

BDSP: a unique initiative to archive and disseminate French grey literature on public health

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1. BDSP – a network, a portal and a database

BDSP (Public Health Databank) is a **network** created by information professionals in 1993 at the request of the French ministry of health in order to provide access to the documentation on public health and especially to **grey literature in French**.

The network is composed of **40 data producers**, including stakeholders from the French health system and other French-speaking countries. The **open and collaborative network** is guided by formal agreements.

Reciprocal exchanges of services enable input to be added to the portal to keep it going, such as the creation of records on documents and events or monitoring hundreds of serials, and to benefit in return from document archiving facilities, increased international visibility, access to all other input, citable records, forums for sharing technical expertise, tools, etc.

A team of 4 people from the **EHESP School of Public Health** manages and promotes the BDSP ; it covers skills in information science, computer programming and public health



2. <http://www.bdsp.ehesp.fr/> – a multiservice information portal

The network produces a multiservice portal: a **bibliographic database** with currently over **473,000 records**, **64,000 full-text documents** (14 %), a catalogue with 400 collections, serials and monographs, a **multilingual glossary** and a **thesaurus** in public health.

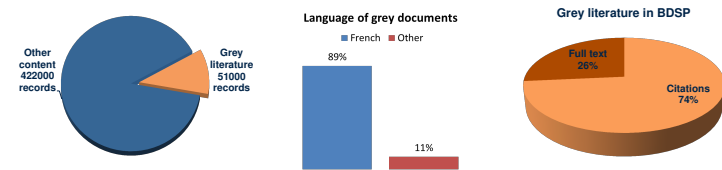
The portal includes dedicated areas for job postings, for conferences and meetings announcements, and a reviewed directory of websites on public health.

- Annuaire de sites
- Base documentaire
- Bibliographies
- Blog du site
- Collections
- Colloques
- Glossaire
- Offres d'emploi
- Thésaurus

3. Grey literature in the BDSP database

Document types / producers

- **Reports** (policy, expert, inspectorate, official documents) – 46.5% / Agencies and health observatories
- **Academic degrees** (theses, dissertations, doctoral theses) – 42% / Universities
- **Conferences** (proceedings, papers, oral presentations) – 11.5% / Professional groups and research



4. Obstacles and leads for grey literature

Archiving and dissemination of grey documents on public health meet with several **obstacles**:

- Difficulties to **identify and collect** the in-house production (e.g. regional health agencies)
- Need to mobilise the producers of grey literature
- **Poor recognition** of grey literature or factual data by health professionals
- Ignorance of **intellectual property rights** -> keeping documents and records in intranets in order to be on the safe side
- Cataloguing errors due to the limited typology of grey documents

Several **opportunities** for progress emerge:

- Development of sites dedicated to specific professional groups thus providing added value to their productions and the possibility to share them
- The French mandate to deposit documents produced by national services
- Development of "Best practices" in public health
- Revision of the typology of grey documents to better disseminate them to specific groups
- Increasing acceptance of BDSP as a "home" for grey documents (38% of them are deposited here)

6. New collaborations

BDSP intends to open its network to all **French speaking countries**. Swiss and Moroccan institutions have already joined.

The following ways of achieving this are being explored:

- **Associate the documentation centres in public health from African countries**
- Take into consideration the **specific health problems** of emerging or developing countries
- Create **dedicated areas** for a given country / region in the portal and add specific documents
- Promote the BDSP network and portal to health professionals in other French-speaking countries (cooperation with « Santécom » database – Quebec)

5. Perspectives

The BDSP network and its services have grown in size and complexity over the past 20 years.

- Today BDSP reinforces its role both as a
- **federator and aggregator** for scientific and professional information in the public health domain
 - main access point for **French language grey literature** on this topic

At its 20th anniversary conference in 2013 its members discuss **new projects** in order to better answer the needs of health professionals, researchers and students

- Work on the interface between data and users
- Elaborate and disseminate thematic syntheses
- Inform on training courses and link to distant learning courses
- Provide sites for best practice guides and contribute thus to continued training, linked to the concept of evidence-based public health

References:

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