

## DANS and the Social Sciences – Policy Document English Summary

This document provides a brief English summary of the policy note on DANS and the social sciences which is available in Dutch and was published in January 2019<sup>1</sup>.

DANS (Data Archiving and Networked Services) is the Netherlands institute for permanent access to digital research resources. DANS offers services to store and access research data and hosts a national portal for scientific information. DANS also provides training and consultancy on various topics including Open Access, FAIR data, and Research Data Management (RDM). Although the services of DANS are available to all disciplines, DANS has its roots in the social sciences and humanities. The policy document on DANS and the social sciences aims to provide an overview of the current position of DANS within the field of social sciences and identify points of attention and future directions.

### The social science landscape

Social sciences in this context refers to the broad category of research concerning “society and the relationships among individuals within a society”<sup>2</sup>. This definition covers a cluster of four categories used in the national portal NARCIS (social sciences, behavioral and educational sciences, economics and business administration, and law and public administration) and includes fields like sociology, psychology and economics. Social scientists work with many different types of data including quantitative data (such as survey data or reaction time data) and qualitative data (such as interviews or video recording) as well as new data sources a(such as social media data, other big data, or combined datasets). In many cases researchers work with personal data from human participants which require special attention and protection. The (Dutch) social science landscape is very divers with many different institutes conducting research, including universities, governmental agencies, ministries, municipalities as well as (commercial) research institutes. DANS has a central role in providing national data services within this field and is involved in many different projects to aid social science researchers in managing, archiving and sharing their research data.

### The role of DANS in the social sciences

DANS offers two services for researchers to store their data: DataverseNL, a platform for storage and sharing of research data during the research process, and EASY, an online long-term archiving system to store and share data after a research project is finalized. DataverseNL is highly used by social scientists as about one third of the data originates from the social sciences. The archive EASY holds more than 5.500 datasets from the social sciences. Of these datasets, a proportionally large number comes from sociology - in particular survey research - while other sub-disciplines, like behavioral sciences or economics, are less well represented.

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<sup>1</sup> Braukmann, R. (Data Archiving and Networked Services) (2019): DANS en de sociale wetenschappen - Beleidsnota. DANS. <https://doi.org/10.17026/dans-zxv-qjvr>

<sup>2</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_science](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_science)

Next to data services, DANS participates in various projects and infrastructures within the field of social sciences (see Figure 1 below for an overview). On a national level, DANS is for instance involved in ODISSEI (Open Data Infrastructure for Social Science and Economic Innovation) a national infrastructure for the social sciences. Internationally, DANS has a role as Dutch Service Provider in CESSDA (Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives) which provides tools, services and training for social science researchers across Europe. DANS also represents the social sciences within European projects, like FREYA – a project on Persistent Identifiers - and the Research Data Alliance RDA Europe 4.0 project.

	2018	2019	2020
Future		SSHOC (Social Sciences and Humanities Open Cloud)	
		Focus: Psychology	
			Focus: Economics
		Pilot governmental data Audiovisual data	
Ongoing	CESSDA (Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives)		
	Sosc ambassador projects		
	GDPR DataTags		
	Science Europe domain protocols		
	ODISSEI (Open Data Infrastructure for Social Science and Economic Innovation)		
	Sosc training		
	Secure microdata from Statistics Netherlands		
	NPSO (Netherlands Platform for Survey Researchers)		
	Survey Data Netherlands		
	ESS-Netherlands		
	ICPSR (Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research)		

Green: International projects

Orange: National projects

Figure 1. Overview of ongoing and (potential) future social science projects. A full description of the different projects is included in Dutch in the original report (<https://doi.org/10.17026/dans-zxv-qjvr>). The projects are ordered on basis of the expected time investment. Sosc= social sciences.

## Summary and future directions

Both as a service provider and within projects, DANS has established a strong position in the field of social sciences and many of the current activities will continue in the future. At the national level, for instance, DANS aims to be involved in the further development of the ODISSEI infrastructure. Internationally, DANS is involved in the Social Science and Humanities Open Cloud (SSHOC) project which aims to link existing social sciences (and humanities) initiatives to the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC). In addition, future activities should also extend into other subfields of social sciences to complement the current work that has a strong focus on the field of sociology and in particular survey data. Currently under-represented disciplines, like Psychology and Economics, for instance, can be targeted by specialized training activities and events. In addition, DANS can explore ways of providing access to additional and novel types of data. This can, for instance, be

achieved by integrating (meta)data from other social science portals, such as the Dutch portal for open government data<sup>3</sup>, into the NARCIS portal. As social science researchers often work with qualitative data, such as audiovisual data, existing DANS services in this area can also be further developed and promoted within this social science community.

By strengthening existing activities and exploring new avenues to extend the focus towards the broad area of social sciences, DANS will be able to continue its function as a core service provider in the social science data landscape.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://data.overheid.nl/>