



UK Data Archive  
www.data-archive.ac.uk



Economic and Social Data Service

# The UK Data Archive and the experience of digital preservation (the first 35 years)

K. Schürer

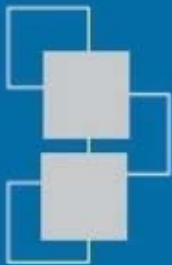
Director of UKDA and ESDS

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Systems Committee

DPC Forum, TNA Kew  
24 September 2003



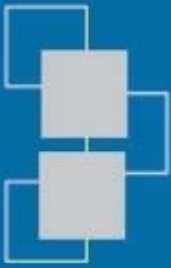
# Brief history & overview

- Archive established in 1968 (as 'Data Bank')
  - See EY2/34
- Funded by (then) SSRC to provide a service to UK HE sector
- Initial focus on government survey data
- New distributed service established 1 Jan. 2003
  - Economic and Social Data Service (ESDS)
- Mixed data types and formats
  - Specialist Qualidata unit and History Data Service
- Still predominately funded to provide service for HE/FE sectors
  - ESRC, JISC, University of Essex
  - Project funding (EC, JISC, MRC, AHRB, etc.)

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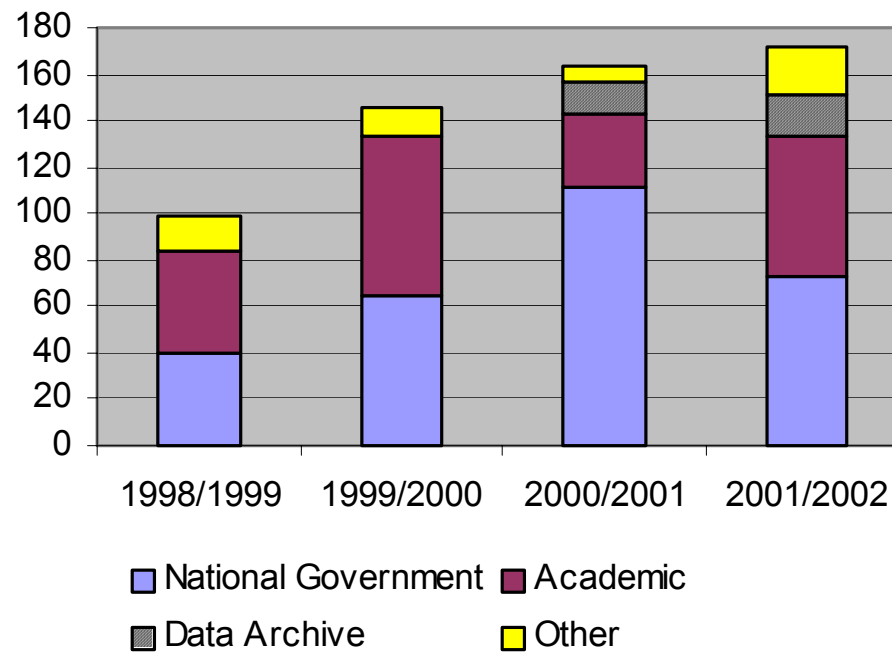


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# Data In

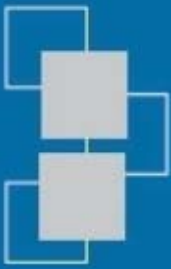
Figure 3. New Acquisitions by Source



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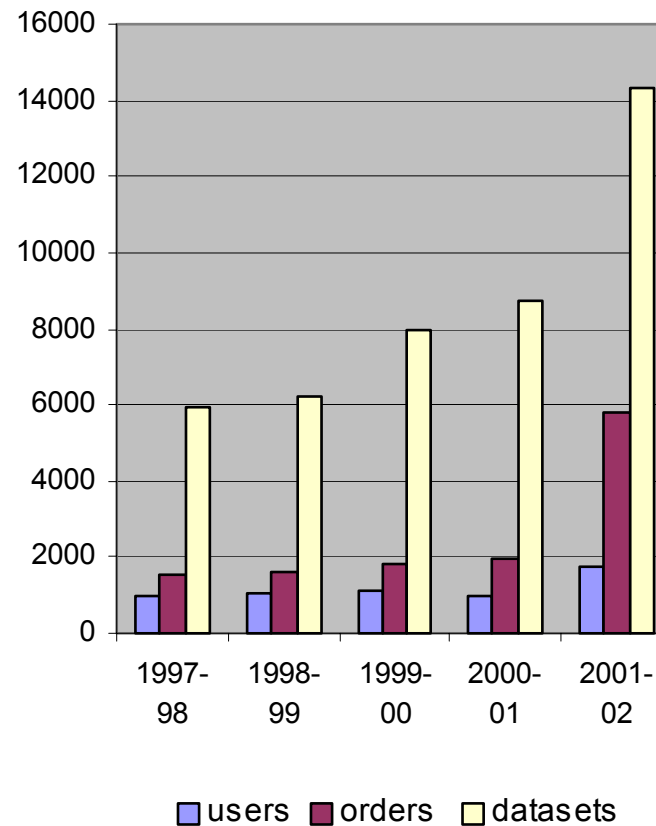


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# Data Out

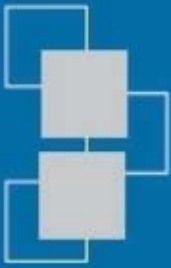
Figure 6. Users, orders and datasets



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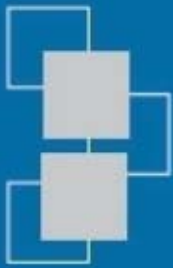
# Top titles....

Rank	Title
1	Quarterly Labour Force Surveys
2	General Household Survey
3	Family Expenditure Survey
4	British Household Panel Survey
5	British Social Attitudes Survey
6	Eurobarometer Survey Series
7	1970 British Cohort Study (BCS70)
8	Health Survey for England
9	Workplace Employee Relations Survey
10	1981 Census
11	Family Resources Survey
12	British Election Studies
13	Youth Cohort Study of England and Wales
14	National Child Development Study and BCS70
15	National Child Development Study
16	Northern Ireland Family Expenditure Survey
17	Road Accident Data
18	Continuous Household Survey
19	British Crime Survey
20	ONS Omnibus Surveys

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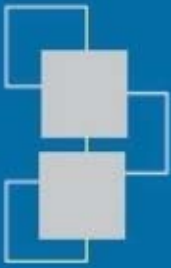
# Acquisition

- Data received (and disseminated) in early years by punch cards and magnetic tapes
- Magnetic tape still major media up to early/mid. 1990s
  - FTP
  - ZIP/JAZ cartridge
  - CD-ROM/DVD
  - DAT
  - Floppy disc
  - Exabyte
  - Email attachment
  - 9" reels
  - Punch cards

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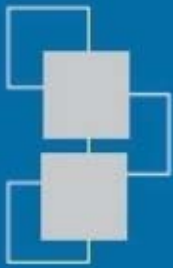
# Ingest

Type of Data	Principal Ingest Formats
Alphanumeric data (held in a statistical package)	Delimited text, SPSS portable (.por), SPSS system (.sav), STATA (.dta), SAS (transport file)
Alphanumeric data (held in a database)	Delimited text, MS Access, dBase, FoxPro, SIR (export file), XML, Filemaker Pro, Paradox
Alphanumeric data (held in a spreadsheet)	Delimited text, MS Excel, Lotus, Quattro Pro
Textual data (e.g. transcripts)	MS Word, Rich Text Format (RTF), XML, SGML, HTML, WordPerfect, Plain (unformatted) Text, paper
Video data	MPEG-1, MPEG-4, Apple Quicktime
Audio data	MS Wave, MPEG-3
Raster (bitmap) images	TIFF, PNG, GIF, BMP
Vector images	DXF, SVG, Adobe Illustrator
Documentation/ metadata	MS Word, RTF, XML, SGML, HTML, WordPerfect, Adobe PDF, paper

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# The Data Exchange Initiative

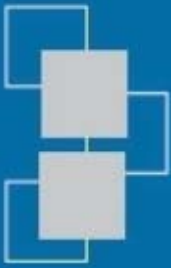
- an XML schema capable of storing any rectangular social survey type of dataset. This will be the first data preservation and interchange standard for social science datasets
- the UKDA plans to define, maintain and promote the schema, and provide software to import into XML from the major proprietary formats (SPSS, STATA, SAS, Excel and Access), and to export back out from the XML to any of these proprietary formats

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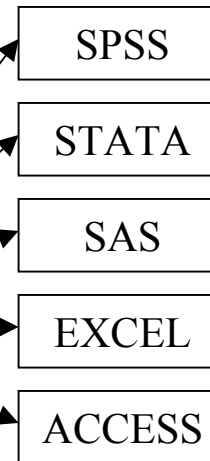
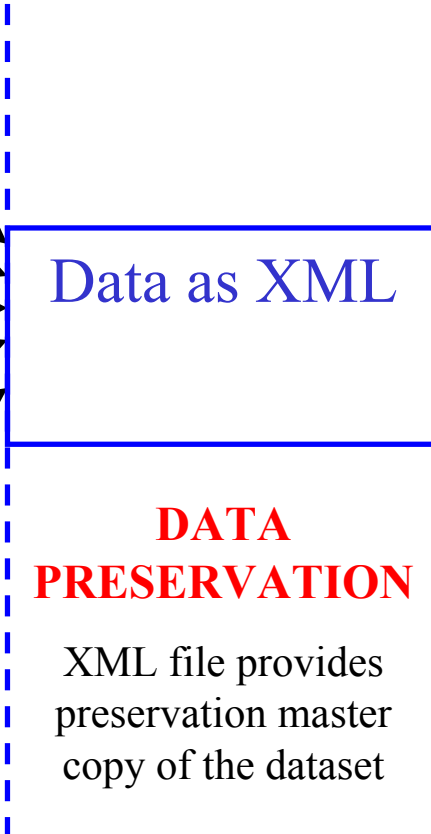


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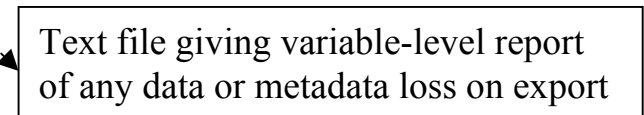




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**RESOURCE DISCOVERY  
(METADATA EXPORT)**



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# Key functions of the Data Exchange software



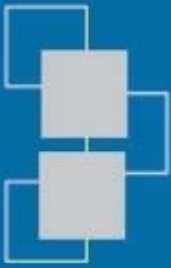
# Metadata

Element Name	Comments
<b>Identification</b>	
Study number	<i>UKDA study number</i>
Study title	<i>As specified in the catalogue record</i>
<b>Resource content</b>	
Details of study received	<i>Author, depositor of the study and time of its deposit</i>
<b><i>Details of data files received:</i></b>	
File name	
File format	<i>Including version number</i>
Description of file content	
<b><i>Details of documentation files received:</i></b>	
File name	
File format	<i>Including version number</i>
Description of file content	
<b><i>Details of hard copy documentation received:</i></b>	
Content of hard copy texts	
Duplication with electronic files	<i>List of any file(s) of which hard copy is a printout</i>

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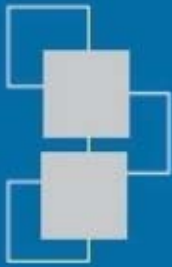
# Metadata II

Element Name	Comments
<b>Processing history</b>	
File name changes	<i>Files for issue to users as well as files not for no issue</i>
Level of processing	<i>One of the four levels of processing used at the UKDA</i>
<b>Data file conversions:</b>	
Conversion method	<i>Including what software was used for conversion</i>
File format created	<i>Including version number</i>
Validation	<i>Checks as required by each level of processing</i>
<i>Documentation file conversions:</i>	
Conversion method	<i>e.g. scanning of hard copy</i>
File format created	<i>e.g. into PDF</i>
<i>Dataset validation problems:</i>	
Problems encountered	<i>Note of any confidentiality problems, data errors, wild-codes, etc</i>
Solutions found	<i>Details of solutions to above problems</i>
Unsolved problems	
New edition information	
<b>Delivery</b>	
Notes to data delivery	
Notes from data delivery	
Name of the member of staff who processed the note file and date	

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# Metadata III

3500\dat@0@858166912@858166912@D@NOCRC  
3500\dat\fr7172.dat@3209769@991959008@858166850@ 134a3c87faf275aa950a113faa82a40d  
3500\dat\fr7172.sps@971@991959019@858166850@ @ce26d1a014925017627e051dfd55438b  
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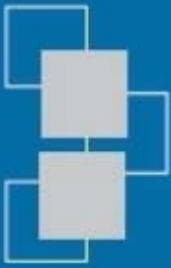
# Preservations formats

Type of Data	Preservation Formats
Alphanumeric data (held in a statistical package, database, or spreadsheet)	Delimited ASCII with data definition statements, Tagged ASCII
Textual data (e.g. transcripts)	Rich Text Format (RTF), SGML, XML, Plain (unformatted) ASCII
Video data	MPEG-1, MPEG-4
Audio data	Currently holding MS Wave, MPEG-3 (preservation standard under review)
Raster (bitmap) images	TIFF
Vector images	DXF, SVG
Documentation/metadata	RTF, TIFF, XML, SGML, Plain (unformatted) ASCII

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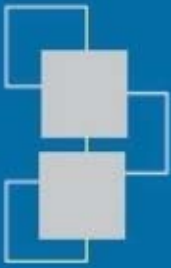
# Multi-copy, multi-storage media, multi-site, multi version resilience

- ◆ Two copies on separate media in main system
- ◆ Up to 10 different versions of each individual file in the shadow area
- ◆ Read only CD-ROM copy with error checking
- ◆ Complete off-site near-line copy of all data with a high level security protection
- ◆ Tape monitoring and refresh strategy
- ◆ Front end copy to reduce load on main system

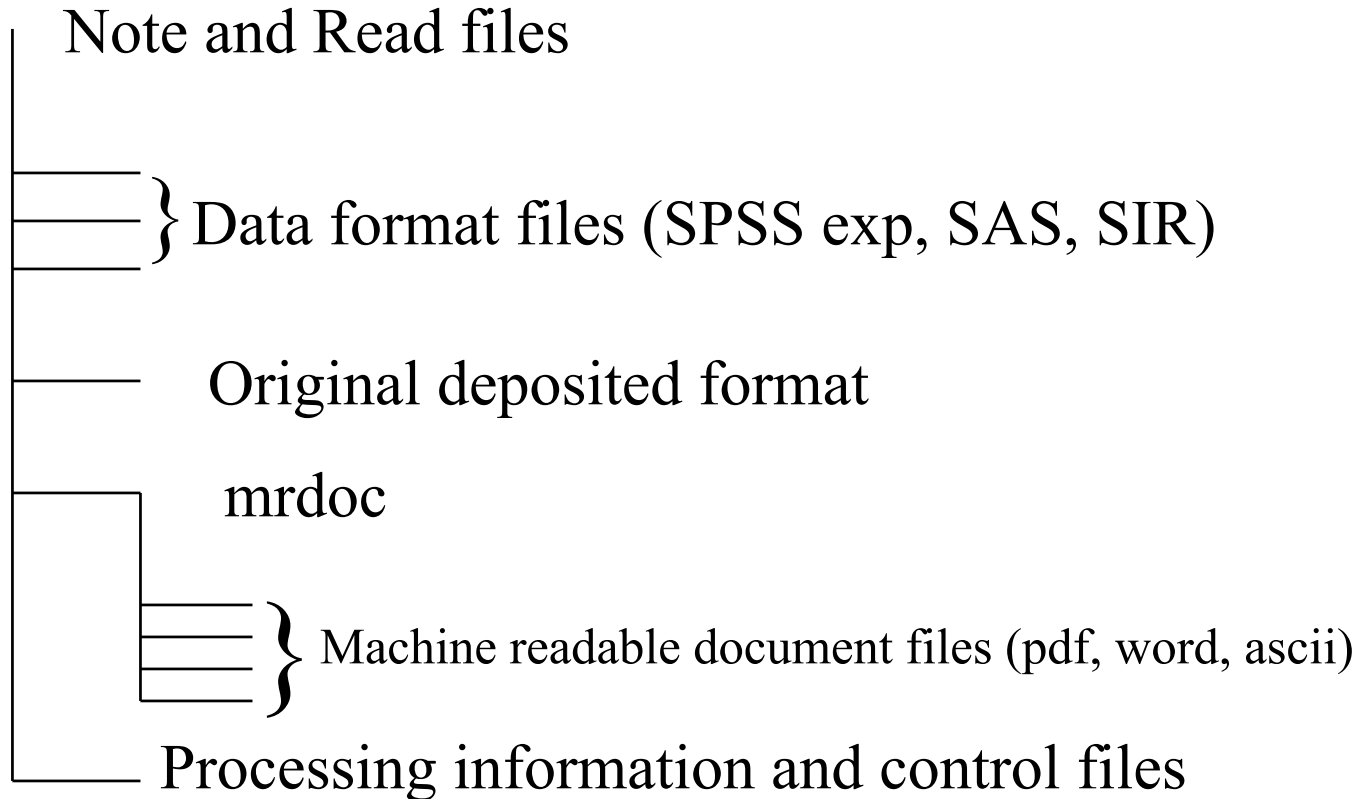
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🌀 Study Number



## Consistent Directory Structure (simplified)

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