ILSES (*Integrated Library and Survey-data Extraction Service*) project

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ILSES General overview
This document describes the ILSES (Integrated Library and Survey-data Extraction Service) project.

ILSES: introduction
General information
ILSES is a project of a number of Dutch, German, French, and Irish institutes. ILSES has been accepted by the European Commission under the Fourth Framework (Telematics Applications of Common Interest, Telematics for Libraries) programme as project LB-4050/C and will as such run from September 1996 to September 1999.

Project Goals
The ILSES project aims to develop a service that enables individuals users to access and retrieve documentary information and empirical data related to large-scale surveys such as the binannual Eurobarometer surveys.

ILSES is designed to serve both end-users and content-providers of socio-economic information.

End-users
For end-users ILSES facilitates the integrated access and retrieval of two different kinds of information:

  1. documentary information as is commonly available from libraries, and

  2. empirical data as archived by data archives.

ILSES allows end-users to extend literature research and searches with a focused access of empirical data which can or have been used in empirical research of the kind reported in the literature they review. This allows them to extend classic literature research with their own original empirical analyses of relevant data.

ILSES of course also offers the other route: directing data-analysts searching for specific empirical data to be used in secondary analysis to literature in which results and outcomes of previous and similar analyses have been reported.

Content-providers

For content-providers ILSES offers tools and procedures for the normalization, cataloguing and controlled distribution of (distributed) holdings of the documentary and data resources mentioned above. Such content-providers are the database administrating staffs of librarian and data-archival institutions. ILSES will enable them to drastically increase and improve the utilization of their information resources while at the same time reducing their support burden per information request or retrieval.

General design
ILSES will be designed as an open system which can be applied to different kinds of library and data holdings. In this project, however, a pilot-application will be focused on socio-economic information as collected by large scale surveys, and on the associated literature.

ILSES is based on integrated relational databases of meta-information pertaining to both library and data-archive holdings, both of which are typically distributed over many different institutions. In order to productively connect such holdings with each other and with end-users, ILSES provides a wide-area network interface utilizing Internet and supporting browsing and retrieval tools such as WWW.

ILSES partners
The following institutes are partners in the ILSES project:

   - iec ProGAMMA, Groningen

   - SWIDOC, Amsterdam

   - University of Amsterdam

   - Zentral Archiv, Cologne

The following institutes are associate partners in the ILSES project, working in association with the University of Amsterdam:

   - Trinity College, Dublin

   - CIDSP, Grenoble

iec ProGAMMA

Introduction
The interuniversity expertise center ProGAMMA is a not_for_profit cooperation of eight Dutch, British, and Belgian universities, established in 1989. The center promotes the development, quality, and use of computer applications for the social and behavioral sciences. ProGAMMA is recognized by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) and supported by the Dutch government.

Role in the ILSES project
ProGAMMA is the Coordinating Partner in the ILSES project. The Coordinating Partner is responsible for communication with the European Commission. ProGAMMA is also responsible for the management and financial administration of the project.

ProGAMMA is also responsible for the development of many of the ILSES software tools

SWIDOC
Introduction
The Social Science Information and Documentation Centre (SWIDOC) of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, promotes and facilitates the exchange and efficient use of information in social science research.

Role in the ILSES project
SWIDOC will deliver the necessary expertise in the library field for the development and evaluation of the ILSES bibliographic data. SWIDOC will also function as content provider of bibliographic data, and will as such function as a test site for the content-provider tools of LIB-ILSES.

University of Amsterdam
Introduction
The University of Amsterdam, more specifically the Faculty of Political, Social and Cultural Sciences (PSCW) is since long one of the most prominent locations of advanced academic empirical social research in the Netherlands. The Faculty contains strong and productive nuclei of methodological expertise, and of innovative large_scale survey research. The combined expertise is particularly strong in the area of electoral research, public opinion studies, multi_level research and methodology of comparative research, all of which are of eminent importance to the ILSES project.

Role in the ILSES project
The University of Amsterdam will function as the main end-user representative. They will research user demands prior to the creation of the ILSES tools, coordinate end-user testing at the CIDSP and Trinity College, and evaluate the results. Throughout the project, the University of Amsterdam will provide end-user feedback for the developing ILSES tools.

Zentral Archiv
Introduction
The Central Archive for Empirical Social Research at the University of Cologne, Germany (ZA) is a resource, research, and teaching centre for national and international comparative research. The ZA is responsible for archiving, processing and distributing the Eurobarometer data, in co-operation with the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) and the Swedish Social Science Data Service (SSD).

Within the framework of the International Federation of Data Organisations for the Social Sciences (IFDO) and CESSDA, ZA has access to the data contained in social science data archives worldwide.

Role in the ILSES project
The Central Archive, on the background of rich research and data management experience and acknowledged competence in integrating international comparative data sets, will help develop the content-provider ILSES tools to access survey-data and guarantee the consideration of international standards for data documentation.

Trinity College
Introduction
Trinity College in Dublin, is one of the most important academic institutions in the Republic of Ireland. It is renowned for its library and documentary infrastructure, and for its sound empirical social research. The Department of Politics, which will be the most involved in the organization of the user validation workshops of the ILSES project, is unusually strongly embedded in European social research and collaboration networks, owing to which it is particularly well placed for contributing to such validation studies. This Department can be regarded as a prototypical environment for many of the end_users of ILSES.

Role in the ILSES project
Trinity College will serve as end-user test site for the ILSES tools. The College will *also help disseminate ILSES through the organisation of workshops.*

Trinity College is an associated contractor, associated to the University of Amsterdam.

CIDSP
Introduction
The Centre d'Information des Données SocioPolitiques, as intermediaries and suppliers, represent a rapidly developing new type of interactive data and documentation resource and interactive service providers. Their experience with international organisations such as CESSDA will enable the input of international best practice and standardization to the ILSES project.

Role in the ILSES project

CIDSP will function as end-user test site for the ILSES tools. CIDSP will also help disseminate ILSES through the organisation of workshops.

CIDSP is an associated contractor, associated to the University of Amsterdam.

ILSES tools
In the ILSES project the following tools will be developed:

Administrator-ILSES
The technical heart of the system

LIB-ILSES
For library content-providers

DAT-ILSES
For content providers with data archives

E-ILSES
For end-users on standalone machines

NET-ILSES
For end-users on the Internet

Administrator-ILSES
Administrator-ILSES will be the technical heart of the system. It consists of the datadictionary, containing all metadata about available archive data and bibliographic data, plus the interfaces that access this metadata.

Administrator-ILSES will consists of a formal specification, plus a set of (MS-Windows-) DLLs that implements this specification. Content-providers or other interested parties seeking to expand upon the ILSES service may get access to Administrator-ILSES.

The specification of Administrator-ILSES will be developed by the University of Amsterdam, in consultation with the other project members. The implementation of the software modules will be done by iec ProGAMMA.

According to the ILSES planning, the first version of Administrator-ILSES will be ready in March 1997.

LIB-ILSES
LIB-ILSES will enable the library content-provider to produce and maintain the metadata needed for the ILSES end-users to access bibliographic information through NET-ILSES and E-ILSES. LIB-ILSES will contain of a set of tools to set up and maintain the metadata and will contain also connections to give on-line access to existing bibliographic and documentary databases and their interrelations.

LIB-ILSES will consist of a set of mainly PC-based programs, that will be available for library content-providers.

The first version of LIB-ILSES will be developed by iec ProGAMMA, in consultation with the SWIDOC, the Central Archive and the University of Amsterdam. The LIB-ILSES tools will then be installed at SWIDOC to be integrated with existing library systems. At least 250 new documentary records will be compiled at SWIDOC and included into ILSES.

According to the ILSES planning, the first version of LIB-ILSES will be available April 1998.

DAT-ILSES
DAT-ILSES will enable the data-archive content-provider to produce and maintain the metadata needed for the ILSES end-users to access statistical data through NET-ILSES and E-ILSES. DAT-ILSES will contain of a set of tools to set up and maintain the metadata and will contain also connections to give on-line access to existing statistical data archives. End-users will also be able to download selected sets of statistical data.

DAT-ILSES will consist of a set of PC- and UNIX(tm)-based programs, that will be available for data-archive content-providers.

The first version of DAT-ILSES will be developed by iec ProGAMMA, in consultation with the Central Archive, the University of Amsterdam, and SWIDOC.

The DAT-ILSES tools will then be be installed at the Central Archive and integrated with the local retrieval system. A test base for selected Eurobarometers will be provided.

According to the ILSES planning, the first version of DAT-ILSES will be available November 1997.

E-ILSES
E-ILSES is the tool for the end-user to access networked information resources, as services to be provided by both LIB-ILSES and DAT-ILSES. However, it should also be capable of operating stand-alone. This is a strict requirement from the research-user who wants to be able to use E-ILSES stand-alone as information- and data extractor for distributed SPSS study files and documentation. This implies that some functionality of the LIB-ILSES and DAT-ILSES will also be incorporated into the ILSES user tool. When operating stand-alone E-ILSES can use any PC-based common database format, including those available through ODBC. When operating in client-server mode any relational database capable of understanding SQL can be used and manipulated.

Through E-ILSES, the user may:

- Examine content of archives and retrieve references to articles relating to the holdings

- Combine the contents of several holdings to set up a new study

- Retrieve the selected data

E-ILSES will be developed as a stand-alone PC-program, running under Windows 3.x or Windows 95/NT.

E-ILSES will be developed by iec ProGAMMA, in consultation with the University of Amsterdam, the Central Archive, and SWIDOC.

According to the ILSES planning, the first version of E-ILSES will be available in June 1997.

NET-ILSES
Next to the stand-alone version for end-users, E-ILSES, a WWW-based service for end-users will also be developed. This service will offer (part of) the functionality of E-ILSES, and possibly more. As the technology of the Internet is very rapidly progressing, the form NET-ILSES will eventually take, and the relation with E-ILSES, will continually be re-evaluated in order to follow technology and end-user demands.

NET-ILSES will be developed by iec ProGAMMA, in consultation with the Central Archive, the University of Amsterdam, and SWIDOC.

NET-ILSES will be developed in the form of one or more HTML-pages with corresponding code, tools, applets etc.

According to the ILSES planning, the first version of NET-ILSES will be available August 1998.

Morerinformation
More information about ILSES can be found at the ILSES home page, at URL http://www.gamma.rug.nl/ilses

There is a mailing list that will keep interested people updated about the progress of the project, and encourages discussions about ILSES.

It can be subscribed to via the ILSES home page, or by sending a mail message to listserv@nic.surfnet.nl, with the message text SUBSCRIBE ILSES-L YourNameGoesHere (put your name in the location YourNameGoesHere.)

You can also contact the project coordinator at iec ProGAMMA: David A. Schweizer, iec ProGAMMA, P.O. Box 841, 9700 AV   Groningen, The Netherlands, tel: +31 50 363 6900, fax: +31 50 363 6687, e-mail: gamma.post@gamma.rug.nl

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