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## How to find our research and our academic experts

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## LSE Research Online- furthering the reach of LSE research

By Neil Stewart, LSE Library

The articles found elsewhere in this magazine amply demonstrates that LSE produces world-class research on a wide variety of topics relating to the social sciences. The LSE doesn't stop there, though- it tries to actively disseminate its research using a variety of methods. Not least of these is a service run by the Library, LSE Research Online (LSERO), available at <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/>. LSERO is the LSE's institutional repository, which disseminates research outputs both by citation and often in the form of full text journal articles, book chapters, conference papers and reports.

The philosophical basis of LSERO is that of the Open Access movement. Open Access can be summed up as ensuring research of all sorts has "free availability on the public internet, permitting any users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of these articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to software, or use them for any other lawful purpose, without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself"<sup>1</sup>. This can be done while respecting copyright by the method of researchers "self-archiving" the research they produce with their institutional repository- in the case of LSE, LSERO.

In practice, this means that we rely on academic colleagues providing us with their full text versions of journal articles, research papers, book chapters, conference papers, datasets and so on. We then catalogue the items and make available these full text versions for any user of the internet to access and make use of. Where academics can't provide full text, we will happily make available citations to works instead. For an example of a full text version of an LSE journal article, please go to this URL: <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/5803/>. In addition, LSERO is used to populate staff publication lists in its Experts service<sup>2</sup>, allowing individual academics to publicise the research that they have produced. In these ways, the research outputs of the LSE is accessible to anyone with an internet connection.

Statistics for use of the service demonstrates the reach that LSE research can gain by being made available as Open Access in LSERO. From 10 Nov to 10 Dec this year, LSERO received just under 47,000 hits. As might be expected, just under 20,000 hits came from searchers in the UK, with the US, Canada, Germany

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<sup>1</sup> Earlham College's Budapest Open Access Initiative FAQs page: <http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/boaifaq.htm>, accessed 11/12/09

<sup>2</sup> LSE Experts: <http://www2.lse.ac.uk/researchAndExpertise/Experts/Home.aspx>, accessed 11/12/09.

and other large and developed nations also contributing substantial numbers of hits. But some visitors from smaller nations also made use of the service: 261 visitors were from Finland, 29 came from Venezuela, and 8 came from Mongolia. And to give you an idea of the number of hits an individual article can get, in the same time period 119 individual searchers accessed Peter Lunt and Sonia Livingstone's full text article, "Rethinking the focus group in media and communications research" (<http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/409/>).

So LSERO provides a medium by which academic colleagues can make available the fruits of their research across the whole world. This has a positive impact on citations for LSE academics<sup>3</sup>, disseminates widely the research produced by LSE, and (when full text is made available) allows those without the benefits of the LSE or other major research libraries' resources to access and make use of LSE research, wherever they may be.

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<sup>3</sup> For a study of the citation impact of making research Open Access, see for example: Harnad, S. and Brody, T., Comparing the Impact of Open Access (OA) vs. Non-OA Articles in the Same Journals, D-Lib Magazine, Vol. 10 No. 6, June 2004.