

The National Data Strategy and New Secure Data Service

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Purpose and Overview

- Purpose: to provide a policy perspective on data infrastructure investment and secure access of data

- Overview:

- ESRC
- UK National Strategy for Data Resources for Research in the Social Science ('National Data Strategy')
- Value of sensitive data
- Secure Data Service

Brief Overview of ESRC

- UK Public Agency
 - Fund research and research training in the social sciences
 - Fund infrastructure required for such research
- ESRC offers:
 - Quality, impact and independence


Overview of the National Data Strategy

www.esrc.ac.uk/nds


Aim: to provide a coherent framework for the development and maintenance of a robust data infrastructure, ensuring that relevant and timely data are available to inform and address future UK research priorities in the social sciences.

- Development led by ESRC between 2004-2006
- Overseen by the UK Data Forum
- ESRC act as 'steward' to the Strategy
- Next version available early Summer 2009

Value of Sensitive Data

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- Sensitive data – potentially ‘disclosive’ or protected data
 - Potential to enrich research into some of the most important social and economic questions
 - Access to such data has been varied
 - Challenges: security; maintaining confidentiality; public and use perspectives

The Secure Data Service

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- Identified as an area of need under the NDS
 - Service commissioned during 2008 – initial 2 year contract awarded to University of Essex
 - Purpose: to provide controlled access to sensitive or potentially disclosive data
 - Remote access service

Next Steps

- Early stages – over the next two years need to establish:
 - relationships with potential data providers (especially the UK Office for National Statistics)
 - scale of future demands on the service – both current and projected
 - links with other relevant research resource (ESDS, ADLS, VML, 'Safe-settings' in other countries, similar developments from other research funding agencies)

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