PRESERVATION POLICY

DASS-BIH

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1 Introduction

DASS-BiH (Data Archive for Social Sciences in Bosnia and Herzegovina) is the national service with a role to ensure long-term preservation and dissemination of social science research data in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). It is an organizational unit at the Centre for Development Evaluation and Social Science Research (CREDI). CREDI is an independent non-profit and non-partisan think-tank, with a mission of strengthening the culture of evidence-based policy making in BiH and the Western Balkans region. The purpose of the data archive is to provide a vital research data resource for researchers, teachers, students, and all other interested users. This preservation policy is intended to give an overview of the broader archival processes in DASS-BiH. It describes the digital preservation principles, responsibilities and procedures involved to ensure the long-term preservation of the data held within the DASS-BiH archive.

2 The scope of the policy

The scope of this policy is limited only to the DASS-BiH and it deals with all aspects of preservation and applies to all digital resources within the archive. This plan does not consider preservation of other materials such as CREDI and DASS-BiH web pages or internal documents. The preservation plan follows a variety of external guidelines and standards for digital preservation such as OAIS, the FAIR principles, GDPR, and CESSDA CoreTrustSeal recommendations.

2.1 The mission

The mission of the DASS-BiH is to ensure long-term preservation of the data in social sciences in BiH for their reuse in the future. Data that are collected are the ones from social science research in the following fields: economy, education, employment and labour, political science, psychology, sociology, society and culture, and social welfare policy. Other disciplines can be included as well, as far as they produce data by using methodologies of the social sciences and cover issues on society and economy.

2.2 Terms and definitions

- **General Terms and Conditions of Use** (hereafter GTCU) is a policy describing procedures during and after usage of the data, as well as liabilities and responsibilities of DASS-BiH and related parties.
- **Data depositor** is a person or an institution that is either owner or has permission for further dissemination of the dataset. The owner of the dataset could be for example: the principle investigator, the leader of the institution financing the data collection and/or research project, the producer of the dataset (data collector). It is the responsibility of the data depositor to have an appropriate permission for data dissemination.
- **Data user** is a person or an institution that requests a dataset through the user declaration/user request form. It is the responsibility of the data user to comply with the GTCU that are part of the user declaration/user request form.
• **Depositor agreement** is a contract signed between data depositor and a legal representative of the DASS-BiH. It specifies rights and obligations of both parties. GTCU is a part of the depositor agreement.

• **User declaration/user request form** is a form that the data user needs to fill in before the dataset is transferred to them. The data user is responsible for reading and understanding the GTCU which are the part of the user declaration/user request form. The difference between the user declaration and user request form is that the user declaration is used for datasets with non-restricted access while the user request form is used for datasets with restricted access and is subject to approval by the legal representative of the DASS-BiH.

### 2.3 Data requirements

To be deposited in the DASS-BiH data archive, any quantitative and qualitative data need to fulfil some or all of the following conditions:

- the data are from a research project that offers evidence and improved understanding of BiH society or parts of it (including international surveys),
- the data are of general interest for social science research (quality and exemplary studies with analytic potential),
- the data are from a research project where researchers from Bosnia and Herzegovina are involved,
- the data are from a comparative or continuous research (panel data, longitudinal surveys, and time series that allow examination of trends),
- the data are produced with methodological excellence.

Currently, traditional-scale data are being processed; however, DASS-BiH remains open for collaboration with different stakeholders and owners of large-scale or “big-data”. Eligible depositors are researchers, members of research institutions, government departments, offices of national statistics, and public and commercial sector sources.

### 2.4 Legal aspects

DASS-BiH is integral part of CREDI and not a legal entity itself. CREDI complies with all regulations relevant for research organisations and/or foundations\(^1\) at national, entity and cantonal level. Moreover, the operations and procedures in DASS-BiH are in line with the relevant regulations related to preservation of its datasets and providing access to them, as follows:

- The Law on Copyright and Related Rights of BiH (Official gazette BiH 63/09)
- The Law on Protection of Personal Data of BiH (Official gazette BiH 49/06, 76/11 i 89/11)
- Framework law on Scientific Research Activities and the Coordination of Internal and International Scientific Co-operation in BiH (2009)

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\(^1\) CREDI is registered as a foundation at the BiH Ministry of Justice, reg. no. 145/16.
• Specified legal relation between depositors, users and other third parties
• Regulation of international donors related to social science research projects

The relationship between the depositor and the DASS-BiH is based on the deposit agreement, along with terms and conditions that are part of the deposit agreement. Depositors may only deposit their own work and will be expected to sign the data deposit agreement. The agreement:

• confirms the rights and obligations of both parties;
• specifies that DASS-BiH shall ensure through its resources that a deposited dataset is archived in a sustainable manner and remains accessible;
• specifies that DASS-BiH has the right to modify the format and functionality of datasets if this is needed for long-term preservation;
• specifies conditions under which a dataset is provided to third parties;
• specifies that the depositor has cleared all permissions and the possible unresolved rights of third parties.

The relationship with users of the datasets is based on General Terms and Conditions of Use, which are related to:

• the use of data;
• the special restrictions applied to datasets with personal data according to The Law on Protection of Personal Data of BiH;
• the required bibliographic reference to the dataset;
• the disclaimer about “No content liability by DASS-BiH”.

2.5 Integrity and security

The contents of all datasets preserved in DASS-BiH are documented through metadata. All actions over the data are documented and kept along with the „original“ version of the dataset. The „original“ and disseminated version of the dataset are accompanied by the metadata, description of the study, the questionnaire in English/local language, and legal documentation (deposit/user agreement).

Data depositor is fully responsible for the contents of the data and its variables and values, as well as data collection methodology including the data anonymization process. DASS-BiH reserves the right to check the main demographic variables and the anonymization procedure and has the right to change the contents of the data in cooperation with the data depositor. DASS-BiH is committed to anonymization of the data which is in line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and local legal regulations.

DASS-BiH is committed to taking all necessary actions to ensure the physical safety and security of the data it preserves. This includes periodical technology check-up, signed declaration of confidentiality for employees and periodic safety inventory by the CREDI.

2.6 Sustainability plans and funding

DASS-BiH as integral part of CREDI receives structural lump sum financing from CREDI. CREDI will take over responsibility for the data files archived in DASS-BiH and store it elsewhere in
the case of discontinuity of DASS-BiH. In such a circumstance, it is the responsibility of CREDI to ensure that data are stored in the most responsible manner possible and under equivalent technical conditions.

In the moment of issuing the policy, CREDI initiated negotiations with Ministry of Civil Affairs (MCP) in BiH responsible for the science in our country to officially recognise DASS-BiH as a national archive for BiH. Providing status of a national archive means that MCP is obliged to support financially the operation of DASS-BiH in the long-run. Moreover, it means that MCP will ensure possible migration of datasets if CREDI and/or DASS-BiH cease to exist.

Other sources of financing include participation in national and international data-infrastructures, research and development projects, and donations by individual researchers or institutions.

3 Implementing the policy

Preservation within the DASS-BiH is provided according to this policy with main four topics covered:

1. Preservation planning;
2. Storage;
3. Duplication;
4. Backup.

By covering those four topics, the long-term preservation is fulfilling its role and it relies on FAIR Guiding Principles in making its data in the archive Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable.

Data preservation within the DASS-BiH follows a broader OAIS model with the pre-ingest function. This function is not always part of the OAIS model, but is considered necessary for BiH at this stage, given current level of skills and experience in data preservation of researchers in BiH.

In the pre-ingest phase, DASS-BiH offers guidance and help for data producers wishing to deposit data. This is done by providing training in data management to researchers, as well as providing them technical support and participation in the research design. Data depositors are provided clear instructions about the minimum requirements for a dataset to be deposited, as well as clear instructions how to properly prepare dataset and documentation.

In the ingest phase, datasets that comply with the requirements stated in the Section 2.3 of this Policy are collected. The datasets are transferred to DASS-BiH in its original format (if possible, DASS-BiH intervenes in the pre-ingest phase to ensure that the data format is appropriate). If not supported in the pre-ingest phase, researchers in the ingest phase submit the data transformed into delimited csv. format. These data are then stored together with original dataset format. The SIP (Submission Information Package) includes the original dataset, compressed dataset, metadata file, description of the research project/study, the questionnaire or other documentation, and files related to labelling of the variables (notepad + statistical software version).
In the **storage phase**, datasets are stored on two separate external storage units to provide duplicate versions. One of the storage units represents the original version of the SIP and the second one is used for the backup procedure.

DASS-BiH guarantees that its digital resources are identifiable and traceable through its data catalogue and the web-site of CREDI. The **access** phase is regulated with the dissemination information package (DIP). DIP includes datasets – original or small-scale datasets (the ones that ensure protection of personal data), accompanied by metadata and other supporting documentation of the dataset. Rules for access are regulated within the terms and conditions and agreement between DASS-BiH and the user of the data.

### 4 Monitoring and review

This preservation policy is subject to regular evaluation and review in order to ensure continued relevance of the DASS-BiH procedures and to detect any changes needed. Therefore, the policy goes under the periodic review every two years. Employees at the DASS-BiH are responsible for the monitoring of the data archive community and technological development and to update the policy when needed. The latest version of the preservation policy is published on the CREDI web-site in the section dedicated to the DASS-BiH.