CROSSING BORDERS WITHOUT LEAVING – SHARING SECURE DATA INTERNATIONALLY

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ROADMAP

- International access to controlled microdata

- UKDS-GESIS connection - The story

- How we did it, key challenges and solutions

- First case studies
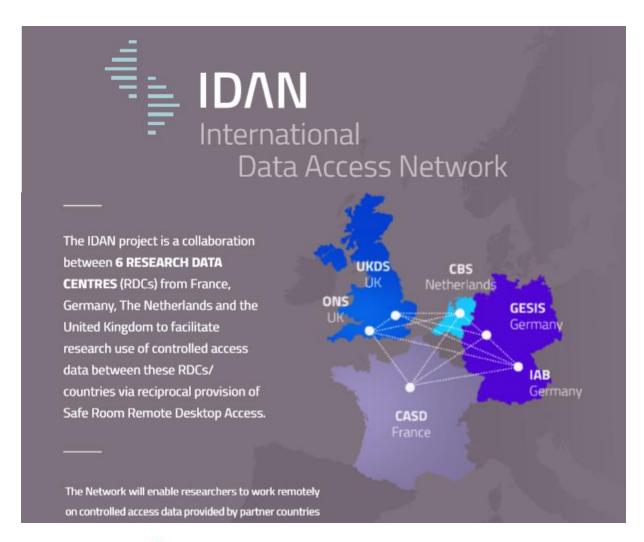
- Summary

- References

INTERNATIONAL ACCESS TO CONTROLLED MICRODATA

- Due to their sensitive nature, access to secure/controlled data is highly restricted, they are only accessible remotely via a Trusted Research Environment (TRE) (UKDS SecureLab) or on-site via a dedicated Safe Room (GESIS).

- Internationally, researchers often face significant hurdles in terms of a) time and financial burden having to travel to a Safe Room, and b) being associated with a HE institution of the other country - hurdles not many can overcome.

- In recent years, work has intensified to enable data access across international borders via Safe Room Remote Access (e.g. IDAN, SSHOC).

https://idan.network/

https://www.sshopencloud.eu/project

UKDS-GESIS CONNECTION - THE STORY

- SSHOC project: 1st January 2019 – 30th April 2022

- WP5 'Innovations in Data Access', Task 5.4 'Remote Access to Sensitive Data'

- One of the achievements of SSHOC WP 5.4 was to set up a remote connection between UKDS SecureLab and GESIS Secure Data Centre

For detailed documentation on framework and contract for international data use agreements on remote access to confidential data, setup, testing, and the International Secure Data Facility Professionals Network (ISDFPN), please see our References.

HOW WE DID IT, KEY CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

- Step 1: Building the remote connection infrastructure
  - ↤ Contracts
  - ↤ Technical set-up
  - ↤ Data depositor permissions
  - ↤ Procedures
  - ↤ Communication
- Step 2: Testing the remote connections
  - ↤ Technical tests
  - ↤ Researcher tests

FIRST CASE STUDIES

"Our visit to the data centre went really smoothly. Instead of needing to travel to Germany, we were able to access excellent but restricted GESIS data from just down the road. The teams at both ends were really helpful throughout, and we are already thinking of new projects that allow us to make use of this fantastic data resource."

SUMMARY

- The bilateral connection UKDS-GESIS was legally and technically challenging, time consuming, and hence only possible due to the SSHOC funding received.

- SSHOC enabled us to generate and publish blueprints to facilitate future connection setups, and set a new precedent for attracting funding for advancing international data access work.

- UKDS and GESIS are currently establishing options of funding for additional access points.

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Questions?

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Thank you.

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