
Transform legacy study, question, and variable documentation into DDI 3.2 LC

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Abstract

Many service providers and institutions in the social sciences document survey data including study information, questions, and variables in self-developed legacy software in proprietary databases or other forms according to the specific needs and use cases. We introduce an easy-to-use REST API to create a DDI LC 3.2 documentation based on a use case of the question/variable documentation by SOEP (DIW). DIW has documented their questions and variables in CSV files using paneldata.org. The REST API is attached into the GESIS questionnaire editor. The resulting documentation is a self-contained DDI XML file including the study unit documentation, instruments, questions, answers, and connected variables. The documentation can be visually explored, evaluated or even further documented in the GESIS questionnaire editor, but also downloaded as DDI XML file or Word/PDF report. The created documentation can also be directly re-used for question search, e.g., based on the CESSDA European Question Bank. In addition, REST API is capable to import multiple languages and translations.

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