

10th Anniversary
Symposium

The future
of data collection
in the social sciences

Wednesday, September 12, 2018

Théâtre La Grange de Dorigny
University of Lausanne

Register on our homepage
www.forscenter.ch

Spots are limited.

Symposium: The future of data collection in the social sciences

The amount of data produced and collected in all aspects of life has exploded in the last decade. The way knowledge about societies is produced in many disciplines, including the social sciences, will most likely change fundamentally.

Empirical social research has relied for a long time on relatively small scale survey or experimental data. In addition, data from official statistics have been used to get insights into social, cultural or political phenomena. These data had in common that they were specifically produced and collected to gain knowledge on societies following a common and accepted set of methodological standards.

This narrative is about to change fundamentally. Data are now produced “organically” everywhere and have significant potential for research purposes, including data resulting from administrative procedures or economic transactions. The potential to use these data is enormous. However, it provides many challenges, from definition of acceptable standards, access – most personal data are still uniquely controlled by companies –, storage, as well as issues around data protection and privacy.

10th anniversary of FORS

FORS is the result from the merger of the SIDOS (Swiss Data Archive), the Swiss Household Panel (SHP) and the Swiss Electoral Studies (SELECTS).

Bringing together colleagues working on large survey projects and data services into a new social science infrastructure in Switzerland created a unique environment to concentrate and develop knowledge on how to collect, archive, and disseminate social science data, but also how to provide services to social scientists in a broader sense.

FORS developed and prospered in the last 10 years, adapting services to new needs and new technical environments. As it is our anniversary, we would like to celebrate, but also reflect upon essential questions and issues regarding how the social sciences will produce knowledge and conduct empirical research in the future.

13h30
Théâtre

Welcome

Prof. Georg Lutz, FORS Director
Prof. Nouria Hernandez, Rector UNIL
Prof. François Bussy, President FORS and Deputy Rector UNIL

14h00-14h15
Théâtre

Introduction

Prof. em. Peter Farago, Retired FORS Director
“The long and winding road that led to FORS - lessons to be learned”.

14h15-14h45
Théâtre

Keynote

Dr. Ineke Stoop (The Netherlands Institute for Social Research/SCP):
“Known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns about survey research. An overview over the many flaws of surveys, possible alternatives, and why we still need them”.

14h45-15h15
Théâtre

Keynote

Prof. em. Andreas Diekmann, ETH Zurich (D-GESS):
“New perspectives for survey research. Data linkage, georeferenced data, causal analysis”.

15h15-16h00
Foyer

Coffee break

16h00-17h00
Théâtre

Roundtable

Stability and change in the collection of social science data in Switzerland
Moderator: Prof. Georg Lutz, FORS Director

Prof. Dr. Georges-Simon Ulrich, General Director, Federal Statistical Office FSO
Prof. Eszter Hargittai, Communication, UZH and member of the FORS scientific board
Prof. Dominique Joye, SSP, UNIL

17h00-18h00
Foyer

Reception