European Social Survey

CASE
European Social Survey ERIC – Impact Studies

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ESS is a European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ESS ERIC)

RIs and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment

" Different impact frameworks and definitions focus on different aspects of impact ranging from academic impact to policy impact, **social impact**, educational impact, cultural impact and **economic impact**." (Pedersen et al. (2020) 'Methods for mapping the impact of social sciences and humanities – A literature review', *Research Evaluation, p.*16)

'Research impact assessment': "ability of research to deliver socio-economic impacts". (Joly et al, (2015) 'ASIRPA: A comprehensive theory –based approach to assessing the societal impacts of a research organisation', *Research Evaluation,* p. 440)

Socio-economic impact assessment/SEIA: no agreed definition; methodological pluralism; a "tool that aids in understanding a potential range of impacts" by RIs (Resinfra@DR Project (2019) *A Practical Guild: Assessment of Socio-economic impacts of research infrastructures*, INTERREG Danube Transnational Programme).

Challenges arising, generally & for specific domains, such as SSH

Social Sciences & Humanities SSH ERICs

'SSH ERICs' - the five ERICs identified in the ESFRI Roadmap *Social and Cultural Innovation* domain:

- ESS ERIC ** (European Social Survey)
- SHARE ERIC * (Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement)
- CESSDA ERIC (Council of European Social Science Data Archives)
- CLARIN ERIC * (Common Language Resource and Technology Infrastructure)
- DARIAH ERIC (Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities)

2021 Roadmap: includes ERICs in preparation as well as other RIs of pan-European interest. (Foreword | ESFRI Roadmap 2021)

* WP4

** ESS ERIC has not undertaken a **socio-economic** impact assessment

Overview - European Social Survey ERIC

ESS is an academically led, cross-national, cross-sectional time series of social attitudes and behaviours

Established in 2001; included in ESFRI Roadmap from 2006 onwards; ERIC status awarded 2013

Landmark RI (ESFRI Roadmaps 2016, 2018, 2021); fully operational (life-cycle)

April 2022: 27 Members and 1 Observer

First round of data collection (R1) took place in 2002. R10 now in final stages

- 38 countries have participated in at least 1 round of data collection
- > 180,000 registered data users;
- > 5,000 academic publications;
- >425,000 interviews available for analysis

Aim

The principal object and task of the ESS ERIC shall be to establish and operate a research infrastructure with the following main objectives:

(a) assembling, interpreting and disseminating via the European Social Survey… rigorous data on Europe's social condition, including the shifting attitudes, values, perceptions and behaviour patterns among citizens in different countries;

(b) providing free and timely access to its accumulated data to professional users and members of the public;

(c) furthering the advancement of methods of quantitative social measurements and analysis in Europe and beyond.

[…]

(ESS Eric Statutes, art. 2 *Tasks and activities*)

Impact of ESS ERIC

Two comparative impact studies of the ESS ERIC to date 2016/2017 and 2021/2022 (supported by EU H2020; undertaken by Technopolis)

2017: Comparative impact study of the ESS ERIC

2022: SUSTAIN-2: Impact study of the European Social Survey

Why undertaken/stated goal: The study (2022) explores the academic, non-academic and teaching impacts that have been achieved through the ESS, by all different user groups and in all current member/observer countries. It also assesses how these impacts came about ('pathways' to impact), identifies best practice, and makes recommendations to ensure the long-term sustainability of the ESS.

Methodology: Range of methods employed

Bibliometric analysis; social media analysis (LinkedIn, Twitter),

Interviews (n=77); analysis of user data. [2017: country case studies]

Impact

- Use of data (view / download)
- Academic data use
- Teaching use
- Impact on methods (methodological innovations e.g. web panel)
- Non-academic impact (policy and practice)
- Exposure of findings to the public (media / social media)
- Capacity building (national teams / students)

Overview –key findings

The second impact study explored changes between the first study under taken in 2016 and the results of a follow up in 2021.

Analysis of **ESS data users** established that, as of June 2021, there were **182,778** registered users - almost double the figure at the start of the original Impact Study (June 2016). The number of registered users has grown consistently by 14-15% in each of the last five years and 74% registered users have downloaded our data.

The overall number of **academic publications** including significant analysis of our data has increased by at least 150% since the first Impact Study. Including various different publication types and non-English language publications, University of Ljubljana data suggests that there are over **7,500 publications** in existence (the first Impact Study reported 2,704).

The **citation impact** of these publications is well above average, being about **70% more highly cited than average, with 21% of all ESS publications belonging to the top 10%.** The journals in which work is being published have a citation impact of 40% above the world average.

Several examples of **non-academic impact**, of many different types and across different domains have been identified. These include data being used for insight by **NGOs or government** ministries, agencies or advisory bodies; and data being used to highlight a particular problem or challenge, leading to policy action. The study also reported that data was used in the **news media** to influence public debate or highlight social issues; and our indicators are used to assess whether certain policies are achieving the desired outcomes.

Impact – policy -selected examples

Ireland: The Healthy and Positive Ageing Initiative (HaPAI) has used the ESS as the basis for some of its own survey questions to improve policy and services for Irish citizens as they age. The HaPAI will then be used to form a clear indicator set that can be deployed by the Irish government to establish clear policy goals in the long-term.

Hungary: At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic there was limited information in Hungary concerning the make-up of the elderly population. The core study team used the ESS to examine the social relationships of people aged 65 and over and warned of the potential impact that quarantine rules would have on this group. This report was widely reported in the Hungarian press, with many calling for more societal support for people in situations of loneliness and isolation.

Figure 1: ESS impacts at a glance

The European Social Survey – Impacts at a glance

User numbers – key figures

Total registered users (March 2017)	Total downloaders (March 2017)	Annual active users (Excl. students) 2016/17
104,729	**72,920**	**6,578**

Student users:*	Academic & PhD users:	Non-academic users:
64% (>60,000)	**27%** (>25,000)	**9%** (>9,000)

*Many student users never register, the true figure is likely significantly higher

Output highlights

Journal articles (up to 2017):	Books, chapters, edited volumes (up to 2017):	Journal articles listed on WoS (up to 2016):
>1,700	**>700**	**>900**

+ Many academic conference papers

+ Numerous policy reports & briefings

+ Over 30% of active users have produced teaching materials

+ Many examples of ESS-based work in news media

Headline bibliometric indicators (up to 2014, N=817)

Mean normalised citation score:	% in top-10% most cited (by microfield):	% international collaborations:
1.79 (1.0 would indicate average)	**22%** (10% would indicate average)	**25%**

Further key impact areas

- Establishment or strengthening of several social science fields
- ESS as a benchmark: Integration and influence on other surveys
- In policy: influence on agenda setting, policymaking and monitoring
- Important open-access resource of PhDs and early career researchers

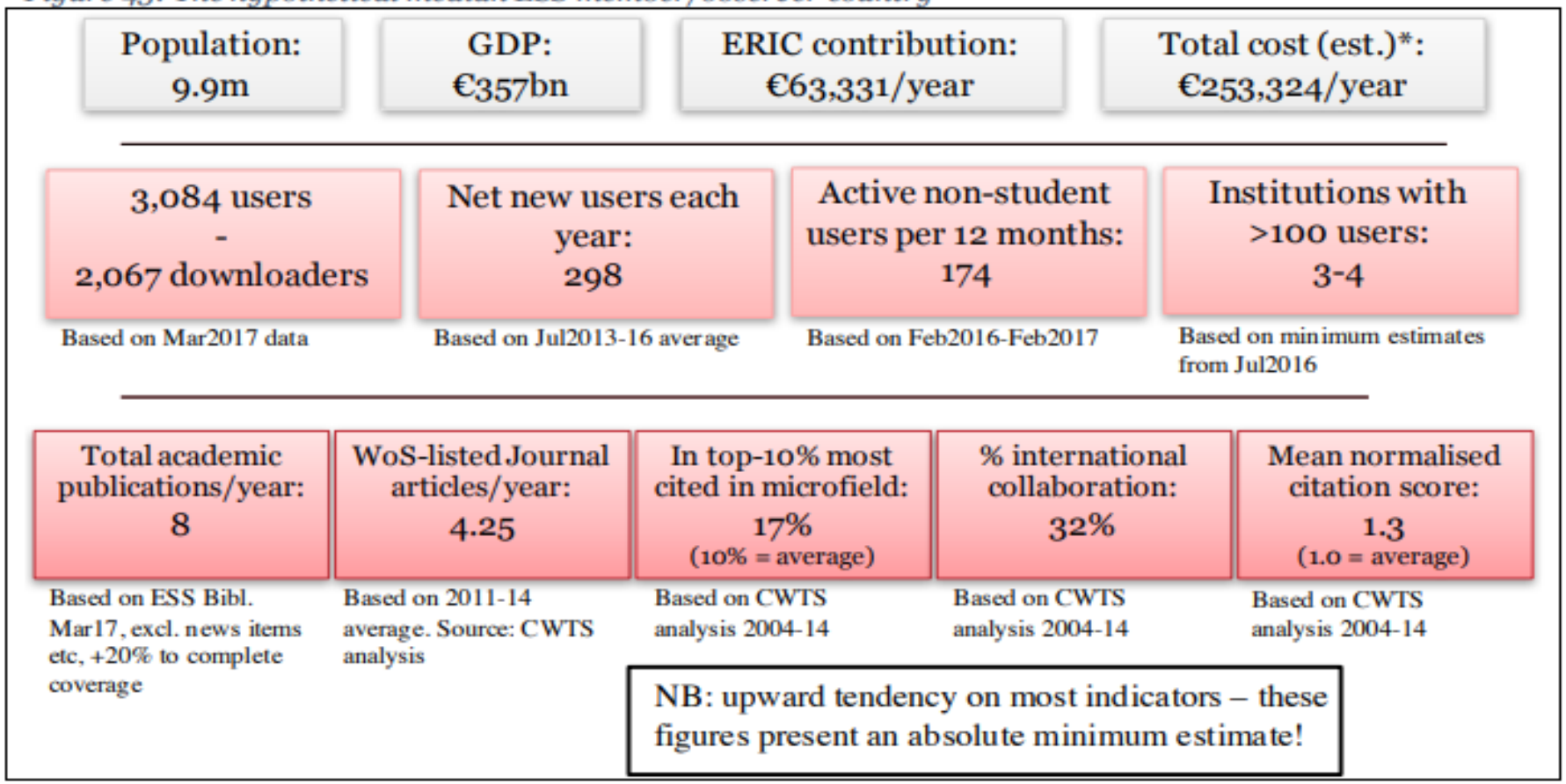
Teaching hotspots

Universiteit Antwerpen	BE	Bocconi University	IT
University Of Ljubljana	SI	Warsaw School Of Economics	PL
KU Leuven	BE	University Of Mannheim	DE
University Of Amsterdam	NL	University Of Copenhagen	DK
University Of Bergen	NO	University Of Helsinki	FI
Sciences Po	FR	University Of Tartu	EE
University of Liège	BE	LSE	GB
NTNU	NO	University Of Geneva	CH
University Of Vienna	AT	Aarhus University	DK
NRU HSE	RU	Radboud Univ. Nijmegen	NL
UCD	IE	ISCTE	PT
Univ. Pompeu Fabra	ES	University of Exeter	GB

Selected non-academic impacts

- Intelligence for policymaking at the Ministry of Social Affairs (AT)
- Construction of the Active Ageing Index at local level (DE)
- Support to the Federal Chancellery's work on quality of life (DE)
- Agenda-setting and monitoring of Children and family policy (EE)
- Benchmark for Eurofound's measurement of quality if life (EU)
- Increased global cooperation on monitoring health inequalities (NO)
- Use for agenda-setting by France Strategie (FR)
- Support to include LGBTQI people as a recognised discriminated group (HU)
- Input for European measurements of social mobility (IE)
- Increased intelligence and benchmarking for the Police Agency (IE)
- Agenda-setting and monitoring of civic/political participation (LT)
- Influence on media and public debate around immigration (NL)
- Evidence for the declaration on the future of the 'Nordic Model' (NO)
- Spearheading improved standards for official statistics at GUS (PL)
- Agenda-setting on ageism (UK)
- Improved training of judges and support for reforms of the judiciary (PT)
- Improved evidence for reform of immigration / integration policy (PT)
- Developing a national strategy for citizen's relationship with the police (SE)
- Contribution to agenda-setting and monitoring at the IMAD (SI)
- Contribution to agenda-setting and monitoring of Wellbeing (UK)

Figure 43: The hypothetical median ESS member/observer country



Source: Technopolis, 2017

Findings

- ESS is one of the most frequently used social science RI in the world
- User figures are high and increasing
- Publications are significant and increasing
- ESS findings have impact beyond academia (policy, practice, media)
- Teaching impact needs greater attention
- ESS impact on policy needs to be better promoted (especially in Brussels)

Lessons for ERICs

Resourcing:	Include resources for undertaking impact assessment
Methodology:	Agreement on indicators & appropriate methods
	Data availability – forward planning to collect data for use & possible dual-use of performance data
	Types of impact may be more relevant for some RIs - also consider country differences (distributed RIs)
Scope:	Stated aims of the RI (ex ante drivers/clarifying mission)

Learning & challenges

Learning includes:

- Different pathways - direct and indirect pathways to impact
- Use of outputs by different actors, including policy makers (anticipated/not)

Challenges include : the identification of appropriate indicators

> "The contributions of science to society are so varied, and mediated by so many different actors, that indicators used in impact assessment cannot be universal. Instead they need to be developed for given contexts and used alongside qualitative assessment" (Pedersen et al, 2020: 4)

- Time-frame of assessment (when in the life-cycle) and time to impact

SSH RIs and impact assessment

Field of SSH impact assessment is characterised by pluralism (Pederson et al 2020)

Commercialisation statistics: impact indicators often 'narrow' - patents, licences, etc

> "it is often hard to compare different types of commercial impacts – especially across disciplines and contexts. Furthermore, the method and its underling transaction model may be useful for describing economic and technological impact in the natural and technical sciences, but is generally found to be insufficient for understanding impact in SSH." (Pedersen et al., 2020:11)

Bibliographic methods and assessments in SSH; for example, the importance of non-journal publications in the dissemination of SSH outputs.

Such indicators do not acknowledge broader engagement with society. Performative consequences – citations do not necessarily mean the research is useful and relevant in a societal context.

Activities are undertaken within a wider social web of relations necessary for realising the impact of research. Identification of indicators should involve external partners/stakeholders. Need for theory based models (see Joly et al, 2015, Sordé *et al, 2015*)

Issues in impact assessment

Distinction between

i. Assessments of performance and impact (OECD (2019) *Reference Framework for Assessing the Scientific and Socio-economic impact of Research infrastructures, p8.*)

ii. impact and outcome (ex ante; ongoing/formative and summative evaluation) Harding, 2014)

iii. direct vs. indirect pathways & impacts (Moulin J. (2016) Workshop on Methodologies and Tools for assessing Socio-Economic Impact of Research Infrastructures, Global Science Forum (Paris, 3 November 2015; OECD, op cit. 2019)

iv. routine vs extraordinary impacts; expected vs. unexpected impacts (ResInfra@DR, 2019:14)

v. Data -qualitative data *also* required to assess social impact of SSH research (Sordé *et al*, 2020:948)

Sordé *et al* . *(2015) '*Qualitative Inquiry: A key element for assessing the social impact of research', *Qualitative Inquiry, 26(8): 948-954*

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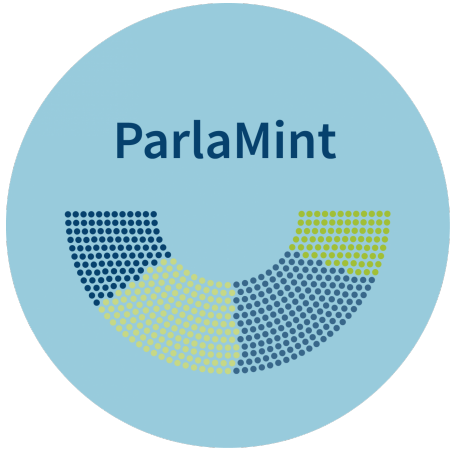
Case Studies from the ERIC Forum: CLARIN

ParlaMint is a project supported by CLARIN ERIC, which contributes to the creation of comparable and uniformly annotated multilingual corpora of parliamentary sessions. The aim of the project is to turn the existing contemporary diverse national parliamentary data into resources that are comparable, interpretable and highly communicative with respect to the society and the study of the public debate across countries, regions and languages.

The project, focused on the COVID-19 emergency, provides data for observations on trends, opinions, and decisions on lockdowns as well as the consequences in terms of health, medical care and employment. The methodology used is scalable to other events and emergencies, such as economic crises and environmental issues.



Case Studies from the ERIC Forum: CLARIN

DELAD stands for Database Enterprise for Language And speech Disorders, and is also Swedish for *'shared'.* DELAD is an initiative to share corpora of speech of individuals with communication disorders (CSD) among researchers in a GDPR-compliant way and at secure repositories in the CLARIN infrastructure.
The DELAD community consists of researchers involved in collecting and analysing CSD as research data, infrastructure specialists, and legal experts. DELAD has chosen the CLARIN infrastructure as its primary space for storing and sharing CSD. More specifically, DELAD has linked up with CLARIN's Knowledge Centre for Atypical Communication Expertise (ACE) for making CSD available through The Language Archive (TLA) at the Max Planck Institute in Nijmegen (a CLARIN Data Centre) and CMU's TalkBank (US-based clinical language data).

Case Studies from the ERIC Forum: CLARIN

[Panel on The Role of Corpora for the Study of Language Use and Mental Health Conditions at CLARIN 2021]

With mental health conditions on the rise, the automatic detection of mental health conditions from text and speech is increasingly relevant. The CLARIN 2021 conference served as an excellent platform to discuss infrastructural and strategic issues that are related to the resources needed for this type of research, as well as their shareability.
Issues that were explored included potential biases that may intrude on the data annotation and tools developed, and how to handle the challenges of collecting and sharing language resources that typically involve vulnerable people (GDPR and more). Wider availability of secure access facilities is a major condition for this field to grow. The SSHOC cluster project has resulted in some major steps forward towards the availability of access models and guidelines for the use of sensitive data.