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Mission Statement DARIS

Creator: Sybil Krügel, Renate Kunz

Approved by: Georg Lutz (director)

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Introduction

FORS is a national centre of expertise in the social sciences and serves researchers in Switzerland and abroad. FORS services are designed to be adapted as far as possible to the needs of the social science research community. FORS aims to stimulate debate and scientific exchange both within Switzerland and between Swiss researchers and the international research community. The Data and Research Information Services (DARIS) is a department within FORS responsible for data curation, distribution, and promotion.

Our mission is twofold:

- First, we aim to acquire, document, preserve and disseminate high-quality quantitative and qualitative data and research information in conformity with national and international standards;
- Second, we aim to make these data and services known and to promote a research culture of data sharing and secondary analysis for the social sciences in Switzerland.

We collect data that:¹

- Represent works of general interest for social science research (i.e. of high quality and exemplary studies with analytic potential);
- Give evidence and greater understanding of Swiss society or parts of it (including international surveys);
- Are produced with methodological excellence;
- Are produced primarily by researchers in Switzerland;
- Consist of cross-sectional or longitudinal research (panel data and time series that allow for examination of trends).

While most of our data are quantitative survey data, we also archive qualitative research data, and we are currently evaluating ways to preserve and disseminate other types of data such as experimental data and some forms of “big data”, including transactional and social media data.

Data depositors and users

Data depositors and/or users of our services are researchers generally affiliated with a Swiss research institution, government departments, offices of cantonal and national statistics, and public and commercial survey institutes and polling organisations.

DARIS highly encourages researchers to archive and reuse data in a sustainable manner. We therefore offer trainings and workshops in data management and data sharing. In order to facilitate the deposit and reuse of data, we offer [FORSbase](#), an online self-archiving platform that allows researchers to easily document and deposit their research data themselves (both quantitative and qualitative) for long-term preservation and dissemination, customisable according to the data type.

Open data

FORS takes the position that social science data produced within publicly funded projects should be:

- Available for re-use outside of the original research team;
- Free and easy to discover and access;

¹ For more detailed information on what we are collecting at DARIS, please consult our collections policy.

- Curated according to international standards by a professional archiving institution.

We advance open data in Switzerland through a range of promotional and teaching activities. In addition, we are involved in several multidisciplinary projects that aim to promote the publication and distribution of open research data in Switzerland.

Sustainability

We follow a policy of active preservation to ensure the authenticity, reliability, and integrity of our digital holdings while providing usable versions for research, teaching or learning. In our preservation policy we express our long-term commitment to retention of, management of, and access to research data through a set of strategies (based upon open and available file formats and data migration). Our preservation policy is compliant with the OAIS reference model and compatible with other international standards.

The activities of DARIS are documented and explained on our website, and related documents such as the collections policy and the preservation policy are available there.