 'Software Sustainability: Quality and Re-usability'.
6. Disseminated guidelines and elicitation of feedback, via updates to the CESSDA Software Adoption Policy and CESSDA Software Adoption Procedure documents.
7. Enrolled developers. 33 developers (members of Service Providers) have been given varying levels of access to the 36 code repositories managed by CESSDA.
8. Maintained and enhanced the Production Environment and 'Testing of Production' workflow driven by the Jenkins Continuous Integration Server, in conjunction with Git source code repositories hosted in Bitbucket. An instance of SonarQube was added to improve the quality control process, and Transport Layer Security was adopted to protect any data in transit (such as usernames and passwords) between computers that form part of the technical infrastructure.
9. Refactored and extended the Metadata Harvester and Repository Handlers as a part of the Products and Services Catalogue – Phase 2 project work.

Products and Services Catalogue – Phase 2

The Products and Services Catalogue (PaSC) is intended to provide a one-stop-shop for search & discovery of datasets relevant to social science research, by harvesting the metadata describing Service Providers' holdings and making it browsable and searchable. The beta version of this Data Catalogue became available in December 2017, with further testing in spring 2018.

It carried out the following activities:

1. Make or buy decision: Determine whether to build the system from scratch, extensively customise an existing product or (open source) codebase or configure a commercial off the shelf (COTS) product. A number of third party products were examined, but none were found to meet the majority of this project's 'must have' requirements. Hence the decision was made to custom build a PaSC product.
2. Produce a specification and engage a subcontractor to develop the product. An agile approach to development was taken, based on a number of 5-day sprint cycles. The specification was a

Working Groups Activities

set of wireframes (corresponding to the User Stories that fulfil the 'must have' requirements), and a backlog of issues (with a subset of issues) was assembled for each sprint, to deliver one or more product features.

3. Conduct acceptance tests and accept delivery of the product. The PaSC User Group conducted feature-specific testing at the end of each sprint, along with automated regression testing (via Jenkins and the Google Cloud Platform). At the end of the sprint cycle, formal User Acceptance Testing (UAT) took place and time was allowed to make final adjustments to version 1 of the product, based on the outcomes.
4. Make a stable and expansible product available to CESSDA's research community. Version 1 of the product was formally accepted (signed off as fit for purpose) at the end of the UAT phase and deployed to the staging environment of the Google Cloud Platform in December. The Service Providers were notified and invited to test it further and provide feedback.
5. Collect feedback from users and feed into Phase 3 requirements. The screen layouts and user controls have been used as the basis of the updated CESSDA ERIC User Experience Guide, so that feedback is also available to all CESSDA User Interface developers.

Working Groups Activities

Trust Working Group

The Trust Working Group focused on three activities:

- » Strengthening and Widening;
- » Certification;
- » Service Providers' obligations.

Strengthening and Widening

The CESSDA Trust Working Group carried out its work in 2017 in the framework of the CESSDA Strengthening and Widening project to ensure the closely aligned project objectives related to Trust remained aligned with CESSDA governance activities.

Group/project activities extended the prior Trust and certification support model beyond current Service Providers to aspiring trustworthy digital repositories (TDR) by offering guidance on the TDR standard and associated process, a guided self-assessment followed by an internal CESSDA peer review. Through the identification of a key trust contact with each interested audience it was also possible for the Trust Group to offer more direct granular support.

The CESSDA Trust Workshop in Zagreb (March 2017) involved 60 participants from 26 countries. The completion of a self-assessment or other responses to the requirements provided a rich experience across participants which was reflected in discussions and outcomes. In addition to an overview of Trust issues, an extensive discussion took place which ensured knowledge exchange between a wide range of attendees rather than simply content delivery from Trust Group members.

In addition to this community development activity a Trust 'surgery' was delivered offering attendees the chance to address specific issues and questions with a member of the Trust group on a one-to-one basis. This range of approaches was successful and will form part of future Trust activities. All self-assessments were dual peer-reviewed by Trust Group members and these outcomes were shared in the form of a gap analysis and a range of anonymised commentaries. The outcome of this work identified a need to make more internal documentation available through public websites to act as supporting evidence (integrated into the CESSDA Trust 2019 work plan). It also indicated a general need to reach out to technical team members in the evidence-gathering process as the

Working Groups Activities

CoreTrustSeal has a greater focus on technical infrastructure and data security than the Data Seal of Approval (see Certification below).

This project finished in October 2017 with deliverables including a [workshop report](#) and an [overview on certification](#) followed by a handover to a group following the more standard CESSDA Working Group governance model.

Certification – CoreTrustSeal

CESSDA ERIC considers the achievement of recognised Trustworthy Digital Repository (TDR) status as a key driver for trust between Service Providers contributing to common CESSDA goals and the trust relationship between Service Providers and their ministries, funders, depositors and data users. This is reflected in the Statutes Annex 2 obligation 8: “adhere to the principles of the OAIS reference model and any agreed CESSDA ERIC requirements for operating trusted repositories”.

During 2017 the reference standards selected by CESSDA, the Data Seal of Approval become the CoreTrustSeal through a Research Data Alliance (RDA) working group in cooperation with the World Data System (ICSU-WDS).

Though the core TDR scope was maintained, the requirements were amended and, in some cases, extended (see Strengthening and Widening above).

Risks to the CESSDA SaW project and the goals of the Trust Group were mitigated through close cooperation with all parties which ensured CESSDA influenced the new standard while benefiting from its becoming more generally applicable (i.e. beyond its original social sciences and humanities base).

By the end of the year, nine seals were acquired, six more will be acquired within one or two years. Other Service Providers are still in a starting phase and attaining the CoreTrustSeal may take time. It has been recognised by the Trust Group and in wider archival and repository circles that the self-assessment phase of the CoreTrustSeal can be of use before an organisation is ready to apply for certification.

The CoreTrustSeal provides a basis for debate and discussion across the functions and hierarchical

Working Groups Activities

levels of archives, promoting internal communication and supporting the delivery of explicit messages (including to funders) about where additional work or support is required. This pre-application period is considered to be particularly relevant to organisations in the early stages of development which need to reference some clear quality and service benchmarks when negotiating for sustainable sources of funding.

Service Providers' Obligations

The Trust Working Group also discussed the CESSDA Statutes Annex II with a mapping between these obligations and the CoreTrustSeal guidelines. The mapping is not 100% aligned meaning that both CoreTrustSeal and Annex II obligations will need to be monitored over time.

The key recommendation was that clear and common interpretations of the Annex II obligations and what steps the Service Providers need to take to comply with them be generated alongside a progress and monitoring role for the Trust Working Group.

During 2017 a number of CESSDA activities progressed which will support meeting these obligations including the creation of a Tools and Services Working Group, the development of approaches for managing common metadata and controlled vocabularies and the creation of a persistent identifier policy.

Working Groups Activities

Training Working Group

The Training Working Group had a number of training activities that can be clustered into:

- » Data Discovery Activities;
- » Research Data Management Activities;
- » CESSDA Expert Seminar.

Data Discovery Activities

The aims of the Data Discovery Activities are to raise awareness for data available at CESSDA Service Providers member organisations by offering training for researchers and data reusers on how to find and get access to the data provided.

In 2017, three face-to-face workshops were held at different locations in Europe to widen the user base of CESSDA data as well as to promote the understanding of (complex) data and its analytical potential. The workshops were designed for all CESSDA users, such as PhD students, postgraduate and senior researchers from throughout Europe, seeking to conduct research with data hosted at CESSDA Service Providers. These three workshops contributed to CESSDA ERIC's strategic goals, ensuring that data access services are available for all users of CESSDA data.

Workshops organised:

- » Working with Data on Political Behaviour, 6 November 2017 at the University of Manchester, Manchester (UK) – 27 attendees (mostly UK).
- » Data on Migration, 13-14 November 2017 at GESIS-Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, Cologne (Germany) – 15 attendees (7 EU countries).
- » Working with European Union Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS), 27-29 November 2017 at GESIS-Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, Mannheim (Germany) – 16 attendees (13 EU countries).

Overall, the three workshops on discovering CESSDA data were well received. That was obviously not only due to the high request on joining the workshops, but also due to participants' feedback in the context of evaluating each of the workshops. In sum, there is a high need for training researchers in how to find and access data.

Working Groups Activities

In addition to the workshop, the data discovery team prepared:

- » One video – How to find and access data from European Social Science Data Services;
- » Three webinars:
 - » How to find data in Europe (88 attendees);
 - » Data in Europe: Ageing (33 attendees);
 - » Data in Europe: Political Behaviour (23 attendees);
- » Three user guides for above named webinars.

All materials are available via the CESSDA website.

Research Data Management Activities

Over the last few years, good practices in research data management have become an important topic for researchers.

Various stakeholders such as research funders, publishers and institutions expect good data management practices, the publishing of high-quality data and the creation of data management plans to facilitate this. Researchers, therefore, have to improve their skills and expertise in this area. Various CESSDA Service Providers have been offering local workshops on research data management to researchers in the social sciences; some for decades; others have started recently. There is thus growing expertise amongst the CESSDA Service Providers. In 2016 the idea emerged to join forces, share best practices in training and develop an online module on research data management in the social sciences and add offline guidance materials for trainers organising local workshops.

In 2017 experts from seven CESSDA Service Providers worked on the creatively developed guide that takes researchers on a journey through the different stages of their research, from the initial planning phase to the publication of the research data. Along the way, the reader is provided with illustrations and examples, as well as expert tips and insights into data management practices in different European countries. It is estimated that the whole “trip” takes fifteen hours.

At the end of the year, the [Data Management Expert Guide](#) was launched. A train-the-trainer event

Working Groups Activities

is planned in 2018 to provide guidance on how the online module and offline guidance materials can be used to deliver a local workshop on research data management.

Chapters of the CESSDA Data Management Expert Guide are:

- » Plan – the introductory tour, where data management and data management planning (DMP) are discussed. General concepts such as FAIR data are explained.
- » Organise & Document – describes good practices in designing an appropriate data file structure, naming, documenting and organising data within suitable folder structures.
- » Process – describes the topics of data entry and coding as the first steps of data management, as well as providing information about choosing the appropriate file format.
- » Store – is about planning a storage and backup strategy, and discuss backup solutions and their advantages and disadvantages. It also describes measures to protect data from unauthorised access with strong passwords and encryption.
- » Protect – highlights legal and ethical obligations and shows how a combination of gaining consent, anonymising data, gaining clarity over who owns the copyright to data and controlling access can enable the ethical and legal sharing of data.
- » Archive and Publish – describes how to differentiate between currently available data publication services. Also, stepping stones to promote data are presented.
- » Discover – to be prepared in 2018.



Working Groups Activities

There are a number of recurring elements in the chapters. Each chapter ends with a set of questions that would typically be answered in a DMP. Another recurring element is European diversity in data management (e.g. diversity in funder requirements in developing a Data Management Plan, in Data protection law etc.). Chapters contain examples of how to handle quantitative or qualitative data.

CESSDA Expert Seminar 2017

The topic of CES2017 was 'The legal and ethical framework for the use, reuse, and archiving of new types of data'. The focus was on exchanging experiences with new types of data, such as social media data, geo-data, biomarkers, administrative data, register data between CESSDA Service Providers as well as discussing how the GDPR would affect archiving these types of data. The audience of the seminar was staff working with data management in their archive. There were 23 participants, representing thirteen different Service Providers and CESSDA Main Office.



CESSDA Expert Seminar, Bergen, Norway, September 2017.

Working Groups Activities

Tools and Services Working Group

CESSDA needs an organised way to prioritise and realise new tools and services from Service Providers and third parties for our users: both data users and data producers. The Tools & Services Working Group was established in late 2017 to represent both users' and Service Providers' interest in terms of what needs to be developed. It consists of representatives from four Service Providers (FSD, EKKE, GESIS and TARKI) and works closely with the Technical Working Group.

Four Work Plan 2017 projects belonged to the Tools and Services pillar:

- » CESSDA Metadata Management Phase 2;
- » Controlled Vocabularies Manager;
- » Persistent Identifier Policy Phase 3;
- » Euro Question Bank 2017.

CESSDA Metadata Management – Phase 2

This phase enhances the CESSDA metadata model based on feedback from Service Providers as well as the Catalogue and Euro Question Bank projects. It will produce a Management and Maintenance Plan for the model as well as User Guidelines. Work is ongoing until the end of 2018. However, by the end of 2017, the project had completed the following two tasks. Firstly, Controlled Vocabularies were extended and translated into additional languages. Secondly, a mapping of the DDI (Data Documentation Initiative) metadata model to the EAD (Encoded Archival Description) metadata model was carried out with the aim of verifying whether broad correspondences could be established between the two standards.

CESSDA metadata model work was presented to a broader audience at the EDDI 2017 conference in Lausanne.

Controlled Vocabularies Manager

Controlled Vocabularies (CVs) form a crucial part of the CMM model and will be used to aid information retrieval in the CESSDA Data Catalogue as well as in the Euro Question Bank. The CV manager tool will allow the creation, versioning and maintenance of CVs and their translations, and access to all CVs.

Working Groups Activities

The project continues until September 2018. In 2017, the project team decided on the requirements, worked on use cases, and evaluated available tools; none were found to be able to manage the requirements. It was decided to use a contractor within GESIS to carry out development work and work on an alpha prototype was started.

A tutorial on CVs was held at the EDDI 2017 conference in Lausanne in December 2017.

Persistent Identifier Policy – Phase 3

CESSDA ERIC approved its Persistent Identifier Policy (<https://doi.org/10.18448/16.0040>) on 22 November 2017 at the General Assembly meeting. It is intended to support the aims of locating, discovering, referencing, identifying and citing CESSDA Service Providers' data holdings. It serves as a basis for a common approach to the use of Persistent Identifier services.

In addition to the PID Policy, the project produced Best Practice Guidelines for the implementation of the Policy (<https://doi.org/10.18448/16.0041>), participated in the Research Data Alliance (RDA) work, and organised a PID webinar.

Euro Question Bank 2017

The Euro Question Bank (EQB) project finished its third phase in 2017. The aim of the project is to develop and implement a central search facility across CESSDA and survey questions from different datasets and in different languages.

In 2017, the project released the first and second prototypes of the EQB, gathered feedback from Service Providers, and developed the metadata model further in collaboration with the CMM2 project. However, due to a delay in programming, the second prototype did not cover enough functionality to go into production. EQB work will continue in 2018.

An EQB workshop for CESSDA Service Providers took place at the EDDI 2017 conference in Lausanne.

International cooperation

All CESSDA activities, both internal and outside of the consortium, are spread across European countries, thus being labelled as international cooperation. However, there are some activities with a long-term impact on a supranational level that CESSDA also takes part in, contributing to the overall strategic and policy efforts in the European Union.

When it comes to European Commission support activities, CESSDA participated in the first EOSC summit, organised by the European Commission in June 2017. This resulted in signing the EOSC Declaration in September and CESSDA participating in the 'coalition of the doers'. CESSDA also contributed to several European Commission meetings, in particular on the EOSC Service Architecture and Portfolio, and on EOSC-Hub. The benefits were threefold: ample networking opportunities to exchange ideas and contact details, in-depth explanations of the core tenets of the EOSC project, and information on upcoming major funding opportunities.

CESSDA Main Office and Service Providers actively participated in international conferences, e.g. [IASSIST conference at Kansas University](#) and [Research Data Alliance meeting in Barcelona](#). CESSDA and its Service Providers also participated actively in the DDI Alliance and several attended the Dagstuhl workshop (Leibniz Centre for Informatics) in October 2017 themed "[DDI-based Infrastructure Vision](#)".

CESSDA continued its participation in the ERIC Forum meetings, now as a full-fledged ERIC. Two meetings of the ERIC Forum were held in 2017; one in Helsinki, Finland (hosted by ICOS ERIC), and the other in Graz, Austria (hosted by BBMRI ERIC). This forum discusses common ERIC problems and is a platform for exchanging experiences.

International cooperation

European Union funded activities

In 2017, CESSDA participated in four Horizon 2020 funded projects; one began early 2017 and two were finalised by the end of the year.

CESSDA Strengthening and Widening (SaW) 01.08.2015 – 31.10.2017

The project performed a range of activities aimed at strengthening the hub and supporting the development of national data services in preparation for CESSDA membership.



SaW project final meeting, October 2017, Dublin, Ireland.

The Country Report on Development Potential, a comprehensive overview mapping the current state of play of data archive services in 44 mainly European countries, represents a key result for policy development and benchmarking.

The project also developed significant input for CESSDA's Quality Assessment model, serving as a quality check of its Service Providers.

For Service Providers, a Knowledge Exchange platform was developed.

In addition, several training modules on archiving, data curation and infrastructure design have also been made available.

By offering the necessary administrative, technical, and methodological support, the project promoted the establishment of new data archives while also strengthening existing ones.

Even though the project is officially closed, the SaW meetings' organisation continues with established and new Service Providers and with countries that are interested in setting up a social science data infrastructure.

International cooperation

BigDataEurope (BDE) 01.01.2015 – 31.01.2017

The final year of the BDE project was devoted to finalising and publishing the big data aggregators' platform for all seven societal challenges. As the networking partner, CESSDA was in charge of societal challenge 6 (SC6): "Europe in a changing world – inclusive, innovative and reflective societies", and community building activities aiming at engaging SSH scientists' and institutions' project activities.

In total, three webinars were hosted by CESSDA during 2017 with themes such as insight into Virtual Currency Ecosystems, European Open Science Agenda, and insights into the field of big data and smart data and how these new principles and technologies can be used in the domain of statistics.

The third and final workshop in the domain of the EU Societal Challenge 6 was held on 11 September 2017 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, as an official workshop of the Semantics 2017 conference. Sessions tackled the current state of play of Big Data in SC6, with an emphasis on the wider ecosystem for social sciences and the humanities including the Open Science Agenda, and the perspective of European official statistics. The BDI Aggregator Platform (Big Data Integrator) and the SC6 Pilot (on budget execution data of municipalities) were also presented.

Synergies for Europe's Research Infrastructures in the Social Sciences (SERISS) 01.07.2015 – 30.06.2019

In 2017, the interim report on the first 18 months of the project was submitted to the European Commission. Outputs meet a specific need identified by one or more SERISS research infrastructures. They improve the quality and efficiency of data collection. One example is an evaluation of the European Language Social Science Thesaurus (ELLST) managed by CESSDA AS (UK Data Archive) and informing future translation guidelines.

Resources were developed to coordinate tasks within the survey life cycle or meet the needs of multiple SERISS Research Infrastructures. On data collection and curation, an expert survey of sampling practices was carried out.

The first "SERISS Train" face-to-face training course on "Designing Questionnaires for Cross-cultural Surveys" and the first SERISS Survey Network meeting on representing the population were attended by representatives of commercial survey organisations, European agencies and national statistical institutes.

International cooperation

European Research Infrastructures in the International Landscape (RISCAPE)

01.01.2017 – 31.12.2019

The project started on 1 January 2017, with a kick-off meeting held on 30-31 January in Helsinki. The first year consisted of administrative alignment of numerous partners, and several deliverables were produced, one of them being the comprehensive report on the European research infrastructure landscape. The partnership in this project proved to be instrumental in connecting to other domains' clusters in applications for interoperability with the EOSC.

European Commission Projects in the Pipeline

CESSDA also submitted two project proposals in the course of 2017: Pop Life (under the call H2020-INFRAIA-2017-1) and SMARTPolicy proposals (under the call H2020 CO-CREATE).

At the end of 2017, CESSDA became the coordinator for the SSH-Cluster proposal in a large EC call for ESFRI's to contribute to the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC—04-2018). CESSDA is also involved in several other European proposals, including one on the ERIC Forum (INFRASUPP-01-2018-2019).

Director's Report

In 2017 CESSDA became an ERIC – a European Research Infrastructure Consortium. This implied a change in governance structure and its statutes were approved by the European Commission. Formally, the activities of CESSDA AS ended on 30 June, and CESSDA ERIC started on 1 July 2017.

At the start of CESSDA ERIC, there were fourteen members and one observer: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Netherlands, Norway, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland (observer), United Kingdom. At the end of 2017, Portugal and Finland also became members. CESSDA's Main Office is in Bergen, Norway.

The mission of CESSDA remained the same:

1. to provide a distributed and sustainable research infrastructure
 - » enabling the research community to conduct high-quality research in the social sciences;
 - » contributing to the production of effective solutions to the major challenges facing society today;
2. to facilitate teaching and learning in the social sciences.



CESSDA Meetings

In 2017, CESSDA Board of Directors met twice (in February and May), focusing on strategy and preparation of the upcoming General Assembly of CESSDA. The Scientific Advisory Board of CESSDA met in March. The meeting stressed the importance of getting better visibility in Brussels at the European Commission and exploring strategic cooperation, also outside Europe.

The Service Providers' Forum met twice – to discuss strategy and prepare the General Assembly.

There were three meetings of the General Assembly: one to decide on ending CESSDA AS and transferring activities to CESSDA ERIC. This was followed by the first General Assembly of CESSDA ERIC, deciding on membership and taking over assets and liabilities of CESSDA ERIC. Another

Director's Report

meeting of the General Assembly took place in autumn. The new strategy was discussed as well as membership of Finland and Portugal. Both countries were accepted as members of CESSDA ERIC by written confirmation of the European Commission.



CESSDA General Assembly

Director's Report

Activities

One of my first actions as Director was to set the structure at the Main Office: assign positions of COO and CTO, set up a management team, and assign tasks to all staff. We managed to bend the situation of lagging behind on projects and activities into catching up with activities – and started a forward-looking discussion on strategy and new annual work plans. We also renewed the CESSDA website, set up the IT (test) platform environment, managed logistics on meetings of the CESSDA bodies, the ERIC festivities and the administrative transition from CESSDA AS to ERIC.

New staff were hired: a project manager and technical officer, and CESSDA agreed with UKDA to dedicate the leader of CESSDA Technology Working Group for three days per week to CESSDA. Unfortunately, at the end of the year, two staff members left for new jobs, creating vacancies for CTO and senior project manager. In December, it was also decided to professionalise financial management and to open a vacancy for a senior financial manager.

CESSDA participated in four European projects – two of them were finalised in 2017 including an audit in early January 2018. In 2017, the CESSDA Projects – as described in the Annual Work Plan – started on time; two out of ten projects carried over some activities to 2018. The Work Plan 2018 was discussed extensively and well prepared. Hence all projects could start on time in 2018. In December, the Technical Working Group could present the beta version of the CESSDA Data Catalogue. Other Working Groups also delivered remarkable results, e.g. on Persistent Identifier Policy, Metadata Standards, Certification, and numerous Training activities.

In addition to restructuring the CESSDA Main Office and project management, my focus has been on the outside – representing CESSDA, visiting Service Providers and making CESSDA more visible. CESSDA became the coordinator for SSH ESFRI Research Infrastructures in a large European call for ESFRI Clusters to contribute to the European Open Science Cloud.

Major activities for 2018 will be to finalise and implement the CESSDA Strategy 2018-2022, to continue Widening activities – striving for full European coverage, to work on improving the visibility of CESSDA, to finalise the restructuring of the Main Office, and to acquire new European projects.

Director's Report

Funding

According to the CESSDA Statutes, the funding scheme shall be based on each country's GDP. Germany and Norway are paying disproportional annual amounts of respectively 750 000 and 800 000 EUR. The annual member fee contribution in 2017 was 1.9 million EUR. The income from EU-funded projects – for CESSDA Main Office – was 160 000 EUR.

The Working Environment and the Natural Environment

At the end of 2017, we had seven employees at CESSDA Main Office and one seconded employee at the UK Data Archive – four women and four men; we received support from NSD and University of Bergen staff with financial services. The website was refurbished ahead of the CESSDA ERIC launch in June 2017 with the help of Open Concept AS located in Kjøllefjord, Norway.

The number of days of short-term sickness absence was very low in 2017. Long-term sickness absence was not registered in 2017. No injuries or accidents were registered. CESSDA's activities have not polluted the natural environment. CESSDA emphasises diversity and encourages qualified candidates to apply for jobs, regardless of age and cultural or ethnic background.

Annual Accounts

The financial performance for 2017 is positive. CESSDA is financially sound, and the organisation's prospects are good.

Because of the transition from CESSDA AS to CESSDA ERIC, we had to close the books of CESSDA AS on 30 June 2017 and open the books of CESSDA ERIC on 1 July 2017.

For CESSDA AS, the Board of the AS confirms that the requirements of the ongoing concern assumption are met; for CESSDA ERIC the Director confirms.

Financial Statements 2017 CESSDA ERIC

Financial Statements

Income statement 2017 (NOK)

CESSDA ERIC

Operating income and operating expenses	Note	2017
Other operating income		12 466 428
Operating income		12 466 428
Payroll expenses	1	3 546 794
Depreciation of fixed assets	2	35 207
Other operating expenses	1	8 951 883
Operating expenses		12 533 883
Operating profit		-67 455
Financial income and expenses		
Other interest income		14 813
Other financial income		853 813
Other financial expenses		19 362
Net financial income and expenses		849 263
Operating result before tax		781 809
Annual net profit		781 809
To other equity		781 809
Net brought forward	6	781 809

Financial Statements

Balance sheet 2017 (NOK)

CESSDA ERIC

Assets	Note	2017	01.07.2017
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets			
Equipment and other movables	2	277 963	204 451
Total tangible fixed assets	2	277 963	204 451
Total fixed assets		277 963	204 451
Current assets			
Debtors			
Accounts receivables	3	16 895	9 988 332
Other receivables		407 039	1 862
Total debtors	3	423 934	9 990 194
Cash and bank deposits			
Cash and bank deposits	4	29 081 990	17 386 818
Total cash and bank deposits		29 081 990	17 386 818
Total current assets		29 505 924	27 377 011
Total assets		29 783 887	27 581 462

Financial Statements

Balance sheet 2017 (NOK)

CESSDA ERIC

Equity and liabilities	Note	2017	01.07.2017
Retained earnings			
Other equity	6	18 398 426	20 797 958
Total retained earnings		18 398 426	20 797 958
Total equity		18 398 426	20 797 958
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade creditors		481 837	280 139
Public duties payable		555 075	322 900
Other short term liabilities	7	10 348 549	6 180 465
Total short term liabilities		11 385 461	6 783 504
Total liabilities	3,7	11 385 461	6 783 504
Total equity and liabilities		29 783 887	27 581 462

Financial Statements

Notes to the financial statements for 2017 - NOK

Accounting principles

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Norwegian Accounting Act and Norwegian Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. These principles are described below.

Operating income and expenses

Revenues consist mainly of grants and project revenues. Received payments related to activities not carried out at year-end are recognised in the balance sheet as accrued income and classified as other short term debt. CESSDA ERIC was established by transfer of activity on 1 July 2017. The grants for 2017 are therefore distributed between CESSDA AS and CESSDA ERIC.

Expenses are recognised in accordance with the matching principle. This means that expenses are recognised in the same period as the related income.

Classification of assets and liabilities

Assets meant for long-term ownership or use are classified as fixed assets. Other assets are classified as current assets. Outstanding receivables to be repaid within one year are classified as current assets. The classification of liabilities is based on analogous criteria.

Fixed assets are valued at acquisition cost. Fixed assets which have a limited economic life shall be depreciated in accordance with a reasonable depreciation schedule. Fixed assets shall be written down to their fair value when a decline in value is not expected to be temporary. The write-down shall be reversed when the basis for the write-down is no longer present.

Current assets are valued at the lower of acquisition cost and fair value.

Liabilities are appraised at the nominal value on the acquisition date.

Financial Statements

Taxes

Since the business is a non-profit organisation it is not liable for corporation tax in accordance with the Tax Law § 2-32.

Currency

Monetary assets and liabilities in foreign currencies are valued at the exchange rate at year-end.

Pension

CESSDA ERIC has established a defined benefit pension scheme. The pension premium is classified as payroll expenses.

Financial Statements

Notes to the Financial Statements for 2017 (NOK)

Note 1 – Payroll expenses, numbers of employees, loans to employees etc

Payroll expenses	2017
Wages and holiday allowance	2 823 717
Payroll tax	443 644
Pension premium	276 519
Other benefits	2 913
Total	3 546 794
Average number of full time equivalent	6,4

The Directors' remuneration was NOK 1 015 972.

The fee paid to the Board of Directors was NOK 165 416.

The organisation is obliged to have a pension scheme according to the Norwegian Law of compulsory occupational pension scheme and have established a defined benefit pension scheme which satisfies the requirements.

Amounts paid to the company's auditor are NOK 23 500 exclusive VAT for audit and NOK 9 750 exclusive VAT for other services.

Financial Statements

Note 2 - Tangible fixed assets

Fixtures, fitting and equipment	
Acquisition cost 01.07	436 877*
Acquisition	108 719
Acquisition cost 31.12	545 596
Accumulated depreciation	-267 633
Accounted value 31.12	277 963
Annual depreciation	35 207
Expected economic life	3-5 years
Depreciation plan	linear

*The fixed assets originate from CESSDA AS

Note 3 – Maturity of receivables and payables

Liabilities that fall due more than five years after the end of the accounting period are NOK 0.

Receivables that fall due more than one year after the end of the accounting period are NOK 0.

Financial Statements

Note 4 - Cash and bank deposits

The bank deposit includes NOK 300 000 in fixed tax deduction funds.

	2017
Restricted cash – fixed tax deduction funds	300 000
Bank deposits in NOK	6 838 377
Bank deposits in EURO	21 943 613
Total bank deposits	29 081 990

CESSDA ERIC has a currency risk associated with exchange rate developments. Allocated funding to projects are paid in EUR. The bank deposits are in NOK and EUR.

Note 5 - Breakdown of income

Income in the year was derived from the following sources:

	2017
Funding from the Norwegian Research Council	3 725 120
Other grant income	8 741 308
Total income 31.12.2017	12 466 428

Financial Statements

Note 6 - Changes in equity

	2017
Equity 01.07.2017	0
Reclassification of unearned revenue in CESSDA AS to equity in CESSDA ERIC	20 797 985
Change in funds granted, not paid at 31 Dec.	-3 181 340
Profit of the year	781 809
Total equity 31.12.2017	18 398 426

On 1 July 2017 a transfer of activity was carried out from CESSDA AS to CESSDA ERIC. On this date, all assets and liabilities were transferred in full, with the exception of the share capital.

Note 7 – Other short term liabilities

	2017
Funds granted to projects, not paid at 31 Dec.	5 451 513
Funds granted to GESIS – German Service Provider	4 350 497
Other short term liabilities	546 539
Total other short-term liabilities 31.12.2017	10 348 549

Projects that have been granted funds from CESSDA ERIC, where payment has not taken place at year-end, are classified as other short-term liabilities. As of 31 December this amounts to NOK 5 451 513. The change in funds granted, not paid at 31 December amounts to NOK 3 181 340.

Bodies of CESSDA

Members of the General Assembly (CESSDA AS and CESSDA ERIC)

Matthias Reiter-Pázmándy & Hajo Boomgaarden – Austria
Laurence Lenoir & Aziz Naji – Belgium
Petr Ventluka & Jindřich Krejčí – Czech Republic
Anne Sofie Fink & Troels Rasmussen – Denmark
Petteri Kauppinen & Helena Laaksonen – Finland
Gilles Ohanessian & Bertrand Jouve – France
Monika van Ooyen & Christof Wolf – Germany
Nicolas Demertzis & Dimitra Kondyli – Greece
Algis Krupavicius – Lithuania
Peter Doorn & Joris Voskuilen – The Netherlands
Kari Balke Øiseth & Bjørn Henrichsen – Norway (for CESSDA AS)
Heidi Dybesland & Bjørn Henrichsen – Norway
Miloslav Bahna & Robert Klobucky – Slovakia
Albin Kralj – Slovenia
Susanna Bylin & Staffan Marklund – Sweden
Georg Lutz & Brian Kleiner – Switzerland
Matthew Woollard & Lucy Martin – United Kingdom

Members of the Board of Directors of CESSDA AS – until 30 June 2017

Bjorn Henrichsen – Chair
Matthew Woollard – Vice Chair
Alexia Katsanidou
Dana Hamplova
Hans Jørgen Marker
Roxane Silberman

Bodies of CESSDA

Members of the Scientific Advisory Board

Myron Gutmann – Chair, Institute of Behavioural Science, University of Boulder, USA

Bernt Aardal – Department of Political Science, University of Oslo, Norway

Denise Lievesley – Cambridge University, UK

Nancy Pedersen – Karolinska Institute, Sweden

Simon Hodson – CODATA

Tomaz Smrekar – National Statistical Office, Slovenia

Members of the Service Providers' Forum

Lars Kaczmirek – AUSSDA, Austria

Johan Surkyn – BELSPO, Belgium

Jindřich Krejčí & Yana Leontiyeva – CSDA, Czech Republic

Anne Sofie Fink – DDA, Denmark

Helena Laaksonen – FSD, Finland

Cécile Maréchal – Progedo, France

Alexia Katsanidou & Wolfgang Zenk-Möltgen – GESIS, Germany

Dimitra Kondyli – So.Da.Net, Greece

Tamas Rudas & Peter Hegedus – TARKI, Hungary

Ricarda Braukmann (from September) & Heiko Tjalsma – DANS, Netherlands

Vigdis Kvalheim – NSD, Norway

Miloslav Bahna – SASD, Slovakia (observer until June)

Janez Štebe & Irena Vipavc Brvar – ADP, Slovenia

Iris Alfredsson – SND, Sweden

Brian Kleiner & Alexandra Stam – FORS, Switzerland (observer, from June)

John Shepherdson & David Hall – UKDS, United Kingdom

Bodies of CESSDA

Main Office

The Main Office (MO) of CESSDA is located at Parkveien 20, Bergen, Norway.

As of 31 December 2017 there were seven employees in the Main Office:

Hossein Abroshan – Chief Technical Officer

Nina Bakanova – Management Assistant

Ron Dekker – Director

Martina Draščić – Project Manager

Ivana Ilijašić Veršić – Chief Operations Officer

Julien Le Hericy – Technical Officer

Eleanor Smith – Senior Communication Officer

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