

Working with the German Socio-Economic Panel – Analyzing Research Questions with Panel Data, WS 2023/24

Tuesdays, 12:00-16:00
Seminarraum 323
Garystr. 55

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Visiting hours: Wed., 11:00-12:00
(only after prior arrangement via E-mail)

Course plan and literature

24.10.2023 Introduction and overview

31.10.2023 Characteristics of high-quality empirical research

Otte, Gunnar, Tim Sawert, Josef Brüderl, Stefanie Kley, Clemens Kroneberg, and Ingo Rohlfing. 2023. 'Criteria of Research Quality in Sociology: An Analytical-Empirical Perspective'.

Brüderl, Josef, and Volker Ludwig. 2015. 'Fixed-Effects Panel Regression'. Pp. 327–57 in *The Sage handbook of regression analysis and causal inference*, edited by H. Best and C. Wolf.

07.11.2023 Research Questions and Research Designs (Exercise: How to phrase a research question)

Azzollini, Leo. 2023. 'Doubly Disadvantaged: Unemployment, Young Age, and Electoral Participation in the United Kingdom'. *The British Journal of Sociology* n/a(n/a). doi: [10.1111/1468-4446.13039](https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.13039).

Ludwig, Volker, and Josef Brüderl. 2021. 'What You Need to Know When Estimating Impact Functions with Panel Data for Demographic Research'. *Comparative Population Studies* 46. doi: [10.12765/CPoS-2021-16](https://doi.org/10.12765/CPoS-2021-16).

14.11.2023 Working with the SOEP – Data structure and Survey Design. (Exercise: How to write a good introduction)

Bertrand, Marianne, Emir Kamenica, and Jessica Pan. 2015. 'Gender Identity and Relative Income within Households *'. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 130(2):571–614. doi: [10.1093/qje/qjv001](https://doi.org/10.1093/qje/qjv001).

Gonalons-Pons, Pilar, and Markus Gangl. 2021. 'Marriage and Masculinity: Male-Breadwinner Culture, Unemployment, and Separation Risk in 29 Countries'. *American Sociological Review* 86(3):465–502. doi: [10.1177/00031224211012442](https://doi.org/10.1177/00031224211012442).

28.11.2023 Working with the SOEP – Data wrangling I (Exercise: How to write a good research proposal) (Research topic/question due Nov 26th)

Giesselmann, Marco, Sandra Bohmann, Jan Goebel, Peter Krause, Elisabeth Liebau, David Richter, Diana Schacht, Carsten Schröder, Jürgen Schupp, and Stefan Liebig. 2019. 'The Individual in Context(s): Research Potentials of the Socio-Economic Panel Study (SOEP) in Sociology'. *European Sociological Review* 35(5):738–55. doi: [10.1093/esr/jcz029](https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcz029).

12.12.2023 Working with the SOEP – Data wrangling II

Kohler, Ulrich, Fabian Class, and Tim Sawert. 2023. 'Control Variable Selection in Applied Quantitative Sociology: A Critical Review'. *European Sociological Review* jcac078. doi: [10.1093/esr/jcac078](https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcac078).

Lundberg, Ian, Rebecca Johnson, and Brandon M. Stewart. 2021. 'What Is Your Estimand? Defining the Target Quantity Connects Statistical Evidence to Theory'. *American Sociological Review* 86(3):532–65. doi: [10.1177/00031224211004187](https://doi.org/10.1177/00031224211004187).

19.12.2023 Working with the SOEP – Data visualization (Research proposal due Dez 17th)

Krug, Gerhard, and Andreas Eberl. 2018. 'What Explains the Negative Effect of Unemployment on Health? An Analysis Accounting for Reverse Causality'. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility* 55:25–39. doi: [10.1016/j.rssm.2018.03.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rssm.2018.03.001).

Steiber, Nadia. 2019. 'Intergenerational Educational Mobility and Health Satisfaction across the Life Course: Does the Long Arm of Childhood Conditions Only Become Visible Later in Life?' *Social Science & Medicine* 242:112603. doi: [10.1016/j.socscimed.2019.112603](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2019.112603).

Lepinteur, Anthony. 2019. 'Working Time Mismatches and Self-Assessed Health of Married Couples: Evidence from Germany'. *Social Science & Medicine* 235:112410. doi: [10.1016/j.socscimed.2019.112410](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2019.112410).

09.01.2024 Working with the SOEP – Research Designs in Practise

Collischon, Matthias, and Andreas Eberl. 2021. 'The Link between Relative Pay and Job Satisfaction Revisited'. *European Sociological Review* 37(2):238–52. doi: [10.1093/esr/jcaa045](https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcaa045).

Eberl, Andreas, Matthias Collischon, and Tobias Wolbring. 2023. 'Subjective Well-Being Scarring Through Unemployment: New Evidence from a Long-Running Panel'. *Social Forces* 101(3):1485–1518. doi: [10.1093/sf/soac022](https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/soac022).

Kapelle, Nicole, Theresa Nutz, Daria Tisch, Manuel Schechtl, Philipp M. Lersch, and Emanuela Struffolino. 2022. 'My Wealth, (Y)Our Life Satisfaction? Sole and Joint Wealth Ownership and Life Satisfaction in Marriage'. *European Journal of Population* 38(4):811–34. doi: [10.1007/s10680-022-09630-7](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10680-022-09630-7).

Schmiedeberg, Claudia, and Jette Schröder. 2017. 'Leisure Activities and Life Satisfaction: An Analysis with German Panel Data'. *Applied Research in Quality of Life* 12(1):137–51. doi: [10.1007/s11482-016-9458-7](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11482-016-9458-7).

16.01.2024 Working with the SOEP – Analysing data I (Research proposal first draft due Jan 12th)

Müller, Christoph. 2023. 'Technological Change, Training, and within-Firm Wage Inequality in Germany'. *European Sociological Review* jcad051. doi: [10.1093/esr/jcad051](https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcad051).

Colombarolli, Claudia, and Philipp M. Lersch. 2023. 'Atypical Work, Financial Assets, and Asset Poverty in Germany'. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility* 85:100803. doi: [10.1016/j.rssm.2023.100803](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rssm.2023.100803).

23.01.2024 Working with the SOEP – Analysing data II

Schmitt, Laila, and Katrin Auspurg. 2022. 'A Stall Only on the Surface? Working Hours and the Persistence of the Gender Wage Gap in Western Germany 1985–2014'. *European Sociological Review* 38(5):754–69. doi: [10.1093/esr/jcac001](https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcac001).

Zoch, Gundula, and Stefanie Heyne. 2023. 'The Evolution of Family Policies and Couples' Housework Division after Childbirth in Germany, 1994–2019'. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 85(5):1067–86. doi: [10.1111/jomf.12938](https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12938).

30.01.2024 Working with the SOEP – Presenting results

Khalil, Samir, and Elias Naumann. 2022. 'Does Contact with Foreigners Reduce Worries about Immigration? A Longitudinal Analysis in Germany'. *European Sociological Review* 38(2):189–201. doi: [10.1093/esr/jcab039](https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcab039).

Czymara, Christian S. 2021. 'Attitudes toward Refugees in Contemporary Europe: A Longitudinal Perspective on Cross-National Differences'. *Social Forces* 99(3):1306–33. doi: [10.1093/sf/soaa055](https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/soaa055).

Vidal, Sergi, and Philipp M. Lersch. 2021. 'Panel Data in Research on Mobility and Migration: A Review of Recent Advances'. *Comparative Population Studies* 46. doi: [10.12765/CPoS-2021-07](https://doi.org/10.12765/CPoS-2021-07).

06.02.2024 Working with the SOEP – Fixing issues (double lesson 12:00-20:00) Garystr.55/323 + Ihnestr.22/UG 5 (Paper first draft due Feb. 9th)

Kiley, Kevin, and Stephen Vaisey. 2020. 'Measuring Stability and Change in Personal Culture Using Panel Data'. *American Sociological Review* 85(3):477–506. doi: [10.1177/0003122420921538](https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122420921538).

Lersch, Philipp M. 2023. 'Change in Personal Culture over the Life Course'. *American Sociological Review* 88(2):220–51. doi: [10.1177/00031224231156456](https://doi.org/10.1177/00031224231156456).

13.02.2024 Research presentations (double lesson 12:00-20:00) Garystr.55/323 + Ihnestr.22/UG 5

Aims, content, and methods of this course

This seminar offers a well-grounded and practically oriented introduction to the data of the Socio-economic panel study. Participants will be introduced to the content of the study, its data-structure, sample selection and weighting strategy and they will be provided with an overview over the study documentation so that students start working on their own research projects using this dataset.

The seminar has four overarching goals: First, it will introduce students to panel data in general and to the SOEP in particular. Second, it will teach students commonly used measurement strategies of popular social scientific concepts and sociodemographic characteristics like social class, education, or occupation. Third, it will make students familiar with basic analytical research designs that commonly rely on panel data and how to use these approaches for their own research goals using the statistical programming language R. Fourth, it will provide students with a basic understanding and the necessary tools to move from the literature, over the research question, to developing a research design, and starting a research analysis.

The course will heavily rely on a flipped classroom approach where students do exercises, readings, and work on their empirical research project at home, while we will do trouble shooting and discuss common problems in class. In parts of the classes the contents taught are practiced directly on the computer. These practical parts require familiarity with basic methods of empirical analysis and programming skills in R. The lecturer will provide a basic introduction and learning material to both but students have to expect that they have to catch up on these topics quickly so that they can work on their own research projects.

After successfully completing the course, you will be familiar with the SOEP and know how to work with panel data to conduct your own research. You will be able to use common analytical research designs that rely on panel data and be able to use these methods for your research. You know how to develop sociological research questions and how to present and defend your ideas in front of class.

To achieve these goals, students will read compulsory literature, do R exercises, and answer related questions ahead of each lesson. In addition, they will hand in a first research question, develop a research proposal, and write a first draft of their research report in the style of an empirical scientific paper by the end of the semester. Students will present a this first draft in class at the end of the semester. After successfully completing the course, you will be familiar with the basic topics of the sociological labor market literature and know common methods to investigate labor market inequalities. You will be able to critically read cutting-edge empirical studies in the field and incorporate their findings into your research. You know how to develop sociological research questions in the field of labor market sociology and how to present and defend your ideas in front of class. To achieve this, students will read compulsory literature and answer related questions ahead of each lesson. In addition, students will present a first draft of their research proposal and write a full research proposal at the end of the course.

Minimum requirements and assessment standard

The minimum requirement for receiving a positive grade includes the attendance of the course (max. 2 absences), the duly upload of the answers to the questions on the compulsory readings, the first research question, and the research proposal, as well as the presentation of the first draft of the term paper in line with the specifications provided in the lectures.

Grade criteria:

- Answers to the questions on the compulsory readings
- Research question and Research Proposal
- Active participation during the lessons
- Presentation of the first draft of the term paper
- Final term paper → graded (“Forschungsbericht “) details will be provided on Blackboard

Exam material

Active participation

(1) Active participation in the course: preparation for course meetings by reading the basic literature and written preparation of questions to be answered briefly.

(2) Discussion contributions: Participants actively discuss the required literature. At the end of the semester, the initial version of the final term paper will be presented in a 10-minute short presentation. The subsequent discussion serves to improve the student's own work.

(3) Research topic, Research Proposal, and First draft of the term paper: In the course of the seminar, the participants will propose a research topic/research question on which they want to write the research proposal. (2-5 sentences). They will hand in a short Research Proposal (~2 pages) in which they embed their research topic in the literature and specify the research question, theoretical perspective, and method for their final term paper in the middle of the semester. Finally, students will write a ~10-page short research first draft of the final paper for the final two lessons. Each participant will receive written feedback on this first draft.

Final term paper “Project report”

(4) Term paper: Preparation of an empirically oriented scientific paper on the chosen topic (~6000 words excl. cover page, table of contents and bibliography). The paper can be on a topic of your interest (could be a basis for your master thesis) but has to contain a research question that can be analysed using a quantitative research design. The literature discussed in class can be used as a starting point but the research proposal must also refer to further scientific literature. Students will have to use SOEP data and preferably use R to analyse the data. When preparing the written work, the rules of scientific work must be observed.

The written answers to the questions (on blackboard)

- SHORT answers to the questions (most of the times 1-2 sentences each)
- Short statements regarding comprehension problems: What was not understood in terms of content? Where do I suspect a weak argumentation?
- You only have to hand in this assignment in 8 of the 11 lessons with comp. readings

The research topic

- Which topic of sociology are you interested in?
- What specific questions do you have about this topic?
- Goal: Phrase question as detailed as possible (the question should specify most of these questions: Who, (How), What, Why, When, Where).

The research proposal

- Roughly 2 pages without literature
- Embed the research topic in the literature and specify the research question, theoretical perspective, research design, and analytical strategy

The first draft of the empirical research paper and presentation of your research

- Final lessons will be spent presenting the first drafts of your final term paper (~10 min presentation ~10 min discussion)
- Details of requirements and structure will be discussed in a separate lesson ~4000 words:
- Main content:
 - Topic relevance
 - Research question embedded in and motivated by the literature
 - Short literature intro
 - Hypotheses derived from theory-based considerations
 - Research Design, Methods, and Data
 - First Results

The final research term paper

- The project report will be written in the form of a standard quantitative empirical research paper
- Revision of the first draft in light of the comments received after the presentation
- Adds final results to the first draft and discusses these in light with the theory and previous results (~6000 words excl. literature)