

DATA ARCHIVE DEVELOPMENT

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Europe- not activated

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Mandate

A procedures manual consolidating current archival organizational, administrative, and personnel structures, procedures, and policies as well as recommended guidelines will be compiled to aid developing archives and to act as a resource guide for existing archives. Workshops and seminars at various levels will be sponsored to provide professional training in the skills necessary for effective operation of a data library, data archive or social science information center.

[Editor's Note: A NEW Action Group on Data Organization and Management has been constituted to focus on the substantive aspects of data base organization and management. This action group is described more fully below. The focus of the Data Archive Development Action Group will be on the more general functional aspects of establishing, managing and operating a data library, archive, or information center. The underlined section reflects this change.]

Activities and Plans

This past summer, a very successful workshop on data library organization, management and user services was held under the auspices of the Inter-University Consortium for Political Research as a pilot module of the ICPSR's Summer Program. It was organized and jointly sponsored by IASSIST. It is hoped that a similar effort will be sponsored by ICPSR and IASSIST next summer. [Editor Note: see p. for full description of the workshop.]

Members of this action group are developing a detailed outline for the proposed procedures manual. The outline will be circulated to Action Group and Steering Committee members for comment and revisions by February, 1977. The Action Group is also collecting administrative and record-keeping forms from existing archives. The collection of forms will be annotated for inclusion in the manual as well as available separately.

At the IASSIST-IPSA panel, Martinotti presented an analytic framework for the historical and present uses of process-produced information by governmental, administrative and research institutions and the implications of these data for the European data archives and of the growing demand for policy-oriented data. Some of the implications he identified included the linking of different data bases, quality of the data, and the political and institutional nature of the consequences of publicly supported social science research.

At the IASSIST-IPSA panel, Erwin K. Scheuch provided the session's attendees with an historical overview of the development of information systems for storage and management of large data bases. He described the problems encountered with these information systems, some of the large data bases which have been organized and the problems utilizing them, the relationship between the data collectors who have been primarily the public agencies and other communities such as researchers, and the relationship between the data archive and public agency. [Editor's Note: His paper will be forthcoming.]

Further input from Action Group members will help the group coordinators decide which projects are of most immediate interest, but tentative plans call for a continuation of the study of confidentiality laws; a preliminary pilot survey of available files in order to define the magnitude of this potential resource; a documentation and coding manual specifically for aggregate data; and, a survey of completed research using process-produced data.

Paul Müller has suggested the following priorities: (1) an overview (survey) of process-produced data for each country of interest; (2) decisions and guidelines on which information should be put into machine-readable form; and, (3) recommendations to public administrators for preservation of materials for social scientists.

It is likely that given the enormity of the tasks outlined by Müller and Leavitt and other issues identified in the Müller memo, these issues might well be handled by other Action Groups, but these matters are still fluid.

This Action Group will be interacting with QUANTUM, the US Association for Public Data Use, and other organizations to address subjects of mutual interest.

DATA ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

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