

# Data Description and Metadata

## What it takes to produce a good one?

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### CESSDA Training Local Event

*FSD and DNA*

 [cessda.eu](https://cessda.eu)

 [@CESSDA\\_Data](https://twitter.com/CESSDA_Data)



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# Practical information

TIME: 2½ hours reserved – but we finish when ready!

QUESTIONS: short questions after each presentation, discussion at the end (raise hand & unmute when asked to)

Feel free to use our shared notes document (link in the chat)

# Agenda

- Introduction to CESSDA and some tools and services
  - Tuomas J. Alaterä
- The significance of data description quality for cross-national data catalogues
  - Taina Jääskeläinen
- Describing data at FSD
  - Emilia Hakkola
- Metadata in reuse: harvesting, licensing, repurposing and FAIR
  - Tuomas J. Alaterä
- Q & A



Taina Jääskeläinen  
Emilia Hakkola  
Tuomas J. Alaterä

Finnish Social Science Data Archive

## What is CESSDA?

Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives

- Long tradition of cooperation even before becoming an ERIC

European Research Infrastructure Consortium

- Legal form for facilitating establishment and operation of RI's within European interest

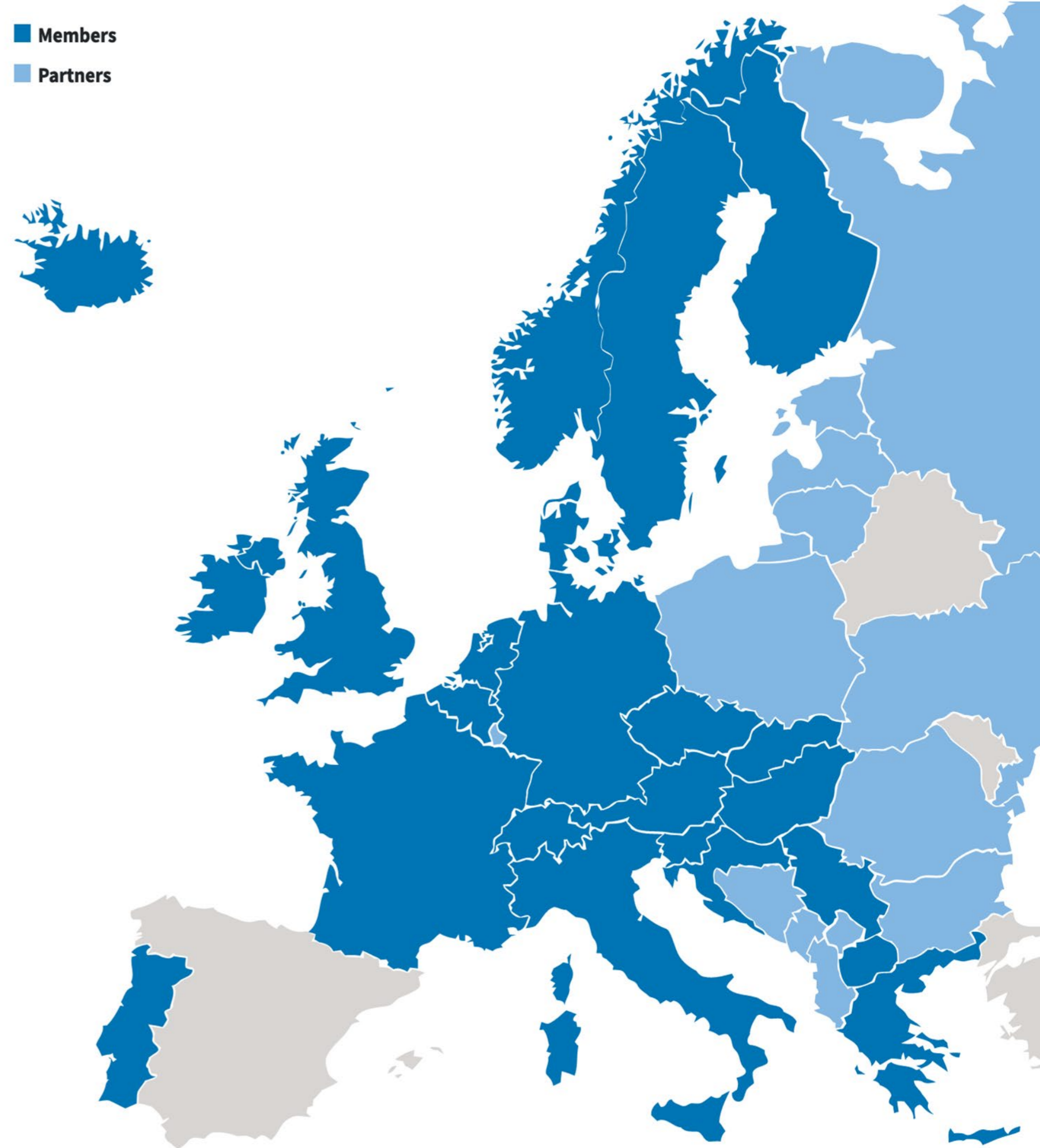
CESSDA provides and develops tools and services for both data **producers** and data **users** in social sciences and related fields

Coordinates participation in SSH fields for many EC funded projects

**Service providers** located in each member country

Main Office in Bergen, Norway

See: [cessda.eu](http://cessda.eu)



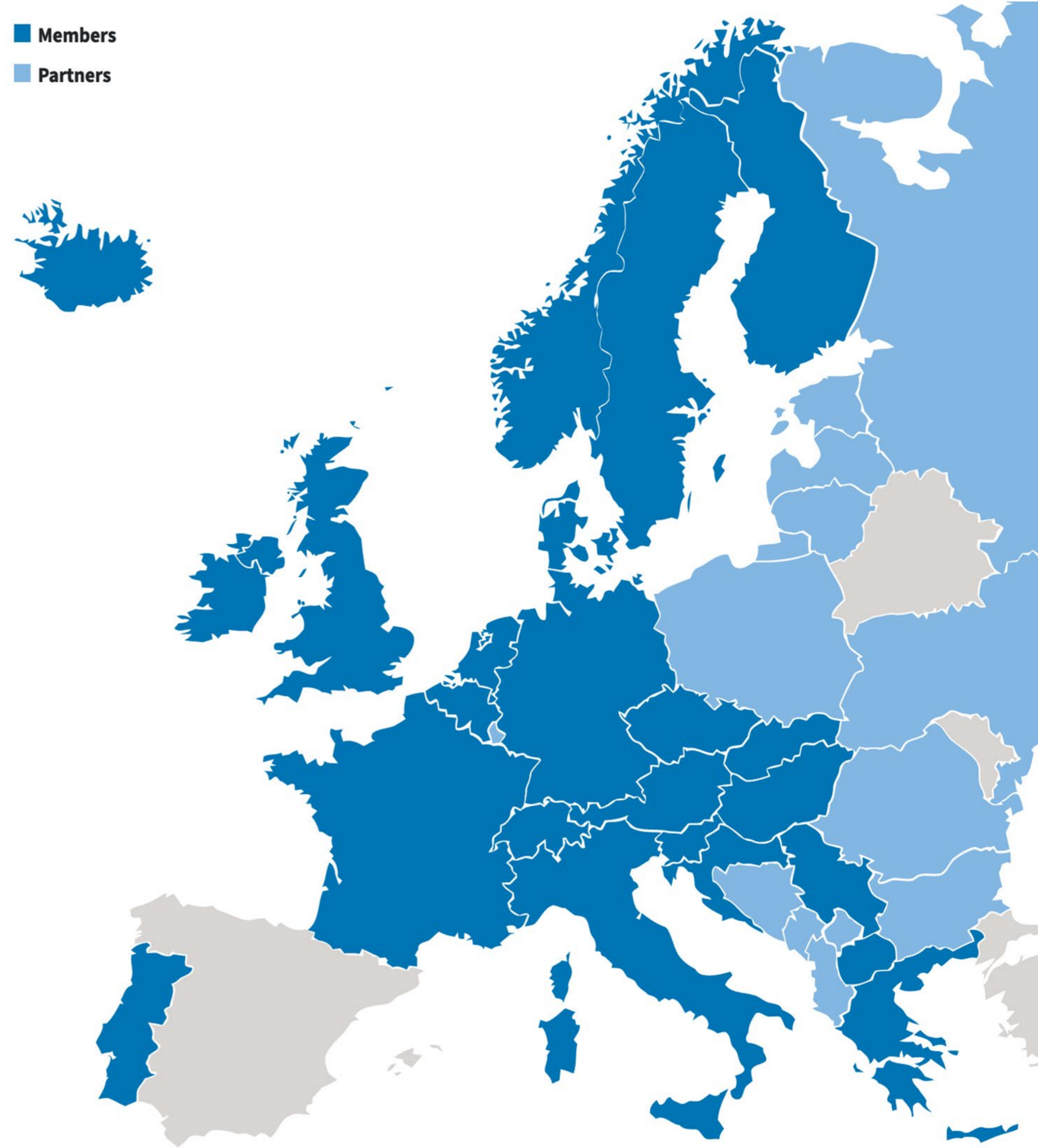
Our vision is that the provision of **access to social science data** and metadata is vital – for both science and society.

For this we must offer **services to data producers** to easily describe and store their data – if needed in a secured environment.

We will adhere to the **FAIR** (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) data principles to make data findable and provide information about the data, where they are, how they can be accessed.

We will also focus on providing **training** and enabling the transfer of expertise and sharing of knowledge on data, as well as relevant rules and regulations.

■ Members  
■ Partners





# Mission of CESSDA

- 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.**
- Facilitate **teaching and learning** in the social sciences.



# Tools & services







## Data Management Expert Guide

This guide is designed by European experts to help social science researchers make their research data Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR).

You will be guided by different European experts who are - on a daily basis - busy ensuring long-term access to valuable social science datasets, available for discovery and reuse at one of the [CESSDA social science data archives](#).

You can [download](#) the full DMEG for your personal study offline (DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.3820473](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3820473)). PDFs for every [single chapter](#) are also available for being printed as handouts for training.

Search this guide

Search

Data Management Expert Guide

- 1. Plan
- 2. Organise & Document
  - Designing a data file structure
  - Organisation of variables
  - File naming and folder structure
  - Documentation and metadata**
    - Adapt your DMP: part 2
    - Sources and further reading
- 3. Process
- 4. Store
- 5. Protect
- 6. Archive & Publish
- 7. Discover
- 8. Contributors

# Documentation and metadata

*I have never documented my data before. I have both qualitative and quantitative data and I work on a collaborative project. Where do I start?*



## ⊖ How to start?

1. Do not panic. Much documentation is simply good research practice, so you are probably already doing much of it.
2. Start early! Careful planning of your documentation at the beginning of your project helps you save time and effort. Do not leave the documentation for the very end of your project. Remember to include procedures for documentation in your data management planning.
3. Think about the information that is needed in order to understand the data. What will other researchers and re-users need in order to understand your data?
4. Create a separate documentation file for the data that includes the basic information about the data. You can also create similar files for each data set. Remember to organise your files so that there is a connection between the documentation file and the data sets.
5. Plan where to deposit the data after the completion of the project. The repository probably follows a specific metadata standard that you can adopt.
6. Document consistently throughout the project. Data documentation gives contextual information about your dataset(s). It specifies the aims and objectives of the original project and harbours explanatory material

<https://www.cessda.eu/Training/Training-Resources/Library/Data-Management-Expert-Guide/2.-Organise-Document/Documentation-and-metadata>