

ELSST Content Coordination

## European Language Social Science Thesaurus (ELSST) Documentation

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## Executive Summary

The European Language Social Science Thesaurus (ELSST) is a broad-based, multilingual thesaurus for the social sciences. It is owned and published by the Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives (CESSDA) and its national Service Providers. The thesaurus consists of over 3,400 concepts and covers the core social science disciplines: politics, sociology, economics, education, law, crime, demography, health, employment, information and communication technology, and environmental science. ELSST is used for data discovery within CESSDA and facilitates access to data resources across Europe, independent of domain, resource, language or vocabulary.

ELSST is currently available in 15 languages: Czech, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Icelandic, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Romanian, Slovenian, Spanish, and Swedish.

This document covers the licensing and structure of ELSST, and how to use the thesaurus. It also includes information on changes made to ELSST over time.

## Abbreviations and Acronyms

CC-BY-SA	Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License
CESSDA	Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives
ELSST	European Language Social Science Thesaurus
FAIR	Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable (FAIR Principles)
HASSET	Humanities and Social Science Electronic Thesaurus
LIMBER	Language Independent Metadata Browsing of European Resources
RDF	Resource Discovery Framework
SKOS	Simple Knowledge Organization System
VOICE	Vocabulary Services Multilingual Content Management project
UKDS	UK Data Service
XKOS	Extended Knowledge Organization System

## 1. Introduction to ELSST

The [European Language Social Science Thesaurus](#) is a broad-based, multilingual thesaurus for the social sciences. It is owned and published by the Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives (CESSDA) and its national Service Providers. The thesaurus consists of over 3,400 concepts and covers the core social science disciplines: politics, sociology, economics, education, law, crime, demography, health, employment, information and communication technology, and environmental science.

ELSST is used for data discovery within CESSDA and facilitates access to data resources across Europe, independent of domain, resource, language or vocabulary.

ELSST is currently available in 15 languages: Czech, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Icelandic, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Romanian, Slovenian, Spanish, and Swedish.

## 2. Licensing of ELSST



ELSST is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](#).

Attribution: *Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives (CESSDA) and its national Service Providers.*

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Faculty of Social Sciences, Slovenia; and The Swedish National Data Service, University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

### 3. Background to ELSST

The European Language Social Science Thesaurus (ELSST) is a broad-based, multilingual thesaurus for the social sciences. It is currently available in 15 languages: Czech, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Icelandic, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Romanian, Slovenian, Spanish, and Swedish.

ELSST is owned and published by the Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives ([CESSDA](#)). ELSST was originally developed in 2000 as part of the EU-funded Language Independent Metadata Browsing of European Resources ([LIMBER](#)) project and has been further enhanced and extended through additional funding from the EU and the UK government. Since 2012, ELSST development has been funded by CESSDA through the CESSDA ELSST, VOICE and Metadata Office projects.

ELSST is used for data discovery within CESSDA and facilitates access to data resources across Europe, independent of domain, resource, language or vocabulary.

The thesaurus covers the core social science disciplines: politics, sociology, economics, education, law, crime, demography, health, employment, information and communication technology, and environmental science.

ELSST was originally based on the monolingual thesaurus, Humanities and Social Science Electronic Thesaurus ([HASSET](#)), of the UK Data Archive at the University of Essex. The thesauri remain closely related.

The latest version of ELSST was released in November 2025. ELSST became available under the terms of the CC-BY-SA licence on the current CESSDA ELSST platform in November 2020. The previous version dates from September 2024. ELSST is available as a [SKOS concept scheme](#).

## 4. Structure of ELSST

A thesaurus is a controlled and structured vocabulary where concepts are represented by terms. In a multilingual thesaurus like ELSST, the same concept is represented by a single Preferred Term in each of the languages of the thesaurus. Optionally, one or more alternative labels or Entry Terms can be linked to a Preferred Term in each language translation of the thesaurus.

Each concept in ELSST is identified by a dereferenceable Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) (= URL).

Each concept of the thesaurus can be semantically related to other concepts within the thesaurus. Hierarchical relations are represented by Broader Concepts and Narrower Concepts, while non-hierarchical associative relations are represented by Related Concepts. ELSST concepts may also be associated with different types of note field: Definition, Definition Source, Scope Note, and History Note. A Definition describes the meaning of the concept within the thesaurus, while a Scope Note provides advice on term usage to either indexers or searchers. A Scope Note may also clarify the meaning of the concept with respect to other concepts in the thesaurus. A History Note records the date of introduction of, changes made to, or deprecation of, an existing term. A full list of Definition Sources can be found in the Bibliography of Definition Sources (see below).

## 5. Bibliography of Definition Sources

The following source references were used to provide provenance for ELSST Definitions. Where no definition source is shown, the definition has either been created in-house, or the original source no longer applies or cannot be determined. Unattributed definitions are checked periodically and may be updated with new definition sources.

Definition Sources appear in the thesaurus only for the source language (English), and not for the other language versions of the thesaurus, unless they are official translations from a multilingual source. All other translations of Definitions have been provided by ELSST partners.

Some of the references in this bibliography may have alternative acronyms. The acronyms provided below are those used within ELSST.

ADED	Wallace, S. (ed.) (2015) A dictionary of education, 2nd edn., (Online version) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
ADOE	Allaby, M. (2015) A dictionary of ecology, 5th edn., (Online version) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

ATED	Australian Thesaurus of Education Descriptors. Retrieved 9 September 2025 from <a href="http://cunningham.acer.edu.au/multites2007/index.html">http://cunningham.acer.edu.au/multites2007/index.html</a>
BRITANNICA	Encyclopædia Britannica. Retrieved 9 September 2025 from <a href="https://www.britannica.com/">https://www.britannica.com/</a>
BRUNDTLAND	World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) Our Common Future. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
CDB	Pass, C., Lowes, B., Pendleton, A. and Chadwick, L. (1991) Collins dictionary of business, 2nd edn., Glasgow: Harper Collins.
CLOSER	CLOSER topics. Retrieved 9 September 2025 from <a href="https://wiki.ucl.ac.uk/display/CLOS/Topics">https://wiki.ucl.ac.uk/display/CLOS/Topics</a>
CODL	Matthews, P. (ed.) (1997) Concise Oxford dictionary of linguistics, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
CODP	McLean, I. (ed.) (1996) Concise Oxford dictionary of politics. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
CODS	Marshall, G. (1994) The concise Oxford dictionary of sociology, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
DE-2002	Black, J. (2002) A dictionary of economics, 2nd edn., Oxford: Oxford University Press.
DE-2003	Dictionary of economics (2003), A & C Black, London.
DE-2017	Hashimzade, N., Myles, G. and Black, J. (2017) A dictionary of economics, 5th edn., (Online version) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
DEC	Park, C. and Allaby, M. (2017) A dictionary of environment and conservation, 3rd edn., (Online version) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
DEST	Porteous, A. (1996) Dictionary of environmental science and technology, 2nd edn., Chichester: J. Wiley.
DFN	Bender, D. A. (2014) A dictionary of food and nutrition, 4th edn., (Online version) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
DHG	Rogers, A., Castree, N. and Kitchin, R. (eds.) (2013) A dictionary of human geography. (Online version) Oxford, Oxford University Press.
DL-1997	Martin, E. A. (ed.) (1997) A dictionary of law, 4th edn., Oxford: Oxford University Press.



DL-2018	Law, J. (2018) A dictionary of law, 9th edn., (Online version) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
DMC	Chandler, D. and Munday, R. (2020), A dictionary of media and communication, 3rd edn., (Online version), Oxford: Oxford University Press.
DN	Martin, E. A. and McFerran, T. A. (eds.) (2017) A dictionary of nursing, 7th edn., (Online version) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
DOE	Porta, M. (ed). (2016) A dictionary of epidemiology, 6th edn., (Online version) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
DOSS	Tomlinson, A. (2010) A dictionary of sports studies, (Online version) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
DPH	Porta, M. and Last, J. M (eds.) (2018) A dictionary of public health, 2nd edn., (Online version) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
DSS	Calhoun, C. (ed.) (2002) Dictionary of the social sciences, (Online version) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality thesaurus. Retrieved 9 September 2025 from <a href="https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/">https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/</a>
ERIC	ERIC Thesaurus (n.d.). Retrieved 9 September 2025 from <a href="https://eric.ed.gov/?ti=J">https://eric.ed.gov/?ti=J</a>
EUROSTAT	EUROSTAT: The Statistical Office of the European Union (n.d.). Retrieved 9 September 2025 from <a href="https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/home">https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/home</a>
FAF	Kent, M. (2016) Food and fitness: a dictionary of diet and exercise, 2nd edn., (Online version) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
GEMET	GEMET Thesaurus (n.d.). Retrieved 9 September 2025 from <a href="https://www.eionet.europa.eu/gemet/en/about/">https://www.eionet.europa.eu/gemet/en/about/</a>
ICPSR	ICPSR Thesaurus (n.d.). University of Michigan. Retrieved 9 September 2025 from <a href="https://www.vocabularyserver.com/icpsr/">https://www.vocabularyserver.com/icpsr/</a>
ILO	ILO Thesaurus (n.d.). June 2024 version at <a href="https://metadata.ilo.org/thesaurus.html">https://metadata.ilo.org/thesaurus.html</a>
IOM	International Organization for Migration. Retrieved 9 September 2025 from <a href="https://www.iom.int">https://www.iom.int</a>
ISCED-1997	International Standard Classification of Education: ISCED (1997). Retrieved 9 September 2025

from [https://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/international-standard-classification-of-education-1997-en\\_0.pdf](https://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/international-standard-classification-of-education-1997-en_0.pdf)

MERRIAM- WEBSTER	Merriam-Webster online dictionary. Retrieved 9 September 2025 from <a href="https://www.merriam-webster.com/">https://www.merriam-webster.com/</a>
ODC	Rennie, R. and Law, J. (2016) A dictionary of chemistry, 7th edn., (Online version) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
ODSSM	Kent, M. (2007) Oxford dictionary of sports science and medicine, 3rd edn., (Online version) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
OED	Oxford English Dictionary (Online version). Retrieved 9 September 2025 from <a href="https://www.oed.com/">https://www.oed.com/</a>
PDIT	Gunton, T. (ed.) (1993) Penguin dictionary of information technology, 2nd edn., Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin.
SCMAHD	Dirckx, J. H. (ed.) (1997) Stedmans concise medical & allied health dictionary, Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins.
UNESCO	UNESCO Thesaurus (n.d.). Retrieved 9 September 2025 from <a href="http://vocabularies.unesco.org/browser/thesaurus/en/">http://vocabularies.unesco.org/browser/thesaurus/en/</a>
UNICRI	UNICRI Thesaurus (n.d.). June 2024 version at <a href="http://www.unicri.eu/services/library_documentation/catalogue_thesaurus/thesaurus.php">http://www.unicri.eu/services/library_documentation/catalogue_thesaurus/thesaurus.php</a>
WHO	World Health Organization (WHO) Health Promotion Glossary (1998).

## 6. Using ELSST

The thesaurus is free to search and browse online using the [Skosmos](#) publishing solution. ELSST is also free to download on acceptance of a CC-BY-SA licence.

To access the thesaurus, click on the 'Access ELSST' link at the bottom of the [ELSST home page](#). This takes you to the [home page of the latest version of ELSST](#) (Version 6).

### Browse the thesaurus

Terms can be browsed either via their hierarchical structure or by alphabetical listing. New and deprecated concepts for each version are listed under the 'New and Deprecated' tab. The list is ordered chronologically and all links are clickable. New concepts are also shown in the Alphabetical and Hierarchical lists.

### Deprecated concepts

Concepts in ELSST are never deleted but deprecated instead. This ensures that their URI is still resolvable in case users have annotated their resources with the concept. A red banner at the top of the concept page indicates that it has been deprecated.

Deprecated concepts are listed in the 'New and Deprecated' tab where they are indicated by 'strikethrough' text. Where the deprecated concept has been replaced by another, an arrow followed by the new concept name indicates its replacement.

### Search the thesaurus

Terms can be searched using the search box on the [home page of the latest version of ELSST](#), either by a specific language or across all languages. Searches are case-insensitive and diacritic-insensitive. The system autocompletes the string.

The default search finds all terms that start with the search string. For example **art** finds terms such as ART and ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES as well as ARTHRITIS and ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION, etc. Entry Terms, such as ART, are shown in italics, with a pointer to their Preferred Term (in this case, VISUAL ARTS).

The symbol \* can be used for truncated searches. For example:

- **art\*** will find all terms starting with **art**, i.e. it is the same as the default search.
- **\*art** will find all terms ending in **art** such as ART and WORKS OF ART
- **\*art \*** will find all terms that contain **art** anywhere in the term. In addition to the terms found by the searches **art\*** and **\*art**, it finds terms such as VISUAL ARTS and FINE ARTS EDUCATION, as well as HEART DISEASES, POLITICAL PARTIES, etc.

- \*-\* or \*'\* finds all terms that contain hyphens (for example ANTI-TERRORISM and MEDICAL X-RAYS) and apostrophes (for example WORKERS' RIGHTS and WOMEN'S HEALTH) respectively

To select a term, click on it within the autocomplete list. Alternatively, click on the Search button to display the list of results then click on a term within this list to select it. The terms in the results list are shown with their equivalents in other languages, as well as their Broader, Narrower and Related Concepts and Alternative/Entry Terms, indicated by symbols. Hover the cursor over the symbol to see how terms are related.

On the search results page you can also refine your search by entering a Broader Concept into the 'By parent' search box under 'Search options' on the left-hand side of the page, and clicking the 'Limit search' button. For example, on the results page for **\*art\***, limiting the search to the parent term EDUCATION filters out terms such as ARTHRITIS and ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION. To clear the filter press the 'Clear limitations' button on the right hand side of the page.

Selecting a term takes you to the home page for that term. The left hand side of the page shows the term in its hierarchy, while the right hand side shows the term with its Entry Terms, relations and notes.

### **Search or browse previous versions of ELSST**

To access previous versions, click on the ELSST thesaurus logo on the top left-hand corner of the latest version home page. This shows a clickable list of all available versions of ELSST, including the current version. You can either:

- Click on a link to take you to the version of your choice. To return to the latest version, click the back button.
- Search for a term across one or more versions by selecting the version(s) and language from the dropdown boxes next to the search box, and either click on a term within the autocomplete list or click on the 'Search' button. To switch back to the original version or access another, select the relevant version from the dropdown box next to the search box in the results page.

If a term is available in the previous version of ELSST, it has a 'has previous version' link to that version on its home page. You can click on that link to switch to the term's home page in the previous version. To return to the term's home page in the latest version, click on the 'is a version of' link on the previous version's page.

### Search the CESSDA Data Catalogue using ELSST

Click on the 'Keyword search' link to search the CESSDA Data Catalogue (CDC). The CDC contains descriptions of more than 40,000 data collections held by CESSDA's Service Providers, originating from over 20 European countries. The 'Keyword search' link finds all catalogue records that have been assigned the term in question as a keyword, or which have a keyword from another vocabulary that matches the ELSST term. Links are also provided from the CDC back to the ELSST thesaurus.

### API access

The Skosmos installation provides an API. See the [Swagger documentation](#) for details.

### Download ELSST

ELSST is also [free to download](#) on acceptance of a [CC-BY-SA](#) licence. This allows users to modify and build upon the work even for commercial purposes. Any new works that use the original content must carry the same CC-BY-SA licence and CESSDA must be clearly credited as the owner of the work.

## 7. ELSST Concept Scheme

ELSST is currently available as a SKOS concept scheme. Concepts, their labels, relations and notes are the basic notions for an [RDF](#) / [SKOS](#) concept scheme.

- Concepts are 'units of thought' that exist in a domain. Concepts are represented by terms. In SKOS concepts are formalised as `skos:concept`, identified by dereferenceable URIs (URLs). In Skosmos, URIs are shown on each concept page.
- Terms are the actual names used to refer to a concept. For example POLITICAL PROTEST, POLIITTINEN VASTARINTA, and POLITIČNI PROTEST are all labels for the same concept in English, Finnish and Slovenian, respectively. Labels are expressed by means of SKOS predicates:
  - `skos:prefLabel` is used for 'Preferred Terms' in classical thesaurus terminology
  - `skos:altLabel` is used for 'Non-Preferred' or 'Use For' terms in classical thesaurus terminology.
- Relations
  - Hierarchical relations between concepts are expressed in SKOS by the predicates `skos:broader` and `skos:narrower`, which correspond to the classical thesaurus relations Broader/NarrowerTerm (BT/NT).
  - Non-hierarchical relations express a notion of 'relatedness' between concepts and are represented in SKOS via the `skos:related` predicate, which corresponds to the classical thesaurus relation Related Term (RT).

- Notes
  - Definitions are expressed as 'skos:definition'
  - Scope Notes are expressed as 'skos:scopeNote'
  - History Notes are expressed as 'skos:historyNote'
  - Definition Sources are expressed as 'xkos:additionalContentNote'

The table below shows the correspondence between SKOS/XKOS names and those used in Skosmos (see section 6, Using ELSST).

<b>SKOS/XKOS</b>	<b>Skosmos</b>
skos:concept	Concept
skos:prefLabel	Preferred term
skos:altLabel	Entry term
skos:broader	Broader concept
skos:narrower	Narrower concept
skos:related	Related concept
skos:definition	Definition
skos:scopeNote	Scope note
skos:historyNote	History note
xkos:additionalContentNote	Definition source

## 8. Release Notes

See below for some of the most important changes to ELSST in recent years.

### November 2025 release (ELSST Version 6)

Work in this development phase of ELSST has focused on updating the DEMOGRAPHY hierarchy and related terms, in consultation with international demography experts. Changes include additional terms to improve coverage of vital statistics (such as births, marriages, cohabitation, civil partnerships and deaths) and updated definitions for existing terms.

Members of ELSST presented recent developments in the thesaurus, including collaborations and translation issues, at the International Association for Social Science Information Service and Technology (IASSIST) 2025 conference in June 2025. They are available on Zenodo at [The European Language Social Science Thesaurus \(ELSST\): Keeping it Fair](#) and [Translating ELSST into Slovenian: Challenges in supporting Open Science and Fair Principles](#).

All language versions have been updated except for Romanian, Swedish and Icelandic where no new translations have been added to this release. Translation of Preferred Terms for all target languages is between 96 -100% complete.

The following changes were made to the English source language version:

- 35 new concepts
- 3 deprecated concepts
- 12 relabelled Preferred Terms
- 59 new Entry Terms
- 10 deleted Entry Terms
- 80 new or changed Definitions
- 21 new or changed Scope Notes
- 53 changes to the Broader/Narrower Concepts
- 55 changes to Related Concepts
- 51 new or changed History Notes

#### Examples

- **New concepts** include the following: MULTIGENERATIONAL HOUSEHOLDS, PARTNERS (PERSONAL), UNDERPOPULATION, NET MIGRATION, IRREGULAR MIGRATION, FOOD INSECURITY, and UNINTENDED PREGNANCY

- **Deprecated concepts** are as follows: HOUSEHOLDERS, DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS (replaced by VITAL STATISTICS) and MORBIDITY (replaced by ILL HEALTH)
- **Relabelled Preferred Terms** include the following: NUMBER OF BIRTHS instead of NATALITY; NUMBER OF DEATHS instead of MORTALITY, and NUMBER OF MARRIAGES instead of NUPTIALITY
- **New Entry Terms** include FLATSHARING as Entry Term for HOME SHARING; FOOD POVERTY as Entry Term for FOOD INSECURITY and UNPLANNED PREGNANCY as Entry Term for UNINTENDED PREGNANCY
- **Deleted Entry Terms:** include PARTNERS (PERSONAL) as Entry Term for SPOUSES and CHILD REARING as Entry Term for CHILD CARE
- **New or changed Definitions** include the addition of a Definition to the term SEPARATED (*PERSONS WHO ARE CURRENTLY MARRIED OR IN A CIVIL PARTNERSHIP, BUT WHO NO LONGER CONSIDER THEMSELVES TO BE A COUPLE. THEY MAY EITHER LIVE SEPARATELY OR LEAD SEPARATE LIVES WITHIN THE SAME HOUSEHOLD. SEPARATION MAY BE BY MUTUAL AGREEMENT OR BY JUDICIAL DECREE.*) and the change of the Definition of EDUCATIONAL MIGRATION (from *MIGRATION FOR PURPOSES OF TERTIARY EDUCATION* to *THE MOVEMENT OF INDIVIDUALS, TYPICALLY STUDENTS, ACROSS REGIONAL OR NATIONAL BORDERS TO PURSUE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES*)
- **Broader/Narrower Concept changes** include the change of the Broader Concept of FOOD BANKS from CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS to FOOD AID (DOMESTIC) and the Broader Concept of HOME SHARING from HOUSING to HOUSEHOLDS

## September 2024 release (ELSST Version 5)

In the last year we have worked closely with developers of the [CESSDA Data Catalogue](#) (CDC) and have now established a link from ELSST to the CDC and vice versa. The CDC contains descriptions of more than 40,000 data collections held by CESSDA's Service Providers, originating from over 20 European countries. The link finds all CDC catalogue records that have been assigned the term in question as a keyword, or which have a keyword from another vocabulary that matches the ELSST term. Links are also provided from the CDC back to the ELSST thesaurus. These innovations aim to enhance the discoverability of data in the CDC by enabling users to learn more about the concepts and navigate through the thesaurus structure. Further details can be found in a presentation given at the International Association for Social Science Information Service and Technology (IASSIST) and Association of Canadian Map Libraries and Archives (CARTO) 2024 conference in May 2024.

Content development work in the past year has focused on updating terms relating to civil status, family structure, disability, and the education of students with special educational



needs and disabilities. We have also made a start at updating the science and technology hierarchy.

All language versions have been updated except for Finnish and Romanian where no new translations have been added to this release. Translation of Preferred Terms for all target languages is between 97 -100% complete. ELSST previously contained a Danish translation, which is no longer available.

The following changes were made to the English source language version:

- 13 new concepts
- 3 deprecated concepts
- 12 relabelled Preferred Terms
- 39 new Entry Terms
- 21 deleted Entry Terms
- 55 new or changed Definitions
- 14 new or changed Scope Notes
- 36 changes to the Broader/Narrower Concepts
- 46 changes to Related Concepts
- 34 new or changed History Notes

#### Examples

- **New concepts** are as follows: NUCLEAR FAMILY; BLENDED FAMILIES; SINGLES (LIFESTYLE); SINGLEHOOD (LIFESTYLE); GLOBAL HEALTH; CO-PARENTING; JOINT CUSTODY; ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORKS; APPRENTICESHIPS; INCLUSIVE EDUCATION; DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY; DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION; DIGITAL DIVIDE
- **Deprecated concepts** are as follows: MARRIED WOMEN WORKERS, SPECIAL EDUCATION, SURVIVING CIVIL PARTNERSHIP
- **Relabelled Preferred Terms** are as follows: FOOD AID (INTERNATIONAL) instead of FOOD AID; EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES instead of SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION; STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES instead of SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS; TEACHERS OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES instead of SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS; SPECIAL SCHOOLS instead of SCHOOLS FOR THE DISABLED; TEACHING ASSISTANTS instead of CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS; JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITIES instead of REFORMATORY SCHOOLS; DIGITALIZATION instead of DIGITIZATION; DIGITAL LITERACY instead of COMPUTER LITERACY; PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES instead of DISABLED PERSONS; SINGLES (CIVIL STATUS) instead of SINGLES; SINGLEHOOD (CIVIL STATUS) instead of SINGLEHOOD

- **New Entry Terms** include DIGITAL EXCLUSION as Entry Term for DIGITAL DIVIDE and MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS as Entry Term for INCLUSIVE EDUCATION
- **Deleted Entry Terms:** include SPINSTERS and BACHELORS as Entry Terms for SINGLES (CIVIL STATUS) and SLOW LEARNERS as Entry Term for STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES
- **New or changed Definitions** include the addition of a Definition to the term DIGITAL LITERACY (AN INDIVIDUAL'S ABILITY TO USE DIGITAL INFORMATION AND RELEVANT TECHNOLOGIES TO FIND, EVALUATE, CREATE AND COMMUNICATE INFORMATION), and the change of the Definition of CIVIL STATUS (from A PERSON'S RELATIONSHIP STATUS, SUCH AS SINGLE, MARRIED, CIVIL PARTNER, DIVORCED OR WIDOWED to A PERSON'S LEGAL RELATIONSHIP STATUS, SUCH AS SINGLE, MARRIED, CIVIL PARTNER, DIVORCED OR WIDOWED)
- **Broader/Narrower Concept changes** include the change of the Broader Concept of COHABITING from CIVIL STATUS to PARTNERSHIPS (PERSONAL), and the Broader Concept of DIGITALIZATION from INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY to DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

## September 2023 release (ELSST Version 4)

A major focus in the latest content development phase of ELSST was to increase diversity and inclusivity of our terms. Our approach is outlined in our new Inclusivity statement and described in [a presentation](#) we gave at the International Association for Social Science Information Service and Technology (IASSIST) 2023 conference in May.

This release also includes the revision of the CIVIL STATUS hierarchy, and the introduction of new terms reflecting changes in working and learning/teaching environments associated with the Covid pandemic.

All language versions have been updated except for Danish and Romanian where no new translations have been added to this release. Translation of Preferred Terms for all target languages is between 96-100% complete.

The following changes were made to the English source language version:

- 33 new concepts
- 23 deprecated concepts
- 18 relabelled Preferred Terms
- 67 new Entry Terms
- 17 deleted Entry Terms
- 55 new or changed Definitions
- 4 new or changed Scope Notes

- 89 changes to the Broader/Narrower Concepts
- 79 changes to Related Concepts
- 87 new or changed History Notes

#### Examples

- **New concepts** include the following terms: HYBRID EDUCATION, HYBRID WORK, DIGITAL NOMADS, CIVIL PARTNERSHIP DISSOLUTION, DATA BREACHES
- **Deprecated concepts:** METHODOLOGY terms have been deprecated, as well as the following terms: SENILE DEMENTIA, ILLEGITIMATE PERSONS, BEREAVEMENT (replaced by the new term GRIEF), VAGRANTS (replaced by the new term HOMELESS PERSONS), OUTWORK (replaced by HOME-BASED WORK) and OUTWORKERS (replaced by HOME-BASED WORKERS)
- **Relabelled Preferred Terms** include the following: BIRTHS OUTSIDE OF A MARRIAGE OR CIVIL PARTNERSHIP instead of ILLEGITIMATE BIRTHS, CIVIL STATUS instead of MARITAL STATUS, INDIGENOUS PEOPLES instead of INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS, IRREGULAR MIGRANTS instead of ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS
- **New Entry Terms** include ALCOHOL ADDICTION as Entry Term for ALCOHOLISM and HYBRID LEARNING as Entry Term for HYBRID EDUCATION
- **Deleted Entry Terms:** include ALIENS as Entry Term for FOREIGNERS and DISSOLUTION OF CIVIL PARTNERSHIP as Entry Term for MARRIAGE DISSOLUTION
- **New or changed Definitions** include the addition of Definitions to the following two terms: FOOD BANKS (NON-PROFIT, CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS THAT DISTRIBUTE FOOD TO THOSE IN NEED) and STREET CHILDREN (CHILDREN WHO DEPEND ON THE STREETS TO LIVE AND/OR WORK, WHETHER ALONE OR WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY)
- **Broader/Narrower Concept changes** include the change of the Broader Concept of SEPARATED from FAMILY COHESION to CIVIL STATUS, and the Broader Concept of COHABITATION from SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR to COHABITING

### September 2022 release (ELSST Version 3)

We are pleased to announce that two new languages, Hungarian and Icelandic, have been added to ELSST with this release. This brings the total number of languages in ELSST to 16. The remaining language versions have all been updated, with the exception of Danish, Dutch, Romanian and Slovenian. Translation of Preferred Terms for all target languages is between 98-100% complete. The Lithuanian version of ELSST now also contains Definitions and Scope notes.

This release also sees a number of technical innovations that are designed to promote ELSST's compliance with the [FAIR principles](#).

Firstly, concepts deprecated from the previous version are now available to view in ELSST. FAIR principles indicate that metadata such as URIs should always remain accessible even though the object may no longer be in use. To ensure that URIs remain resolvable, obsolete concepts are no longer deleted from ELSST, but are deprecated instead. This means that they remain viewable online, with a link to the concept that has replaced or superseded them, if applicable - not all concepts have a replacement.

Secondly, versioning of ELSST has also been refined, with a new URI formatting and the move to a simpler and more streamlined SKOS concept scheme, from the previous [SKOS-XL](#) concept scheme for lexicalisations. This improves interoperability by making the ELSST concept scheme easier to interpret.

Content development work in this period has focused on completing the revision of terms related to sexuality, as well as updating terms relating to migration.

The following changes were made to the English source language version:

- 44 new concepts
- 8 deprecated concepts
- 3 relabelled Preferred Terms
- 42 new Entry Terms
- 30 deleted Entry Terms
- 35 new or changed Definitions
- 5 new or changed Scope Notes
- 84 changes to the Broader/Narrower Concepts
- 57 changes to Related Concepts
- 59 new or changed History Notes

#### Examples

- **New concepts** include the following terms related to sexuality including GENDER EXPRESSION, TRANSGENDER PERSONS, MASCULINITY, FEMININITY, LGBTQI+ RIGHTS, HOMOPHOBIA, and TRANSPHOBIA. Other new terms include FORCED MIGRATION, REFUGEE POLICY, ASYLUM SEEKERS, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL POLARIZATION and SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE
- **Deprecated concepts:** The following four concepts have been deprecated: SEXUAL AND GENDER GROUPS, RIGHTS OF SPECIAL GROUPS, GREEN BELT AREAS and BRITISH HISTORY. We have also deprecated the following concepts that were previously reported as deleted in the September 2021 release: CONSERVATION, QUALITY, ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION (now an Entry Term of

ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES), PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS (now an Entry Term for POLLUTANTS)

- **Relabelled Preferred Term:** GENDER DISCRIMINATION instead of SEX DISCRIMINATION; TRADESPEOPLE instead of TRADESMEN, and HEATWAVES instead of HEAT WAVES
- **New Entry Terms** include MARGINALISATION as Entry Term for SOCIAL EXCLUSION, and MOBILE MONEY as Entry Term for MOBILE PAYMENTS
- **Deleted Entry Terms:** include REFUGEE POLICY as Entry Term for IMMIGRATION POLICY
- **New or changed Definitions** include the addition of Definitions to the following two terms: FORCED MIGRATION (*THE MIGRATION OF PEOPLE IN WHICH AN ELEMENT OF COERCION EXISTS, INCLUDING THREATS TO LIFE AND LIVELIHOOD, WHETHER ARISING FROM NATURAL OR MAN-MADE CAUSES, E.G. WAR, NATURAL OR ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTERS, FAMINE OR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS*) and SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE (*THE POWER OF SOCIAL MEDIA TO SHAPE THE ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS OF INDIVIDUALS*)
- **Broader/Narrower Concept changes** include the change of the Broader Concept of NON-BINARY PERSONS from SEXUAL AND GENDER GROUPS to GENDER IDENTITY, and the Broader Concept of WOMEN'S RIGHTS from GENDER EQUALITY to HUMAN RIGHTS

## September 2021 release (ELSST Version 2)

Development work in this period has focused on the revision of the ENVIRONMENT hierarchy, and of terms related to sexuality. The latter work is still in progress.

Out of the 14 available languages, all have been updated, with the exception of Spanish, Danish and Czech. Translation of Preferred Terms for all target languages is between 98-100% complete. The following changes were made to the English source language version:

- 19 new concepts
- 4 deprecated concepts
- 9 relabelled Preferred Terms
- 37 new Entry Terms
- 11 deleted Entry Terms
- 22 new or changed Definitions
- 7 new or changed Scope Notes
- 54 changes to the Broader/Narrower Concepts
- 58 changes to Related Concepts
- 32 new or changed History Notes

## Examples

- **New concepts** include ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS, BIODIVERSITY, EMISSIONS TRADING, CARBON OFFSETTING, WEATHER HAZARDS, NON-BINARY PERSONS, and LGBTQI+
- **Deprecated concepts:** CONSERVATION, QUALITY, ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION (now an Entry Term of ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES), and PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS (now an Entry Term for POLLUTANTS)
- **Relabelled Preferred Terms** include GENDER IDENTITY instead of SEXUAL IDENTITY, and DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION instead of DISCRIMINATION AGAINST HOMOSEXUALS
- **New Entry Terms** include TELECOMMUTING, REMOTE WORKING and E-WORKING as Entry Terms for TELEWORK, and COVID-19 VACCINATION for VACCINATION
- **Deleted Entry Terms:** include TRUTH, HONESTY and TRUSTWORTHINESS as Entry Terms for TRUST
- **New or changed Definitions** include the addition of Definitions to the following two terms: ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS (*AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES, AND OF THE IMPACT HUMAN ACTIONS HAVE ON THESE*) and BIODIVERSITY (*BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, ESPECIALLY AT ECOSYSTEM, SPECIES AND GENETIC LEVEL*)
- **New or changed Scope Notes** include GENDER IDENTITY (*DO NOT CONFUSE WITH THE TERMS 'SEX' OR 'SEXUAL ORIENTATION'.*)
- **Broader/Narrower Concept changes** include the change of the Broader Concept of SMOKING RESTRICTIONS from POLLUTION CONTROL to PUBLIC HEALTH, and the Broader Concept of DROUGHTS from WEATHER to WEATHER HAZARDS

## November 2020 release (ELSST Version 1)

The focus of the work in this period was on the creation of a new hierarchy, TECHNICAL INFRASTRUCTURE, and the inclusion of new topical concepts such as COVID-19 and DISINFORMATION.

Out of the 14 available languages, 12 have been updated. The exceptions are Spanish and Danish. Translation of Preferred Terms for all target languages is between 98-100% complete. The following changes were made to the English source language version:

- 14 new concepts
- 6 deleted concepts
- 6 relabelled Preferred Terms
- 21 new Entry Terms
- 2 deleted Entry Terms
- 18 new or changed Definitions

- 1 new Scope Note
- 46 changes to the Broader/Narrower Concepts
- 14 changes to Related Concepts
- 16 new or changed History Notes
- 16 new or changed Definition Sources

#### Examples

- **New concepts** include TECHNICAL INFRASTRUCTURE, COVID-19, CROWDFUNDING, and DISINFORMATION
- **Deleted concepts** include STRUCTURES, WATER SERVICES (BUILDINGS), PIERS and PYLONS
- **Relabelled Preferred Terms** include DISRUPTION OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES instead of DISCONNECTION OF SERVICES, and WASTEWATER DISPOSAL AND HANDLING instead of SEWAGE DISPOSAL AND HANDLING
- **New Entry Terms** include FAKE NEWS as an Entry Term for DISINFORMATION, and GENERATING PLANTS as an Entry Term for POWER PLANTS
- **Deleted Entry Terms:** ELECTRICITY, ELECTRICAL ENERGY
- **New or changed Definitions** include the addition of Definitions to the following two terms: WASTEWATER DISPOSAL AND HANDLING (*INFRASTRUCTURE FOR HANDLING AND DISPOSING OF WASTEWATER FROM INDUSTRIAL, DOMESTIC AND STORM RUN-OFF SOURCES*), and COMPETITION LAW (*THE BRANCH OF LAW CONCERNED WITH THE REGULATION OF ANTICOMPETITIVE PRACTICES, RESTRICTIVE TRADE PRACTICES, AND ABUSES OF A DOMINANT POSITION OR MARKET POWER*)
- **New Scope Note:** WATER INFRASTRUCTURE: *FOR TRANSPORT USE EITHER "SEA TRANSPORT" OR "INLAND WATER TRANSPORT"*
- **Broader/Narrower Concept changes** include the change of the Broader Concept of DAMS from STRUCTURES to WATER SUPPLY, and the Broader Concept of NUCLEAR POWER STATIONS from NUCLEAR POWER to POWER PLANTS

## 9. Inclusivity statement

The ELSST service aims to be inclusive and recognise the diversity of all people. We are working to make sure the terminology used across ELSST is appropriate, inclusive, unbiased and respects diversity and equality.

We recognise that ELSST may contain historic terminology that is no longer considered respectful and we are actively working to change this. Due to the time it takes to translate new and updated content, changes may not appear as quickly as we would like. At present, one annual release of updated content is made, usually in mid-September each year. In some cases, translation updates may take longer if resources for a particular language are not available.

Please note that historical or obsolete terms may still be found in earlier versions of ELSST or in deprecated concepts. In ELSST, concepts are deprecated, not deleted. It is important to maintain links to deprecated concepts to ensure that external metadata resources that have not been updated to use the latest ELSST terminology remain findable and accessible (see the [FAIR Principles](#) recommendations on Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability, and Reusability of digital assets).

We encourage all ELSST users to update their metadata resources to use the current terms where possible.

We welcome your suggestions and comments. Please contact us using the [ELSST feedback form](#).