

Britzke, Janina (Ed.); Schupp, Jürgen (Ed.)

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SOEP – The German Socio-Economic Panel at DIW Berlin



SOEP Wave Report

Janina Britzke, Jürgen Schupp (Editors)

SOEP Wave Report 2018

Janina Britzke, Jürgen Schupp (Editors)



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Editorial

Jürgen Schupp

Vice-Director of the Research Infrastructure SOEP
Professor of Sociology at Freie Universität Berlin



We are pleased to present our ninth SOEP Wave Report, offering a glimpse of our work over the past year. In 2018, we planned the 36th wave of the study for 2019, conducted the interviews and prepared the data for the 35th wave, and distributed 34 waves of SOEP data—27 of which included data on the former GDR—to over 500 researchers worldwide. The central focus of our work is the dataset we refer to as SOEP-Core. It consists of the original SOEP study and all of the subsamples and refresher samples that have been added to it over the years. When the study was launched in 1984, its aim was to provide a representative picture of private households in Germany from both a cross-sectional and a longitudinal perspective. This remains the objective of SOEP-Core to this day.

An additional focus of our work is on studies that have joined the landscape of SOEP studies over the last few years. The newest addition is the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees, which began in 2016. In 2018, data from this survey have provided us with information on how satisfied refugees in Germany are with their lives. These data are also the basis for the AFFIN cooperation project, which is funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and deals with affective and cultural dimensions of integration following forced migration and immigration.

The year 2018 brought a series of changes to the SOEP team. On January 1, Stefan Liebig took Gert G. Wagner's place on the DIW Berlin Executive Board and my place as Director of the SOEP. Stefan Liebig is a sociologist whose research focuses on justice. Before coming to the SOEP, he was a Professor at the University of Bielefeld, and he now holds a professorship in sociology at Freie Universität Berlin.

At the beginning of 2018, we launched the new SOEP research unit Knowledge Transfer, which I am heading. This unit is responsible for all of the SOEP's activities in the areas of public relations and user services. Over the course of the year, we developed "Getting Started", a toolbox that allows our data users to work more easily and efficiently with

the SOEP data. The core of Getting Started is our SOEPcompanion, an online handbook for analysis of the data from SOEP-Core, our main study.

On July 19 and 20, the SOEP team hosted the 13th International German Socio-Economic Panel User Conference at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW), where the first SOEP conference took place 25 years earlier, in 1993, under the leadership of Gert G. Wagner. One of the main themes of the 2018 conference was social inequality. The sustained attention to this topic in the media both during and after the conference reflects the intense public interest in issues of inequality. Another topic of media reports was the minimum wage, the subject of an important SOEP evaluation in 2018. On September 7, SOEP respondents were honored by Germany's Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier at an event recognizing exemplary civic engagement at Bellevue Palace in Berlin. A family of four SOEP respondents from the Ruhr Valley attended, representing all SOEP respondents.

This Wave Report gives you an overview of all these events and insights into the fieldwork activities of Kantar Public. It also contains the complete texts of a selection of recent DIW Weekly Reports published in 2018 reflecting the wide range of SOEP-based research on subjects ranging from inequality in Germany, upward and downward social mobility probabilities, income distribution in Germany, to the life satisfaction of refugees in Germany. We also introduce several of the international researchers who are doing groundbreaking research with the SOEP data.

We hope you enjoy reading this year's SOEP Wave Report!

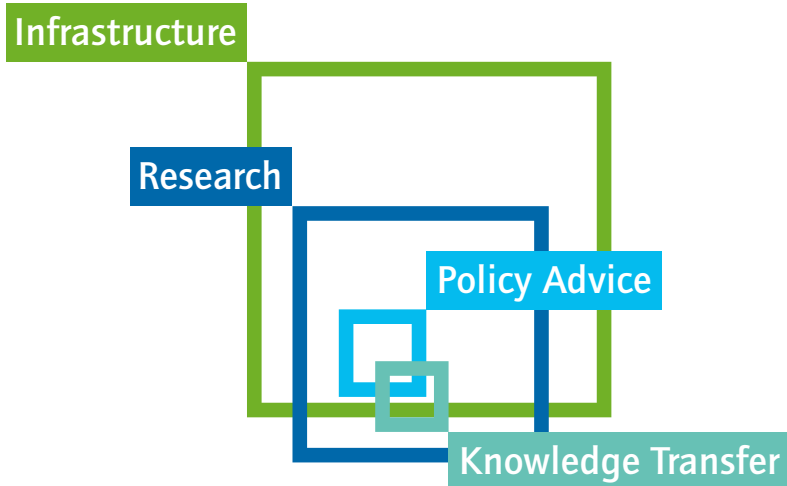
Best regards,

PART 1

Overview of the SOEP Research Infrastructure at DIW Berlin

2018

SOEP in a Nutshell



Infrastructure

The Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP), based at the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW Berlin), is the longest-running and largest multidisciplinary survey in Germany. The data collected as part of the SOEP survey are not only used by the staff of DIW Berlin but are also distributed to researchers worldwide for use in their own studies. Over its 35-year history, the SOEP has become one of the most important research infrastructures in the social, behavioral, and economic sciences worldwide, and it is also part of the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) National Roadmap for Infrastructures. As a member institute of the Leibniz Association, the SOEP receives federal and state funding. The SOEP Research Data Center offers researchers from outside DIW Berlin access to anonymized SOEP data, which are provided exclusively for scientific research purposes. SOEP experts offer guidance and advice to researchers who want to use the SOEP as a data source or control sample.

Research

Over 500 researchers from a range of disciplines are currently using SOEP data for empirically oriented research in the social and economic sciences. Since the start of the SOEP study in 1984, the focus has been on “Living in Germany”, as the study is known among its respondents: www.leben-in-deutschland.info (in German). Research based on the SOEP data examines processes of both continuity and change in our society. Some of the many studies using SOEP data explore the distribution of social resources—not just income and wealth but also access to education and the labor market—and how this affects people’s chances of social advancement. Other studies look at how social and economic living conditions affect people’s life satisfaction and well-being—a question that has been a subject of SOEP research since the outset of the study. About 15 years ago, researchers in developmental psychology began to discover the SOEP’s potential for use in psychological research. Since then, the SOEP data have been used to study personality development across the life course. The SOEP is also one of the largest repeat surveys of immigrants in Germany. In 2016, the SOEP conducted its first survey of refugees in Germany. More than 8,300 research papers and other publications have been published to date using the SOEP data.

http://www.diw.de/soeppapers_en

http://www.diw.de/soepsurveypapers_en

<http://www.diw.de/soeprdc>

<http://www.diw.de/soepeople>



SOEP team

Policy Advice

The SOEP is an independent, non-partisan research infrastructure, which means that the topics of the study are selected solely according to scientific criteria. Findings from the SOEP study make an important substantive contribution to the social and economic policy debate. The results of research using SOEP data are published regularly in the *DIW Berlin Wochenbericht* (in German) and the *Weekly Report* (in English). These publications serve to promote the exchange of ideas between experts and representatives of important social groups, and thus provide an empirical foundation for public policy decisions both within Germany and at the European and international level.

<http://www.diw.de/wochenbericht> and
<http://www.diw.de/diweeklyreport>

Knowledge Transfer

The SOEP communicates its research findings to the broader public in an accessible and understandable way to promote knowledge transfer from science to society. SOEP staff members engage in diverse press and public relations activities. Members of the SOEP team regularly take part in the Long Night of Sciences in Berlin and are active on social media (Facebook, YouTube). The SOEP contributes to the German Data Report, a joint project with the Federal Statistical Agency (Destatis), the Federal Agency for Civic Education (bpb), and the Berlin Social Science Center (WZB). The SOEP also supports universities and non-university research facilities in providing methodological training to SOEP data users. The workshops offered as part of the SOEPCampus program are oriented toward young researchers in the fields of sociology, economics, education, and psychology.

http://www.diw.de/soepcampus_en
<https://www.bpb.de/nachschlagen/datenreport-2018/>

The SOEP: Looking Toward the Future

Since the beginning of the study more than 35 years ago, the SOEP has been adapting constantly to changing social contexts. When the Berlin Wall fell in November 1989, the study quickly expanded to include households in the former GDR, with the first survey going out to this group in June 1990. In 1994, the SOEP added a boost sample of immigrants to Germany from the former Soviet Union. And in 2016, after the arrival of hundreds of thousands of refugees in Germany seeking protection, the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees was launched. The SOEP is constantly monitoring current social developments and expanding the range of topics that can be studied using SOEP data. The study is also constantly being refined methodologically—for instance, through the use of new survey technologies. Over time, the paper version of the SOEP questionnaire has gradually been replaced by computer-assisted personal interviews conducted on laptops. And for the SOEP Survey of Refugees, the survey institute uses a mobile phone app to stay in contact with respondents. For respondents who give written consent, SOEP data can be linked with data from other sources: Since 2013, SOEP survey data have been linked with administrative data for use in migration and integration research. The linked data are subject to special data protection requirements and are accessible to only a limited number of researchers. In 2012, the SOEP Innovation Survey was launched for use in addressing innovative new research questions. It now has around 6,500 respondents in more than 3,500 households.

The SOEP Innovation Survey allows researchers from institutes worldwide to contribute their own survey questions. It has already been used in research on happiness to test innovative methods for measuring life satisfaction and in economics for behavioral experiments on risk-taking in adults. The SOEP team is also working to facilitate linkages between the SOEP study and data from household panel studies in other countries. Numerous research groups from outside Germany are already using the SOEP data—in countries from Australia to the United States. Around 1,000 of the publications using SOEP data are internationally comparative studies. In the coming years, the SOEP will be working to promote increased use of the data by the international research community. In 2019 the SOEP will add a new boost sample of high-wealth individuals. Over the next few years, the SOEP will be focusing on (1) ensuring that the SOEP-Core has sufficient case numbers representing the population groups that are driving or are most affected by processes of social change to provide a basis for generalizable and statistically robust research results, (2) linking SOEP data with other datasets in Germany and internationally to keep pace with current developments in research methodology and to expand the potential for analysis of SOEP data, (3) finding technical and organizational solutions to provide researchers with easy access to SOEP data in compliance with data protection regulations and with user support in understanding the increasingly complex structure of the SOEP data and in using our full range of data products.

PART 1

SOEP Structure

2018

SOEP Administrative and Management Team

Prof. Dr. Stefan Liebig
Director of SOEP & DIW Berlin
Executive Board Member

Prof. Dr. Jürgen Schupp
Vice-Director and Head of the
Division "Knowledge Transfer"

Dr. Sabine Zinn
Head of the Division "Survey
Methods/Management"

Dr. Jan Goebel
Head of the Division "Data
Operation/Research Data Center"

Prof. Dr. Carsten Schröder
Head of the Division "Applied
Panel Data Analysis"

Patricia Axt
Team Assistance

Anja Bahr
Project Management

Christiane Eichhorst
Team Assistance (currently on leave)

Alisa Fränkel
Team Assistance/SOEPhotline

PROJECT GROUP SOCIAL INEQUALITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Jule Adriaans
Doctoral Student BGHS,
Harmonization of International
Household Panels

Philipp Eisnecker
Doctoral Student BGSS

Prof. Dr. Stefan Liebig
Project Director

BMAS-ENDOWED PROFESSORSHIP (WITH HUB)

Prof. Dr. Philipp Lersch

SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOWS

Prof. Dr. Martin Kroh
Prof. Dr. Gert G. Wagner

In 2018, the SOEP Administrative and Management team was responsible for around 65 staff members, as well as trainees, doctoral students, grant holders, and about 35 student assistants. The team provides a range of research and administrative support services as well as research and project management to the entire SOEP team. Administrative support activities include liaising with the SOEP Survey Committee and coordinating and facilitating administrative processes between the SOEP unit and DIW Berlin's financial and human resources units.

The SOEP's management team (directorate) is comprised of the SOEP director and the heads of the four divisions Survey Methods and Management, Data Operation and Research Data Center, Applied Panel Data Analysis, and Knowledge Transfer and Training. The members of this team set the direction for the diverse activities of the SOEP, ranging from independent research to infrastructure provision, and define strategic goals for the future development of the SOEP.

In 2018, the Social Inequality and Justice Project Group was established under the supervision of SOEP Director Stefan Liebig to intensify research on attitudes and perceptions related to social inequalities in the SOEP. One of the research questions the group is currently pursuing is whether and how an individual's ideas about social justice change over the life course and how individual living conditions affect these changes.



From left to right:
Jürgen Schupp, Patricia Axt, Jule
Adriaans, Alisa Fränkel, Philipp
Eisnecker, Sabine Zinn, Stefan Liebig,
Jan Goebel, Anja Bahr, Philipp Lersch,
Carsten Schröder

Division 1: Knowledge Transfer

Prof. Dr. Jürgen Schupp
Vice-Director of SOEP & Division
Head Knowledge Transfer

Sandra Bohmann
Doctoral Student BGSS
SOEPcampus

Deborah Anne Bowen
German-English Translation and
Editing

Janina Britzke
Documentation, Editing, and
Social Media

Luise Burkhardt
Doctoral Student BGSS

Zbignev Gricevic
Doctoral Student BGSS

Selin Kara
Documentation, Reporting,
and Web Content

Christine Kurka
Guest Program and
Event Management

Uta Rahmann
Documentation, Reporting,
and Web Content

Katja Schmidt
Doctoral Student BGSS
Research Project: AFFIN

Monika Wimmer
SOEP Communications
Management

The Division of Knowledge Transfer holds workshops and teaching events to facilitate and promote knowledge transfer to the next generation of researchers. It also makes SOEP-based research available to the broader public through the German and international media, conveying scientific findings in an understandable way to diverse audiences. Skill transfer to SOEP users is an increasingly important part of our work in the SOEP, as the complexity of the survey continues to increase from one year to the next. Our goal is to make the SOEP study as accessible as possible for both secondary data analysis and scientific research. Universities and non-university research institutes work with the SOEP to provide methodological training in use of the SOEP data. The diverse SOEPcampus workshops provided at German universities and research institutes since 2007 are aimed primarily at young researchers in the fields of sociology, economics, education, and psychology. In 2018, the SOEP in Residence visiting researcher program was expanded at the European level to accommodate researchers in the InGRID2 infrastructure project and to host a summer school at DIW Berlin.

An ongoing focus of our work is on the transfer of SOEP-based research results to policy makers, stakeholders, and the broader public, so that scientific findings can shape political and social decision-making processes and provide people with insights to inform their life choices. Recent findings are disseminated to researchers within Germany and around the world through a range of media. These press and public relations activities are managed within the SOEP in cooperation with the Department of Communication at DIW Berlin.

Last but not least, the knowledge transfer division is responsible for pooling the diverse feedback we receive from the scientific community, from surveys of our data users and ideas generated at conferences, and from our SOEP Survey Committee and the DIW Berlin Scientific Advisory Board. We use all this valuable feedback in the conceptual and strategic development of the SOEP as an important part of Germany's research data infrastructure.



From left to right:
Katja Schmidt, Monika Wimmer,
Sandra Bohmann, Uta Rahmann,
Jürgen Schupp, Luise Burkhardt,
Markus M. Grabka, Zbignev Gricevic,
Christine Kurka, Deborah A. Bowen,
Selin Kara, Janina Britzke

Division 2:

Survey Methodology and Survey Management

Dr. habil. Sabine Zinn
Division Head Survey Methodology
and Survey Management

Mirjam Fischer, PhD
Research Focus: Sexual Minorities,
Same-Sex Families, Social Inequality
and Well-Being
Research Project: SOEP-LGB

Martin Gerike
Trainee as Specialist in Market and
Social Research, second year

Florian Griesse
Survey Management

Jannes Jacobsen
Doctoral Student BGSS
Research Project: GeFam

Magdalena Krieger
Doctoral Student BGSS
Research Project: GeFam

Dr. Elisabeth Liebau
Survey Management
Research Focus: Migration

Lea-Maria Löbel
Doctoral Student BGSS
Research Project: MORE

Lisa Pagel
Doctoral Student BGSS
Research Project: GeFam

Dr. David Richter
SOEP-Innovation Sample (SOEP-IS)
Research Project: DDR-Psych
Research Focus: Psychology

Rainer Siegers
Sampling, Weighting, and Imputation

Dr. Hans Walter Steinhauer
Sampling, Weighting, and
Imputation
Research Focus: Item and Unit
Nonresponse, Panel Attrition

The Division of Survey Methodology and Survey Management is responsible for all aspects of data collection for the SOEP survey. Its central tasks include sampling design for the various SOEP samples, SOEP questionnaire development, and survey research on selectivity and measurement errors in the data. The team works in close consultation with members of the SOEP Survey Committee and Kantar Public Germany in Munich, the survey research institute that conducts the SOEP fieldwork, including all interviews and direct contact with respondents. The team also oversees the SOEP Innovation Sample, which provides a framework for the testing of new and innovative concepts, survey modules, and survey instruments for potential inclusion in the core SOEP survey.

The Survey Methodology and Survey Management team is further responsible for the provision of survey weights and the documentation of their usage. Research activities focus on the effectiveness of methods to increase participation in the survey and the derivation of new weighting approaches as well as the development of novel statistical methods adequately compensating for unequal selection probabilities, selective response rates, and incomplete data issues. Further focal points of research include: differences between data collection methods (e.g., personal versus mail interviews), the role of interviewers in data quality, statistical imputation techniques for missing data, and the implementation of new survey instruments such as behavioral experiments, complex cognitive psychological tests, and non-invasive health measures in fieldwork on large-scale studies.



From left to right:
Elisabeth Liebau, Mirjam Fischer,
Sabine Zinn, Lea-Maria Löbel,
Jannes Jacobsen, Hans Walter
Steinhauer, Florian Griesse, Rainer
Siegers, Martin Gerike

Division 3:

Data Operation and Research Data Center

Dr. Jan Goebel
Division Head RDC
Research Focus: Income and
Regional Inequality

Andreas Franken
Data Management

Heinz-Alexander Fütterer
Metadata and Data Documentation

Dr. Markus M. Grabka
Data Generation and Testing
Research Focus: Income and Wealth
Inequality

Dominique Hansen
Metadata and Data Documentation

Valeriia Heidemann
Research Project: GeFam

Philipp Kaminsky
SOEPhotline
Contract Management

Dr. Peter Krause
Data Management
Research Focus: Quality of Life

Janine Napieraj
SOEPhotline, Contract Management
Data Generation and Testing
(currently on leave)

Jana Nebelin
Research Project: GeFam

Marvin Petrenz
Data Generation and Testing

Dr. Diana Schacht
Research Project: MORE, GeFam
Research Focus: Migration and
Integration, Social Inequalities,
Quantitative Methods

Dr. Paul Schmelzer
Data Generation and Testing
Research Focus: Employment

Dr. Christian Schmitt
Data Generation and Testing
Research Focus: Demography

Jun.-Prof. Dr. Daniel Schnitzlein
Data Generation and Testing
Research Focus: Intergenerational
Mobility

Ingo Sieber
Metadata and Data Documentation

Knut Wenzig
(Meta)Data Management
Trainer

Stefan Zimmermann
Data Generation and Testing

The Research Data Center of the SOEP, as part of the SOEP Department at DIW Berlin, offers a comprehensive range of support services and coordinates access to the SOEP data. In all of its work, the SOEP Research Data Center adheres closely to the criteria of the German Data Forum for the accreditation of research data centers.

The team makes the anonymized SOEP data available to the research community. A data distribution contract is the precondition for use of the SOEP's scientific use files. The form of data access provided to users depends on the data protection regulations that apply to the dataset in question. Access to the scientific use files is provided through a personal download link sent to users. More sensitive (e.g., regional) data are made available to users by remote execution, remote access, or in the framework of a research visit to DIW Berlin.

The team is responsible for processing the anonymized data sent to DIW Berlin by Kantar Public Germany for use in longitudinal and cross-sectional analysis. Data processing involves generation of user-friendly variables and preparation for use with standard statistical software packages. Further focal points include analysis of non-response to individual questions or entire questionnaires, development of methods of compensating for non-response, and provision of small-scale indicators.



The team also produces comprehensive documentation on these activities and reports on its findings on the SOEP Research Data Center website. Members of the team have also developed a web-based tool (paneldata.org) following the DDI standard for documentation of scientific studies to present all of the SOEP and SOEP-Related studies to our users. The SOEP Research Data Center also provides user support through lectures and workshops at universities. A guest program enables users to access the data on site at the SOEP Research Data Center, a requirement for protected access to sensitive regional data. As a special service, the SOEP Research Data Center advises researchers who want to use the SOEP as reference data or a control sample for their own studies. The team's numerous international research partnerships are important forms of cooperation and networking for the SOEP. The overarching aim of the SOEP Data Research Center is to strengthen and expand the empirical foundation for international comparative cross-sectional and longitudinal analysis.

From left to right:
Ingo Sieber, Peter Krause, Jana Nebelin, Jan Goebel, Heinz-Alexander Fütterer, Diana Schacht, Marvin Petrenz, Valeriia Heidemann, Andreas Franken, Knut Wenzig, Stefan Zimmermann, Daniel Schnitzlein, Philipp Kaminsky

Division 4: Applied Panel Analysis

Prof. Dr. Carsten Schröder
Division Head Applied Panel
Analysis

Dr. Charlotte Bartels
Harmonization of International
Household Panels
Research Focus: Inequalities

Patrick Buraue
Doctoral Student

Dr. Theresa Entringer
Research Project: DDR-Psych

Dr. Alexandra Fedorets
Data Generation and Testing
Research Focus: Labor Markets

Daniel Graeber
Doctoral Student

Christoph Halbmeier
Doctoral Student
Research Focus: Inequalities

Dr. Johannes König
Research Project: Improving the
Research Data Infrastructure in the
Area of High-Worth Individuals
Research Focus: Inequalities and
Structural Estimation

Dr. Hannes Kröger
Research Projects: BRISE,
DDR-Psych
Research Focus: Health
Inequalities

Dr. Nicolas Legewie
Research Project: MORE
Research Focus: Migration

Dr. Holger Lüthen
Research Project: Record Linkage of
SOEP with Social Security Data
Research Focus: Public Economics,
Inequalities

Maria Metzger
Doctoral Student
Research Project: InGRID II
Research Focus: Inequalities

Dr. Levent Neyse
Research Focus: Behavioral and
Experimental Economics

Felicitas Schikora
Doctoral Student
Research Focus: Migration, Labor
Markets and Education

Johannes Seebauer
Doctoral Student
Research Project: MLK-E005

Cortnie A. Shupe
Doctoral Student
Research Project: Minimum Wage –
Consumption, Income and Savings
Research Focus: Labor Markets

Matteo Targa
Doctoral Student
Research Focus: Labor Economics
and Inequality

The Division of Applied Panel Analysis provides data infrastructure as a public good and conducts research on a wide range of topics using the SOEP and other international databases such as the Cross-National Equivalent File. This research is important for the SOEP for two reasons. First, our publications increase the visibility of the SOEP in the international research landscape. Second, our ongoing research guarantees in-depth, regular, and systematic discourse on the quality of the SOEP data and on the relevance of the modules and questions included each year in the SOEP surveys.

Key themes of the team's research are: distributional analysis, policy evaluations, youth and family research, education and competencies, living conditions and migration, and determinants of emotions (happiness, well-being, etc.). Our interdisciplinary team conducts research on all these themes in cooperation with researchers worldwide. The high quality of this research is documented in numerous publications in international refereed journals, successful supervision of doctoral dissertations, as well as a series of externally funded projects. Funding bodies include the German Research Foundation, the Leibniz Association, and various other foundations and federal ministries.



From left to right:
Levent Neyse, Carsten Schröder,
Alexandra Fedorets, Christoph
Halbmeier, Cortnie A. Shupe, Matteo
Targa, Johannes König, Holger Lüthen,
Felicita Schikora, Charlotte Bartels,
Maria Metzing, Daniel Graeber,
Hannes Kröger

SOEP Staff at DIW Berlin (as of June 2019)

Administrative and Management Team

**DIRECTOR OF SOEP AND
DIW BERLIN EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER**
Prof. Dr. Stefan Liebig
Phone: – 223 | sliebig@diw.de

DEPUTY DIRECTORS
Prof. Dr. Jürgen Schupp
Dr. Jan Goebel
Prof. Dr. Carsten Schröder
Dr. Sabine Zinn

TEAM ASSISTANCE
Patricia Axt
Phone: – 490 | paxt@diw.de
Christiane Eichhorst (on leave)
Phone: – 671 | ceichhorst@diw.de
Alisa Fränkel
Phone: – 671 | afraenkel@diw.de

RESEARCH AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT
Anja Bahr
Phone: – 380 | abahr@diw.de

SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOWS
Prof. Dr. Martin Kroh
Phone: – 678 | mkroh@diw.de
Prof. Dr. Gert G. Wagner
gwagner@diw.de

**PROJECT GROUP SOCIAL INEQUALITY AND
SOCIAL JUSTICE**
Jule Adriaans (BGHS**)**
Phone: – 398 | jadriaans@diw.de
Philipp Eisnecker (BGSS*)
Phone: – 423 | peisnecker@diw.de

**BMAS-ENDOWED PROFESSORSHIP
(WITH HUB)**
Prof. Dr. Philipp Lersch
plersch@diw.de

Division 1: Knowledge Transfer

VICE-DIRECTOR AND DIVISION HEAD
Prof. Dr. Jürgen Schupp
Phone: – 238 | jschupp@diw.de

SOEP COMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT
Monika Wimmer
Phone: – 251 | mwimmer@diw.de

**DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING,
WEB CONTENT**
Janina Britzke
Phone: – 418 | jbritzke@diw.de
Selin Kara
Phone: – 345 | skara@diw.de
Uta Rahmann
Phone: – 287 | urahmann@diw.de

TRANSLATION AND EDITING
Deborah Anne Bowen
Phone: – 332 | dbowen@diw.de

GUESTS AND EVENT MANAGEMENT
Christine Kurka
Phone: – 283 | ckurka@diw.de

SOEPCAMPUS
Sandra Bohmann (BGSS*)
Phone: – 428 | sbohmann@diw.de

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER
Luise Burkhardt (BGSS*)
Phone: – 235 | lbukhardt@diw.de
Zbignev Gricevic (BGSS*)
Phone: – 461 | zgricevic@diw.de
Katja Schmidt (AFFIN, BGSS*)
Phone: – 543 | kschmidt@diw.de

Division 2: Survey Methodology and Management

DIVISION HEAD
Dr. Sabine Zinn
Phone: – 340 | szinn@diw.de

SURVEY MANAGEMENT
Mirjam Fischer, PhD (LGB)
Phone: – 323 | mfischer@diw.de
Florian Giese (SOEP-Core)
Phone: – 359 | fgiese@diw.de
Magdalena Krieger (MORE, BGSS*)
Phone: – 461 | mkrieger@diw.de
Dr. Elisabeth Liebau (SOEP-Core)
Phone: – 259 | sliebau@diw.de
Lea-Maria Löbel (MORE, BGSS*)
Phone: – 358 | lloebel@diw.de
Lisa Pagel (GeFam, BGSS*) (on leave)
Phone: – 402 | lpagel@diw.de
Dr. David Richter (SOEP-IS, DDR-Psych)
Phone: – 413 | drichter@diw.de

SURVEY METHODOLOGY
Hans Walter Steinhauer
Phone: – 338 | hsteinhauer@diw.de

SAMPLING AND WEIGHTING
Rainer Siegers
Phone: – 239 | rsiegers@diw.de
Jannes Jacobsen (GeFam, BGSS*)
Phone: – 688 | jjacobsen@diw.de

..... Based at the SOEP but not part of its organizational structure

* BGSS: Berlin Graduate School of Social Sciences at Humboldt Universität zu Berlin.

** DIW Berlin GC: DIW Berlin Graduate Center of Economic and Social Research.

*** LIFE: International Max Planck Research School "The Life Course: Evolutionary and Auto-genetic Dynamics (LIFE)".

**** BGHS: Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology.

***** Inequalities: Public Economics & Inequality – Doctoral Program at Freie Universität Berlin.

Division 3: Data Operation and Research Center

DIVISION HEAD

Dr. Jan Goebel

Phone: +377 | jgoebel@diw.de

DATA MANAGEMENT

Andreas Franken

Phone: +331 | afranken@diw.de

Dr. Peter Krause

Phone: +690 | pkrause@diw.de

Marvin Petrenz

Phone: +463 | mpetrenz@diw.de

Ingo Sieber

Phone: +260 | isieber@diw.de

Knut Wenzig

Phone: +341 | kwenzig@diw.de

DATA GENERATION AND TESTING

Dr. Markus M. Grabka

Phone: +339 | mgrabka@diw.de

Dr. Diana Schacht (MORE, GeFam)

Phone: +465 | dschacht@diw.de

Dr. Paul Schmelzer

Phone: +526 | pschmelzer@diw.de

Dr. Christian Schmitt

Phone: +603 | cschmitt@diw.de

Jun.-Prof. Dr. Daniel D. Schnitzlein

Phone: +322 | dschnitzlein@diw.de

Stefan Zimmermann

Phone: +391 | szimmermann@diw.de

METADATA AND DATA DOCUMENTATION

Heinz-Alexander Fütterer

Phone: +243 | afuetterer@diw.de

Dominique Hansen

Phone: +363 | dhansen@diw.de

Jana Nebelin (GeFam) (on leave)

Phone: +319 | jnebelin@diw.de

Valeriia Heidemann (GeFam)

Phone: +319 | vheidemann@diw.de

SOEPHOTLINE, CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

Alisa Fränkel

Phone: +671 | afraenkel@diw.de

Philipp Kaminsky

Phone: +292 | pkaminsky@diw.de

Janine Napieraj (on leave)

Phone: +345 | jnapieraj@diw.de

Division 4: Applied Panel Analysis

DIVISION HEAD

Prof. Dr. Carsten Schröder

Phone: +284 | cschoeder@diw.de

APPLIED PANEL ANALYSIS

Dr. Charlotte Bartels (CompHPD)

Phone: +347 | cbartels@diw.de

Patrick Buraue (DIW Berlin GC)**

Phone: +235 | pburaue@diw.de

Dr. Theresa Entringer (DDR-Psych)

Phone: +317 | tentringer@diw.de

Dr. Alexandra Fedorets

Phone: +321 | afedorets@diw.de

Daniel Graeber (DIW Berlin GC)**

Phone: +472 | dgraeber@diw.de

Christoph Halbmeier (Inequalities***)**

Phone: +382 | chalbmeier@diw.de

Dr. Johannes König

Phone: +503 | jkoenig@diw.de

Dr. Hannes Kröger (BRISE, DDR-Psych)

Phone: +285 | hkroeger@diw.de

Dr. Nicolas Legewie (MORE)

Phone: +587 | nlegewie@diw.de

Dr. Holger Lüthen (SOEP–RV)

Phone: +431 | hluethen@diw.de

Maria Metzger (InGRID2, Inequalities***)**

Phone: +221 | mmetzing@diw.de

Dr. Levent Neyse

lneyse@diw.de

Felicitas Schikora (DIW Berlin GC)**

Phone: +326 | fschikora@diw.de

Johannes Seebauer (MLK–E005, DIW Berlin GC)**

jseebauer@diw.de

Cortnie A. Shupe (DIW Berlin GC)**

Phone: +272 | cshupe@diw.de

Matteo Targa (DIW Berlin GC)**

Phone: +235 | mtarga@diw.de

Student Assistants and Trainees

TRAINEE SPECIALIST IN MARKET AND SOCIAL RESEARCH

Martin Gerike

Phone: +393 | mgerike@diw.de

STUDENT ASSISTANTS

Janine Bernard

Carsten Braband

Antonia Briel

Paul Brockmann

Xiao Chen

Lea Essers

Manuel Fangmann

Sascha Geschke

Sebastian Geschonke

Anita Glass

Konstantin Göbler

Natascha Hainbach

Theresa Iglaue

Benjamin Jursch

Michael Krämer

Leopold Lautenbacher

Tabea Naujoks

Fabian Nemecek

Marius Pahl

Christopher Prömel

Jan Reher

Lisa Reiber

Irakli Sauer

Tobias Scheckel

Antonia Scherz

Tobias Silbermann

Milan Stille

Lisa Ulrich

SOEP Survey Committee

MEMBERS:

Prof. Dr. Uwe Sunde (Head)
Professor of Population Economics
University of Munich (LMU)

Prof. Dalton Conley, PhD
Henry Putnam University Professor
of Sociology
Princeton University

Prof. Dr. Urs Fischbacher
Chair of Applied Research in
Economics
University of Konstanz

Prof. Melissa A. Hardy, PhD
Distinguished Professor of Sociology
and Demography
Penn State University

Prof. Jutta Heckhausen, PhD
Professor of Psychology &
Social Behavior
University of California, Irvine

Prof. Dr. Monika Jungbauer-Gans
Professor at the Institute of
Sociology at *Leibniz University
Hannover* and Scientific Director
of the *German Centre for Higher
Education Research and Science
Studies (DZHW)*

Prof. Lucinda Platt, D Phil
Professor of Social Policy and
Sociology
*London School of Economics and
Political Science*

Prof. Dr. Susann Rohwedder
Professor of Economics
*Pardee RAND Graduate School
Santa Monica, CA*

Prof. Dr. Arthur van Soest
*Tilburg School of Economics and
Management, Netherlands*

ALUMNI:

Prof. Dr. Simon Gächter (2010–2016)
Prof. Janet Gornick, PhD (2010–2014)
Prof. Dr. Karin Gottschall (2010–2013)
Prof. James Heckman, PhD (2010–2014)
Prof. Guillermina Jasso, PhD (2010–2015)
Prof. Dr. Bärbel-Maria Kurth (2012–2018)
Prof. Peter Lynn, PhD (2010–2015)
Prof. Dr. Rainer Winkelmann (2010–2016)

The SOEP Survey Committee is appointed by the DIW Berlin Board of Trustees. The nine renowned international scholars on the SOEP Survey Committee provide advice on the further development of the SOEP survey and SOEP user services. We are very grateful to this impressive group of researchers for their commitment to work with us in building and enhancing the SOEP.



From left to right:
 Dalton Conley, Uwe Sunde, Melissa
 A. Hardy, Jutta Heckhausen, Lucinda
 Platt, Urs Fischbacher, Monika
 Jungbauer-Gans, Arthur van Soest

PART 2

SOEP Data and Fieldwork

2018

The Landscape of SOEP Studies

SOEP-Core

SOEP-Core is the centerpiece of the Socio-Economic Panel study, a wide-ranging representative longitudinal study of private households in Germany. The study was launched in 1984 as a research project of an interdisciplinary Collaborative Research Center of the German Research Foundation. A few years later, the study moved to its current home at the German Institute for Economic Research, DIW Berlin. In 1990, just after German reunification, the SOEP was expanded to include a representative East German sample. Since the study began in 1984, survey fieldwork has been conducted by Kantar Public Germany, which now surveys around 14,000 households and 30,000 individuals every year. The data provide information on every member of every household taking part in the survey. Respondents include Germans living in the states of both the former East and West Germany, foreign nationals residing in Germany, recent immigrants, and a new sample of refugees added in 2016. Some of the many topics of SOEP-Core include household composition, education, occupational biographies, employment, earnings, health, and satisfaction.

SOEP Innovation Sample (SOEP-IS)

The longitudinal SOEP Innovation Sample (SOEP-IS) was created in 2012 as a special sample for testing highly innovative research projects. It was designed primarily for the study of innovative methodologies and topics that involve too great a risk of non-response to be included in the long-term SOEP study, in some cases because the instruments have not yet been scientifically tested. Proposals approved for inclusion in SOEP-IS up to now include economic behavioral experiments, implicit association tests (IAT), and complex procedures for measuring time use (day reconstruction method, DRM). Researchers at universities and research institutes worldwide are encouraged to submit innovative proposals to SOEP-IS. An open call for proposals is published annually, with a submission deadline at the end of the year.

SOEP-Related Studies (SOEP-RS)

There are now a number of studies in Germany that have incorporated questions from the SOEP questionnaire to validate their results on a representative sample of the German population ("SOEP as Reference Data"). These SOEP-Related Studies (SOEP-RS) are designed and implemented in close cooperation with the SOEP team and structured similarly to the SOEP. This makes it possible to link the SOEP-RS datasets to link SOEP-RS datasets with SOEP-Core or SOEP-IS and to analyze the data together. Some examples of SOEP-Related Studies include BASE-II (Berlin Aging Study II), FiD (Families in Germany), PIAAC-L (Programme for International Assessment of Adult Competencies-Longitudinal), SOEP-ECEC Quality (Early Childhood Education and Care Quality in the SOEP), SOEP-LEE (SOEP Employer-Employee Survey), BIP (Bonn Intervention Panel), and BRISE (Bremen Initiative to Foster Early Childhood Development).

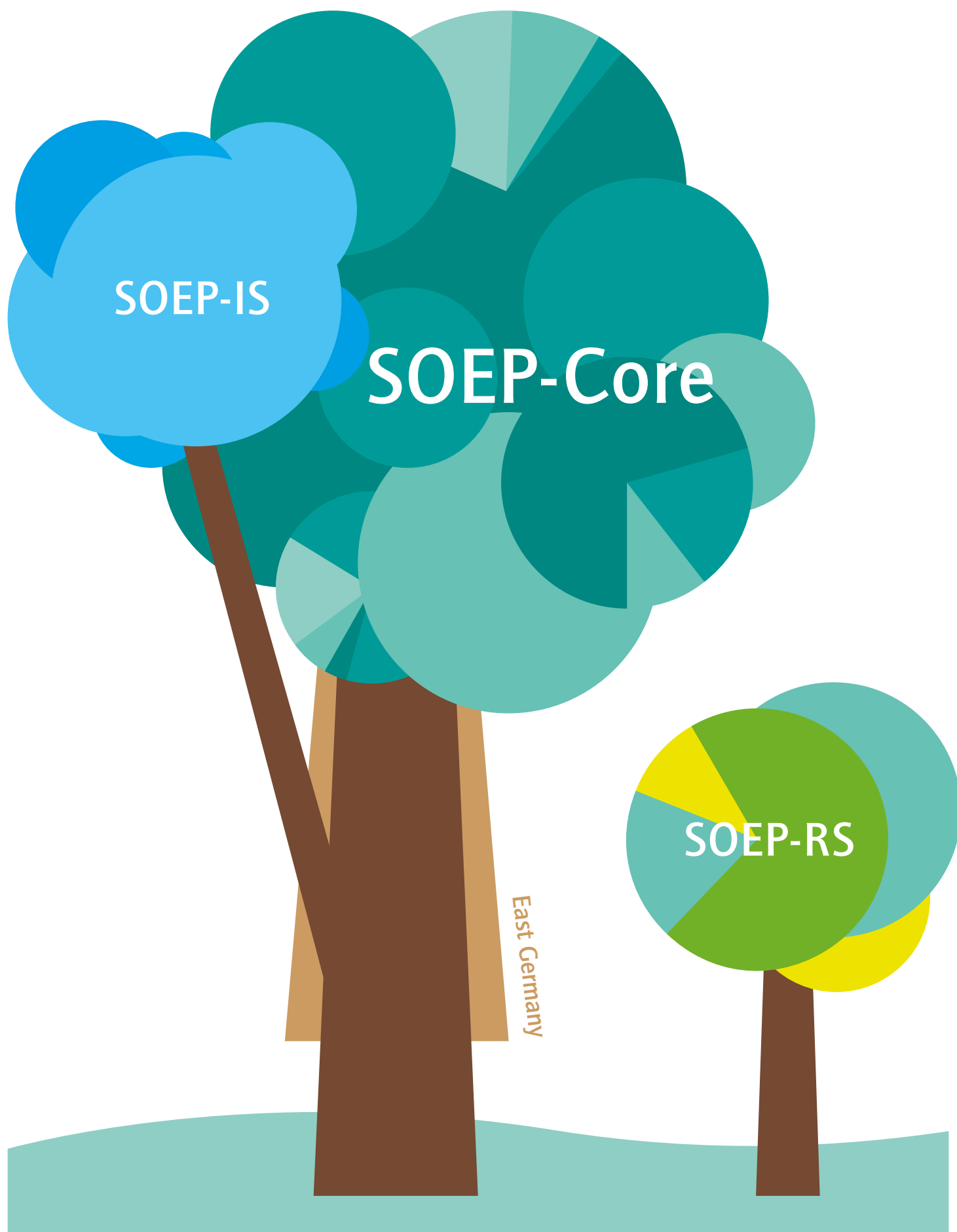
today



2012

1990

1984



Kantar Public's Organization of SOEP Fieldwork

By Axel Glemser

Kantar Public

Kantar Public, headquartered in Munich, is one of the most prestigious institutes for political and social research in Germany. Together with Kantar TNS, which serves commercial clients, Kantar Public is the German member of the Kantar Group, in which WPP (London) has bundled its research activities. As a member of a leading global network, the institute provides its clients with the highest quality research data, strategic knowledge, and scientific advice for business and policy decisions. Clients include major international corporations, medium-sized businesses in Germany and abroad, and numerous German ministries, agencies, and scientific institutions. Kantar uses systems for quality assurance and total quality management processes in all areas and at all levels of its organization. Kantar Public and its predecessor “Infratest” have been conducting political and social research since the 1950s. In the early 1980s, “Infratest Sozialforschung” (Infratest Social Research) was founded as a separate company that today is the leading commercial research institute in the field of social science surveys in Germany. In recent years, Kantar Public worked closely with the contracting institutes to design and conduct a number of empirical studies and project types that have made national and international scientific history. Foremost among these is the German Socio-Economic Panel Survey (SOEP), which is known to respondents under the name “Living in Germany” (LID). Kantar Public has been responsible for collecting data since the beginning of the SOEP in 1984. The range of tasks covers the entire process of data collection, from the conceptual design through the sampling, implementation of the survey instruments, to the cross-sectional weighting, data processing, and methodological field reporting. These activities are coordinated by a separate business area of Kantar Public.

SOEP Team at Kantar Public

For the SOEP, Kantar Public has created a “tailor-made” business area that reflects the specific requirements of the project in terms of its composition and structure. The tasks of the SOEP team at Kantar can be divided into three areas: first, methodological, conceptual, science-based, and science-oriented advice and guidance; second, panel management; and third, comprehensive data processing, in particular data acquisition, verification, and editing.

The first area includes general project management and project monitoring, analysis, and documentation for methodological field reports as well as consulting services for the SOEP group at DIW Berlin on issues of sample design, the design and implementation of data collection methods, and consulting for innovative survey methods as used in SOEP tests, pilots, and the SOEP Innovation Sample. With regard to panel management, several individual tasks are especially noteworthy: assignment and telecare of interviewers and coordination of the interface to the field organization. Further key tasks include organization and mailing of survey documents to interviewers and respondents, including ordering and handling of incentives, the “central administration” of households that participate exclusively in the survey in the mail mode, the coding of the response results in the panel database and the hotline for respondents on issues relating, for instance, to data collection and privacy information. In the context of data processing, data from paper questionnaires are registered and comprehensive, and semi-automated data examination is carried out along with individual checkups including longitudinal consistency checks. Moreover, survey responses are coded according to standard occupation and industry classifications. The SOEP team at Kantar includes 22 permanent employees (some part-time) as well as several assistants. Further employees are involved in the ongoing processing of the project data from several of Kantar’s data production units in Germany. These include the project managers responsible for orga-

nizing face-to-face fieldwork, questionnaire programmers, as well as experts from the statistics department, who are responsible for sampling.

Face-to-Face Capability

Kantar Public conducts all of the face-to-face interviews for ambitious surveys using interviewers who are trained and managed in-house by Kantar, and thus does not outsource parts of the fieldwork to third-party institutions as is common practice in other institutes. In the case of the SOEP, the reasons for the exclusive use of in-house expertise are especially clear. Kantar's trained interviewers are fundamental for (a) effective communication between project leader and interviewer during the fieldwork phase, (b) efficient fieldwork management with a view to response-oriented processing of the sample, and (c) effective quality control of the fieldwork. For panel studies, it is crucially important to use the same interviewer each year to ensure continuity in processing the sample from a longitudinal perspective. At the household level, interviewer continuity has a favorable effect on the longitudinal response rate. In Germany, Kantar has a total of approximately 1,400 interviewers, including several select groups of interviewers for special studies that do not use the modern touch-pen laptops otherwise used. Around 800 of Kantar's interviewers work with touch-pen laptops and about 550 of these interviewers are available for work on demanding surveys like the SOEP. These interviewers are experienced in the implementation of sophisticated social research projects in general and also in working with the SOEP. To provide additional support in data collection for the SOEP, there are around 120 interviewers on the "special staff" of "Living in Germany" (LID). Most of these special LID interviewers have extensive SOEP experience and work exclusively with the conventional paper-and-pencil interview (PAPI) method. The large number of interviewers on Kantar's various interviewer teams guarantees a nationwide infrastructure for face-to-face interviews in Germany. Through a rigorous process for the selection of interviewer staff, with requirements for a minimum length and a minimum volume of work, the recruitment and hiring of SOEP interviewers is managed professionally according to the highest standards. The "Face-to-Face Line" also located in Munich is in charge of central management and organization of interviewer fieldwork for Kantar and holds responsibility for the entire interviewer staff. Its work includes comprehensive recruitment processes, establishing and maintaining database-driven information systems for the management and monitoring of the interviewer staff, monitoring and checking of

the samples in the field, and compilation of response statistics. In cooperation with project management, the Face-to-Face Line also coordinates interviewer payment through a range of fee and premium models. In addition, the Face-to-Face Line works with project management to draft and create the fieldwork and training materials for the interviewers.

With the support of 25 "contact interviewers" responsible for specific regions of Germany, the Face-to-Face Line guarantees optimal coordination of the complete interviewer staff. The contact interviewers have extensive liaison experience and outstanding leadership abilities. Thus, each interviewer, in addition to having an in-house contact at Kantar Germany, also has a permanent local contact available to him or her. The contact interviewers play an important role in local recruitment and training processes. They regularly take part in organization-wide events, general training (online or in-house) and project-specific training, and thus serve as "multipliers" for the dissemination of important information and knowledge to interviewers.

Quality Assurance and Supervision of Interviewers

Kantar has implemented total quality management at all levels of the organization. Quality management was introduced as part of a larger quality assurance system and served as the basis for Kantar's certification of quality management according to the international quality standard ISO 9001 (first acquired in 1995). In 2007, the institute was certified to the international quality standard ISO 20252 for organizations conducting market, opinion, and social research. This certification covers the entire operational research process, including data collection, data processing, data evaluation, and reporting. Furthermore, it defines the requirements for total quality management and the cooperation with the client.

Kantar places high priority on interviewer monitoring and has put an ISO-certificated process in place that is audited regularly. Kantar adheres to the German Business Association of Market and Social Research Institutes (ADM) standards for internal regulation and monitoring of all systems and procedures. This means that a minimum of 10 percent of Kantar's annual interviews are checked and every interviewer is monitored at least once a year. Besides these basic checks, additional checks of interview duration, date, and time are carried out in these cases. Inconsistencies in these routine monitoring procedures lead to a more detailed examination of the interviewer in question.

Moreover, for longitudinal household surveys like the SOEP, additional measures are in place to ensure

high-quality fieldwork results and trustworthy data. First, the administration of the panel itself and the various motivational measures for the participants are inherent quality control procedures. A variety of letters and notes (invitations preceding new waves of data collection, reminder letters and brochures urging participation, letters of thanks), personal hot-lines for interviewers and respondents, and website contact forms ensure that respondents maintain a strong commitment to the survey and allow the fieldwork agency to interact directly with participants to receive feedback on the interviewers' performance. Second, the longitudinal data consistency checks are central in guaranteeing fieldwork quality. Throughout 2018, existing quality control measures for interviewer monitoring were expanded and intensified in three ways.¹

1. The basic interviewer monitoring concept was expanded to a project-based full-control system for all SOEP refresher waves: Every participating household will be contacted shortly after the interview by letter or phone asking them to confirm their participation in a regularly conducted interview. In case of inconsistencies and/or irregularities, Kantar will attempt to gain clarification through direct contact with respondents, primarily by telephone. For upcoming waves of the existing panel, the volume of households in the monitoring process is reduced by means of random sampling to limit the response burden for the participants. For example, in the SOEP-Core sample, approximately 25 percent of the households were monitored in 2018.
2. Enhancing and intensifying checks of paradata from the interview including duration, date, time, and temporal intervals between interviews using electronic contact documentation.
3. We are also examining procedures that might be able to uncover irregularities in the distribution of the actual interview data in order to identify interviews that may not have been conducted in line with our standards.

¹ For checks of para- and interview data, Kantar used ideas and concepts that were later published in the German Federal Employment Agency report, "Identification of Interviewer Falsification in the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees in Germany" (Kosyakova et al., German Federal Employment Agency (IAB), 2019, FDZ-Methodenreport 02/2019 EN.)

Table 1 shows details for the recontacting process in the different samples². The share of recontacted households differs by project type. In refresher samples such as sample O, 100% of the households are part of this process. In existing panel samples, the volume of households is reduced by means of random sampling to limit the response burden for the participants. The aim is to recontact at least 10% of households for every interviewer in every SOEP project. However, the average share of recontacted households in the samples is significantly higher than 10% (A–N: 25%, M1–2: 36%, I1–I5: 28%). There are several reasons for this. First, for interviewers who are responsible for only a few households, more than 10% of their households need to be recontacted to generate sufficient response. Second, in some projects, interviewers may be responsible for a very high share of households. For these interviewers, the share of recontacted households is also higher. Third, for interviewers with low response rates from recontacted households, the number of recontacted households can be increased. At 91%, the share of households that were recontacted in M3–5 was almost as high as for refresher samples due to the higher likelihood of irregularities encountered in the refugee samples.

In terms of survey mode, the standard approach is a short paper questionnaire that can be followed up by phone calls if too many interviewers have a response rate significantly below 30%. This approach was used in samples A–N and M1–2 in 2018. In samples O and IS, we did not call households that did not respond to our letter with the short questionnaire for different reasons. In sample O, for instance, we did not want to put too much pressure on our newly recruited households. Again, the setup for samples M3–5 was different: Here a phone call was the main mode of recontacting and only households without phone numbers were sent a letter with the short paper questionnaire. The aim was to achieve a response rate that was comparable to the other SOEP samples. Overall, we recontacted 7,692 and received feedback from 4,760 households. This results in a response rate of 62% overall. The samples differed from 45% in refresher sample O to 68% in sample A–N. In total, households of 567 out of 572 interviewers were part of the recontacting process across all samples.³ Using the results from the recontacting process, paradata and interview data, across all samples we identified three interviewers who had not adhered to

² The CAPI split of samples L2/3 will be included in the new, project-based monitoring approach from 2019 onward.

³ Interviewers are missing for different reasons, e.g., because Kantar avoided making a second attempt to recontact households in the same wave. Each of the missing interviewers was responsible for five or fewer households.

Table 1

Overview recontact process in the SOEP samples 2018

Sample	A-N	O	M1-2	M3-5	I1-I5 ¹	Total
Households in net sample ²	9,955	935	1,690	3,042	3,232	18,854
Interviewers in net sample ³	482	114	187	53	278	572
Setup						
Mode	sequential mixed mode (SELF+CATI)	SELF	sequential mixed mode (SELF+CATI)	parallel mixed mode (CATI+SELF)	SELF	-
Recontacted households	2,475	935	611	2,759	912	7,692
Share of recontacted households (in %)	25	100	36	91	28	41
Interviewers with recontacted households ⁴	479	114	176	52	274	567
Share of Interviewers without recontact ⁵	0.6	-	5.9	1.9	1.4	0.9
Results						
Households with feedback	1,681	425	341	1,708	605	4,760
Response rate (in %)	68	45	56	62	66	62
Interviewers identified as having not conducted interviews properly	1	-	-	2	-	3

¹ Preliminary results.
² For A-N: interviewer based.
³ According to the household questionnaire. A second attempt at recontact was made in households where another interviewer was responsible for some of the individual questionnaires.
⁴ Without fraudulent interviewers.
⁵ Only Interviewers with few net cases are missing from the re-contacts (8*1; 3*2;1*3;1*5;1*7;1*9). Almost all of them were re-contacted in at least one of the other SOEP samples (11 out of 15).

our standards in conducting interviews in the 2018 fieldwork period. One interviewer was identified in the process of recontacting respondents in samples A–N. The households were then interviewed by another interviewer and the respondents stated that they had been interviewed correctly in the previous waves up until 2017. Two interviewers in samples M3–5 were identified using paradata and by recontacting respondents. Many of these households were then interviewed correctly by other interviewers. As both interviewers were completely new to the Kantar interviewer team, there are no negative retrospective effects on data of previous waves.

In 2019, we will be further intensifying our interviewer monitoring processes using paradata and interviewer data in all SOEP samples starting soon after fieldwork begins. Results from these data checks will be shared regularly with the SOEP team at DIW Berlin to discuss what steps to take with interviewers who show irregularities and to develop indicators. We are currently working on giving respondents an option to answer the short questionnaire online as part of the recontact process.

Data Protection, Information Security Management, and Corporate Responsibility

Kantar takes a rigorous approach to maintaining data protection and information security that is underpinned by accreditation and adherence to relevant national and international codes, standards, and legislation. Kantar Germany maintains strict adherence to the regulations of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (EU-GDPR), the German Federal Data Protection Act (BDSG) as well as all other data protection regulations. Furthermore, we are a member of the working group of the German Business Association of Market and Social Research Institutes (ADM), which has released a self-regulatory framework for research activities determining how the demands of the data protection legislation and other regulations should be applied to market and social research practices. The BDSG defines the code of conduct explicitly in article 38a. State-level supervisory authorities check to ensure observance of these legal regulations.

Survey results are processed, archived, and distributed exclusively in anonymous form. It is therefore impossible to identify respondents in the data in any way, and Kantar does not pass personal data on to third parties in any of our social research activities. All employees of Kantar in Germany are contractually bound to strict provisions on data confidentiality according to article 5 BDSG and social confidentiality (article 35 SGB I). The obligation to maintain confidentiality extends beyond end of the activity in question, in this case the SOEP survey. Kantar Germany has implemented various technical and organizational measures to meet the respective legal requirements and also has appointed a data protection officer to ensure adherence.

In 2012, we launched an extensive management system for information security (Information Security Management System: ISMS) according to the ISO 27001 standard. This was certified by the Technical Supervisory Association (TÜV) in February 2019. Kantar Public is part of the WPP group and complies with the group's social, ethical and environmental principles. Corporate responsibility and ethical behavior towards employees, customers, business partners, and government agencies play an integral part in our value system. Accordingly, Kantar has always been fully committed to ensuring adherence to laws and has implemented strict internal policies directed at the prevention of potential violations of law and their consequences.

An Overview of SOEP Fieldwork in 2018

Report from Kantar Public

By Anne Bohlender

The dataset for a given SOEP wave is made available to users by the SOEP Research Data Center. To prepare the data for distribution to users, Kantar Public delivers the various data files (gross and net sample files, question-item-variable correspondence lists, and the complete documentation) to the SOEP group at DIW Berlin. The SOEP uses a complex sampling system comprised of various subsamples that have been integrated into the household panel at different times since the SOEP was launched in 1984. The various subsamples are based on different target populations and were therefore drawn using different random sampling techniques.

Table 2 provides an overview of sizes of the various subsamples for the year 2018. **Tables 3 and 4** present the history and development of all major SOEP subsamples since 1984 in absolute sample sizes.

The households and individuals with the longest history of (continuous) panel participation took part for the 35th time in 2018 (samples A and B). Since 1984, various subsamples have been added to the core sample. The following samples have been added since the year 2009:

- **Sample I1** started with more than 1,500 households in 2009 and served as the core sample of the SOEP-Innovation Sample (SOEP-IS) when it was established in 2011. Since then, the SOEP-IS has been expanded with refresher samples in 2012 (sample I2), 2013 (sample I3), 2014 (sample I4) and 2015 (sample I5). Additionally, a subset of households from sample E was transferred to the SOEP-IS in 2012 (sample IE).
- **Sample J** is a general population refresher of more than 3,000 households that was integrated into SOEP-Core in 2011.
- **Sample K** is a general population refresher totaling 1,500 households that was added to SOEP-Core in 2012.
- **Samples L1** (cohort samples) and L2/3 (screening samples) were established in 2010. They originated in the old “Families

in Germany (FiD)” study, a longitudinal SOEP-equivalent sample system for the evaluation of German family policies on behalf of two German government ministries (the Federal Ministry of Finance (BMF) and Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ)). That evaluation ended in 2013. The FiD samples were incorporated into the methodological and financial framework of SOEP-Core in 2014.

- **Sample M1** was designed to improve the representation of migrants living in Germany. Established in 2013, over 2,700 households with at least one person with a migration background were interviewed to enhance the analytic potential for integration research and migration dynamics. A second migration sample (Sample M2) of almost 1,100 households was added in 2015.
- **Samples M3 and M4** were designed to represent the rising number of refugees that have arrived in Germany since 2013. Both samples were established in 2016 with a sample size of 1,673 and 1,601 households. In 2017 sample M5 added another 1,519 households of refugees who have migrated to Germany since 2013 to the SOEP framework.
- **Sample N** integrated 2,314 households of former participants of the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) in 2017.
- **Sample O** includes 935 households located primarily in bigger cities.

The integration of sample O into the SOEP-Core sample in 2018 served multiple purposes. First, it was designed to enhance the potential of the data for analysis by incorporating more city-specific environments. Second, the innovative sampling method used in this sample reflects the SOEP’s commitment to innovation. The approach was conceptualized by the SOEP team at DIW Berlin in cooperation with the Federal Institute for Building, Urban Affairs and

Table 2

Sizes of the 2018 subsamples

Sample	Households	Adults	Youths ¹	Children ²	Total individual questionnaires
A+B	1,581	2,627	26	171	2,824
C	929	1,498	18	124	1,640
D	147	244	3	15	262
E	59	91	–	3	94
F	1,811	2,900	23	179	3,102
G	533	899	4	32	935
H	548	893	12	54	959
J	1,692	2,714	32	186	2,932
K	934	1,495	15	119	1,629
L1	991	1,825	36	901	2,762
N	2,114	3,360	45	343	3,748
O	935	1,241	13	–	1,254
L2/3	1,676	3,184	188	594	3,966
M1	1,203	2,146	44	404	2,594
M2	487	816	14	183	1,013
M3	979	1,369	27	502	1,898
M4	1,058	1,579	42	771	2,392
M5	1,005	1,428	26	576	2,030
IE3	233	353	–	64	417
I13	636	996	–	153	1,149
I23	564	872	–	163	1,035
I33	647	996	–	156	1,152
I43	518	746	–	123	869
I53	635	903	–	203	1,106
Total	21,915	35,175	568	6,019	41,762

1 16-year-olds who completed the youth questionnaire.

2 Children under the age of 16 on whom a mother-child or parent questionnaire has been completed or who completed the pre-teen questionnaire.

Spatial Research (BBSR), which has implemented over 700 projects supporting economically and socially deprived urban areas. Combining BBSR information resources with those of the SOEP promises to open up a wide range of new options for effectively assessing these projects.

The sample selection process was divided into three stages. The first stage consisted of a random selection of 125 very similarly sized sample points using the BBSR's geo-information system (GIS). In this step, urban areas that have received or are receiving support and areas that do not receive support are selected in equal numbers. Methodologically, this new sampling approach is still based on random area selection, similar to the ADM-F2F approach that is usually used for boost samples in the SOEP. However, it differs in that addresses were drawn from the GIS to ensure inclusion of areas receiving support. During the second stage, 15 buildings were randomly selected for each sample point and their

addresses were listed. This stage differed from the standard procedure, as random-route walks were replaced by the selection of random building addresses. The third stage included a separate phase of preliminary fieldwork in which interviewers wrote down the surnames that appeared on the doorbells of the selected buildings. This data was then pooled and reviewed, and unsuitable addresses such as businesses and industrial facilities were excluded. In the last step, 53 concrete addresses were randomly selected for each of the 125 sample points. The process in the third stage was thereby comparable to the standard procedure.

Table 3

Number of waves per SOEP subsample, 1984–2018

Sam- ple	Year/wave	1984	'90	'95	'98	2000	'02	'06	'09	'11	'12	'13	'14	'15	'16	'17	'18
A+B	"SOEP West" and main groups of foreign nationalities 1984	1	7	12	15	17	19	23	26	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
C	"SOEP East" general population sample GDR 1990	-	1	6	9	11	13	17	20	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
D	Immigration sample 1995	-	-	1	4	6	8	12	15	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
E	Boost sample 1998 (general population)	-	-	-	1	3	5	9	12	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
F	Boost sample 2000 (general population)	-	-	-	-	1	3	7	10	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
G	High-income sample 2002	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	8	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
H	Boost sample 2006 (general population)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
J	Boost sample 2011 (general population)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
K	Boost sample 2012 (general population)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
L1	Cohort samples: est. in 2010 (FiD) and integrated in 2014 ¹	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1/5	2/6	3/7 ¹	4/8 ¹	5/9 ¹
L2/3	Screening samples: est. in 2010 (FiD) and integrated in 2014 ¹	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1/5	2/6	3/7 ¹	4/8 ¹	5/9 ¹
N	PIAAC sample: est. in 2011/12 (PIAAC) and integrated in 2017 ²	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1/5 ¹	2/6 ²
O	City sample 2018	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
M1	Migration sample 2013	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3	4	5	6
M2	Migration sample 2015	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3	4
M3	Refugee sample 2016	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3
M4	Refugee sample 2016	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3
M5	Refugee sample 2017	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
I _E	Innovation sample 1998 (SOEP E) ³	-	-	-	1	3	5	9	12	14	1/5	2/16	3/17	4/18	5/19 ²	6/20 ³	7/21 ³
I ₂	Innovation sample 2009	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I ₂	Innovation sample 2012	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I ₃	Innovation sample 2013	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3	4	5	6
I ₄	Innovation sample 2014	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3	4	5
I ₅	Innovation sample 2016	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3

1 The households of the former FiD ("Families in Germany") samples were interviewed for the ninth time in 2018 but in SOEP-Core for the fifth time.

2 The respondents of the former PIAAC study ("Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies") were interviewed for the sixth time in 2018 but in SOEP-Core for the second time.

3 Households from SOEP sample E that were surveyed face to face were transferred into the SOEP-IS in 2012. In 2018, they were interviewed for the twenty-first time using SOEP questionnaires.

Table 4

Number of households per SOEP subsample, 1984–2018

Sample	Year/wave	1984	'90	'95	'98	'00	'02	'06	'09	'11	'12	'13	'14	'15	'16	'17	'18
A+B	"SOEP West" and main groups of foreign nationalities 1984	5,921	4,640	4,508	4,285	4,060	3,889	3,476	2,923	2,538	2,379	2,270	2,176	2,028	1,857	1,729	1,581
C	"SOEP East" general population sample GDR 1990	–	2,179	1,938	1,886	1,879	1,818	1,717	1,535	1,355	1,312	1,250	1,212	1,131	1,073	997	929
D	Immigration sample 1995	–	–	522	441	425	402	360	306	266	251	232	213	193	173	165	147
E	Boost sample 1998 (general population)	–	–	–	1,056	842	773	686	574	546	92	82	78	70	68	67	59
F	Boost sample 2000 (general population)	–	–	–	–	6,043	4,586	3,895	3,033	2,885	2,702	2,567	2,414	2,273	2,094	1,968	1,811
G	High-income sample 2002	–	–	–	–	–	1,224	859	757	706	687	677	641	606	590	561	533
H	Boost sample 2006 (general population)	–	–	–	–	–	–	1,506	996	858	818	783	732	684	639	594	548
J	Boost sample 2011 (general population)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3,136	2,555	2,305	2,110	1,983	1,883	1,776	1,692
K	Boost sample 2012 (general population)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1,526	1,281	1,187	1,108	1,046	987	934
L1	Cohort samples: est. in 2010 (FiD) and integrated in 2014 ¹	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1,247	1,184	1,122	1,055	991
N	PIAAC sample: est. in 2011/12 (PIAAC) and integrated in 2017 ²	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2314	2,114
O	City sample 2018	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	935
L2/3	Screening samples: est. in 2010 (FiD) and integrated in 2014 ¹	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2,015	1,968	1,804	1,769	1,676
M1	Migration sample 2013	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2,723	2,012	1,667	1,493	1,350	1,203
M2	Migration sample 2015	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1,096	660	559	487
M3	Refugee sample 2016	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1,673	1,051	979
M4	Refugee sample 2016	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1,601	1,240	1,058
M5	Refugee sample 2017	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1,519	1,005
I _E	Innovation sample 1998 (SOEP E) ³				See sample E						339	311	298	282	266	250	233
I ₂	Innovation sample 2009	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1,531	1,040	928	863	798	741	721	690	636
I ₂	Innovation sample 2012	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1,010	833	772	710	669	615	564
I ₃	Innovation sample 2013	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1,166	929	840	770	716	647
I ₄	Innovation sample 2014	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	924	672	623	566	518
I ₅	Innovation sample 2016 ⁴	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1,050	746	635
	Total	5,921	6,819	6,968	7,668	13,249	12,692	12,499	11,655	13,330	14,599	17,343	19,758	19,236	21,875	23,284	21,915

1 The households of the former FiD ("Families in Germany") samples were interviewed in SOEP-Core for the fifth time.

2 The respondents of the former PIAAC study ("Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies") were interviewed in SOEP-Core for the second time.

3 Households from SOEP sample E that were interviewed face to face were transferred to the SOEP-IS in 2012.

4 Preliminary results for '18.

Questionnaires and Survey Instruments in SOEP-Core Samples A–O

The primary interviewing method in the SOEP-Core samples is face-to-face with computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) and/or paper-and-pencil interviewing (PAPI) as modes, depending on the subsample and the assigned interviewer. A small percentage of households in samples A to H are interviewed with the help of self-administered mail questionnaires that were introduced as a means of converting non-respondents into respondents. In 2018, 16 different questionnaires were used in the households of the SOEP-Core samples. Most of them were processed with PAPI as well as CAPI:

1. **Household questionnaire** answered by the household member most familiar with household matters.
2. **Individual questionnaire** answered by all adult household members (2018: individuals born in 2000 or earlier).
3. **Supplementary “life history” questionnaire** answered by all new respondents joining a panel household (2018: individuals born in 2000 or earlier).
4. **Youth questionnaire** answered by household members aged 16 or 17 (2018: individuals born in 2001).
5. Additional **cognitive competency tests** for all individuals who have completed youth questionnaire (age 16 or 17; interviewer-assisted modes only).
6. **Youth questionnaire** answered by household members aged 13 or 14 (2018: born in 2004).
7. **Youth questionnaire** answered by household members aged 11 or 12 (2018: born in 2006).
8. **Supplementary questionnaire** answered by mothers of newborn children (2018: born in 2018 or 2017 if the child was born after the previous year’s fieldwork was completed).
9. **Supplementary questionnaire** answered by mothers (or fathers) of children aged two or three (2018: born in 2015).
10. **Supplementary questionnaire** answered by mothers (or fathers) of children aged five or six (2018: born in 2012).
11. **Supplementary questionnaire** answered by mothers and fathers of children aged seven or eight (2018: born in 2010).
12. **Supplementary questionnaire** answered by mothers (or fathers) of children aged nine or ten (2018: born in 2008).

13. **Supplementary questionnaire** answered by temporary dropouts from the previous wave to minimize “gaps” in longitudinal data on panel members. This questionnaire is a short version of the previous year’s questionnaire.
14. **Supplementary questionnaire** answered by panel members who experienced a death in their household or family in 2017 or 2018.
15. **Supplementary questionnaire “grip strength”** for respondents who’s grip strength is measured with a special device. This test is implemented every two years.
16. **Supplementary questionnaire “Living in the former GDR”** answered by household members who lived in the territory of the former GDR before 1990 and were born in 1972 or earlier.

Table 5 provides an overview of the number of interviews provided for the various questionnaires types and the corresponding response or coverage rates.

The mean face-to-face interview length for the main questionnaires in 2018 was 16 minutes for the household questionnaire and 41 minutes for the individual questionnaire. The time taken for a model household consisting of two adults was therefore 98 minutes plus the time needed for any supplementary questionnaires. The total length of the interviews was therefore slightly longer than in the previous wave, when total interview time in a model household amounted to 89 minutes.

In addition to the questionnaires, respondents and interviewers are given several other questionnaires. In terms of data provision, the most important is the household grid. It provides basic information about every household member and allows us to track whether anyone entered or left the household since the previous wave. Since 2014, an electronic version of this grid has been employed in all households whose interviewers are equipped with a laptop. At the end of January, all households from samples A–N received a letter announcing the beginning of the new wave. In almost all households from samples A–H, the letter included a lottery ticket as an incentive that was not conditional on their actual participation. Participants in the newer samples, J–O, and some households from A–H receive a cash incentive. The cash incentive for the individual questionnaire is €10 and participants receive €5 for the shorter household questionnaire. Teenagers and children receive a small gift for completing their respective questionnaires. Interviewers also bring a small gift to the household as a whole and present this upon arrival. This year’s household gift was a tea towel with a woven logo of “Leben in Deutschland”. The interviewer also presented an

Table 5

Questionnaire volumes and response rates, Samples A–N

	Gross sample/reference value ¹	Number of interviews ¹	Response rate/coverage rate
Individual questionnaire	20,768	18,531	89.2%
Youth questionnaire: age 16 or 17	259	214	82.6%
Cognitive competency tests ²	187	180	96.3%
Youth questionnaire: age 13 or 14	300	256	85.3%
Youth questionnaire: age 11 or 12	277	246	88.8%
Mother and child questionnaire: newborn	171	142	83.0%
Mother and child questionnaire: age 2 or 3	241	225	93.4%
Mother and child questionnaire: age 5 or 6	269	262	97.4%
Questionnaire for parents ³ : age 7 or 8	484/968	462/784	95.5%/80.9%
Mother and child questionnaire: age 9 or 10	503	488	96.8%

¹ The numbers refer to the respective target population in participating households. For the child-related questionnaires, the reference value is the number of children in the respective age group living in participating households. Therefore the response rate for these questionnaires indicates the number of children for whom a questionnaire has been completed by one parent (in most cases by the mother).

² The tests can be implemented only if the fieldwork is administered by an interviewer and the youth questionnaire is completed. Therefore the gross sample for the tests (n=187) is different from the sample for the youth questionnaire (n=259).

³ In contrast to the other child-related questionnaires, this questionnaire is supposed to be completed not by just one but by both parents. For 462 (95.5%) of 484 children born 2010 and living in households that participated in 2018, at least one questionnaire has been completed. In total, 784 questionnaires were completed.

eight-page brochure on the project and an information sheet on data protection and security. To continue 2017's efforts at curbing the slight increase in partial unit non-response (PUNR), interviewers were provided with a flyer to help in explaining the issue of PUNR, especially in new households.

Fieldwork Characteristics and Key Fieldwork Indicators in 2018

Interview Modes

Since the SOEP was launched in 1984, face-to-face interviewing has been the primary method of data collection. Up to 2000, all face-to-face interviews were conducted using paper-and-pencil interviews (PAPI). Since then, SOEP interviewers have gradually starting using laptops to conduct interviews in CAPI (computer-assisted personal interviewing). Since sample J in 2011, CAPI has been used exclusively to interview the respondents from refresher samples. However, PAPI is still used to collect data from the respondents in samples A–H if they prefer or if their interviewer does not yet have a laptop. The second type of fieldwork processing used exclusively in core samples A–H is known as “central administration of fieldwork,” in which respondents complete their questionnaires at home and return them by mail. This was first used as a refusal conversion process in the second wave of the SOEP in 1985 and is focused on households that did not agree to any further visits from an interviewer or could

not be convinced by interviewers to participate for other reasons. As part of this process, households are contacted by telephone and urged to keep participating in the study. If this “conversion” is successful, basic household information is collected and the questionnaires are sent by mail. Thus, in these households, questionnaires are fully self-administered. This mode shift often leads to a conversion of soft refusals, in turn improving the stability of the long-term samples A–H.

Another method of interviewing is used in multi-person households from samples A–H. Individuals who were unable to provide an interview while the interviewer was present are offered the option to complete a paper questionnaire on their own as a means of reducing partial unit non-response (PUNR). The option of interviewing more than one person simultaneously with the help of paper questionnaires can be useful for reducing the overall length of interviewer visits to households with many members, thereby increasing participation. This method is a mixture of face-to-face interviewing and self-administered interviewing. Although this option is actually an exception, the longer a sample exists, the more frequently it is used to ensure low PUNR in larger households.

Table 6 shows the distribution of interview modes by subsample in 2018. In general, a distinct pattern is evident across the various SOEP samples when using a multi-mode design: the “older” the sample, the higher the share of mail- or self-interviews. In the recent samples (J, K, L, N and O), the options of a mail questionnaire as part of “central adminis-

Table 6

Interview modes by subsample (in percentage of individual interviews)

	Interviewer-based			Centrally administered
	CAPI	PAPI	SELF	MAIL
A–D	26.4	9.6	34.5	29.5
E ¹	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
F	40.0	9.6	31.4	19.0
G	35.1	5.6	40.7	18.7
H	64.5	1.7	24.1	9.7
A–H	35.0	8.3	32.8	23.9
J/K	99.6	0.0	0.3	0.0
L1	99.2	0.0	0.8	0.0
N	99.5	0.0	0.5	0.0
O	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	69.8	3.8	15.3	11.0

¹ All households with interviewer-administered questionnaires from sample E were transferred to the SOEP-LS in 2012.

tration” or a self-completed paper questionnaire in the interviewer-assisted mode are no longer available. This serves one of our main objectives in improving the quality of the SOEP: We aim to increase the CAPI rate to improve data quality and provide a larger pool of respondents for questionnaire modules that are not viable with paper-based questionnaire administration: cognitive tests and behavioral experiments, for example.

Fieldwork Progress

Data collection in samples A–N covered a period of roughly seven months starting at the beginning of February and ending when the refusal conversion processes were completed by the end of summer. As indicated by the figures in **Table 7**, which shows fieldwork progress by month, over 90 percent of the households were interviewed within the first four months. The vast majority of interviews are conducted within a comparatively short fieldwork period. The remaining months are dedicated almost exclusively to contacting difficult-to-reach households, households whose new address needs to be traced, or households where various refusal conversion strategies have to be used. Fieldwork for sample O was conducted between mid-July and December.

Table 7

Fieldwork progress in samples A–N by month: Household interview processing¹

	2017		2018	
	Gross sample	Net sample	Gross sample	Net sample
January ²	0.6%	0.1%	0.6%	0.4%
February	41.0%	43.0%	27.8%	29.7%
March	71.8%	75.2%	54.1%	58.3%
April	85.2%	88.6%	73.2%	78.3%
May	95.6%	97.2%	87.0%	91.4%
June	99.0%	99.5%	95.2%	98.0%
July	99.9%	100.0%	98.2%	99.7%
August	100.0%	100.0%	99.9%	100.0%
September	–	–	100.0%	100.0%

¹ Cumulative percentages based on the month of the last household contact.

² Includes households that refused to take part in the survey prior to start of fieldwork.

Table 8

Composition of gross sample and response rates in samples A–N by type of fieldwork

	Total		Samples A–H		Sample J		Sample K		Sample L1		Sample N	
	Abs.	In %	Abs.	In %	Abs.	In %	Abs.	In %	Abs.	In %	Abs.	In %
New households	220	1.6	103	1.6	51	2.6	35	3.2	31	2.7	107	4.0
Centrally administered (mail)	1,833	13.7	1,833	27.9	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Respondents in previous wave	1,467	80.0	1,467	22.3	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Dropouts in previous wave	191	10.4	191	2.9	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Dropouts during F2F, further processed by mail	120	6.5	120	1.8	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
New households	55	3.0	55	0.8	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
(3) Response rates by type of fieldwork												
Interviewer-based	7,841	88.8	4,224	90.5	1,692	88.0	934	86.6	991	85.8	2,114	79.8
Respondents in previous wave	7,598	92.3	4,115	92.9	1,626	92.0	905	91.9	952	90.4	1,989	86.6
Dropouts in previous wave	125	34.6	49	37.1	37	35.2	14	25.5	25	36.2	63	27.9
New households	118	53.6	60	58.3	29	56.9	15	42.9	14	45.2	62	57.9
Centrally administered	1,384	75.5	1,384	75.5	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Respondents in previous wave	1,296	88.3	1,296	88.3	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Dropouts in previous wave	48	25.1	48	25.1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Dropouts during F2F, further processed by mail	21	17.5	21	17.5	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
New households	19	34.5	19	34.5	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
(4) Panel stability²		92.8		92.2		95.3		94.6		93.9		91.4
(5) Partial unit non-response³		25.3		23.0		23.8		21.0		14.8		39.3

¹ Final dropouts, deaths, and moves abroad reported between waves.

² Number of participating households divided by previous wave's net sample.

³ Share of households (number of household members >1) with at least one missing individual questionnaire.

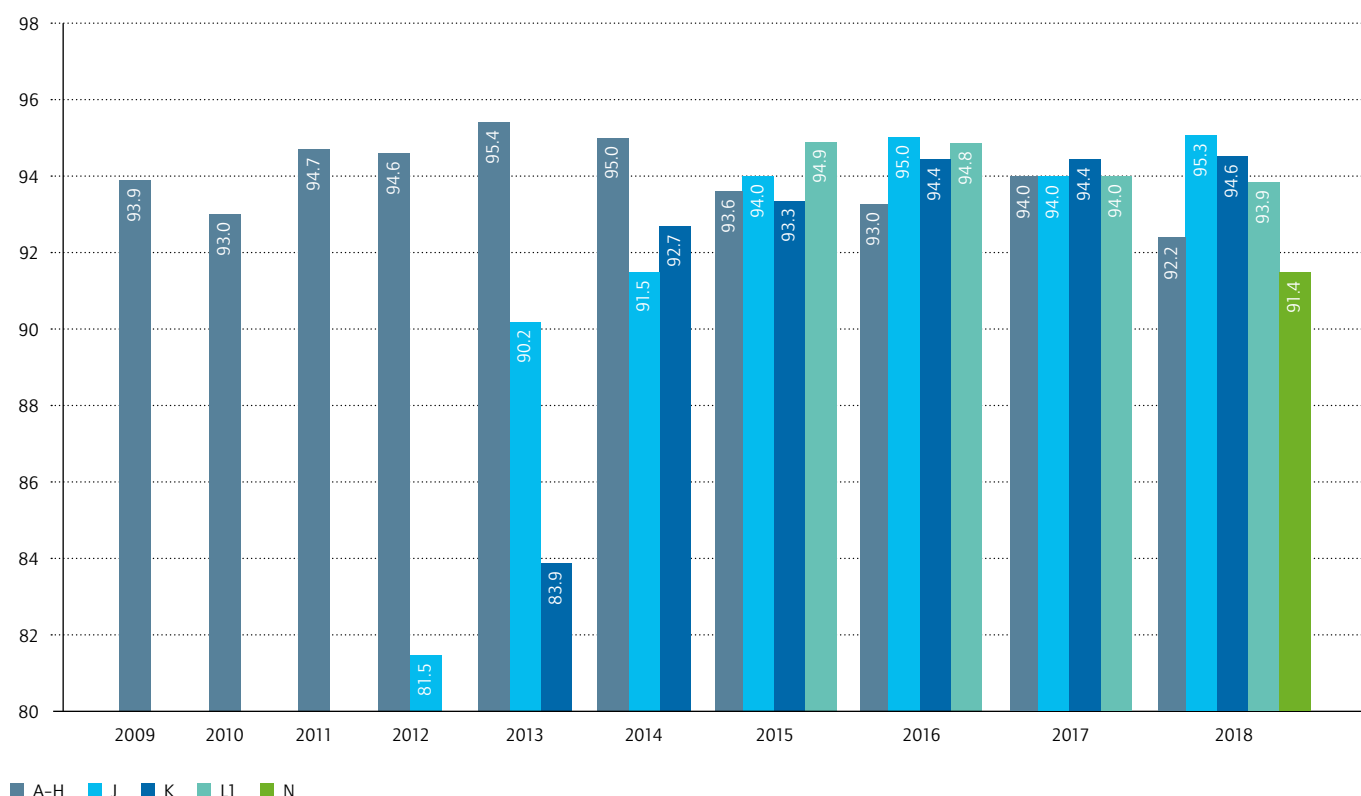
Composition of the Gross Sample

Table 8 presents the composition of the gross sample in 2018 by type of fieldwork procedure and type of household, as well as the response rates and partial unit non-response for samples A–H, J–L1 and N. The SOEP households from each wave are differentiated into three types of households: previous-wave respondents (91.3 percent of the gross sample in 2018), previous-wave dropouts that were recontacted (5.9 percent), and “new” households that split off from established panel households (2.9 percent).

Interviewers make every effort to contact the households personally. However, for the reasons stated above, alternative means are used to survey the households in samples A–H. In 2018, 71.0 percent of the households in gross sample A–H completed their questionnaires with an interviewer present in the household and 27.9 percent completed their questionnaires at home without an interviewer present and returned them by mail. The remaining 1.1 percent were households that are considered dropouts based on information from the period between waves (e.g., “final dropouts”; entire household moved abroad or all household members are deceased).

Figure 1

Panel stability in SOEP samples from 2009 to 2018



Response Rates and Panel Stability

The field results of a longitudinal survey can be measured in different ways. Two sets of indicators appear to be most relevant: response rates and panel stability rates. Response rates reflect the simple relation between input (gross sample) and output (net sample) and therefore are an indicator of cross-sectional fieldwork success. The response rate in the group of respondents from the previous wave processed by interviewers, which is the most important response rate, was 92.3 percent. The response rate for the “centrally administered” households, those that complete their survey without an interviewer present, is usually slightly lower than the rate of households processed by interviewers. With 88.3 percent this rate declined slightly compared to last year (91.3 percent). Considering that those households have a history of refusing further participation in the study, the response level is still rather high.

The response rates for dropouts from the previous wave and new households are significantly lower than for households that took part in the study the year before. Nevertheless, a response rate of 34.6 percent among dropouts from the previous wave that

were processed by interviewers in the 2018 wave shows that contacting these households again is useful in more than a third of all cases. Furthermore, interviewers were able to convince about half of the new households that joined the sample when respondents from existing households moved out and formed new households to participate in the study (53.6 percent).

From a long-term perspective, panel stability can serve as a decisive indicator when monitoring and predicting a longitudinal sample’s development in terms of overall size. Panel stability is calculated as the number of households participating in the current year compared to the number from the previous year. It reflects the net total effects of panel mortality on the one hand and panel growth on the other. This approach is particularly helpful in household surveys where split-off households are tracked: if an individual from a participating household moves into a new household, Kantar Public will attempt to track the address change and conduct interviews with the new household. In the context of a panel survey, a second group of households can contribute to the stabilization of the sample: “temporary drop-outs,” i.e., households that could not be interviewed

Table 9

Fieldwork results, sample O

	Absolute	In % gross sample	In % eligible
Gross sample for fieldwork	6,625	100.0%	
– Not eligible	506	7.6%	8.3%
Eligible, non-interview			
– Permanent refusals	3,455	52.2%	56.5%
– Unable to reach during fieldwork period	1,378	20.8%	22.5%
– Language problems	187	2.8%	3.1%
– “Soft refusal” (currently not willing/ capable)	51	0.8%	0.8%
– Permanently physically or mentally unable/ incompetent	113	1.7%	1.8%
Interview			
– Household interviewed	935	14.1%	15.3%
Interview			
– Household interviewed	2,314	82.4	

in the previous wave(s) for various reasons but that “re-joined” the panel in a given panel wave.

In order to meaningfully assess panel stability rates over the years, the various subsamples should be processed for at least five consecutive waves. After this period of time, the panel stability rates of samples are usually consolidated and therefore comparable. The mean panel stability across established SOEP samples A–H was 92.2 percent in 2018, (see **Figure 1**). This is a slight decrease from the previous wave (93.6 percent). Panel stabilities in the last two refresher samples J (eighth wave in 2018) and K (seventh wave in 2018) were slightly higher, at 95.3 and 94.6 percent, respectively. The cohort samples L1 performed very similarly at 93.9 percent panel stability in 2018. For the relatively new sample N, added in 2017, panel stability was 91.4 percent. As stated above, although this is still not comparable to the older samples, the sample performed solidly in this year’s wave.

One indicator of the success of the fieldwork process on an individual level is the rate of partial unit non-response (PUNR). As noted above, the SOEP aims at interviewing every adult member of the household, so the issue of PUNR is critical to observe, along with response rates and overall panel stability. In 2018, PUNR was 25.3 percent in samples A–N, (**Table 8**). For the oldest samples, A–H, PUNR went from 21.9 percent in 2017 to 23.0 percent in 2018. Additional measures undertaken in 2017 to diminish PUNR (new incentives for interviewers, new flyer for households, intensified interviewer training and monitoring) were not as effective as had been hoped. In sample N, PUNR remains high at 39.3 percent. These results

indicate that PUNR remains a vital issue requiring further attention and possibly additional measures in the future.

As can be seen from the results in **Table 9**, the fieldwork for the new sample O created some challenges for the SOEP team at Kantar as well as for the interviewers. Over 50 percent of the households in the gross sample gave permanent refusal to join the study. Another 20 percent could not be reached by our interviewers during the fieldwork period. Groups such as the poor and less educated that are often part of urban populations, especially in economically and socially deprived areas, show a lower willingness to participate in surveys. Additionally, the high building density and large number of households per building unit creates challenges for interviewers. These challenges were factored in as far as possible. With 935 interviewed households, we came fairly close to the intended objective of 1,000 households.

The SOEP Screening Samples (L2/3)

Fieldwork Report 2018 from Kantar Public

By Simon Huber

Interview Modes

Along with SOEP sample L1 (cohort samples), screening samples (L2/L3) were established in 2010 as part of the study Families in Germany (FiD), a longitudinal SOEP-equivalent sample system for the evaluation of German family policies. In 2014, both samples were incorporated into SOEP-Core. This switched the screening samples, which consisted of the subgroups single parents, households with three or more children, and low-income households, from an exclusively interviewer-assisted mode to a hybrid CATI (computer-assisted telephone interview)/CAWI (computer-assisted web interview) approach, followed by CAPI (computer-assisted personal interview).

Since 2015, the screening samples have maintained this innovative multi-mode design. The aim in every wave is, on the one hand, to recruit as many households as possible for participation by CAWI, and on the other, to maintain a high panel stability rate. The gross sample is thus divided into various subgroups depending on the mode of participation in previous years. Households that participated online at least once since 2014 were processed in CAWI in 2018. This includes households that participated in CAPI in 2017 but did not explicitly refuse to do the interviews in CAWI. A CAPI interviewer was immediately sent to households that rejected the CAWI mode in previous waves. Households that did not answer the CAWI questionnaires during the first three months of CAWI fieldwork were sent a CAPI interviewer as well.

To reduce both potential qualitative disadvantages and negative response rate effects of using CAWI instead of CAPI, CATI interviewers contacted each household in the CAWI population to encourage online participation. They also made a list of all household members to ensure that the right set of CAWI questionnaires would be provided. The CATI interviewers also acted as contacts for respondents to answer their questions and address problems. If a household did not have Internet access or could not

Table 10

Sample L2/3: Fieldwork progress by month and interview mode

	CAWI interviews		CAPI interviews		Total	
	Abs.	In % ¹	Abs.	In % ¹	Abs.	In % ¹
July	254	38.4	319	31.5	573	34.2
August	335	89.0	316	62.6	651	73.0
September	42	95.3	176	80.0	218	86.0
October	25	99.1	125	92.3	150	95.0
November	6	100.0	69	99.1	75	99.5
December	0	100.0	9	100.0	9	100.0
Total	662		1,014		1,676	

¹ Cumulative percentages based on the month of the household interview.

be motivated to participate in CAWI, the telephone staff offered them CAPI.

Fieldwork using the CAWI/CATI hybrid approach started in July 2018, and the online questionnaires remained available to respondents until November 2018. Additionally, letters were sent to remind respondents about the study or to ask for missing individual CAWI questionnaires.

Fieldwork with CAPI also began in July with households that either had no Internet connection or had refused to participate in CAWI. Households that had stated a preference for CAPI in their phone conversations with CATI interviewers were subsequently added to the CAPI fieldwork process, followed by those who had said they wanted to complete the questionnaires online but had not done so by early October. **Table 10** shows the fieldwork progress for both interviewing modes by month.

Table 11

Questionnaires: Volume and response rates, sample L2/3

	Gross sample/reference value ¹	Number of interviews	Response rate/coverage rate
Household questionnaire	2,154	1,676	77.8
Individual questionnaire	3,539	3,140	88.7
Youth questionnaire: age 16 or 17	216	188	87.0
Youth questionnaire: age 13 or 14	190	180	94.7
Youth questionnaire: age 11 or 12	152	143	94.1
Mother and child questionnaire: newborn	37	32	86.5
Mother and child questionnaire: age 2 or 3	32	31	96.9
Mother and child questionnaire: age 5 or 6	30	29	96.7
Questionnaire for parents ² : age 7 or 8	49/98	47/73	95.9/74.5
Mother and child questionnaire: age 9 or 10	127	124	97.6

¹ The numbers refer to the respective target population in participating households. For the child-related questionnaires, the reference value is the number of children in the respective age group living in participating households. Therefore the response rate for these questionnaires indicates the number of children for whom a questionnaire has been completed by one parent (in most cases by the mother).

² Respondents who had no Internet access or who declined to use CAWI in the previous wave, respondents who could not be reached during CATI fieldwork and did not participate online, those who could be reached during CATI fieldwork but insisted on CAPI, those who were willing to participate online but did not do so until early October, and households that were formed during the fieldwork process (split-off households).

Table 12

Sample L2/3: Gross and net samples and response rates by mode

	Gross sample	Net sample	Response rate
CAWI ¹	1,138	662	58.2%
CAPI ²	1,433	1,014	70.8%
Total ³	2,154	1,676	77.8%

¹ Including respondents who were temporary dropouts or CAWI/CAPI participants in previous wave but did not refuse to participate online.

² Respondents with no Internet access or who declined to use CAWI in previous wave, could not be reached during CATI fieldwork and did not participate online, could be reached during CATI fieldwork and insisted on CAPI, willingness to participate online but did not do so until early October, and households that were formed during the CAPI fieldwork process (split-off households).

³ The CAWI and CAPI gross samples are not distinct; one household could be processed in both modes.

Questionnaires and Survey Instruments

Regarding data collection, all questionnaires from samples A–N were used in CAWI / CATI with the exception of the cognitive competence test, which can only be carried out with an interviewer present. Minor changes in CAWI programming were mode-specific and only pertained to design and layout. The CATI process did not include the various questionnaires. It only captured the mode that the household planned to use and recorded the household composition for those households that wanted to or already had completed the questionnaires online. **Table 11** provides the volumes and response rates of all distributed questionnaires.

All households received a letter and a brochure announcing the new wave of the study. The letter was sent to respondents in CAWI along with an online access code to a personal page containing links to every questionnaire the respondent was expected to fill out. For every household questionnaire, a household received 5 euros. It received a bonus of 10 euros if all individual questionnaires were completed. For CAWI, the incentives were sent as vouchers by mail or e-mail depending on the respondent's preference. For CAPI, the incentive was paid in cash by the interviewer.

Table 13

Sample L2/3: Composition of gross sample and response rates by type of household

	Total	
	Absolute	In %
(1) Gross sample compositions by types of HH	2,154	100.0
Respondents in previous wave	1,769	82.1
Dropouts in previous wave	248	11.5
New households (split-off HHs)	137	6.4
(2) Net sample composition by type of HH	1,676	100.0
Respondents previous wave	1,529	91.2
Temporary dropouts prev. wave(s)	93	5.5
New households (split-off HHs)	54	3.2
(3) Response rates by type of HH		
Respondents previous wave		86.4
Dropouts previous wave		37.5
New households		39.4
(4) Panel stability¹		94.7
(5) Partial unit non-response²		25.5

¹ Number of participating households divided by previous wave net sample.

² Share of households (number of household members > 1) with at least one missing individual questionnaire.

Fieldwork Results

The study design of sample L2/3 consisted of two interview modes (CAWI / CAPI) flanked by telephone interviews (CATI). **Table 12** lists the gross and net samples of both the CAWI and CAPI population. These gross samples are not distinct; one household could be processed in both modes through the end of fieldwork. The overall gross sample consisted of 2,154 households, 1,138 of which were given the online access data (gross sample CAWI). The overall CAPI gross sample consisted of 1,433 households. In total, 1,676 households were interviewed, 662 with CAWI and 1,014 with CAPI. The overall response rate was 77.8 percent, thus quite steady compared to last year's wave (77.6 percent). The CAWI response rate was 58.2 percent; with CAPI it was 70.8 percent. **Table 13** shows the composition of the gross sample by type of household and the respective response rates. The response rate for the screening samples was 86.4 percent in households that participated in the previous wave, 37.5 percent in households that did not participate in 2017, and 39.4 percent in split-off households that took part for the first time in 2018. After last year's outstanding performance (98.1 percent), panel stability decreased slightly in 2018 but remained relatively high at 94.7 percent. As observed last year, the implementation in CAWI

might have been driving the increase in partial unit non-response (PUNR) to 25.5 percent in this sample. **Table 14** displays the results of the CATI fieldwork process. 76.9 percent (672 households) of the CATI gross sample, which consisted of households in the CAWI population with a functioning telephone number, could be contacted by phone. 4.3 percent of these households declined to participate further in the study, whether online or face-to-face. Only 2.5 percent were only willing to participate through face-to-face interviews. A relatively high proportion of households contacted (90 percent) stated their willingness to participate online. Although the households were reminded by mail to fill out the questionnaires, only 74.7 percent of those who had intended to participate online actually did so (see **Table 15**). Households that had not filled out the online questionnaires by early October were transferred to CAPI, in which 11.6 percent (70 households) of the households that had stated their intention to participate online actually took part in the study.

Table 14

Sample L2/3: Fieldwork results of the CATI process

	Absolute	In % of gross sample	In % of contacted households
CATI gross sample	874	100.0	
Households that could not be contacted	202	23.1	
Contacted households	672	76.9	100.0
Permanent refusal (Both CAWI and CAPI)	29	3.3	4.3
Household undecided whether to participate	21	2.4	3.1
Household insisted on CAPI participation (no Internet or other reasons)	17	1.9	2.5
Household stated intention to participate online	605	69.2	90.0

Table 15

Resulting net interviews of CATI-contacted households with intention to participate online

	Respondents (Abs.)	In %
Household stated intention to participate online	605	100.0
– participated in CAWI	452	74.7
– participated in CAPI	70	11.6
– did not participate at all	83	13.7

The SOEP Migration and Refugee Samples (M1–M5)

Report from the SOEP

By Martin Kroh and Jürgen Schupp

SOEP Migration Boosts 2013–2017 (M1–M5)

The influx of refugees to Germany in 2015 and 2016 not only poses challenges to the German government, policy makers, and administrative agencies, but also increases the need for robust findings from empirical social researchers, statistical agencies, and research institutions on the social processes surrounding immigration. This challenge was already beginning to emerge in the years before 2015, when gross immigration was above one million persons per year, due primarily to immigration from Central and Eastern as well as Southern Europe.

In the SOEP longitudinal study, we are meeting this challenge by continually building, adapting, and expanding our survey and the range of services we provide. As part of this endeavor, the SOEP partnered with the Institute for Employment Research (IAB) in Nuremberg to create new samples of migrants to Germany in 2013 (M1) and 2015 (M2) that consisted mainly of EU migrants who arrived in recent years in Germany (IAB-SOEP-Migration Sample).

In 2016, the Federal Office of Migration and Refugees (BAMF) joined the SOEP and IAB to create a large representative sample of refugees, the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees. The first sample of 2016 focused on refugees who arrived in Germany between January 2013 and January 2016 (M3). The second sample covered the same period but focused on families with underage children (M4). Finally, a larger number of recent refugee arrivals between January and December 2016 were interviewed for the first time in 2017 (M5). In autumn of 2018, Kantar Public conducted the second (M5) and third waves (M3, M4) of interviews as part of the IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Survey of Refugees⁴.

In samples M1–M5, after obtaining consent from respondents, we link the survey data with information from the IAB's Integrated Employment Biographies Sample (IEBS). This is creating a new database for scientific use that combines the comprehensive information of a household survey with precise labor market information from the social insurance data. In adherence to strict data protection and privacy regulations, this unique new database will provide labor market information from the social insurance system in fully anonymized form. Linked data will be made available by the Research Data Centre (FDZ) of the Federal Employment Agency at the Institute for Employment Research. The linked data on samples M1 and M2 are available under the acronym IAB-SOEP-MIG-ADIAB (IAB-SOEP Migration Sample linked to administrative data of the IAB).

⁴ For a summary of the field work, see: Kühne, S., Jacobsen, J. & M. Kroh (2019) "Sampling in Times of High Immigration: The Survey Process of the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees. Survey Methods: Insights from the Field", DOI:10.13094/SMIF-2019-00005.

The SOEP Migration and Refugee Samples (M1–M5)

Fieldwork Report from Kantar Public

By Simon Huber

Table 16
Fieldwork progress by month: Processing of household interviews¹

	Gross sample	Net sample
April ²	18.9%	20.6%
May	53.9%	60.6%
June	78.5%	86.9%
July	91.4%	95.2%
August	100.0%	100.0%

¹ Cumulative percentages based on the month of the last household contact.
² Including households that refused to take part in the survey prior to start of fieldwork.

Migration Samples M1 and M2

The two subsamples that constitute the SOEP Migration Survey, which was designed to improve the representation of migrants living in Germany, are sample M1, established in 2013, and M2, established in 2015. In 2018, fieldwork started in April and lasted through August (see Table 16). Table 17 displays the fieldwork results by subsample and type of household. In total, 2,321 addresses comprised the gross sample. 82.3 percent of all households had participated in the study in the previous wave; 14 percent were dropouts in the previous wave; and 3.6 percent were split-off households. In total, 1,690 households were interviewed, 1,203 in M1 and 487 in M2. The comparatively low response rates of 74.4 percent in M1 and 69.1 percent in M2, with the relatively high PUNR rate of 33.6 percent overall and the relatively low response rate of 84.8 percent for the individual questionnaire (see Table 17), reflect the difficulties in processing migrant households since the first wave of M1 in 2013. In a migration sample, the effort required by interviewers to contact households successfully and to motivate every individual to take part is obviously greater than in general population surveys. The contact process and the interviewing situation are more complicated and sensitive as well (e.g., language problems, cultural

specifics, level of education, etc.). But it appears that sample size is stabilizing with each wave, especially in M2, where panel stability increased from 84.7 percent to 87.1 percent, catching up with the older sample M1.

Questionnaires and Survey Instruments in M1 and M2

For data collection in the SOEP migration samples in 2018, all of the questionnaires from SOEP-Core were used. However, a specific biographical questionnaire covering the migration history and other additional questions about migration and integration was used for adult household members who were participating in the study for the first time. Table 18 shows the gross samples and net volumes of the various individual questionnaires. All questionnaires were conducted using CAPI, with the exception of the cognitive competence test, which is a paper questionnaire. The mean interview length for the main questionnaires was 15 minutes for the household questionnaire and 38 minutes for the individual questionnaire.

Table 17

Sample M1 and M2: Composition of gross and net sample and outcome rates by type of household (HH)

	Sample M1		Sample M2		Total	
	Absolute	In %	Absolute	In %	Absolute	In %
(1) Gross sample compositions by types of HH	1,616	100.0	705	100.0	2,321	100.0
Respondents from previous wave	1,351	83.6	559	79.3	1,910	82.3
Dropouts from previous wave	196	12.1	130	18.4	326	14.0
New households (split-off HHs)	68	4.2	15	2.1	83	3.6
(2) Net sample composition by type of HH	1,203	100.0	487	100.0	1,690	100.0
Respondents from previous wave	1,131	94.0	442	90.8	1,573	93.1
Dropouts from previous wave	49	4.1	37	7.6	86	5.1
New households (split-off HH)	23	1.9	8	1.6	31	1.8
(3) Response rates by type of HH		74.4		69.1		72.8
Respondents from previous wave		83.7		79.1		82.4
Dropouts from previous wave		25.0		28.5		26.4
New households		33.8		53.3		37.3
(4) Panel stability ¹		89.1		87.1		88.5
(5) Partial unit non-response ²		34.6		31.0		33.6

¹ Number of participating households divided by previous wave's net sample.

² Share of households (number of household members >1) with at least one missing individual questionnaire.

Table 18

Questionnaires volumes and response rates samples – M1+M2

	Gross sample/reference value ¹	Number of interviews ¹	Response rate/coverage rate
Individual questionnaire ²	3,492	2,960	84.8%
Youth questionnaire: age 16-17	72	58	80.6%
Cognitive competence test	58	51	87.9%
Youth questionnaire: age 13-14	82	68	82.9%
Youth questionnaire: age 11-12	98	80	81.6%
Mother and child questionnaire: newborn	77	66	85.7%
Mother and child questionnaire: age 2-3	106	94	88.7%
Mother and child questionnaire: age 5-6	96	95	99.0%
Questionnaire for parents ³ : age 7-8	121/242	113/171	93.4%/70.6%
Mother and child questionnaire: age 9-10	74	70	94.6%

¹ The numbers refer to the respective target population in participating households. For the child-related questionnaires, the reference value is the number of children in the respective age group living in participating households. Therefore the response rate for these questionnaires indicates the number of children for whom a questionnaire has been completed by one parent (in most cases by the mother).

² There are two additional individual questionnaires conducted in household that are coded as non-participating households as there is no household questionnaire for 2018. 55 of the 2,960 respondents were first time respondents and therefore answered the additional biographical questions.

³ In contrast to the other child-related questionnaires, this questionnaire is supposed to be completed not by just one but by both parents. For 497 (99.0%) of 502 children born in 2008 and living in households that participated in 2016, at least one questionnaire has been completed. In total, 853 questionnaires were completed.

Table 19

Language problems and usage of translated paper questionnaires in M1+M2

	Total¹	Net sample in %
Net sample (individual questionnaire)	2,960	100.0
No language problems occurred/no need for assistance with language problems	2,468	83.4
Assistance with language problems needed	493	16.7
<i>Of that number:</i>		
German-speaking person in the same household	201	6.8
German-speaking person from outside the household	49	1.7
Professional interpreter	5	0.2
Translated paper questionnaire	238	8.0
<i>Of that number:</i>		
Russian	82	2.8
Turkish	33	1.1
Romanian	36	1.2
Polish	52	1.8
English	35	1.2

¹ Including all individual questionnaires even if the households in which they are conducted are classified as non-participating households.

As the target population consists of people of (mostly) foreign origin, the main questionnaires (household and individual) were translated into five languages: English, Russian, Turkish, Romanian, and Polish. With the exception of English, these are the languages of the nationalities that were overrepresented in the first wave's gross sample. The translated versions were not implemented in CAPI but printed on paper and given to the interviewer as an additional support tool to overcome language problems. **Table 19** displays different kinds of aids the interviewers used if language problems arose in the interview situation.

A special feature of the migration sample's survey design is the linkage of respondents' survey data to register data from the Integrated Employment Biographies Sample (IEBS). As in the previous waves, a portion of individuals in samples M1 and M2 were asked to give their written consent to the record linkage at the end of the individual interview. In 2018, 113 respondents were selected for data linkage and 31.0 percent of these gave their consent.

The SOEP Refugee Samples: M3–M5

To implement an innovative sampling procedure to map recent migration and integration dynamics, the SOEP partnered with the Institute for Employment Research (IAB Nuremberg) and the Research Centre of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF-FZ) in 2016. M3 is the acronym for the first boost sample of households of adult refugees who entered Germany from January 1, 2013, to January 31, 2016 and applied for asylum in Germany. M4 is the acronym for the second refugee boost sample. It consists of two tranches. The first one is a household boost of the M3 sample. For the second tranche, underage children of refugee families were sampled but only the adults in the respective households were invited to participate. M5 is the acronym for the third boost sample of refugee households that was established in 2017. The population covers adult refugees who have applied for asylum in Germany since January 1, 2013, and are currently living in Germany. For all three samples, the Central Register of Foreign Nationals (AZR) was utilized as a sampling frame.⁵ In 2018, the second wave of sample M5 and the third wave of samples M3 and M4 were fielded.

⁵ The sampling design of the refugee samples M3 and M4 is described in: SOEP Wave Report 2016; the sampling design for M5 in: SOEP Wave Report 2017.

Table 20

Cumulative fieldwork progress by month

	M5		M3/M4	
	In % of gross sample	In % of net sample	In % of gross sample	In % of net sample
September 2018	10.10%	10.40%	10.60%	10.80%
October 2018	28.40%	31.30%	29.00%	32.40%
November 2018	51.40%	58.50%	48.60%	54.40%
December 2018	69.60%	75.40%	68.00%	74.30%
January 2019	93.30%	95.30%	94.80%	96.40%
February 2019	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Table 21

Sample M3–M5: Composition of gross and net sample and outcome rates by type of household (HH)

	Sample M3		Sample M4		Sample M5		Total	
	Absolute	In %	Absolute	In %	Absolute	In %	Absolute	In %
(1) Gross sample compositions by types of HH	1,562	100.0	1,606	100.0	1,604	100.0	4,772	100.0
Respondents from previous wave	1,103	70.6	1,264	78.7	1,519	94.7	3,886	81.4
Dropouts from previous wave	400	25.6	278	17.3	0	0.0	678	14.2
New households (split-off HHs)	59	3.8	64	4.0	85	5.3	208	4.4
(2) Net sample composition by type of HH	979	100.0	1,058	100.0	1,005	100.0	3,042	100.0
Respondents from previous wave	780	79.7	912	86.2	966	96.1	2,658	87.4
Dropouts from previous wave	173	17.7	122	11.5	0	0.0	295	9.7
New households (split-off HH)	26	2.7	24	2.3	39	3.9	89	2.9
(3) Response rates by type of HH		62.7		65.9		62.7		63.7
Respondents from previous wave		70.7		72.7		63.6		68.4
Dropouts from previous wave		43.5		44.0		0.0		43.7
New households		44.1		37.5		45.9		42.8
(4) Panel stability ¹		93.1		85.3		66.2		79.8
(5) Partial unit non-response ²		59.8		54.2		57.7		56.9

¹ Number of participating households divided by previous wave's net sample.

² Share of households (number of household members >1) with at least one missing individual questionnaire.

Fieldwork Progress in M3–M5

Table 20 shows the progress of fieldwork for the three refugee samples. Face-to-face interviewing started in the beginning of September 2018 and was completed in February 2019. Originally, fieldwork was scheduled to end in December 2018 but had to be extended for several reasons. Many first-wave addresses were no longer accurate for second-wave fieldwork and required further research. It was also more difficult to find times when respondents could meet with interviewers than in wave one, and many appointments had to be rescheduled.

Fieldwork Results in M3–M5

Table 21 displays the fieldwork results by subsample and type of household of the samples M3, M4, and M5. In total, 4,772 addresses comprised the gross sample. 81.4 percent of all households were respondents in the previous wave; 14.2 percent were dropouts in the previous wave; and 4.4 percent were split-off households. In total 3,042 households were interviewed, 979 in M3, 1,058 in M4 and 1,005 in M5. Similar to the prior wave, the challenges of surveying this population are evident in the moderate response rate of 68.4 percent for respondents from the previous wave. The high mobility poses a particular issue and required considerable efforts in address

research. Panel stability for the two older samples is relatively high at 93.1 percent (M3) and 85.3 percent (M4) because of the high share of dropouts in the gross sample from the previous wave (M3: 25.6 percent; M4: 17.3 percent).

One major concern for all SOEP samples are the growing rates of partial unit non-response (PUNR), which are exceptionally high for the refugee samples, at a total of 56.9 percent in this year's wave. According to our interviewers' reports, respondents are increasingly busy with activities such as job search, participation in language and integration courses, and appointments with various agencies and authorities. The increasing number of activities these individuals are involved in makes it difficult for interviewers to complete interviews with multiple adult household members. Communication and language difficulties create additional complications in contacting as well as in performing interviews. These can only be addressed in part through preliminary measures.

Fieldwork in Foreign Languages in M3–M5

Especially with refugees who entered Germany very recently, language problems pose a major challenge in the interviewing process. Although some of the interviewers conducting interviews in M3–M5 speak Arabic, Farsi, or Pashtu, it is generally not feasible to match interviewers with special language skills with respondents in such a large, nationwide survey. As implemented successfully in the first wave of samples M3 and M4, a bilingual CAPI program was used for all three refugee samples in 2018. The translation was scripted into the CAPI such that German and another language were shown on the screen side by side. The second language was selected at the beginning of the interview. The survey languages offered besides German were English, Arabic, Farsi,

Pashto, Urdu, and Kurmanji. Usage of the different language versions is shown in **Table 22**.

Questionnaires and Survey Instruments in M3–M5 **Table 23** displays the types and volumes of the questionnaires implemented in the three refugee samples. Again, many different questionnaires were used in 2018. At the household level, in addition to the standard household questionnaire a mother-child questionnaire was used, merging the questionnaires used previously for children of different age groups. Additionally, a questionnaire for teenagers was fielded with special questions for certain birth cohorts. In 2018, it included knowledge questions and a picture puzzle. For adults, two different kinds of questionnaires were used. First-time respondents completed a questionnaire including additional biographical questions. Adults who had already participated in at least one SOEP survey had already provided that information, and thus received a shorter questionnaire. In both cases, we distinguished between refugees on the one hand and migrants and Germans on the other, with questionnaires tailored to each.

Two notable features of this year's questionnaire were the CAMCES (Computer-assisted measurement and coding of educational qualifications in surveys) module and the escape route map. Both had already been used the year before in samples M3 and M4. This year, they were integrated into the questionnaires for second-wave participants in M5. The CAMCES module is based on a tool that was developed to accurately measure educational attainment using an international database of educational qualifications. Respondents enter their qualifications into a text box. A search algorithm then matches it with educational qualifications from the database, producing the most likely response. The procedure enables the correct coding of educational qualifications and degrees from a wide variety of countries. The escape route map is a tool to reconstruct a refugee's route from their home country to

Table 22

Utilization of questionnaire translations¹

Total	Abs.	In % of interviews
German/English	366	8.4%
German/Arabic	3,310	76.2%
German/Farsi	528	12.2%
German/Pashto	33	0.8%
German/Urdu	56	1.3%
German/Kurmanji	51	1.2%

¹ Individual questionnaires for wave II respondents and individual questionnaire for new respondents.

Table 23

Questionnaires types and volumes of the refugee samples

	Gross sample/reference value ¹	Number of interviews	Response rate/coverage rate
Individual questionnaires ²	6,018	4,351	72.3
Youth questionnaire: age 16 or 17	218	95	43.6
Youth questionnaire: age 13 or 14	266	117	44.0
Youth questionnaire: age 11 or 12	308	155	50.3
Mother and child questionnaire: newborn	399	379	95.0
Mother and child questionnaire: age 2 or 3	311	295	94.9
Mother and child questionnaire: age 5 or 6	296	276	93.2
Mother and child questionnaire: age 7 or 8	342	324	94.7
Mother and child questionnaire: age 9 or 10	308	299	97.1

1 The numbers refer to the respective target population in participating households. For the child-related questionnaires, the reference value is the number of children in the respective age group living in participating households. Therefore the response rate for these questionnaires indicates the number of children for whom a questionnaire has been completed by one parent (in most cases by the mother).

2 There are 25 additional individual questionnaires conducted in households that are coded as non-participating households as there is no household questionnaire.

Table 24

Consent to record linkage: Compliance rates

	M3/M4		M5	
	Abs. 1	In %	Abs. 1	In %
Approved	205	82.0	135	73.8
Declined	18	7.2	23	12.6
Didn't understand the issue	27	10.8	25	13.7
Total	250	100.0	183	100.0

1 Only first-time respondents were asked to give their consent to the record linkage.

their arrival in Germany. The tool is integrated into the CAPI questionnaire. A world map is presented to the respondents. By clicking on the screen, the respondents can select their home country and then mark all stops along their route. They are urged to not only select countries but mark all important cities and border crossing points as well.

As with every previous subsample of the migration population in the SOEP, questionnaire content is based on the SOEP-Core questionnaires. However, there are several deviations from SOEP standard to reflect the special characteristics of the target group, including several additional questions on migration and integration. The mean interview length for refugees who had taken part in one of the previous waves was about 54 minutes for the individual questionnaire. This meant that the interview was significantly longer than in other SOEP samples (e.g., M1/2: 38 minutes), adding further to issues with response rates and PUNR.

In recent years, it has become fairly standard in the SOEP to link respondents' survey data with data from the Integrated Employment Biographies Sample (IEBS). All first-time refugee respondents in 2018 were asked to give their written consent. **Table 24** shows the results on consent.

Record Linkage with Administrative Pension Data (SOEP-RV)

Report from the SOEP

By Holger Lüthen

A Combined Dataset for Life-Course Research

SOEP-RV has the objective of enhancing the SOEP through linkage with high-quality social security data from pension insurance records (the data do not contain information on civil servants or on periods of self-employment). For persons within the social security system, the pension insurance data provide information on employment biographies, pensions, pension prospects, social security earnings since age 14, and other topics. This enables the SOEP to provide additional high-quality, long-term monthly data on individuals' entire work histories. The sample provides unique possibilities for research combining administrative and survey information, e.g., household lifetime income. Since the pension information is very rich, the data offer significant potential for research on pensions and old age. It also provides the basis for research on methodological questions, such as the consistency of self-reported versus administrative information.

SOEP-RV approaches record linkage by asking SOEP respondents for their consent. If they consent, respondents either provide their social security number themselves or this number is obtained from pension insurance records. The first step in either case is to validate the social security number. This is done by SOEP in cooperation with the pension insurance agency. Second, the agency finds the individuals in their database based on the validated numbers. Third, pensions and earnings histories and pension payments are obtained from the individuals' pension records.

Up to now, about 50% of SOEP respondents have consented to record linkage, and in cooperation with the Research Data Center of the pension insurance agency, we have derived and validated the social security numbers of about 8,000 respondents. About 65% of the respondents provided a valid social security number. The next step is to match the pension data to the SOEP. This work is currently in progress, and involves solving data security and format issues. After obtaining the individual pension records, the SOEP and the pension insurance will both provide a dataset that can be merged by the user. The final product, SOEP-RV, will be provided to users at our Research Data Center in late 2020; there will be no online access.

http://www.diw.de/soep-rv_en

SOEP Innovation Sample (SOEP-IS)

Report from the SOEP

By David Richter

The SOEP Innovation Sample (SOEP-IS) is a service provided by the SOEP to researchers worldwide for their research projects. Users can submit proposals including both short-term experiments and longer-term instruments that are not suited to SOEP-Core, whether because they have not yet been scientifically verified or because they deal with very specific research issues. SOEP has been accepting proposals annually since 2013, and assesses them in an annual competitive referee process to identify the most innovative research questions and operationalization processes. In 2018, almost 7,000 individual respondents in more than 3,500 households participated in SOEP-IS. Many of these women and men have been part of a SOEP-Core boost sample since 1998, while others joined in 2009. These individuals provide a wealth of longitudinal data to the SOEP-IS. Additional samples were added to the SOEP-IS in 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2016 (see **Table 25**).

Data Access

To protect respondents' confidentiality, the SOEP adheres to strict security standards in distributing the SOEP-IS data. The data are reserved exclusively for research and provided only to members of the scientific community. The SOEP Research Data Center distributes the SOEP-IS data to users as an independent dataset. Individuals and institutions that have signed a SOEP data distribution contract can submit an informal application (in the form of a letter or e-mail) requesting a supplemental contract for use of the SOEP-IS data. After signing the required contracts, users receive the SOEP-IS dataset by personalized encrypted download. Users can also access small-scale regional data, which can be linked to the SOEP-IS data, on site at the SOEP Research Data Center.

Access to SOEP-IS Data from 2011 to 2017

The latest SOEP-IS data were released in late March 2018. The data release contained the core SOEP questions and additional SOEP modules included in the SOEP-IS in 2016, user-friendly generated SOEP variables for 2016, as well as all of the previous SOEP-IS data going back to the first subsample in 1998. Also included were the innovative modules from 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015, which are released after a 12-month embargo during which the data are available exclusively to the researcher who submitted the questions. The data from the 2016 SOEP-IS modules will be under embargo until April 2019.

Innovative Modules Surveyed in 2011

- Internalized Gender Stereotypes Vary Across Socioeconomic Indicators (Dietrich, Eagly, Garcia-Retamero, Holst, Kröger, Ortner, Schnabel)
- Justice Sensitivity (Liebig)
- Pension Claims (Grabka)

Innovative Modules Surveyed in 2012

- Adaptive Test of Environmental Behavior Scale (Otto & Kaiser)
- Control Strivings (Gerstorf & Heckhausen)
- Day Reconstruction Method (DRM; Lucas & Donnellan)
- The Big Two Psychological Content Dimensions: Agency & Communion (Gebauer, Asendorpf & Bruder)
- Implicit Association Test of Self-Esteem (Gebauer, Asendorpf & Bruder)
- Dementia Worry (Kessler)
- GeNECA (Just Sustainable Development Based on the Capability Approach; Gutwald, Krause, Leßmann, Masson, Mock, Omann, Rauschmayer & Volkert)
- Anxiety & Depression (Brähler & Zenger)

Innovative Modules Surveyed in 2013

- Conspiracy Mentality (Haffke)
- Day Reconstruction Method (DRM; Lucas & Donnellan)
- Job Preferences and Willingness to Accept Job Offer (Auspurg & Hinz)
- Job Task Survey (Görlich)
- Regional Identification (Neyer, Zimmermann & Schubach)
- Narcissistic Admiration & Rivalry Questionnaire (NARQ-S) (Küffner, Hutteman & Back)
- Sleep Characteristics (Stang & Zinkhan)
- Socio-Economic Effects of Physical Activity (Lechner & Pawlowski)

Innovative Modules Surveyed in 2014

- Cross-Cultural Study of Happiness (Uchida & Trommsdorff)
- Day Reconstruction Method (DRM; Lucas & Donnellan)
- Determinants of Attitudes to Income Redistribution (Poutvaara, Kauppinen & Fong)
- Determinants of Not Wanting to Know (Hertwig) Expected Financial Market Earnings (Huck & Weizsäcker)
- Comparing Measures of Experimental and Evaluative Well-Being (ESM; Lucas & Donnellan)
- Computer-Assisted Measurement and Coding of Educational Qualifications in Surveys (CAMCES) (Herzing & Schneider)
- Flourishing Scale (Mangelsdorf & Schwarzer)
- Inattentional Blindness (Conley, Chabris & Simons)
- Decisions from Description and Experience (Mata, Richter, Josef, Frey & Hertwig)
- Justice Sensitivity (Baumert, Schlösser, Beierlein, Liebig, Rammstedt & Schmitt)
- Lottery Play: Expenditure, Frequency, and Explanatory Variables (Beckert & Lutter + Oswald)
- Future Life Events (Luhmann & Zimmermann)
- Self-Evaluation and Overconfidence in Different Life Domains (Ziebarth, Arni & Goette)
- Separating Systematic Measurement Error Components Using MTMM (Cernat & Obersky)
- Confusion, Hubbub, and Order Scale (CHAOS) (Rauch)

Innovative Modules in 2015

- Attitude Inferences and Interviewer Effects (Kühne) Comparing Measures of Experimental and Evaluative Well-Being (Lucas & Donnellan)
- Couples' Prediction Accuracy for Food Preferences (Scheibehenne)
- Diversity of Living-Apart-Together-Couples (Schmiade)
- Emotion Regulation (Romppel & Schulz)
- Epigenetic Markers of Stress (Helms & Weierstall)
- Fiscal Crisis in the EU and European Solidarity (Lengfeld)
- Future Life Events (Luhmann & Zimmermann)
- Grit and Entrepreneurship (Dupuy & Kritikos)
- Happiness Analyser Smartphone Application (Ludwigs, Lucas & Veenhoven)
- Impostor Phenomenon and Career Development (Neureiter)
- Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire (NARQ-S) (Küffner, Hutteman & Back)
- Ostracism Short Scale (Rudert & Greifeneder)
- Preference for Leisure (Borghans & Collewet)
- Private or Public Health Care: Evaluation, Attitudes, and Social Solidarity (Immergut, Burlacu, Ainsaar & Oskarson)
- Self-Regulated Personality Development (Specht & Hennecke)
- Separating Systematic Measurement Error Components Using MTMM (Cernat & Obersky)
- Sickness Presenteeism (Steidelmüller & Breitsohl)
- Smartphone Usage (Wrzus)
- Socio-Economic Effects of Physical Activity (Lechner & Pawlowski)

Innovative Modules in 2016

- Adaptation in Very Old Age (Gerstorf, Hoppmann & Ram)
- Adaptation to Major Life Events (Brose)
- Ageing in a Changing Society (Pavlova, Rothermund & Silbereisen)
- Collective vs. Individual Risk Attitudes (Gorelkina)
- Fiscal Crisis in the EU and European Solidarity (Lengfeld)
- Happiness Analyzer Smartphone Application (Ludwigs, Lucas & Veenhoven)
- Informal Care Outside the Household (Ehrlich & Kelle)
- Internet Based Psychotherapy (Apolinário-Hagen)
- Language Skills, Income and Employment (Gazzola, Templin & Wickström)

- Perceived Discrimination (Schlenzka & Stocker)
- Personal and Economic Relations (Hommelhoff)
- Physical Attractiveness (Schunk)
- Representations of Scientific Information (Brandt, Kimmig, Cress, Kimmerle & Hofer)
- Resilient Behavior in the Workplace (Soucek)
- Separating Systematic Measurement Error Components Using MTMM (Cernat & Obersky)
- Status Confidence & Anxiety (Delhey, Schneikert & Steckermeier)
- Subjective Social Status (Süssenbach & Euteneuer)
- Inequality and Other-Regarding Preferences and Risk Taking (Fehr)
- Ostracism Short Scale (Rudert & Greifeneder)
- Perception of Inequality (Niehues)
- Self-Insight Motive Scale (Dufner & Schmukle)
- Subjective Social Status (Süssenbach & Euteneuer)
- Online Survey for German Federal Government's Report on Poverty and Wealth (Deml)

Innovative Modules in 2017

- Assessment of Contextualized Emotions (Hess & Gerstorf)
- Determinants of Ambiguity Aversion (Leuker, Pleskac & Hertwig)
- Future Time Perspective (Korff)
- Inequality and Other-Regarding Preferences and Risk Taking (Fehr)
- Inequality Attitudes (Mau, Gülzau & Lux)
- Justice Sensitivity (Baumert, Schlösser, Beierlein, Liebig, Rammstedt & Schmitt)
- Multilingualism, Language Attitudes and Their Socioeconomic Reflection (Plewnia & Adler)
- Private or Public Health Care: Evaluation, Attitudes, and Social Solidarity (Immergut, Burlacu, Ainsaar & Oskarson)
- Representations of Scientific Information (Brandt, Kimmig, Cress, Kimmerle & Hofer)
- Self-Control (Cobb-Clark & Schildberg-Hörisch)
- Socio-Economic Effects of Physical Activity (Lechner & Pawlowski)
- Temporal Self-Continuity (Löckenhoff)
- Working Time Preferences (Matiaske & Beermann)

Innovative Modules in 2018

- 2D:4D Measurement (Dreber, Johannesson, Neyse & Schmidt)
- Awareness of Age-Related Change (Wahl & Diehl)
- Comparison of Different Measurements of Donating (Schulz-Sandhof)
- Comparison of Different Measurements of Volunteering (Kelle, Burkhardt, Kausmann, Lejeune, Simonson & Tesch-Römer)
- Consumers' Beliefs and Trust in Predictive Analytics (Rebitschek & Gigerenzer)
- Inattentional Blindness & Stroop Test (Conley)
- INCOM Social Comparison Scale (Erkut & Neyse)

Data Collection in 2018

Forty-two proposals were submitted for the 2018 wave of SOEP-IS data collection. We received fifteen proposals from the field of economics, eight from the field of sociology, fourteen from psychology, three from political science, and two from medical and health science. Twelve were accepted. Due to the limited testing time available, the remaining 30 proposals had to be rejected.

We also replicated innovative modules in 2018: the module on inequality and other-regarding preferences and risk taking from 2017, the module on the subjective social status from 2016, the module on the ostracism short scale from 2015, as well as the module on inattentional blindness from 2014.

Table 25

The SOEP Innovation Sample (SOEP-IS)

Sample/survey year	1998–2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Sample E (IE) (started in 1998 with 373 households and 963 individuals)	373 (963) in the SOEP	447 (934) in the SOEP	453 (936) in the SOEP	464 (944) in the SOEP	339 (649) in the SOEP-IS	310 (603) in the SOEP-IS	298 (570) in the SOEP-IS	282 (540) in the SOEP-IS	266 (506) in the SOEP-IS	250 (460) in the SOEP-IS	233 (417) in the SOEP-IS
Sample I (I1) (started in 2009 with 1,495 households and 3,052 individuals)		1495 (3,052) in the SOEP	1175 (2,450) in the SOEP	1040 (2,113) in the SOEP-IS	928 (1,845) in the SOEP-IS	846 (1,740) in the SOEP-IS	798 (1,562) in the SOEP-IS	741 (4,141) in the SOEP-IS	721 (1,380) in the SOEP-IS	688 (1,287) in the SOEP-IS	636 (1,149) in the SOEP-IS
Supplementary sample 2012 (I2) (started in 2012 with 1,010 households and 2,005 individuals)					1,010 (2,035)	833 (1,698)	772 (1,550)	710 (1,399)	669 (1,313)	616 (1,185) in the SOEP-IS	564 (1,035) in the SOEP-IS
Supplementary sample 2013 (I3) (started in 2013 with 1,166 households and 2,256 individuals)						1,166 (2,256)	929 (1,788)	840 (1,617)	770 (1,458)	717 (1,326) in the SOEP-IS	647 (1,152) in the SOEP-IS
Supplementary sample 2014 (I4) (started in 2014 with 924 households and 1,667 individuals)							924 (1,667)	672 (1,226)	623 (1,123)	566 (971) in the SOEP-IS	518 (863) in the SOEP-IS
Supplementary sample 2016 (I5) (started in 2016 with 1,057 households and 1,935 individuals)									1,057 (1,935)	746 (1,325) in the SOEP-IS	634 (1,106) in the SOEP-IS
Households total (individuals total)	373 (963)	1,942 (3,986)	1,628 (3,386)	1,504 (3,057)	2,277 (4,529)	3,173 (6,297)	3,721 (7,137)	3,245 (6,196)	4,106 (7,715)	3,583 (6,594)	3,232 (5,722)

SOEP Innovation Sample (SOEP-IS)

Fieldwork Report from Kantar Public

By Bettina Zweck

Overview

The SOEP-IS (SOEP-Innovation Sample) is a longitudinal household survey with a special design that makes it possible to conduct highly innovative and ambitious research projects in many disciplines. Important features of the sample design and core fieldwork procedures are consistent with the SOEP-Core samples. But, in adherence to the original intention, SOEP-IS also offers a unique framework that facilitates the piloting and testing of innovative survey modules. Since its launch in 2009, the new SOEP-Innovation Sample drew increasing interest

from the scientific community and research institutions, leading to its permanent establishment in 2011. Modules incorporated into the SOEP-IS deal with issues of scientific interest that are too specific for inclusion in the SOEP-Core surveys, such as in-depth questions about personal opinions and attitudes, questions about changes following major life course events, and even short behavioral experiments. The SOEP-IS has been expanded regularly with refresher samples in 2012 (subsample I2), 2013 (I3), 2014 (I4) and most recently in 2016, when Subsample I5 was added. **Figure 2** provides more details about the development of sample size since 2009.

Figure 2

Development of SOEP-IS subsample since 2009

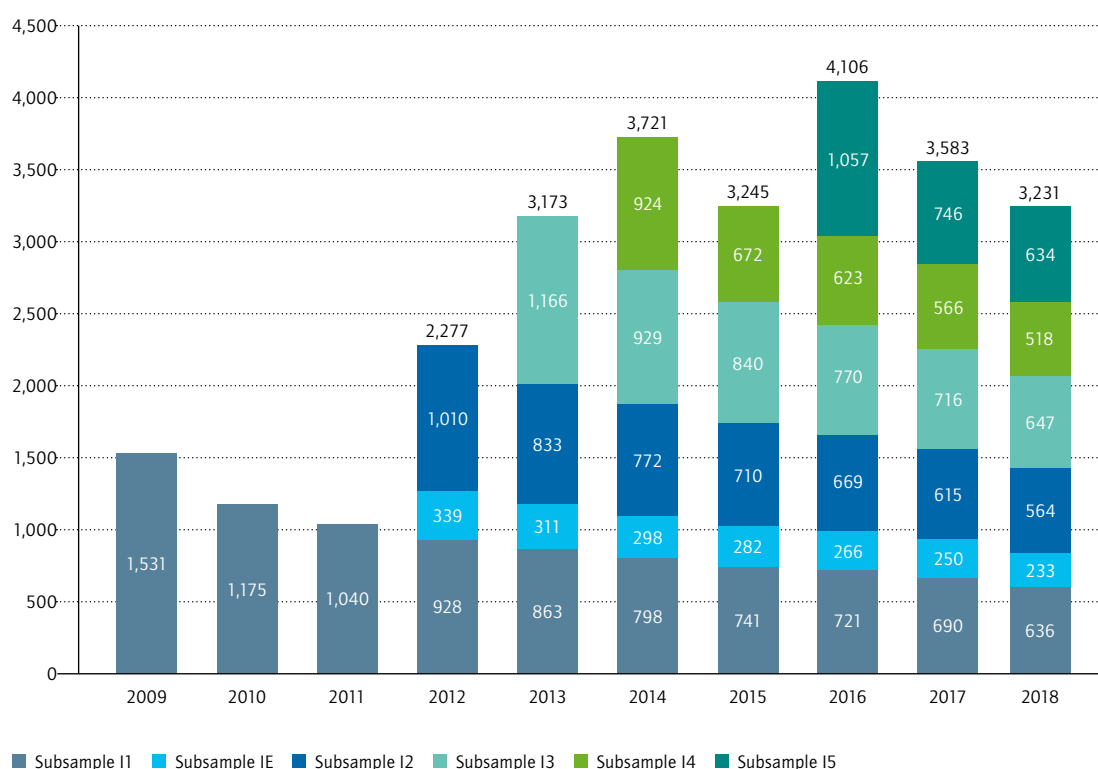


Table 26

Questionnaires: Volume and response rates for SOEP-IS in 2018¹

	Gross sample/ reference value ²	Interviews	Response/coverage rate
Individual questionnaire	5,608	4,863	86.7%
Mother and child module: up to 23 months old children	105	105	100.0%
Mother and child module: between 24 and 47 months old children	107	107	100.0%
Mother and child module: older than 48 months	784	784	100.0%

¹ Preliminary results.

² The numbers refer to the respective target population in participating households. For the child-related questionnaires, the reference value is the number of children in the respective age group living in participating households. Therefore the response rate for these questionnaires indicates the number of children for whom a questionnaire has been completed by one parent (in most cases by the mother).

Questionnaire

The framework for SOEP-IS data collection consists of an integrated core questionnaire based on elements from the SOEP-Core household and individual questionnaires, core questions from the biography questionnaire for new panel members, and three mother-child modules. In contrast to the other SOEP samples with their multiple separate questionnaires, the SOEP-IS has a single questionnaire for each respondent with an integrated CAPI script. In order to provide a smooth and efficient interview situation, the script automatically routes through all the modules the respondent is asked to complete. The SOEP-IS core questionnaire used in 2018 included the following modules:

- Core elements from the SOEP-Core household questionnaire to be completed by one member of the household (preferably the one who is best informed about the other household members and general household matters).
- Core elements from the SOEP-Core individual questionnaire to be completed by each household member aged 17 and over.
- Core elements from the SOEP-Core biography questionnaire for new panel members (new respondents as well as young people born in 2001 who participated in the panel for the first time as an adult).
- Three mother-child modules to be completed by: Mothers of children up to 23 months of age (mother-child module A)
 - Mothers of children between 24 and 47 months of age (mother-child module B)
 - Mothers of children older than 48 months of age (mother-child module C)

Table 26 shows the gross samples and net volumes of the different questionnaire modules (preliminary results).

The rationale behind the integration of household and individual questionnaires into one shorter interview is to allow more time for innovative modules and tests. In addition to the core elements, the questionnaire in 2018 contained three additional elements: first, like every year, pretest questions were integrated to test new questions that can subsequently be chosen for the following SOEP-Core wave. Second, as in 2017, an additional online survey was announced during the CAPI interview. And third, as every year, the “main part” of the SOEP-IS questionnaire focused on the testing of different innovative modules. In 2018, 22 different modules were integrated into the SOEP-IS questionnaire. This high number results from the fact that subsample I5 received different modules than subsamples IE/I1–I4. To be able to consider as many different research interests as possible in a limited interview time, the individuals in the different subsamples received different sets of innovative modules. **Table 27** presents an overview of the distribution of the innovation modules across subsamples IE/I1–I4. **Table 28** shows the modules given to subsample I5. In the following section, these modules are described in varying detail. First, we look at three modules in which the respondents were able to win real money, followed by a brief overview of the other modules, including modules that are replicas of previous years such as the module “Social Status”.

Table 27

Distribution of the innovative modules of subsamples IE/I1–I4

	IE/I1	I2	I3	I4
Household gift	X	X	X	X
Income distribution II	X			
Financial decisions II			X	
Gorilla-test		X		
Ostracism	X	X		
Social status			X	X
Stroop-test		X		
Fingure length (2D:4D)	X	X	X	X
Comparison, social distance		X		X
Age related change		X		X
Wealth	X	X	X	
Estimate	X		X	X
Leisure-time activities	X	X	X	X
Selfinsight		X		X
Questions of donations	X		X	X
Resilience	X	X	X	X

Table 28

Distribution of the innovative modules of subsample I5

Household gift	X
Self-control	X
Real estate II	X
Full-time/part-time II	X
Expectancies of the financial market	X
Accuracy	X
Risk of disease	X

Modules with Incentives in SOEP-IS

Like in 2017, there were a few modules in 2018 in which the respondents were able to win money. These modules may have a unique influence on respondents' actions, as the possible outcomes—money—make reference to everyday life. In comparison to 2017, where respondents could win a very high amount of money, the highest possible payout of 30 euros was easier for interviewers to handle in practical terms in 2018. All profits were paid out in cash. Like in 2017, incentives pay-offs were only implemented for modules in the subsamples IE/I1–I4.

One “incentive module” is the repetition module **Income Distribution II**. This module consists of several parts which were positioned in different places throughout the questionnaire. Like in 2017, respondents were asked to estimate their gross household income in comparison to other households in Germany and worldwide. In addition, each respondent had to guess how confident he or she is with the estimation. After finishing the individual questionnaire, respondents received 10 euros for each correct estimation. Like in 2017, the second part provided respondents with information about the actual financial position of their households. The crucial difference from 2017 is that respondents virtually had to “purchase” the information. In ten situations, respondents had to choose whether they keep the information or take a certain amount of money, ranging from 10 cents up to 10 euros, in exchange for the information. The computer algorithm then randomly picked one situation and carried out the respondent's decision. Depending on the chosen situation, immediately after the experiment the respondent received either the information about the actual financial position of his or her household or an announcement about the amount of money won. The money was then paid out at the end of the individual questionnaire. Consequently, in the second part of the Income Distribution module, respondents could win money in addition to the amount from the first part of the module. Respondents were able to re-

ceive a maximum of 30 euros total in the Income Distribution module in 2018. In the third part of the module, respondents in the treatment group in 2017 (those who had received information about the income distribution in 2017) were asked several control questions, for instance, whether they had spoken with anybody about their answers or whether they had looked for information about income distributions in the last twelve months. Additionally, every respondent in this module was asked about his/her trust in government, media, statistics and science. The repetition module **Financial Decisions II** was modified to a great extent in comparison to 2017. The module was predominantly self-administered by the respondent without the interviewer being aware of the choice. Respondents were able to transfer the incentive from real persons that had participated in a separate survey. Respondents in the separate survey received 10 euros as an incentive. Respondents from the SOEP-IS were matched randomly by a computer algorithm with either one or 100 respondents from the separate survey. In the first group, respondents from the SOEP-IS could transfer up to 10 euros to themselves from one external respondent. In the second group, one SOEP-IS participant could take up to 10 cents per person from 100 external respondents. Nobody else could transfer money from those 100 respondents. In a third group, one SOEP-IS participant could again take up to 10 cents per person from 100 external respondents, but simultaneously another 99 SOEP-IS participants could take up to 10 cents per person from the very same 100 external respondents. After the personal questionnaire, a computer algorithm decided whether the reallocated money was actually transferred to the SOEP-IS participant. Additionally, SOEP-IS respondents could estimate the amount of money other SOEP-IS participants took on average from the external survey participants. If respondents stated an estimation within +/- 5 percent of the correct answer, they could win another 50 euros. After fieldwork was completed, a total of 10 respondents were randomly chosen to receive the 50 euros.

The third incentive module, the **Gorilla Test**, is a task on selective perception. Included in the SOEP-IS study for the first time in 2014, the module consisted of a short film sequence where numerous geometrical forms, circles and rectangles, in black and white moved around on the computer screen. Respondents were asked on the screen to count the frequency of either a form or a color touching the edge of the screen. The assignment to count either forms or colors was random. If respondents stated the correct frequency, they received 4 euros afterwards. In case of a wrong answer, participants received 1 euro. Independently of the assigned form and color, the module also aimed at determining

whether participants noticed that during the film sequence, a black circle appeared, moved across the screen and eventually disappeared. In the original test, a person dressed up as a gorilla ran across the screen, which was the reason for naming this the “Gorilla Test” in SOEP-IS.

Overview of the Modules Without Incentives: IE/I1–I4 and I5

In the following section, modules without incentives are divided into the modules of the subsamples IE/I1 – I4 and the modules in subsample I5. Furthermore, the modules described in the following sections are differentiated into the so-called repetition modules (modules which had been part of previous surveys of the SOEP Innovation Sample), and new modules.

Modules in Subsamples IE/I1–I4 at a Glance

In subsample IE/I1 – I4, the following two modules are **repetition modules without incentives**:

- The module **Ostracism** was already part of the SOEP Innovation Sample in 2015. Ostracism is generally referred to as the phenomenon of feeling excluded and ignored by others. The module was included to investigate the far-reaching effects of exclusion on the psychological health of affected individuals over a long-term period.
- With the **Social Status** module, the 2018 SOEP-IS repeated a module from 2016 survey. The module gathers information about the perceived social status of individuals to investigate the possible effects of subjective social status on individual's health. Respondents were therefore asked to rate themselves in comparison to those around them as well as compared to people in Germany as a whole. The rating was done on a scale visualized as a ladder. Respondents could choose the ladder rung on which they see themselves

The subsamples IE/I1 – I4 received 11 **new modules without incentives**:

- A special feature of the SOEP Innovation Sample in 2018 was that the distribution of a **household gift**, which is a regular annual part of the SOEP-IS, was used for an experiment: Two different gifts were used, only one of which remained in the household: a microfiber towel

or a writing set. Participating households were separated into three distinct groups. The first group received one of the two gifts and the information that switching the gifts is optional after completing the household interview. The second group received one of the two gifts while the information about the switching option was kept secret until the household interview was completed. The third group functioned as control group that could choose one of the two gifts.

- With the **Stroop Test**, a prominent neuropsychological test method found its way into the SOEP-IS. During the self-administered test, respondents were asked to click on a button matching the font color of a word for a different color that appeared on the screen (for example, the word “yellow” appeared on the screen in a blue font, and beneath it were a series of buttons labelled black, blue, yellow, and so on) as quickly as possible. Since color vision deficiency can pose a serious impediment for the Stroop Test, the Ishihara Test was used to identify possible difficulties. Sixteen color boards were presented to the test subjects. They displayed numbers in certain colors against a background in a color that is problematic for people with color blindness (for example, a green number against a red background for red-green color blindness). Subjects with a color vision deficiency identify different numbers in this test than subjects without deficiencies or identify no numbers.
- For the module **Finger Length (2D:4D)** the length of all respondents’ index and ring fingers were measured on both hands. The aim was to test the hypothesis that a small quotient (length of the index finger divided by the length of the ring finger) is an indicator for a high prenatal testosterone level, resulting in higher risk tolerance and athleticism. So far, research has produced contradictory results in this area. In addition to measuring finger length, a few questions regarding feelings about fairness were asked within this module.
- Individuals tend to compare themselves with others for multiple reasons. The main purpose of the module **Comparison and Social Distance** was to test whether social comparison may explain individuals’ relative position in society. Respondents were asked to report their own position and estimate the position of others on topics like life satisfaction, risk preferences, and honesty. Furthermore, they were asked to indicate how they compare with others in terms of various aspects of life, such as popularity or general living situation.
- Another new module in the 2018 Innovation Sample was **Age-Related Change**. It assessed the perceived experience of aging in different dimensions to understand and predict outcomes like physical health, life-satisfaction, and well-being.
- The module **Wealth** dealt with aspects of the estimated real wealth distribution versus the desired wealth distribution. Respondents were also asked for their preferences in terms of public redistribution.
- The module **Estimate** tackled the level of trust respondents placed in algorithm-based advice compared to expert-based advice. Exemplary scenarios in which algorithms are increasingly used, such as in employee selection and the insurance sector, were listed. The module also assessed respondents’ error tolerance in predictive algorithms.
- In the module **Leisure-Time Activities**, respondents were asked about their activities and social commitments during their free time. The questions were organized into two blocks. One block consisted of specific questions similar to those in the SOEP-Core survey. The second block asked about these activities in a more general way.
- People engage in various activities to find out about themselves. The purpose of the **Self-Insight** module was the assessment of the intensity of striving for accurate self-knowledge through indicators like willingness to know about one’s own strengths and weaknesses and participation in personality tests.
- In the **Donations** module, respondents were asked if and how much money they had donated in the last year. There are two versions with different question wordings. Both versions are either self-administered or read out loud by the interviewer. The objective was to find out whether question wording or/and self-administered vs. interviewer-administered made a difference in the donation amount given.
- The **Resilience** module consisted of different questions measuring the respondent’s perceived resilience to stress or pressure, including willingness to seek solutions if exposed to a difficult situation.

Modules in Subsample I5 at a Glance

Subsample I5 included one repetition module from last year's wave:

- The **Self-Control** module consists of multiple questions measuring the concept of self-control through indicators such as the ability to resist temptations, manage distractions, and concentrate. It was part of last year's SOEP-IS, where similar items were used. The researchers who submitted this module are interested in self-control because it is fundamental for understanding human behavior.

Some of the modules were modified modules from last year's wave:

- The module **Real Estate II** is mainly a repetition from the years 2016 and 2017. Respondents, who live in a rental home were asked whether they have a temporary or permanent rental contract. Further, respondents were asked to estimate how they expect rent and property prices to develop over the next two and 30 years. Before answering the questions about price development, half of the respondents (the same respondents as last year) were shown the price development of residential properties in 14 different countries. New in 2018: Respondents were asked how they would distribute a certain amount of money among different investment opportunities like gold, real estate, and shares.
- The **Full-Time/Part-Time II** module asks respondents about their expected wage development, in particular, how they would expect their wages to change with a change in working hours (e.g., full-time to part-time). Additionally, respondents were asked to evaluate the wages of other employees in full- and part-time work as well as the motivation, qualifications, and resilience of other employees in part-time work.

- The module **Expectations of the Financial Market** is a modified version from 2017. First, respondents were informed about the rise or fall in the DAX in one of two randomly chosen 30-year periods between 1951 and 2017 based on real numbers. Afterward, they had to decide how they would distribute a hypothetical investment of 50,000 euros between government bonds and DAX investments. Then the respondents were asked questions about the estimated future development of the DAX.

There were three new modules in subsample I5:

- In the module **Accuracy**, respondents had to state the year certain events occurred, such as the introduction of the euro or the death of Lady Diana. They were then asked to estimate how close their answer was to the correct answer.
- The **Risk of Disease** module deals with the question of how people form expectations about the risk of diseases, and how much they value preventive behavior. Respondents were asked to estimate their own risk of death from cardiovascular disease as well as the mortality risk resulting from two distinct behavioral profiles.
- The module involving the **Household Gift** was carried out with sample I5 in the same manner as described above for the IE/I1 – I4 samples.

Table 29

Fieldwork progress by month: Processing of household interviews¹

	2017		2018 ²	
	Gross sample (in %)	Net sample (in %)	Gross sample (in %)	Net sample (in %)
September ³	20.3	21.9	18.6	19.7
October	52.5	57.9	54.5	59.7
November	72.3	79.4	73.6	80.0
December	81.0	88.2	81.3	87.6
January	89.7	94.9	90.8	95.4
February	98.7	99.6	98.1	99.4
March	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

1 Cumulative percentages based on the month of the last household contact.

2 Preliminary results.

3 Including households who refused to take part in the survey prior to start of fieldwork.

Preliminary Fieldwork Results

Data collection for the main phase of SOEP-IS fieldwork usually lasts from September to late December or early January and is followed by an additional fieldwork phase lasting until the end of February. Households are assigned to the second fieldwork phase if they could not be contacted successfully in the main phase, if they were unwilling or unable to participate, or if interviews were missing for some household members. As shown in **Table 29**, fieldwork for 87.6 percent of the households in the study was completed by the end of December 2018. In the remaining households, some or all interviews were conducted up to the beginning of March 2019.

Table 30 presents the composition of the gross and net sample and response rates at the household level. It should be noted that these figures are preliminary, as the data were still being checked at the time of writing. The total gross sample consisted of 3,958 households. This includes previous-wave respondents as well as temporary dropouts from the previous wave and new households. Overall, 3,232 households took part in the SOEP-IS in 2018, which means that at least one person in the household answered the individual and the household-related questions. Combining all subsamples, 3,583 (90.5 percent) of the households in the gross sample had participated in the previous wave. A total of 268 households (6.8 percent) did not participate and were therefore considered temporary dropouts. The last group, “new households”, emerged during the fieldwork period: split-off households are created, for example, when children move out of their parents’ home and establish new households. In 2018, 107 new households were integrated into the gross sample (2.7 percent). Fieldwork results from longitudinal samples can be evaluated according to two basic parameters. The

first is panel stability, which is the decisive indicator of a household panel survey’s successful development from a long-term perspective. Since panel stability is calculated as the number of participating households in the current wave divided by the corresponding number from the previous wave, panel mortality and panel growth (split-off households) or “regrowth” (dropouts from the previous wave who “rejoined” the sample) are taken into account. The second parameter is the longitudinal response rate. Response rates indicate the ratio between the number of interviews—in this case, household interviews—and the number of units in the gross sample. **Table 30** gives the overall panel stability and response rates for all relevant subsamples.

Overall panel stability has increased since the last wave (2018: 90.2 percent; 2017: 87.3 percent). This increase is primarily the result of the increasing stability in subsample I5, which is now in its third wave. Here, panel stability went from 70.6 percent in 2017 to 85.0 percent in 2018. Despite this, I5 still shows lower panel stability than the other subsamples, which were around 90 percent in 2018. Stability was again highest in the oldest subsample, IE/I1, which is now in its seventh wave, but decreased slightly from 2017 to 2018 (from 95.2 to 92.4 percent). Subsample I2 showed approximately the same stability in 2018 as in 2017 (91.9 and 91.7 percent, respectively), and subsample I3 showed a slight decrease (from 93.0 to 90.4 percent). Stability increased slightly in subsample I4, from 90.9 percent in 2017 to 91.5 percent in 2018.

Response rates show a similar pattern. Due to the challenging process of incorporating subsample I5 into the longitudinal sample, this subsample still has the lowest response rate overall, but respondents in this subsample who had participated in the previous wave showed an increase from 69.5 percent in 2017

Table 30

Composition of gross and net sample and response rates¹

	Total		Sample I _{1/E}		Sample I ₂		Sample I ₃		Sample I ₄		Sample I ₅	
	Num.	In %	Num.	In %	Num.	In %	Num.	In %	Num.	In %	Num.	In %
(1) Gross sample compositions by types of HH	3,958	100.0	1,007	100.0	676	100.0	776	100.0	624	100.0	875	100.0
Respondents from previous wave	3,583	90.5	940	93.3	615	91.0	716	92.3	566	90.7	746	85.3
Dropouts from previous wave	268	6.8	40	4.0	35	5.2	41	5.3	41	6.6	111	12.7
New households (split-off HHs)	107	2.7	27	2.7	26	3.8	19	2.4	17	2.7	18	2.1
(2) Net sample composition by type of HH	3,232	100.0	869	100.0	564	100.0	647	100.0	518	100.0	634	100.0
Respondents from previous wave	3,108	96.2	845	97.2	542	96.1	622	96.1	497	95.9	602	95.0
Dropouts from previous wave	74	2.3	8	0.9	10	1.8	19	2.9	14	2.7	23	3.6
New households (split-off HH)	50	1.5	16	1.8	12	2.1	6	0.9	7	1.4	9	1.4
(3) Response rates by type of HH ²												
Respondents from previous wave	3,108	86.7	845	89.9	542	88.1	622	86.9	497	87.8	602	80.7
Dropouts from previous wave	74	27.6	8	20.0	10	28.6	19	46.3	14	34.1	23	20.7
New households	50	46.7	16	59.3	12	46.2	6	31.6	7	41.2	9	50.0
(4) Panel stability ³		90.2		92.4		91.7		90.4		91.5		85.0
(5) Partial unit non-response ⁴		32.5		27.3		33.9		27.1		32.0		43.9

¹ Preliminary results.² Adjusted by deceased persons and expatriates.³ Number of participating households divided by net sample from previous wave.⁴ Share of households (number of household members >1) with at least one missing individual questionnaire.

to 80.7 percent in 2018. This serves as an indicator of rising stability in subsample I5. The response rate is highest in the oldest subsample, IE/I1 (89.9 percent among previous-wave respondents). Due to the stabilization of I5, the overall response rate among previous-wave respondents increased from 84.4 percent in 2017 to 86.7 percent in 2018.

In household surveys, a commonly used indicator to measure the success of fieldwork processes on an individual level is the number of households in which at least one questionnaire is missing (partial unit non-response (PUNR)). Like SOEP-Core, the SOEP Innovation Sample attempts to survey every adult member of the household. The share of multi-person households in which at least one person did not complete the individual questionnaire increased slightly from 31.5 percent in 2017 to 32.5 percent in 2018. As expected, the newest subsample I5 showed the highest partial unit non-response (43.9 percent), probably due to the lack of routine in the annual survey routine within this new group. Subsample I2 showed the second-highest partial unit non-response in 2018 (33.9 percent), despite being an older sample.

Additional Online Survey

The 2018 Innovation Sample included a new supplemental online survey (the first supplemental online survey was conducted in 2017). The questionnaire focused on poverty and wealth in Germany and asked about respondents' individual living conditions. The results will be central to the next Poverty and Wealth Report of the German federal government.

Procedure

The procedure used in the poverty and wealth survey was similar to the online survey on language from 2017. During surveying for the SOEP Innovation Sample, respondents with Internet access were asked whether they would be willing to participate in an additional online survey. Interviewers provided those willing with a flyer containing information on the survey, including its length (15 minutes) and the incentive of 5 euros for completing the questionnaire, and data protection regulations. Like last year, respondents could choose to keep or donate the incentive at the end of the survey. After respondents looked at the flyers, interviewers took down their e-mail addresses for processing.

Invitations to participate were sent by e-mail with a link to the survey in four consecutive waves. The fieldwork was downstream of the SOEP Innovation Sample and lasted from October to late March. The first wave started with a soft launch of 50 invita-

tions on October 16 followed by 713 more invitations on October 25. The second wave of 517 invites went out in early November. The third wave of 646 invitations went out in mid-January 2019. The fourth and last wave went out on March 5 to 213 remaining participants, completing the process with a total of 2,139 invitations sent. Of these, 56 (2.6 percent) were undeliverable due to wrong e-mail addresses. Like last year, to maximize the response rate, up to three reminder e-mails were sent to each person who did not respond to their invitation. The fieldwork phase ended on March 29.

The reason for conducting four waves rather than a single wave at the end of the SOEP-IS fieldwork, which would have allowed all respondents to be contacted simultaneously, was to achieve the highest possible response rate. Contacting respondents soon after the announcement is considered beneficial because the survey is still fresh in their memory.

Questionnaire

After a short introduction, the questionnaire starts either with a section on respondents' individual living conditions or with a set of questions on socially necessary services. In the "living conditions section", respondents were asked to compare their own living conditions to what they consider average in Germany, and to position themselves on a "social ladder". One question out of five ladder questions in sum, namely the positioning in comparison to other people in Germany, is the same question used in the SOEP-IS in 2016 in the module **Social Status**.

The following section asked respondents what they think the causes of poverty are, and what contributes to poverty risks in different phases of life. The next section was similar but focused on aspects of wealth. The section on social necessary services included questions about respondents' distance from public transport, schools, and different leisure facilities, and satisfaction with their residential environment. In the last section, respondents were asked to evaluate the fairness of their own salary as well as the fairness of the salary of certain professional and income groups presented in varying orders.

Preliminary Results

As presented in **Table 31**, 66.8 percent of the respondents in the 2018 SOEP Innovation Sample had internet access and were thus qualified to take part in the survey. Roughly one third of those with internet access (32.4 percent) declined to take part, the main reasons being a lack of interest in the topic and a lack of time. Among those who qualified for participation, 2,154 respondents were generally interested in participating and 1,179 participated (36.3 percent).

Table 31

Response rate, additional online survey¹

Gross sample	4,866	100	
Internet access – no answer	12	0.2	
No Internet access	1,605	33.0	
With Internet access	3,249	66.8	100
No interest in additional survey	1,052	21.6	32.4
Not interested/unwilling to take part	487	10.0	15.0
Not enough time/too much effort	314	6.5	9.7
Currently no Internet access/no E-mail address/ other technical issues	37	0.8	1.1
No or too little experience with the Internet/ not using the internet	59	1.2	1.8
Data protection/privacy	52	1.1	1.6
Issues of health/language difficulties/age	32	0.7	1.0
Other reasons	71	1.5	2.2
No answer	43	0.9	1.3
Interested in additional survey	2,154	44.3	66.3
Yes, with consent for usage of e-mail address in context of the survey	1,941	39.9	59.7
Yes, without consent for usage of e-mail address in context of the survey	198	4.1	6.1
No, no consent or no answer	15	0.3	0.5
E-mail address provided	2,139	44.0	65.8
Valid E-mail address provided	2,083	42.8	64.1
Actual participation in the survey¹	1,179	24.2	36.3

¹ Preliminary results (participation rate calculated on February, 25).

This response rate is slightly higher than in the 2017 online survey (35.5 percent), which was about aspects of language. Final checks have not been completed, so it should be kept in mind that the 2018 participation rate is still preliminary.

Only 55 survey participants (3.6 percent) did not fully complete the questionnaire. The rate is substantially lower than last year's rate (5.0 percent) and serves as an indicator of respondents' concerns regarding poverty and wealth as a survey topic. Furthermore, the higher rate of completion indicates that the overall survey design was interesting and user-friendly. As stated above, respondents had the possibility to decide between either keeping or donating their 5 euro incentive at the end of the survey. In total 48.8 percent of the respondents chose to donate to UNICEF.

Conclusion

Similar to last year's online survey, which was the first in the history of the SOEP Innovation Sample conducted in CAWI mode, this year's results seem promising. Even on the basis of preliminary data, the response rate is higher than last year. One reason for this could be the topic, "poverty and wealth", which is important to the majority of the population because it affects everyday life. In future online surveys, it should be ensured that the topic is similarly interesting and the questionnaire is of appropriate length (approximately 15 minutes) with questions that are easy for everyone to answer.

SOEP-IS Module "Foxes"

Science Communication and Public Dialogue

By Miriam Brandt, Joachim Kimmmerle, Sophia Kimmig

Making Scientific Findings Accessible to Non-Scientists

Knowledge transfer is becoming an increasingly important part of scientific work. Apart from publishing research output in scientific journals, scientific institutions are expected to provide information to policy makers, stakeholders, and the public at large. This means making results accessible to specific target groups. The public has an interest in scientific progress and indeed a right to be provided with information on scientific findings, particularly when those findings were generated through public funding. These demands pose a challenge to researchers, who have to find ways to "translate" specialist jargon into understandable non-scientific language.

The Human Dimension of Wildlife Management

The demand for knowledge transfer is high across all scientific disciplines, but it is especially important in biology. In the field of conservation, the public is often an essential part of management strategies and ecosystem protection efforts. People's behavior or even their presence is responsible for habitat loss and defaunation, and the continuous alteration of natural ecosystems sparks human-wildlife conflicts. Yet, people themselves often depend on land and resources, and the only way to sustainably ensure the survival of endangered species is work toward coexistence of wildlife and humans. Conservationists therefore often campaign for wildlife tolerance to improve the chances of conservation efforts. This includes raising awareness of the presence and the intrinsic value of endangered species. To be successful, however, such campaigns need not only to convey information, but also to change people's feelings, attitudes, and ultimately, behavior.

The Project

To find out what factors determine acceptance of wildlife, we studied socioeconomic and sociodemographic factors play a role in wildlife perceptions. In a second step, we focused on how to communicate scientific information taking these factors into account. Many research institutions have significantly expanded their knowledge transfer activities and are investing in the development of creative methods of science communication. But since little is known about how factual information and the style of its presentation influence people's factual knowledge and attitudes, institutions often do not know how well knowledge transfer measures are working, and can only guess which formats should be used in presenting scientific data to certain target groups.

The Research Institutions Involved

The Leibniz-Institut für Wissensmedien (IWM) in Tübingen is an independent research institute investigating knowledge processes and how they are influenced by different media. A focus of its work is on how motivational, emotional, and social processes influence knowledge transfer. The Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research (IZW) in Berlin aims at understanding and improving the adaptability of wildlife in the context of global change. It seeks to find out how wildlife species cope with altered environmental conditions (understanding adaptability) and, based on this knowledge, to design appropriate methods for conservation (improving adaptability). To meet this latter goal, which is dependent on the transfer of research results to relevant stakeholders, policy makers, and the general public, the IWM and IZW worked with the SOEP at DIW Berlin to design and conduct this study.

The Case Study

The red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) is found throughout Germany and is very familiar to most people. Its long and ambiguous relationship with humans makes it an ideal case study of wildlife perceptions in Germany. Since 2015, the IZW has been conducting a broad ecological examination on how red foxes adjust to life in urban areas. The local public broadcasting company rbb reported on the project and called for the people of Berlin and the surrounding state of Brandenburg to send in photographs, videos, and stories of fox encounters. More than a thousand submissions were received within a few weeks, and although most people who participated showed a positive attitude towards foxes, some showed strong negative reactions. This may reflect the historically ambiguous human-fox relationship. On the one hand, the fox is considered to be charismatic, cute, and cunning and has become part of many fables and fairy tales. On the other hand, the red fox is associated with harmful or even lethal diseases such as rabies or alveolar echinococcosis, caused by the fox tape worm (*Echinococcus multilocularis*), and is thus considered a pest species, in addition to posing a threat to companion animals and livestock such as poultry.

Study Design

The study was carried out in the SOEP Innovation Sample as a longitudinal intervention study. The questionnaire investigated factual knowledge about, attitudes toward, and risk perceptions of red foxes, and also included questions about nature affinity, pet ownership, and other background information. The second survey consisted of the same questions as the first. A few weeks before the second questionnaire, all participants received a brochure about red foxes together with the letter announcing the date they were scheduled to be surveyed. Eight brochures were designed to test the impact of different representation modes, particularly the kind and the degree of emotionalization of the factual information.

Emotionalization is a common tool in advertising and is also used by NGOs to raise awareness of the necessity of habitat and species protection. However, little is known about whether and how this actually influences attitudes, factual knowledge, and risk perceptions. We therefore used two different emotionalization approaches, a textual and a visual one. Both approaches included several degrees of emotionalization, which resulted in brochures ranging from blank bullet point lists to emotional interviews with appealing fox images, all of which contained the same scientific information.

Outlook

A lab version of this study has been published in *Frontiers in Communication*, entitled “Emotionalization in Science Communication: The Impact of Narratives and Visual Representations on Knowledge Gain and Risk Perception”. The data generated from the two surveys are still being analysed and interpreted. We hope that the final results of this study will contribute to an improvement of scientific communication and provide useful advice for conservationists for successful management of human-wildlife issues.

Study Directors

- Dr. Miriam Brandt, Sophia Kimmig (IZW)
- Dr. Joachim Kimmmerle, Danny Flemming, Prof. Dr. Ulrike Cress (IWM)
- Dr. David Richter (SOEP)

Website

https://www.iwm-tuebingen.de/www/en/forschung/projekte/projekt.html?name=SOEP_Einfluss_untersch_Repraesentationen

Publications

Flemming, D., Cress, U., Kimmig, S., Brandt, M., & Kimmmerle, J. (2018). Emotionalization in science communication: The impact of narratives and visual representations on knowledge gain and risk perception. *Frontiers in Communication*, 3(3). <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2018.00003>

The SOEP-Related Studies: Definition and Overview

The SOEP-Related Studies (SOEP-RS) started in 2010 and are planned in close cooperation with the SOEP team and structured in a similar way to the SOEP. This makes it possible to link the SOEP-RS datasets with the original SOEP questionnaire (SOEP-Core) and to analyze the data together or even integrate the RS data later into SOEP-Core. Up to the present day, there are seven research projects in diverse disciplines among the SOEP-Related Studies, some of which have already been completed and integrated into SOEP-Core (BASE II, FiD), projects whose funding period has just ended (PIAAC-L), and projects in which research has just begun (BRISE).

BASE II (Berlin Aging Study II)

The Berlin Aging Study II (BASE-II) is an extension and expansion of the Berlin Aging Study (BASE). This study, with more than 2,200 participants of different ages, aims to complement the analysis of cognitive development across the lifespan by including socio-economic and biological factors such as living conditions, health, and genetic preconditions. The study was funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research from 2009 up to December 2015, and the collaborating institutions are: The Geriatrics Research Group of the Charité, Max Planck Institute for Molecular Genetics, Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Karolinska Institute (Sweden), Freie Universität Berlin, University of Tübingen, as well as the SOEP. Subsequently, participants have been integrated into the annual SOEP survey and provide information about their life situations and living conditions. For more information, see: <https://paneldata.org/soep-base>

Selected Recent Publications:

- **König, Maximilian et al.** 2017. Prevalence of impaired kidney function in the German elderly: Results from the Berlin Aging Study II (BASE-II). *Gerontology* 63, 201–209. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000454831>
- **Kühne, Simon and Martin Kroh.** 2018. Personalized feedback in web surveys: Does it affect respondents motivation and data quality? *Social Science Computer Review*, 36, 744–755. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0894439316673604>
- **König, Maximilian et al.** 2018. Historical trends in modifiable indicators of cardiovascular health and self-rated health among older adults: Cohort differences over 20 years between the Berlin Aging Study (BASE) and the Berlin Aging Study II (BASE-II). *PLoS ONE*, 13(1):e0191699. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0191699>
- **Avdeenko, Alexandra** 2018. Long-term evidence of retrospective voting: A natural experiment from the German Democratic Republic. *European Economic Review*, 103, 83–107. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eurocorev.2018.01.006>
- **Fuks, Kateryna, Anke Hüls, Dorothea Sugiri, Hicran Altug, Andrea Vierkötter, Michael J. Abramson, Jan Goebel, Gert G. Wagner, Ilja Demuth, Jean Krutmann, and Tamara Schikowski.** 2019. Tropospheric ozone and skin aging: Results from two German cohort studies. *Environment International*, 124, 139–144. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envint.2018.12.047>

BIP (Bonn Intervention Panel)

The Bonn Intervention Panel (BIP) investigated the development of personality and preferences of children starting at primary school age up to age 25 and beyond. At age 25, the personality is largely developed and critical transitions in life have been completed. The main focus of the BIP has been on the impact of early childhood environments.

The first part of the project, which was completed in the fall of 2011, focused on measuring personality traits and preferences before the start of the intervention in all of the children in the sample (through choice experiments) and their mothers (or other main caregivers).

Interviews in the third wave of the study (at the end of 2014) acted as a bridge between the first two waves and the “classic” SOEP-IS. Here, families completed the standard SOEP-IS questionnaire, and the BIP child and the main caregiver (mother) answered additional batteries of questions. The BIP child took part in incentivized experiments regarding time, risk, and social preferences and completed the appropriate youth questionnaire from SOEP-Core. The mothers answered additional questions regarding personality and parenting style. Since 2014, the “BIP families” have been part of SOEP-IS and are interviewed on a yearly basis to gather information on the further development of the children.

<http://www.diw.de/Bonn-Intervention-Panel>

Publications:

- Deckers, Thomas, Armin Falk, Fabian Kosse & Hannah Schildberg-Hörisch. 2015. How Does Socio-Economic Status Shape a Child's Personality? [IZA Discussion Paper No. 8977](#).
- Kosse, Fabian, Thomas Deckers, Hannah Schildberg-Hörisch & Armin Falk. 2016. Formation of Human Prosociality: Causal Evidence on the Role of Social Environment. [IZA Discussion Paper No. 9861](#).

BRISE

The Bremen initiative for reinforcing early childhood development (Bremer Initiative zur Stärkung frühkindlicher Entwicklung) is a long-term study that examines the systematic effects of early childhood care and education.

BRISE monitors around 1,000 mothers from Bremen who were expecting a child between spring 2017 and the end of 2018 and their families. One-quarter of the mothers were then selected to participate in an intervention linking early childhood and pre-school care and education programs that were designed to be integrated into everyday life and generally available at daycare centers in Bremen into a “chain of measures” (Maßnahmekette). With funding from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) for an initial period of four years, the BRISE research project examines the cumulative effects that a coordinated care and education program has on the cognitive, social, and emotional development of children. Program planning includes a second four-year funding phase. Along with the SOEP, other consortium members include the Leibniz Institute for Science and Mathematics Education at the University of Kiel (IPN), the University of Bremen, the University of Bamberg, the Leibniz Institute for Educational Trajectories (LIfBi), Freie Universität Berlin, and Heidelberg University. For more details, see the BRISE website:

<http://www.brise-bremen.de>.

FiD (Families in Germany)

The Familien in Deutschland (FiD) project is a longitudinal panel study financed by the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) and the German Federal Ministry of Finance (BMF). Its main purpose is to provide researchers with new and better data on specific groups in the German population: low-income families, families with more than two children, single-parent families, as well as families with young children.

The data are the backbone of the first large-scale evaluation of family policy measures in Germany carried out on behalf of the two ministries. The first wave of data collection started in 2010, and in 2014, FiD was fully integrated into SOEP-Core. The data were made available to the scientific community in April 2012. They can be obtained with a SOEP data distribution contract at the RDC SOEP. Even though the survey instruments have been adapted to the specific research focus of the evaluation, they are based on those used for the SOEP survey. Hence, combined usage of FiD and SOEP data is encouraged,

especially because the majority of the known datasets are included in FiD, along with joint weighting factors to allow for analyses representative for the German population.

<http://www.diw.de/soep-fid>

Selected Publications:

- **Fräßdorf, Mathis, et al.** 2016. SOEP FiD – ‘Familien in Deutschland’, Data Documentation Release FiDv4.o. *SOEP Survey Papers* 341: Series D – Variable Description and Coding. Berlin: DIW Berlin.
- **Lauber, Verena, et al.** 2014. Vereinbarkeit von Beruf und Familie von Paaren mit nicht schulpflichtigen Kindern – unter spezifischer Berücksichtigung der Erwerbskonstellation beider Partner: ausgewählte Ergebnisse auf der Basis der FiD-Daten („Familien in Deutschland“). DIW Berlin: *Politikberatung kompakt* No. 88. Berlin: DIW Berlin.
- **Schröder, Mathis, Rainer Siegers, and C. Katharina Spieß.** 2013. Familien in Deutschland – FiD. *Schmollers Jahrbuch* 133(4), 595–606. DOI: 10.3790/schm.133.4.595.

PIAAC-L

The Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), carried out on behalf of the OECD, examines the basic skills that are necessary for adults to participate successfully in society and working life. Findings from the 2011/2012 wave of the PIAAC study were released in October 2013. Around 98% of the approximately 5,400 PIAAC survey respondents in Germany agreed to participate in further surveys. PIAAC-L is a cooperative project of GESIS, the National Educational Panel Survey (NEPS) at the Leibniz Institute for Educational Trajectories (LifBi), and the Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) at DIW Berlin, whose aim is to convert the PIAAC study into a longitudinal study with three waves. This will create one of the world’s first internationally comparable longitudinal studies on competencies and their significance across the life course.

The project is planned to consist of three survey waves (in 2014, 2015, 2016) with different focal points. This will involve use of the SOEP core survey instruments (both individual and household questionnaires), PIAAC instruments (competency measurement and background questionnaire), and competency tests from NEPS and SOEP. In the first survey wave, only the SOEP survey instruments will be used (household and individual questionnaires). The third wave will focus on measuring the competencies of all household members based on the short scales used in the SOEP in 2006 and 2012 on basic cognitive skills. The surveys are aimed at comparative methodological analysis of the competency indicators used in PIAAC, NEPS, and SOEP and innovative analysis of labor market, education, and socio-political issues. By the end of the project, findings will be released on the influence of competencies on educational and professional careers in the form of research publications, and the data from all waves will have been made available to the research community together with supporting documentation. According to current plans, the analyses of competency-related issues will make use of the longitudinal character of the new dataset and will be designed for comparison with the SOEP. It is also planned that as of 2018, participants from PIAAC-L who are willing to join a permanent, institutionalized longitudinal study will be transferred into either the recently launched SOEP Innovation Sample or the NEPS adult cohort.

Data from the first wave (surveyed in 2014) of the study PIAAC-L were updated on July 20, 2016 (doi: 10.4232/1.12576). The PIAAC-L data are available for scientific use and can be linked with PIAAC 2012 data through the GESIS data archive.

http://www.diw.de/piaac-l_en and [GESIS website](#).

Selected Publications:

- **Bartsch, Simone, Katharina Poschmann, K., and Luise Burkhardt.** 2017. Weighting in PIAAC-L 2014. *GESIS Papers* 2017|06. GESIS: Köln.
- **Burkhardt, Luise and Simone Bartsch.** 2017. Weighting in PIAAC-L 2015. *GESIS Papers* 2017|30. Mannheim: Gesis – Leibniz-Institut für Sozialwissenschaften.
- **Rammstedt, Beatrice, et al.** 2017. The PIAAC longitudinal study in Germany: rationale and design. *Large-scale Assessments in Education* 5(4). (<http://doi.org/10.1186/s40536-017-0040-z>).

SOEP-ECEC Quality (K2ID-SOEP)

K2ID is short for “Kinder und Kitas in Deutschland” and refers to the German name of the surveys carried out as part of a project entitled “Early childhood education and care quality in the Socio-Economic Panel” (K2ID-SOEP).

The project aims at investigating effects of the quality of early childhood education and care (ECEC) institutions on children’s development and parents’ employment and wellbeing. It also examines socio-economic differences in parental choices of ECEC quality and whether they are linked to information asymmetries between mothers and ECEC providers. New data is collected on the quality of ECEC institutions, which are attended by children below school age who are sample members of a representative annual household panel study for Germany, the Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP).

The three-year project was launched in September 2013 with funding from the Jacobs Foundation. The project ended in April 2017. In March 2017 there was held an interdisciplinary conference on ECEC quality. Since October 2017, the data are distributed to users by the RDC SOEP.

More information on the study and data collection can be found here: <http://www.k2id.de>.

Selected Publications:

- **Schober, Pia S., et al.** 2017. The Early Childhood Education and Care Quality in the Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP-ECEC Quality) Study – K2ID-SOEP Data. *Data Documentation* 91, Berlin: DIW Berlin.
- **Stahl, Juliane F. and Pia S. Schober.** 2017. Convergence or divergence? Educational discrepancies in work-care arrangements of mothers with young children in Germany. *Work, Employment & Society* 32(4), 629–649. (<https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017017692503>).
- **Schober, Pia S. and Juliane F. Stahl.** 2016. Expansion of Full-Day Childcare and Subjective Well-Being of Mothers: Interdependencies with Culture and Resources. *European Sociological Review* 32(5), 593–606. (<http://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcw006>).
- **Stahl, Juliane F. and Pia S. Schober.** 2016. Ausbau der ganztägigen Kindertagesbetreuung kann zur Zufriedenheit von Müttern beitragen. *DIW Wochenbericht* 83(37), 840–847.

Report from the SOEP Research Data Center

By Jan Goebel

Overview of Activities in 2018

One major change in 2018, visible to all of our users, is that the new wave of the SOEP-Core study incorporates our “wide” and “long” data formats, which used to be provided to users separately. Our aim is to eliminate any confusion about what is available in which format and to make data use easier overall. After several years of testing SOEPlong as an additional service designed to facilitate analysis for both experienced and new users, we will now be providing all datasets in the “long” format as a standard part of our SOEP data release. Feedback from experienced and beginning users over the past several years shows that the “long” data offer significant advantages in ease of use, particularly for beginners. We have therefore decided to use this as our primary data format in future data releases.

All available individual year-specific datasets are pooled into a single dataset (e.g., all \$P datasets are integrated into the PL dataset). In some cases, this means that we have to harmonize variables in order to be able to define them consistently over time. For instance, income information is given in euros up to 2001 and not in deutschmarks, and in cases where questionnaires have changed, the categories are modified over time. All changes are presented to users in a clear and understandable way, and if harmonization is necessary, all input variables are provided in their original form. SOEPlong thus significantly reduces the number of datasets and the number of variables. A more detailed description of the future format of our SOEP-Core data releases can be found in our new SOEPcompanion. But since we know that many users have existing scripts that are based on the original data format, and to enable users to understand the process of generating the “long” data, we provide all of the datasets in their original SOEP format in a subdirectory.

With version 34 of the SOEP-Core data (1984–2017, 10.5684/soep.v34) we have further additions for our data users: two additional subsamples and enhanced support for cross-national analysis using SOEP data. Many users are undoubtedly aware that the SOEP supports cross-national analysis with CNEF through the dataset pequiv. We have now produced a data product that allows you to use the SOEP data in comparative analyses with the EU-SILC (European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions) data. EU-SILC, which is provided by Eurostat upon request, offers cross-sectional and longitudinal information for many European countries. Up to now, only cross-sectional information was available for Germany. The EU-SILC clone offers longitudinal information on private households in Germany based on the SOEP data. All of the information contained in it can be directly compared with the EU-SILC longitudinal information on other European countries. The EU-SILC clone is integrated into the standard SOEP data release (in the subdirectory EU-SILC clone), and documentation on the 2005–2016 EU-SILC clone can be found [here](#).

In 2018, we integrated two new subsamples: a further refugee sample, and the continuation of the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC and PIAAC-L). In cooperation with the Institute for Employment Research (IAB) and the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF), the SOEP’s third sample of refugee households (M5) was launched in 2017. The population of M5 covers adult refugees who have applied for asylum in Germany since January 1, 2013, and are currently living in Germany. M5 added another 1,519 refugee households to the SOEP framework.

Along with our “classic” data, we also distributed the data from the SOEP Innovation Sample (10.5684/soep.is.2016.2, see p. 57 for more on the SOEP-IS). Due to the demands of the different datasets depending on the size and depth of the data, we offer different forms of data access. First, data are made available as standard scientific use files for secure download (using the encryption program Crypt-

share and providing users with individual passwords). Second, for the “sensitive” regional data, which are subject to strict data protection regulations, users can obtain access through our remote execution system SOEPremote (based on the LISSY System of the Luxembourg Income Study), which has been available for several years now, or as part of a guest research visit to the SOEP.

Data Usage

The SOEP Research Data Center (SOEP-RDC), which is accredited by the German Data Forum (RatSWD), provides the international research community with access to anonymous microdata, thereby fulfilling our task as an independent, non-partisan research infrastructure.

To obtain SOEP data for scientific research, users are required to sign a data use contract with DIW Berlin, no matter whether they are going to use the data within or outside Germany. The SOEP Hotline (soepmail@diw.de) provides assistance in applying for data use. All the necessary forms are also available on our website (most importantly, the form to apply a data distribution contract). See:

<http://www.diw.de/soepforms>.

Table 32

New contracts 2018

Region	Contracts	Researchers
Germany	174	770
EU/EEA (Germany excl.)	137	216
International	72	69
Total	383	1,055

Figure 3 presents an overview of the number of data distribution contracts signed since 2012. In 2018, more than 300 external users signed data distribution contracts.

There is usually more than one individual data user behind a given contract and often an entire research team at the respective institute. The breakdown for 2018 in **Table 32** shows that more than 1,000 individual researchers were given access to the SOEP data that year.

Figure 3

Number of data distribution contracts

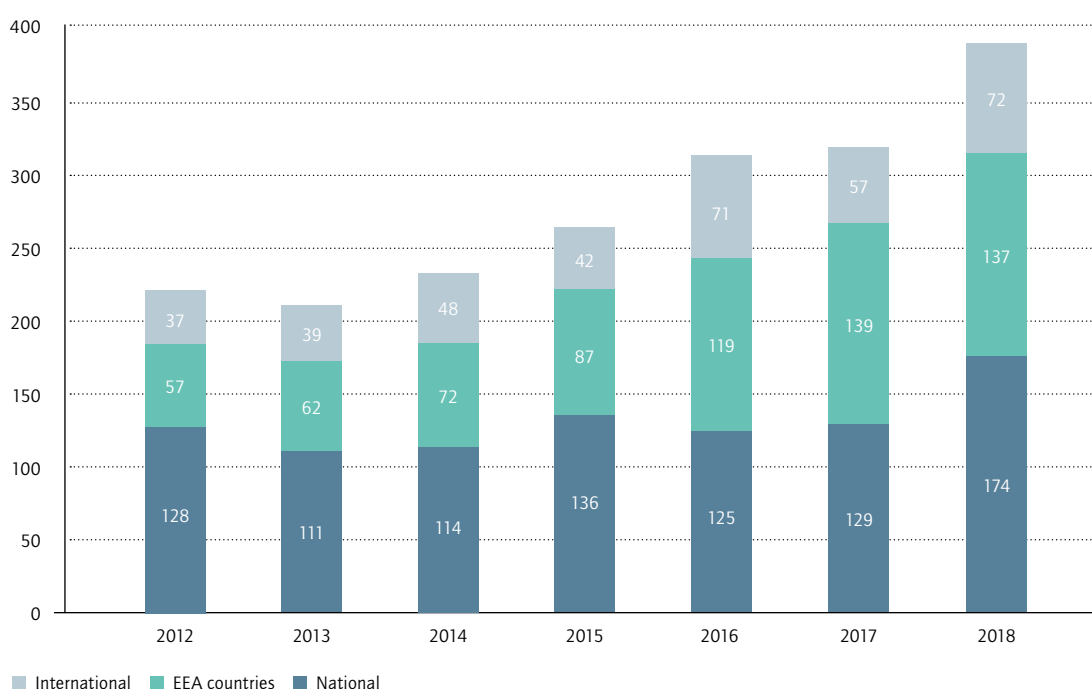


Table 33

SOEPrmote use by year

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Unique users	55	54	65	69	83	85	89
Number of jobs > 5 sec.	4,219	6,170	5,815	8,237	8,305	11,041	16,016
Number of jobs (total)	9,434	10,036	10,407	13,337	12,497	16,349	16,197

Remote Execution (SOEPrmote)

The SOEP offers not only the use of regional data on site at the SOEP Research Data Center (62 researchers in 2018), but also the possibility of controlled remote execution (with the lowest level being district-level indicators). Using the thoroughly tested LISSY software of the Luxembourg Income Study, Stata syntax jobs are run and tested at the SOEP-RDC. Users can send the Stata syntax by e-mail to the SOEP-RDC, which automatically checks the data for authoriza-

tion and for unauthorized commands and runs the job. If all automatic checks are passed, the output file is sent out immediately. If not, a SOEP-RDC staff member checks the output by hand. **Table 33** shows that over 80 users were active in recent years, with a rising number of active users over time. These users produce several thousand syntax jobs per year, counting only those with a processing time of over five seconds. The number of processed jobs has more than doubled in the last six years.

PART 3

A Selection of SOEP-Based *DIW Weekly Reports*

2018



Source:

DIW Weekly Report
9/2018

Vol 8, pp. 84-92
February 28, 2018
ISSN 2568-7697

<http://www.diw.de/diweeklyreport>

AT A GLANCE

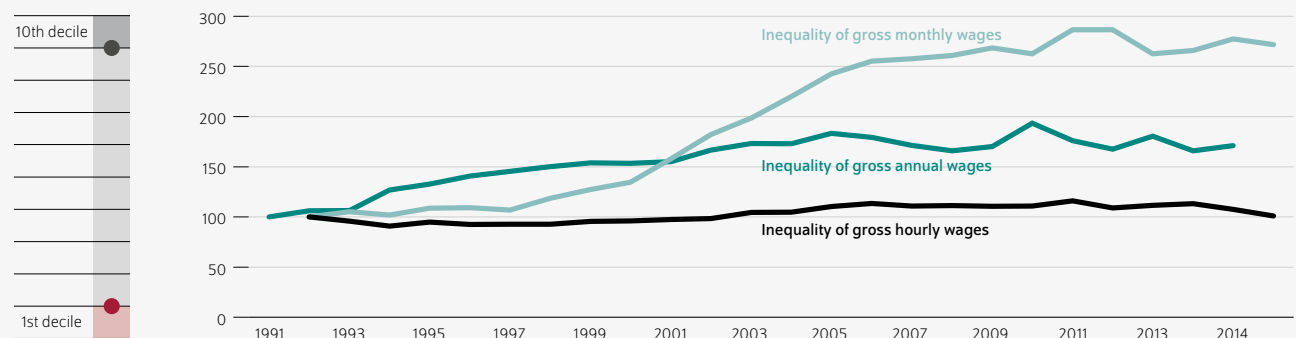
Inequality in Germany: decrease in gap for gross hourly wages since 2014, but monthly and annual wages remain on plateau

By Markus M. Grabka and Carsten Schröder

- The average real gross hourly wage rose by five percent between 2013 and 2016
- In the lowest decile between 2013 and 2016, at around 13 percent gross hourly wages rose disproportionately for the first time in years
- Despite the legal minimum wage, gross monthly wages rose minimally in the lowest decile because the number of working hours dropped for the low earners.
- For gross hourly wages, wage inequality has declined since 2014; gross monthly and annual wages plateaued during that period

Inequality in gross hourly wages is decreasing while inequality in monthly and annual wages is increasing

Gross salary of the person on the ● lower limit of the top decile in relation to the gross salary of the person on the ● upper limit of the lowest decile (90:10 percentile ratio), standardized, 1992 and 1991¹ = 100



Source: SOEP v33, employees in private households, excluding trainees, interns, and the self-employed.

1. The gross annual wage is always indicated for the previous year. The annual wages are set to 100 in 1991 and only last until 2015.

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FROM THE AUTHORS

“The legal minimum wage has a positive effect on gross hourly wage inequality, but this effect has not yet reached the gross monthly and annual wages.” — Markus M. Grabka —

“The fact that the gross monthly wages are affected less than the hourly wages is due to fewer paid working hours.” — Carsten Schröder —

Inequality in Germany: decrease in gap for gross hourly wages since 2014, but monthly and annual wages remain on plateau

By Markus M. Grabka and Carsten Schröder

ABSTRACT

Despite the booming German labor market, wage inequality is still a relevant issue. In the present study, the authors report on the changes in wages and their distribution between 1992 and 2016. In addition to real contractual gross hourly wages, we closely examined gross monthly and annual wages. Based on Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) data, the results show that wage inequality rose significantly between 1992 and 2005, in particular with respect to monthly and annual wages. Since then inequality in monthly and annual wages has plateaued at its 2005 level. Inequality in hourly wages has decreased only since 2014, and between 2013 and 2016, average real gross hourly wages rose by five percent after a longer phase of stagnation. For the lowest ten percent of the population, they rose by 13 percent—a rate related to the implementation of sector-specific wages and the statutory minimum wage. However, these minimum wages obviously did not affect monthly and annual wages as anticipated.

Over the last 25 years, the general perception of the condition of Germany's labor market shifted radically. In view of the high unemployment rate after reunification, it was considered a "sick man" unable to compete in the global market due to a range of structural issues.¹ As a result of high employment and rising earnings, Germany's labor market is now considered as very competitive and attractive for employees. Alongside changes in the general economic environment, such as globalization, digitalization, and the global economy's growth, a series of reforms that made the labor market more flexible and reduced unit labor costs are driving the shift. These reforms include: adding opening clauses to collective bargaining agreements, the Hartz laws, relaxing the rules on working hours, and expanding the low-wage segment while making it more flexible.

The minimum wages implemented by sector after 2009 and the legal general minimum wage that followed in 2015 were reforms targeted at improving pay in the low-wage segment. The legal minimum wage in particular should have significantly reduced the gap in gross hourly wages, since around ten percent of eligible employees earned less than the legal minimum wage before the reform.² The extent to which narrowing the gap is reflected in the gross monthly wage distribution depends on how working hours were adjusted following the reform. The effect on the distribution of gross annual wages also depends on whether sub-annual periods without gainful employment, bonuses, and one-time payments underwent structural changes in the course of the years, and if so, how.³

¹ See Dennis J. Snower and Christian Merkl, "The caring hand that cripples: The East German labor market after reunification," *American Economic Review Papers and Proceedings*, 96(2) (2006): 375–282.

² See Patrick Burauel et al., "Mindestlohn noch längst nicht für alle – Zur Entlohnung anspruchsberechtigter Erwerbstätiger vor und nach der Mindestlohnreform aus der Perspektive Beschäftigter," *DIW Wochenbericht*, no. 49 (2017): 1109–1123. (available online, accessed February 12, 2018; this applies to all other online sources in this report unless stated otherwise).

³ A second example deals with the employment structure. German "mini-jobs" include a cap on gross monthly wages. If the proportion of people with mini-jobs rises, the average monthly wage will fall as long as labor market conditions remain the same. This does not necessarily apply to the average gross annual wage, if without this regulation, people with mini-jobs were to have considerably shorter periods of employment during the year.

Box

Definitions, methods, and assumptions for income measurement

The present study is based on the database of the Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) longitudinal household survey. The survey asks all persons 17 and older questions about a range of socio-economic matters, including wages.

The authors examined the data with respect to three wage concepts:

1. Contractual hourly wages are based on information on gross monthly earnings from the previous month from main employment without one-time payments but including overtime pay, if applicable, divided by the contractual weekly working hours times 4.33, the factor required to arrive at monthly working hours.
2. Gross monthly wages from the previous month from main employment excluding one-time payments but including overtime pay, if applicable.
3. The gross annual wages earned in the previous year, including one-time payments such as vacation pay, Christmas bonus, 13th- or 14th-month wage, profit sharing, other bonuses, etc.

Properly dealing with missing information is a challenge faced by all surveys of the general population, in particular when it comes to sensitive issues such as income. In the SOEP data analyzed here, missing information is replaced using an elaborate imputation methodology on a cross-sectional and longitudinal basis.¹ The process includes newly imputing all missing values in retrospect after each new data collection period, since new information from surveys can be used to replace the data missing from prior years.

This can lead to changes in earlier analyses. As a rule, the changes are minor.

Studies show that multiple adjustments in survey behavior occur during the first two survey waves, and they are not due to fluctuating willingness to participate.² To avoid such effects in the time series for wages, the first survey wave of each SOEP sample was excluded from the calculations.³

Upon consideration of extrapolation and weighting factors, the underlying SOEP microdata (version v33 based on the 33rd survey wave in 2016), these analyses are based on a representative picture of the dependent employees in private households. They therefore allow for conclusions about the overall population.

¹ Joachim R. Frick and Markus M. Grabka, "Item non-response on income questions in panel surveys: incidence, imputation and the impact on inequality and mobility," *Allgemeines Statistisches Archiv*, 89(1) (2005): 49–61.

² Joachim R. Frick et al., "Using analysis of Gini (ANOGL) for detecting whether two subsamples represent the same universe," *The German Socio-Economic Panel Study (SOEP) Experience, Sociological Methods Research*, May 2006 vol. 34 no. 4 (2006): 427–468.

³ In 2016 for example, this was the case for the two new refugee samples, M3 and M4.

Three concepts, three realities: wages per hour, per month and per year

The present study adds breadth and depth to the German Institute for Economic Research's previous examinations of wage inequalities in Germany, updating it to 2016.⁴ Unlike other studies, the calculations presented are based on three compensation concepts. Alongside frequently used contractual gross hourly wages, the authors also looked at

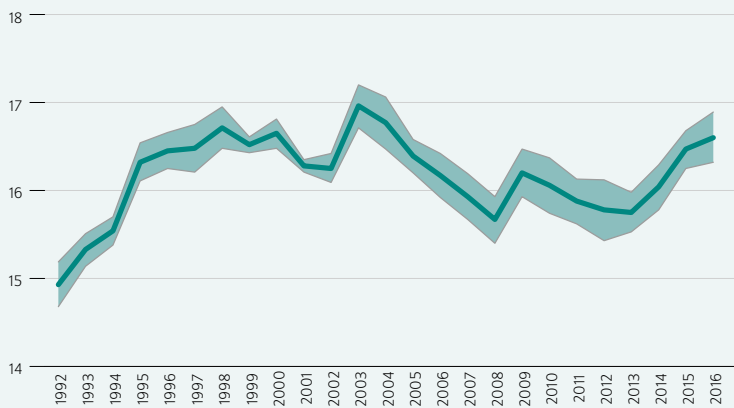
gross monthly and annual wages, including one-time payments such as paid vacation or bonuses in the previous year (see Box).

It is interesting to compare the developments of the three different concepts because they reflect various facets of employees' workplace reality. A contractual gross hourly wage specifies an employee's earned income potential and, in the static view, is unrelated to hours worked. Gross

⁴ See Karl Brenke and Alexander Kritikos, "Hourly wages in lower deciles no longer lagging behind when it comes to wage growth," *DIW Economic Bulletin*, no. 21 (2017): 407–416. (available online).

Figure 1

Contractual real hourly gross wage¹ In euros



1 Gross hourly wage at main job, in 2010 prices.

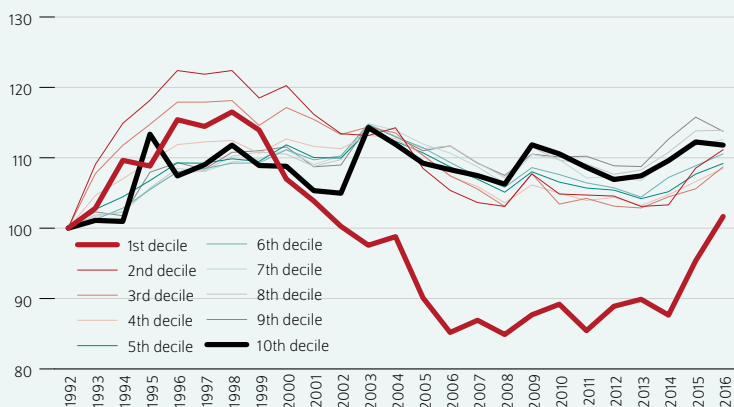
Source: SOEP v33, employees in private households, excluding trainees, interns, and the self-employed.

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The average gross hourly wage has increased significantly since 2013.

Figure 2

Normalized contractual real hourly gross wage¹ at main job per decile Mean per decile in euros (standardized to 1992=100)



1 In 2010 prices.

Source: SOEP v33, employees in private households, excluding trainees, interns, and the self-employed.

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The lowest decile has decreased the most but has been rising since 2014.

monthly wages are the product of the gross hourly wage and the actual number of hours worked. The growth trends of the two concepts can vary. Due to productivity gains or the implementation of a minimum wage, the average gross hourly wage can rise as the average gross monthly wage falls due to fewer hours worked.⁵

Gross annual wages—the sum of all monthly wages for one year, plus bonuses and one-time payments—describe incoming resources resulting from gainful employment over one year.⁶ In addition to including supplementary compensation components, the gross annual wage distribution is different from the two other wage distributions because it encompasses all persons who pursued gainful employment at least once during the year.⁷ On the other hand, hourly and monthly wage distributions only include those persons who pursued gainful employment in the month in question.⁸

Accordingly, structural changes in the labor market potentially have various and different effects on the three wage concepts. For example, if more and more highly qualified, commensurately paid women work during the period, the inequality in the distribution of gross hourly wages should increase. But if these women work less on average than those previously employed, the effect on gross monthly or annual wages is uncertain.

The data collected as part of the Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) longitudinal study conducted annually by the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW Berlin) in collaboration with Kantar Public are the empirical basis of the following analyses.⁹ The present study examined wage-dependent employees with the exception of apprentices, interns, persons performing military or civil service; only wages from main employment were considered in the computation of gross hourly and monthly wages.¹⁰

⁵ An individual employee's position in the distribution of gross hourly and gross monthly wages can also vary. For example, an employee can have a high gross hourly wage but can end up with a low gross monthly wage due to a low number of (paid) hours worked, and vice versa.

⁶ To find out how one-time payments affect wage inequality in general, see Thomas Lemieux, W. Bentley Macleod, and Daniel Parent, "Performance pay and wage inequality," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, CXXIV (1) (2009): 1–49.

⁷ For the influence of different observation periods on measured inequality, see Carsten Schröder, *Wage distributions and the accounting period: An assessment of the Shorrocks effect*, eds. John A. Bishop and Juan Gabriel Rodríguez, *Economic Well-Being and Inequality: Papers from the Fifth ECINEQ Meeting* (Bingley: Emerald Publishing Ltd., 2014).

⁸ Based on the month prior to the date of the survey.

⁹ For information on the SOEP, see Gert G. Wagner et al., "Das Sozio-oekonomische Panel (SOEP): Multidisziplinäres Haushaltspanel und Kohortenstudie für Deutschland – Eine Einführung (für neue Datennutzer) mit einem Ausblick (für erfahrene Anwender)," *ASIA Wirtschafts- und Sozialstatistisches Archiv* 2, no. 4 (2008): 301–328. (available online).

¹⁰ The SOEP survey includes detailed information on monthly pay for main employment only. Monthly wages encompass full-time, part-time, and mini-job employment.

Significant rise in real contractual hourly wages in lowest decile since 2013

The average real¹¹ contractual gross hourly wage showed weak growth over the study period (1992–2016). From just under 15 euros in 1992, it rose to 17 euros in 2003. By 2013, it had fallen to 15.75 euros (see Figure 1). Starting in 2013 and with the implementation of the statutory minimum wage,¹² the average real contractual gross hourly wage rose to 16.60 euros in 2016. This equals a significant increase of over five percent in comparison to 2013.¹³

The growth of gross hourly wages differs by wage segment. Sorting dependent employed people by level of contractual gross hourly wage and dividing them into ten groups of equal size results in deciles. Using 1992 as the base year for the average wage per decile (=100), all deciles showed a significant rise in real wages during the 1990s (see Figure 2). Around the turn of the millennium, the trend changed for the lowest decile in particular. Due to the expansion of the low-wage sector,¹⁴ as more and more people pursued mini-jobs, the average fell to 85 percent of its 1992 value until 2006. And around 2005, contractual hourly wages plateaued in all deciles. The picture was more positive as of 2013, especially in the lowest decile, which returned to its original level in 2016. The positive trend in the lowest decile is most likely the result of implementing the statutory minimum wage.¹⁵

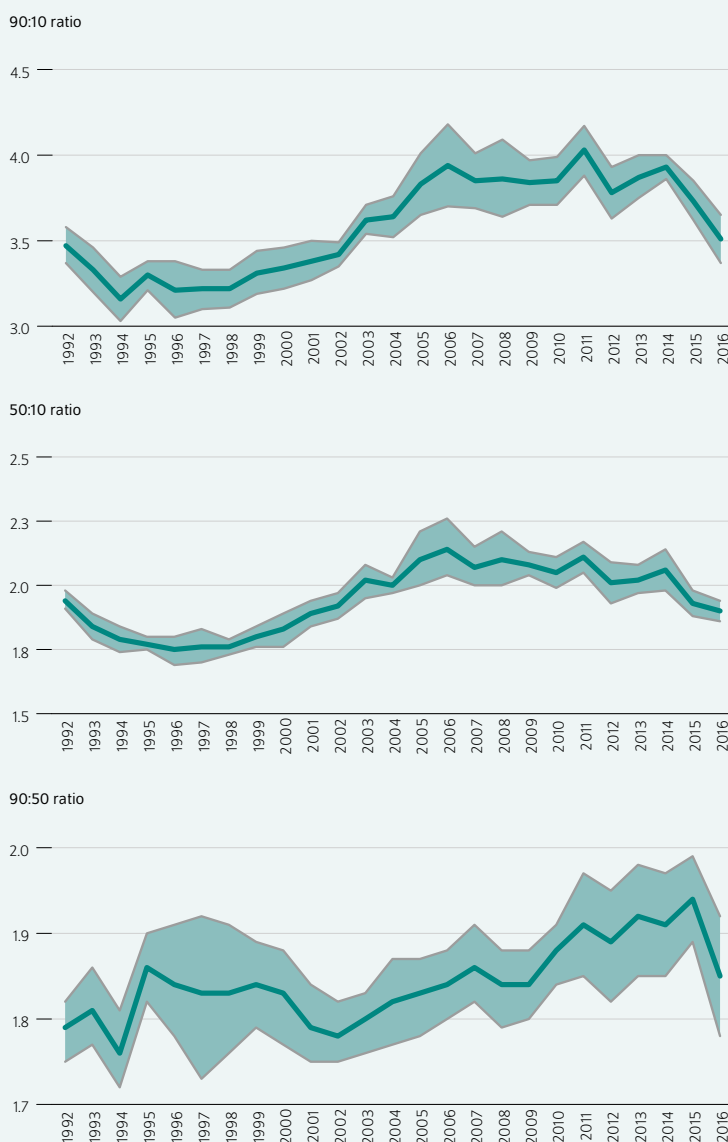
Inequality in contractual hourly wages declined as of 2014

The distribution of contractual gross hourly wages can be assessed by means of different inequality indices. In this study, we use percentile ratios to present the results. For example, 90:10 percentile ratio is the ratio of the wages of the person in the top (tenth) decile with the lowest earnings to the person with the highest earnings from the lowest (first) decile.

In the mid-1990s, the 90:10 percentile ratio of the contractual gross hourly wage was around 3.3.¹⁶ It had risen to 3.9 by 2005 and has decreased significantly again since 2014 (see Figure 3). In 2016, the ratio was 3.5.

Figure 3

Inequality in contractual gross hourly wages at main job Different percentile ratios



Source: SOEP v33, employees in private households, excluding trainees, interns, and the self-employed.

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The salary of the person with the lowest salary in the highest decile is around 3.5 times higher than the salary of the person with the highest salary in the lowest decile.

¹¹ In 2010 prices, calculated using the consumer price index of the German Federal Statistical Office.

¹² See Patrick Burauel et al., "Mindestlohn noch längst nicht für alle."

¹³ The index of hourly wages under collective bargaining agreement excluding one-time payments increased by 7.5 percent in the same period. See German Federal Statistical Office, "Verdienste und Arbeitskosten. 4. Vierteljahr," (2017).

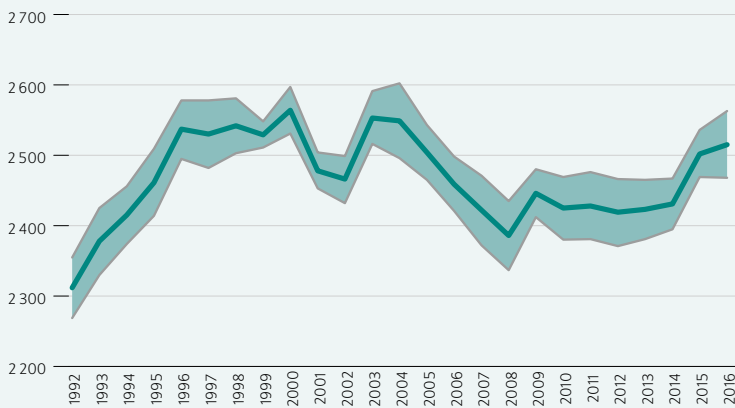
¹⁴ For example, the proportion of low-wage employees was just under 19 percent in 1995 and rose to just under 25 percent in 2009. See Thorsten Kalina and Claudia Weinkopf, "Niedriglohnbeschäftigung 2012 und was ein gesetzlicher Mindestlohn von 8,50 Euro verändern könnte," *IAQ Report* 2014-02 (2014). This means Germany has one of the largest low-wage sectors in Europe. See Eurostat, "Verdienststruktur-erhebung. Jeder sechste Arbeitnehmer in der Europäischen Union ist Niedriglohnempfänger", press release 246/2016, December 8, 2016.

¹⁵ See Patrick Burauel et al., "Mindestlohn noch längst nicht für alle."

¹⁶ In other words, the gross hourly wage of the person at the lower limit of the tenth decile was 3.3 times higher than that of the person at the upper limit of the first decile.

Figure 4

Real gross monthly wage¹ In euros



¹ In 2010 prices at main job.

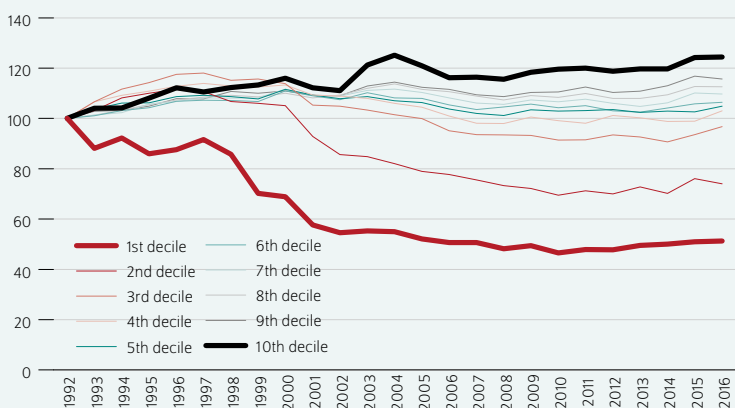
Source: SOEP v33, employees in private households, excluding trainees, interns, and the self-employed.

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The average real gross monthly wage has returned to its 2005 level.

Figure 5

Normalized real gross monthly wages¹ at main job per decile Average per decile in euros (standardized to 1992=100)



¹ In 2010 prices.

Source: SOEP v33, employees in private households, excluding trainees, interns, and the self-employed.

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The lowest deciles are the biggest losers despite rising hourly wages in monthly wages.

While the 90:10 percentile ratio describes the wage ratio for the two tails of the distribution, the 90:50 percentile ratio describes the relationship of top wages to the median wage.¹⁷ The 90:50 percentile ratio fluctuated between 1.75 and 1.95 during the study period. This means that the differences in pay per hour in the upper half of the distribution have hardly budged despite all of the changes the German labor market has experienced since 1992.

The lower half of the distribution has a different relationship to the median wage. The 50:10 percentile ratio reflects increasing wage inequality between 1996 and 2006. The literature presents several explanations for this: the drop in demand for employees with low-level qualifications, a growing service sector, the reduction in collective bargaining coverage, and decreasing union organization.¹⁸ When the minimum wage was implemented in 2015, the 50:10 percentile ratio fell significantly.¹⁹

Real gross monthly wage growth weaker than that of hourly wages

The growth trend of the average real gross monthly wage paralleled the trend of hourly wages. At around nine percent, growth between 1992 and 2016 was somewhat weaker than that of gross hourly wages, which rose by 11 percent during the same period. And at 3.8 percent, growth was somewhat lower than that of hourly wages (five percent) between 2013 and 2016 (see Figure 4).

Over time, we observed significantly stronger expansion in comparison to the distribution of hourly wages (see Figure 5). The upper six gross monthly wage deciles display a slight wave; whereby at 25 percent between 1992 and 2016, growth in the top decile is the highest. The lower three deciles show a different pattern. Between 1992 and 2010, real gross monthly

¹⁷ 50:10 describes the ratio of the wages of the people employed at the median and those at the limit of the first decile.

¹⁸ For example, see Martin Biewen, Bernd Fitzenberger, and Jakob de Lazzar, "Rising wage inequality in Germany: Increasing heterogeneity and changing selection into full-time work," *IZA Discussion Paper Series*, no. 11072 (2017); Christian Dustmann, Johannes Ludsteck, and Uta Schönberg, "Revisiting the German wage structure," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 124(2) (2009): 843–881; and David Card, Jörg Heining, and Patrick Kline, "Workplace heterogeneity and the rise of West German wage inequality," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 128 (2013): 967–1015.

¹⁹ Alternative inequality indicators, such as the Gini index, mean-log deviation, and the Theil index, confirm the findings that inequality with regard to contractual hourly wages declined between 2014 and 2016. The 90:10 indicator is a conservative inequality measure that does not take the changes in wage distribution at the upper and lower tails into consideration. However, the international literature on wage inequality trends indicates that in the U.S. in particular, the top wage recipients drive wage inequality. See David H. Autor, Lawrence F. Katz, and Melissa S. Kearney, "Trends in U.S. wage inequality: revising the revisionists," *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, 90(2) (2008): 300–323.

The German Federal Statistical Office (*Statistisches Bundesamt*) reported in 2016 that the wage gap in Germany closed slightly between 2010 and 2014. The effect was stronger in eastern Germany than in the western part of the country. Subsequently, the 90:10 percentile ratio fell from 3.45 to 3.16 in eastern Germany. See German Federal Statistical Office, "Trend gestoppt: Lohnspreizung nicht weiter gewachsen," press release dated September 14, 2016. The SOEP data confirm this. Wages in the lowest decile rose disproportionately between 2006 and 2016. As a result, the 90:10 percentile ratio went from 3.9 to 3.0 between 2006 and 2016. In western Germany, it fell from 3.8 to 3.6, a much less significant drop. According to the Institute for Employment Research (*Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung*, IAB), wage inequality measured by daily pay for employees that contribute to the social insurance system in western Germany plateaued between 2011 and 2014. In the same period, the gap closed slightly in eastern Germany. See Joachim Möller, "Lohnungleichheit – Gibt es eine Trendwende?" *IAB Discussion Paper*, 9/2016 (2016).

wages in the lowest decile fell by around 50 percent,²⁰ in the second decile by around 30 percent and in the third decile by just under ten percent.²¹ As of 2010, there was slight growth in real wages in the lowest three deciles, but it did not allow any of the three deciles to achieve its initial level.

Overall, inequality in gross monthly wages increased markedly between 1992 and 2010 (see Figure 6). Measured by the 90:10 percentile ratio, the value was just under four in 1992 and had risen above ten by 2010. Unlike hourly wages, the ratio has not changed since then.²²

The weak growth of the two lowest monthly wage deciles in Germany was accompanied by a growing number of mini-jobs. At the beginning of the 1990s there were around three million of them. The number rose to 7.5 million by 2010 and has since remained on that plateau.²³ Changes in working hours are also part of the explanation for the weak growth (see Table 1). For example, between 1992 and 2016 the number of hours worked in the lowest hourly wage decile fell by ten hours (25 percent). In the second and third deciles, the decrease was just under six hours (17 percent), or 2.5 hours (seven percent).²⁴ In the upper part of the hourly wage distribution, on the other hand, the number of hours worked rose by just under ten percent. Even if hourly wages had remained constant, we would have observed an increase in monthly wage inequality due to the asymmetrical change in the number of hours worked.

The positive trend of rising wages in the lowest hourly wage decile since 2014 is not reflected in a rise of similar magnitude in the lowest monthly wage decile. This finding requires an explanation and the Minimum Wage Commission provides several clues. For example, it reports that the number of working hours for those with full-time employment whose pay was below the minimum wage in 2014 decreased by around ten percent (measured by working hours per week) after the statutory minimum wage was implemented.²⁵

²⁰ Other studies also found a significant decline in real wages. See for example David Card, Jörg Heining, and Patrick Kline, "Workplace heterogeneity and the rise of West German wage inequality," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 128(3) (2013): 967–1015. Data from the IAB show that men in the first decile in western Germany with full-time employment in the private sector were subject to a 25-percent decrease in daily pay between 1996 and 2008.

²¹ When comparing the deciles for hourly wages and monthly wages, it should be noted that the same employees are not necessarily included.

²² The 50:10 percentile ratio also rose during the period—from around 2 to 5.5. The 90:50 percentile ratio rose slightly during the period.

²³ This includes all mini-jobs held, whether exclusively, as main employment, or as secondary employment. See Federal Employment Agency, *Beschäftigungsstatistik* (2017). (in German; available online).

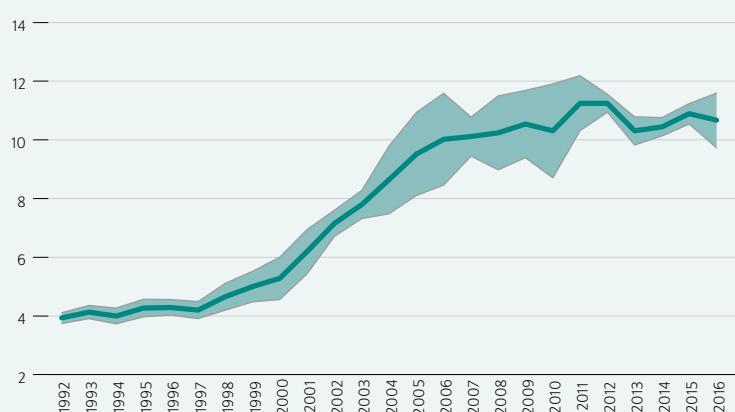
²⁴ The expansion of part-time employment in Germany, particularly among women, was also responsible for this development.

²⁵ See Minimum Wage Commission, English summary of the first evaluation report by the Minimum Wage Commission (2016). (available online). Also see the findings for companies in Saxony. Lutz Bellmann et al., "Mindestlohn: Längsschnittstudie für sächsische Betriebe", *IAB Forschungsbericht*, no. 7/2017 (2017). When comparing hourly and monthly wage deciles, it should also be noted that the underlying populations are not identical. Instead, around 50 percent of those in the lowest hourly wage decile are in the second and third monthly wage decile.

Figure 6

Inequality in gross monthly wages at main job

Gross salary of the person on the lower limit of the top decile in relation to the gross salary of the person on the upper limit of the lowest decile (90:10 percentile ratio)



Source: SOEP v33, employees in private households, excluding trainees, interns, and the self-employed.

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Inequality in gross monthly wages increased sharply until 2010.

Table 1

Average actual work hours per decile of the contractual hourly wage In hours per week

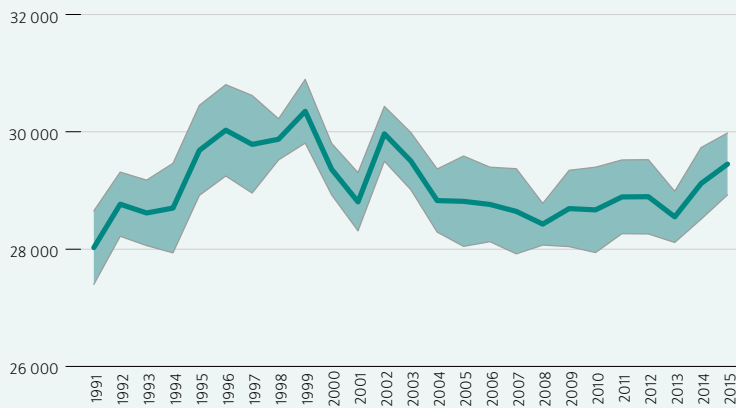
	1992	2002	2012	2016	Change 1992 to 2016 in percent	Absolute difference 1992 to 2016
1st decile	36.4	27.9	26.2	26.8	-26.5	-9.7
2nd	35.6	32.2	30.4	29.6	-16.9	-6.0
3rd	37.2	35.9	35.5	34.6	-7.0	-2.6
4th	37.4	36.7	36.8	35.3	-5.5	-2.1
5th	37.9	37.1	38.6	36.9	-2.5	-0.9
6th	38.9	38.6	38.2	39.0	0.2	0.1
7th	39.0	39.1	39.4	38.3	-1.8	-0.7
8th	39.4	39.8	40.4	39.1	-0.8	-0.3
9th	40.0	40.7	41.1	39.9	-0.2	-0.1
10th decile	37.9	40.3	42.5	41.5	9.7	3.7
Mean	38.0	36.8	36.9	36.1	-4.9	-1.9

Source: SOEP v33, employees in private households, excluding trainees, interns, and the self-employed.

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Figure 7

Real annual earnings¹ including one-time payments In euros



¹ In 2010 prices. Annual earnings from main and secondary jobs.

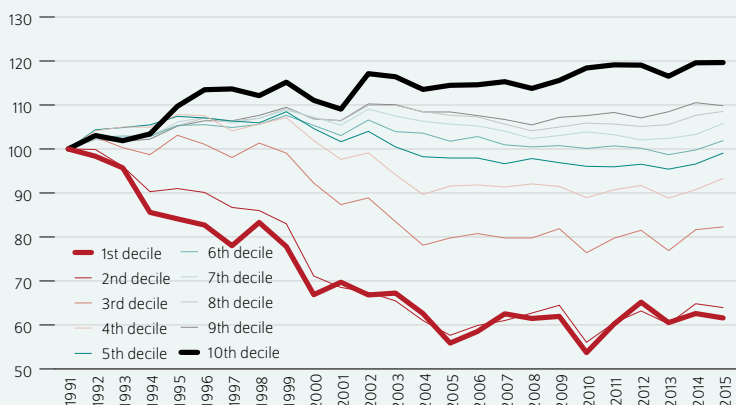
Source: SOEP v33, employees in private households, excluding trainees, interns, and the self-employed.

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Gross annual earnings are increasing less than hourly and monthly wages.

Figure 8

Normalized real annual earnings¹ including one-time payments per decile Mean per decile in euros (standardized to 1991=100)



¹ In 2010 prices. Annual earnings from main and secondary jobs.

Source: SOEP v33, employees in private households, excluding trainees, interns, and the self-employed.

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The spread of gross annual earnings is increasing.

No change in real gross annual wages

Over the entire study period, real gross annual wages including one-time payments from main and secondary employment rose around five percent on average, making their growth flatter than that of hourly or monthly wages as a percentage (see Figure 7). This could be the result of various factors, in particular a decrease in one-time payments or the greater importance of periods without gainful employment during the year.

As with the two other wage concepts, the gap in the distribution of gross annual wages has grown wider since 1992 (see Figure 8). While real annual wages grew by a total of 20 percent in the top decile, they did not change in the fifth and sixth deciles, and in the two lowest deciles they decreased by around 35 percent. Further, unlike the case of hourly wages, no growth in gross annual wages was visible at the current tail of the lower three deciles.

The measured inequality of gross annual wages increased between 1992 and 2010/2011 (see Figure 9). We observed significant differences in the extent of the changes among the three percentile ratios. The 90:50 ratio grew moderately during the period (from 1.9 to 2.2), while the 90:10 (from around eight to 15) and 50:10 ratios (from around four to seven) grew much more rapidly. As of 2011, there has been a slight downward trend²⁶ for all three percentile ratios, but it is not statistically significant.²⁷

In the following section, we will find out how one-time payments, such as the traditional 13th-month salary and bonuses, have developed across the annual wage distribution and whether or not the changes are important factors in the growth of inequality in gross annual wages. First of all, the higher the gross annual wage, the higher the amount of one-time payments. Furthermore, one-time payments fell by over 50 percent in the lower half of the gross annual wage distribution between 1991 and 2015, while they rose by a solid 20 percent in the top decile (see Figure 10). Hence the asymmetrical trend for one-time payments also contributes to the inequality of gross annual wages.²⁸

²⁶ Examining regions reveals that the inequality in gross annual wages decreased in the lower half of the wage distribution between 2006 and 2016 in eastern Germany. In western Germany on the other hand, gross annual wage inequality continued on a plateau.

²⁷ Comparing the levels and trends of percentile ratios based on gross monthly and annual wages, it becomes obvious that they basically developed in parallel during the period. The ratios for annual wages are much higher. This finding might be surprising. The literature assumes that when the period during which wages are measured is extended (here, from one month to 12 months), measured inequality will fall because a longer measurement period should smooth over short-term wage fluctuations. This effect is not apparent in the present study for a couple reasons. We did not use a balanced sample, including only those people who were gainfully employed at the time when we were designing the gross hourly and monthly wage-based study populations.

²⁸ According to information from the German Economic Institute (IW), the one-time payment component of gross wages in the manufacturing sector also fell by virtually 50 percent between 2000 (14 percent) and 2013 (7.5 percent). See Christoph Schröder, "Personalzusatzkosten in der deutschen Wirtschaft," *IW – Trends*, 33(2) (2006): 1–12; and Christoph Schröder, "Die Struktur der Arbeitskosten in der deutschen Wirtschaft," *IW – Trends* 41(2) (2014): 29–42.

Of course, the changes in periods without gainful employment during the year could also potentially explain the development of gross annual wages. But based on the SOEP data, it is apparent that these periods have slightly decreased across all employed persons and therefore do not have a significant impact on the distribution.²⁹

Conclusion: a break in the long-running inequality trend

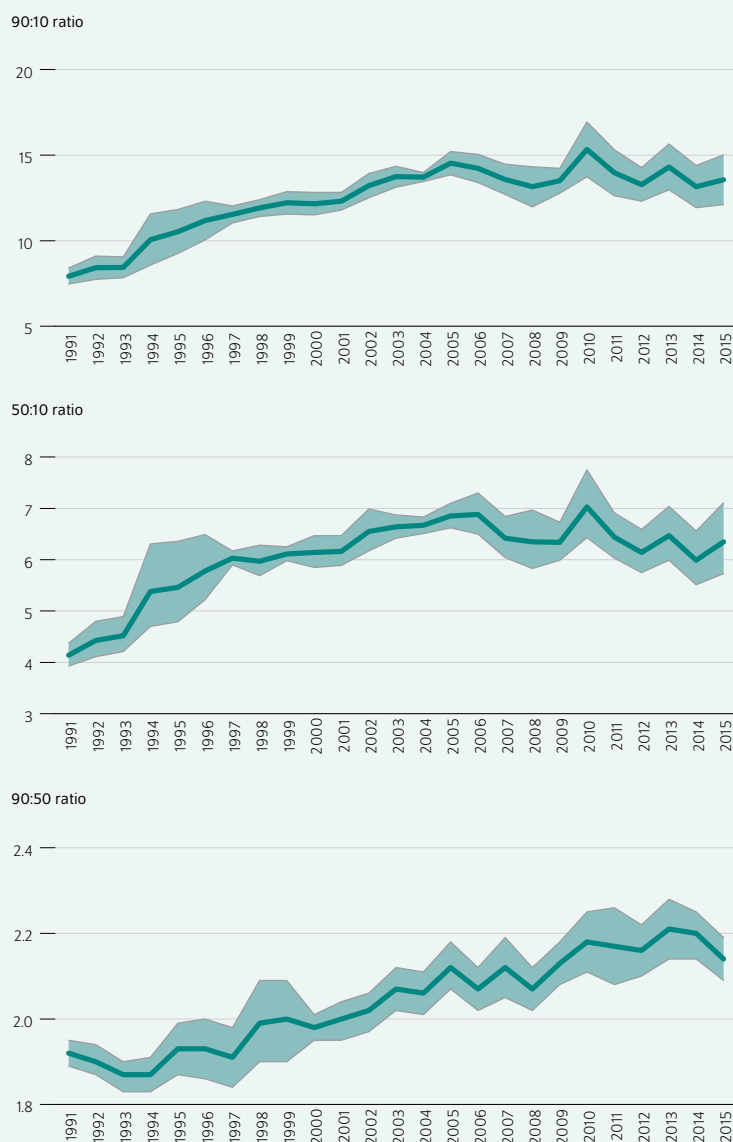
Measured by the number of persons employed, the German labor market has developed very positively in recent years. This is at least partially due to past labor market reforms and the wage restraint practiced by the collective bargaining parties in an effort to improve the country's international competitive standing. But in recent years, targets and measures for avoiding poverty wages and reducing dependency on social transfer payments to supplement wages have become the focus of debate once again. Sector-specific minimum wages and the blanket minimum wage are two important measures that were implemented in support of these goals.

The present study shows the growth trends of real gross hourly, monthly, and annual wages between 1992 and 2016, given the circumstances outlined above. Overall, it is apparent that wages have increased only slightly. Since 2014, only hourly wages have significantly increased. Wages in the lower wage segments have risen more quickly since that time, which has contributed to closing the wage gap. For monthly and annual wages, the most recent upturn was ultimately moderate in the lower part of the distribution due to a decrease in the number of hours worked.³⁰

We found that implementing the minimum wage had only a limited impact on raising the monthly wages of low earners and putting them in the position of being able to earn a living in employment. It remains to be seen whether or not the situation will change after the minimum wage is raised again (to 9.19 euros per hour on January 1, 2019).³¹ In addition to regularly raising the minimum wage, more effective controls are required to ensure that all of the employed persons who are eligible for it actually benefit from it. According to the Police Union (*Gewerkschaft der Polizei*), however, the number of "employer audits" conducted according to the 2011 Act to Combat Clandestine Employment (*Schwarzarbeitsbekämpfungsgesetz*, (*SchwarzArbG*)) fell from just under 68,000 to around 40,000 in 2016. In individual

Figure 9

Inequality in annual earnings¹ including one-time payments Different percentile ratios



1 In 2010 prices. Annual earnings from main and secondary jobs.

Source: SOEP v33, employees in private households, excluding trainees, interns, and the self-employed.

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Inequality in gross annual earnings has mainly increased in the lower half of the distribution.

²⁹ In the SOEP, the proportion of employed persons who were only employed during the year in question went from 19 percent in 1991 to 17 percent in 2015.

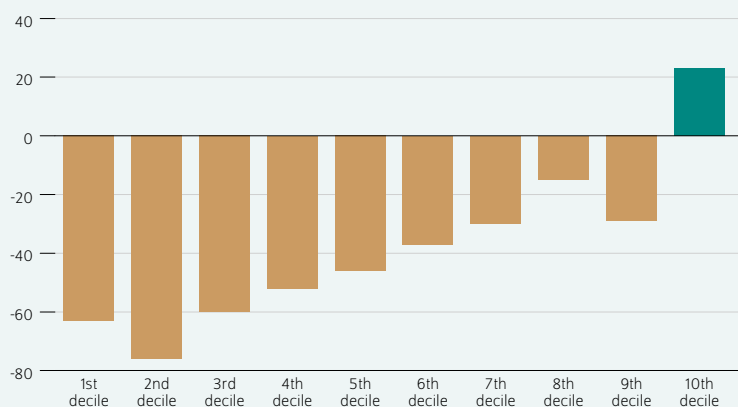
³⁰ See Minimum Wage Commission, "English summary of the first evaluation report." (available online).

³¹ See Burauel et al., "Mindestlohn noch längst nicht für alle."

Figure 10

Changes in one-time payments per decile of annual earnings¹

Change in average one-time payments between 1991 and 2015 in percent

¹ In 2010 prices. Annual earnings from main and secondary jobs.

Source: SOEP v33, employees in private households, excluding trainees, interns, and the self-employed.

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One-time payments have only increased in the highest wage decile.

sectors, the decline is even higher than 50 percent,³² which is why the federal police sector of the Police Union is critical: “It remains a big mystery how customs, with diminishing inspection pressure, wants to fulfill its statutory duties under the Act to Strengthen Wage Setting Autonomy (*Tarifautonomiestärkungsgesetz*).”³³

³² See Gewerkschaft der Polizei. “Aktuelle Meldungen der Gewerkschaft der Polizei”, *Bezirksgruppe Zoll Online-Ausgabe Nr. 6,200* (2018) Oktober.

³³ See Gewerkschaft der Polizei. *Newsletter*. Oktober 2014 (in German; available online).

Markus M. Grabka is a research associate at the Socio-Economic Panel study (SOEP) at DIW Berlin | mgrabka@diw.de

Carsten Schröder is deputy head of the Socio-Economic Panel study at DIW Berlin | cschroeder@diw.de

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DIW Berlin — Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung e. V.

Mohrenstraße 58, 10117 Berlin

www.diw.de

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AT A GLANCE

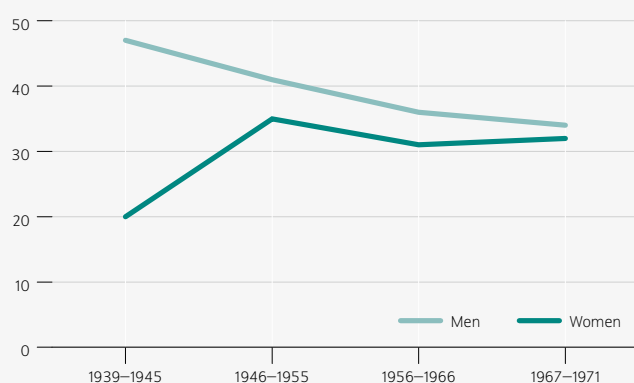
Upward and downward social mobility probabilities have converged for men and women

By Nicolas Legewie and Sandra Bohmann

- Analysis of upward and downward social mobility in regards to occupational status relative to that of parents
- Changes in the overall level of social positions were observed
- The probability of achieving a higher occupational status still strongly depends on the parents' occupational status
- Mobility patterns for men and women largely converged during the observation period
- Men experience downward mobility more often than before while women experience upward mobility more often

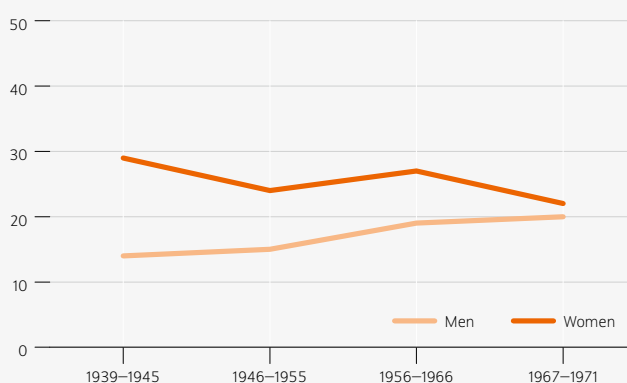
Upward and downward social mobility rates for men and women In percent

Upward mobility of men and women



Source: Authors' own calculations (weighted) based on SOEP v.33.1

Downward mobility of men and women



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FROM THE AUTHORS

The rates of upward and downward mobility for men and women have almost converged.

— Nicolas Legewie, survey author —

MEDIATHEK



What about with Nicolas Legewie and Sandra Bohmann (in German)
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Upward and downward social mobility probabilities have converged for men and women

By Nicolas Legewie and Sandra Bohmann

ABSTRACT

This study investigates professional social mobility, i.e., changes in one's occupational status compared to that of their parents. It uses data from the German Socio-Economic Panel (Sozio-ökonomisches Panel, SOEP) on middle-aged, western Germans who were born between 1939 and 1971. On average, social status relative to parents has increased (absolute social mobility). However, looking at how positions change from parents to their children relative to their respective cohorts (relative social mobility) shows that, on average, little has changed in this respect since the Second World War. A person is still much more likely to achieve a position in the top status group if the parents already had such a position. Looking at specific social groups, the picture is more differentiated. Mobility patterns for men and women have largely converged during the observation period: men experience downward mobility more often than before and women experience upward mobility more frequently.

Introduction

The idea of the “downwards escalator” has presented a new image of social mobility in Germany¹ that conflicts with the idea of the “elevator taking everyone upwards.”² The former depiction questions the image of German society as upwardly mobile and shows there is still a great need for research on this topic.

A look at structural changes over the last decades allows various assumptions about how patterns of social mobility may have changed. One study recently showed that in Germany, income inequality before taxes and transfer payments has increased since the Second World War.³ Additionally, the “Great Gatsby” curve, which has been much discussed in recent years, could suggest a negative correlation between income inequality and social mobility: in countries with high income inequality there is less social mobility.⁴ It could therefore be assumed that social mobility has decreased since the Second World War. However, the fact that a large number of those from the younger generations attain a higher level of education than their parents and the economic upswing of the post-war period could have led to greater social mobility regarding occupational status.

This study examines professional social mobility since the Second World War in more detail using SOEP data for western Germany.

Social mobility should be viewed in a differentiated manner

In this context, social mobility refers to changes in one's occupational status in comparison to the parents' status. Absolute social mobility describes the change in social status relative

¹ Oliver Nachtwey, *Die Abstiegs-gesellschaft: über das Aufbegehren in der regressiven Moderne* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2016) (in German).

² Ulrich Beck, *Risikogesellschaft: Auf dem Weg in eine andere Moderne* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1986) (in German).

³ Charlotte Bartels, “Einkommensverteilung in Deutschland von 1871 bis 2013: Erneut steigende Polarisierung seit der Wiedervereinigung,” *DIW Wochenbericht*, no. 3 (2018): 51–58 (in German; available online).

⁴ Miles Corak, “Income Inequality, Equality of Opportunity, and Intergenerational Mobility,” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 27, no. 3 (2013): 79–102.

to one's parents: a person who is a skilled worker whose parents were unskilled laborers his upwardly mobile. Relative social mobility, on the other hand, measures the extent to which children are in a better position relative to their peers than their parents were: if many others in society move up at the same time by becoming skilled workers, the person may not have changed positions or may even have experienced downward mobility relative to others in society. That means that relative mobility abstracts from structural changes that lead to upward mobility in all positions—the previously mentioned elevator effect. Thus, relative mobility measures how easy it is to advance in a society.

Out of several possible approaches to measure social mobility, transition matrices are used in this study since they provide a differentiated picture of opportunities for upward and downward mobility (Box 1).

Data from the Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP), a long-term study conducted by DIW Berlin together with Kantar Public (formerly *TNS Infratest Sozialforschung*), are used to analyze social mobility.⁵ In order to increase the comparability within the sample, our analysis is limited to people who were 45 years old⁶ at the time the survey was conducted and who lived in West Germany before reunification. Respondents who had recently migrated to Germany at the time the survey was conducted were excluded.⁷ Thus, our study focuses on middle-aged people who were born between 1939 and 1971 and either come from West Germany or at the time of measuring their occupational status, had lived at least ten years in West Germany.

A classification system based on occupational status, which has proved its value in the German mobility analysis, is used in this report to measure social status.⁸ This classification system considers one's occupation as well as an individual assessment of occupational status (Box 2). If information is available on both parents, the higher classification is used.

⁵ SOEP is an annual representative tracking survey of private households that has been conducted since 1984 in western Germany and since 1990 in eastern Germany as well; cf. Gert G. Wagner, Jan Goebel, Peter Krause, Rainer Pischner, and Ingo Sieber, "Das Sozio-oekonomische Panel (SOEP): Multidisziplinäres Haushaltspanel und Kohortenstudie für Deutschland – Eine Einführung (für neue Datennutzer) mit einem Ausblick (für erfahrene Anwender)," *AsIA Wirtschafts- und Sozialstatistisches Archiv* 2, no. 4 (2008): 301–328 (in German). The SOEP data of transfer v33.1 is used in the following analysis.

⁶ It makes sense to measure the outcome variable at a uniform time at the age of 45 since at this age few status changes are to be expected within the occupational status scheme used. Missing information at 45 will be gradually filled in with the next closest information if available, meaning information from 44 or 46, 43 or 47, and so forth. The final age range is therefore 40 to 50 years, with over 90 percent of our observations referring to 45-year-olds.

⁷ This applies in particular to the M2, M3, and M4 samples, which specifically interviewed migrants and refugees. Martin Kroh, Simon Kühne, Jan Goebel, and Frederike Preu, "The 2013 IAB-SOEP Migration Sample (M1): Sampling Design and Weighting Adjustment," *SOEP Survey Papers, Series C – Data Documentation* (2015) (available online); Martin Kroh, Axel Böhm, Herbert Brücker, Jannes Jacobsen, Simon Kühne, Elisabeth Liebau, Jana A. Scheible, Jürgen Schupp, Manuel Siegert, and Parvati Trübzwetter, "Die IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Befragung von Geflüchteten: Studiendesign und Feldergebnisse der Welle 1," *Politikberatung kompakt*, no. 123 (2017): 4–17 (in German; available online).

⁸ In the style of Robert Erikson and John H. Goldthorpe, *The constant flux. A study of Class Mobility in Industrial Societies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992). See also Reinhard Pollak, "Kaum Bewegung, viel Ungleichheit: Eine Studie zu sozialem Auf- und Abstieg in Deutschland," *Schriften zu Wirtschaft und Soziales*, vol. 5 (2010) (in German); Olaf Groh-Samberg and Florian Hertel, "Ende der Aufstiegs-gesellschaft?" in *Oben – Mitte – Unten, Zur Vermessung der Gesellschaft* from the Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung (2015): 256–267 (in German).

Box 1

Measuring dynamics in the distribution of social goods

Transition matrices are one method to measure social mobility, which is used primarily used in sociological research (Table). Unlike income and education elasticity, which represent a measure of social mobility "on average," transition matrices allow a more differentiated view of intergenerational social mobility. The method maps the origin and destination occupational status groups into a table and makes group-specific mobility movements between individual cells visible. For example, it can be seen that out of 317 people whose parents were executives, almost a third later occupy such positions themselves.

Table

Transition matrix for the observed sample Weighted number of observations

		Status of destination: Occupational status 45-year olds				Total
		Professionals and executive employees	(Highly-) qualified employees	Skilled craftsmen and employees completing simple tasks	Un- and semi-skilled workers	
Status of Origin: Parents' occupational status	Professionals and executive employees	105	117	81	15	317
	(Highly-) qualified employees	108	424	344	54	931
	Skilled craftsmen and employees completing simple tasks	199	878	1,446	475	2,998
	Un- and semi-skilled workers	21	192	392	279	884
Total		432	1,612	2,262	823	5,129

Note: The transition matrix above cross-tabulates the occupational status of children with their parents' occupational status. Rows contain the status of origin, i.e., parents occupational status, while columns contain the occupational status of the children measured at the age of 45, i.e. the status of destination. Transition matrices thus show from which origins the respective occupational status groups are recruited (columns) and which occupational statuses are reached by individuals from a particular status of origin (rows). The cells on the diagonal contain individuals who obtain the same occupational status as their parents.

Source: Authors' own calculations based on SOEP v33.1.

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Table 1

Occupational Status Groups

1	Professional and executive positions: High-level civil servants, professionals with and without employees (e.g., lawyers, medical doctors), employees with extensive managerial and supervisory functions
2	(Highly) qualified positions: Employees in jobs demanding a high level of qualifications and managerial functions, higher-level civil servants, self-employed with more than 10 employees.
3	Intermediate positions: Employees with simple tasks and vocational training, middle- and low-level civil servants Skilled craftsmen: foremen, qualified craftsmen with supervisory tasks, master workman, (<i>Meister</i> /Clerk of works) Self-employed and farmers: self-employed individuals with up to 9 employees, farmers with up to nine employees
4	Semi- and unskilled positions: Employees with simple routine tasks without vocational training

Source: Authors' own depiction.

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Box 2

Coding of the occupational status scheme

To create the occupational status groups, groups were initially formed based on respondents' subjective assessments of their occupational position (Table 1). Respondents' assessments are examined by evaluating information about their occupation. If the two indicators clearly diverged, the respondents in question were regrouped according to occupation. Thus, judges, lawyers, chemists, other scientists, directors and chief executives, and university professors were assigned to the first status group, even if the respondents placed themselves in a lower group. Technicians and other non-technical professions belong to the second group. Employees with simple tasks (ISCO88 codes above 4,000) and technical employees and craftsmen (ISCO88 codes 7,000 to 8,999) are grouped in the third status group. All laborers (ISCO88 codes above 9,000) as well as unskilled sales staff, promotion staff, and ticket inspectors are assigned to the fourth status group (semi- and unskilled workers).

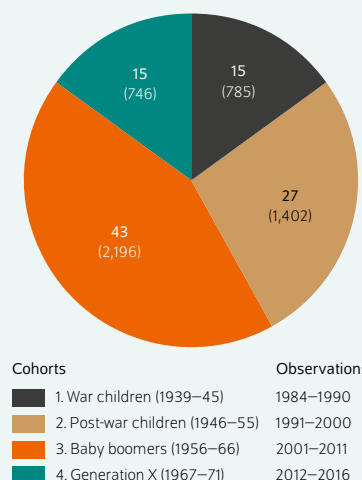
The schema used divides occupations into four status groups (Table 1). The first group consists of professionals and executive employees, such as doctors. The second group is comprised of qualified and highly-qualified employees, such as accountants. The third group includes employees completing simple tasks and skilled craftsmen, such as industrial mechanics. Finally, the fourth group is made up of semi- and unskilled workers, such as unskilled workers in production. The self-employed and farmers are assigned to the second or third group depending on the number of employees they have.

The labor market has changed significantly since the Second World War. Typical occupations in the four status groups have changed and some jobs have completely disappeared. In order to ensure comparability over time, the occupational group classification used in this analysis differentiates primarily according to occupational status and the complexity of the required skills rather than according to the each

Figure 1

Overview of cohorts and time of observation

In percent; number of observations in each cohort (weighted)



Note: The professional status was measured when the observed persons were middle aged, circa 45 years.

Source: SOEP v33.1.

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occupation's specific activities. Using a definition of occupational groups independent of specific tasks and activities makes it possible to compare occupational groups over a long period of time.

Structural changes foster social mobility

Many of the following analyses were conducted separately according to birth cohort groups in order to show how social mobility in Germany changes over time (Figure 1). People were divided into the following groups: those born during the Second World War, those born after, baby boomers, and Generation X.

Looking at the distribution of educational attainment and occupational status for parents and children by birth cohorts, it becomes clear that, on average, younger generations reach a higher level of education than their parents (Figure 2). The share of *Gymnasium* (the most advanced of German secondary schools) and university graduates increased from about 19 percent for those born between 1935 and 1945 to almost 45 percent for Generation X, while the share of *Hauptschule* (the less advanced secondary school) graduates decreased from 65 to 23 percent.

The above-mentioned elevator effect can also be clearly seen in occupational status. The observation group has a larger share of higher status positions in each cohort group relative to their parents. This elevator effect is also visible between the cohort groups. The share of people in the first and second

Figure 2

Distribution of educational degrees and occupational status of 45 year olds and their parents

By cohorts (weighted); in percent



Source: Authors' own calculations (weighted) based on SOEP v.33.1.

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Educational expansion as well as structural changes in the occupational distribution are clearly observable.

status groups rose from 35 to about 45 percent. At the same time, the share of people who are in the fourth status group (semi- and unskilled workers) has decreased. The structural changes in the educational and employment landscapes imply there must be more absolute upward mobility than downward in every cohort group. Changes in the rates of absolute mobility in a society can therefore in principle be due both to changes in societal mobility as well as structural changes such as technological change. Below, we will take a closer look at absolute mobility rates, which are determined in part by structural changes.

More upward than downward mobility was observed in all cohort groups

How widespread is social mobility across the cohort groups observed? Analyzing transitions between generations in relation to the four status groups can shed light on this (Figure 3). It appears that more than half of the respondents have a different occupational status than their parents (Table 2). The

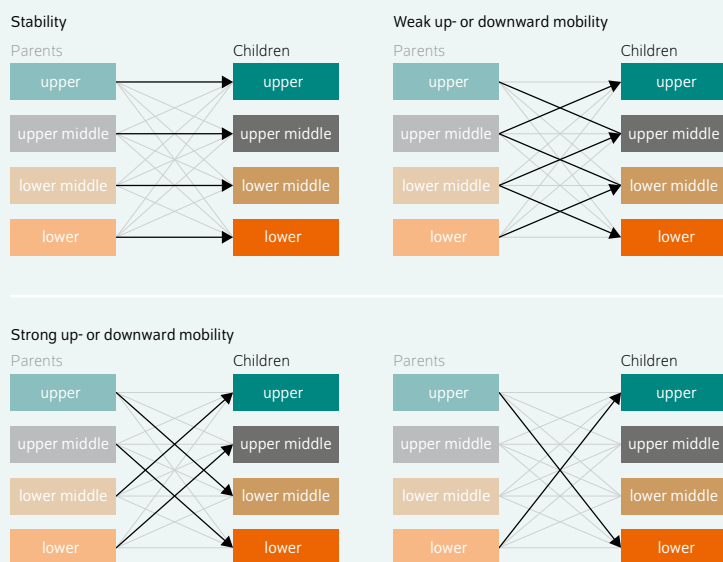
share of those who have a similar status to that of their parents did not significantly change during the observation period. Upward and downward mobility also show few significant changes over time: in every cohort group, more people experience upward than downward mobility.

These small contrasts between cohort groups are accompanied by some specific differences. For example, the cohorts of the post-war period have particularly few instances of strong downward mobility. We refer to changes in which at least one status group is skipped (for example, the daughter of an industrial mechanic who becomes a doctor) as “strong upward and downward mobility.” “Weak upward and downward mobility” describes a change to the next higher or lower status group (for example, the son of an accountant who becomes a bricklayer). Those who remain in the same status group as their parents are regarded as “stable.” The especially small rates of strong downward mobility in the post-war cohort group could be due to the large influx of often semi- and unskilled guest workers into the German labor market

Figure 3

Investigated patterns of mobility

Schematic display



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Table 2

Patterns of absolute mobility by birth-cohorts

In percent (weighted)

	Mobility total					Mobility total
	Strong upward mobility	Weak upward mobility	Stable	Weak downward mobility	Strong downward mobility	
Lower bound	8	24	42	15	3	58
1939–1945	9	26	44	16	4	56
Upper bound	11	28	47	18	5	53
Lower bound	8	27	40	16	1	60
1946–1955	9	30	43	18	2	57
Upper bound	10	32	45	19	2	55
Lower bound	7	25	42	18	3	58
1956–1966	7	26	44	19	3	56
Upper bound	8	27	46	21	4	54
Lower bound	6	23	43	16	2	57
1967–1971	8	25	46	18	3	54
Upper bound	9	28	49	20	4	51
Observations	5,129					

Note: The table gives information about the percentage of individuals in each cohort which show (strong/weak) upward or downward mobility or who obtain the same occupational status as their parents.

Source: Authors' own calculations (weighted) based on SOEP v.33.1.

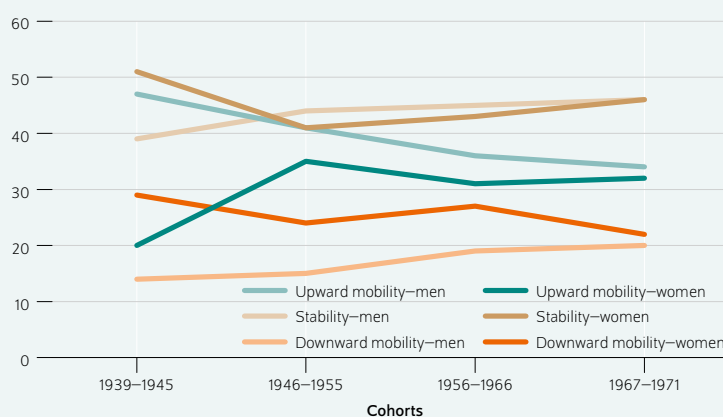
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Patterns of absolute mobility have remained relatively stable across cohorts.

Figure 4

Mobility patterns by gender and cohort

Transitions in percent



Note: Weak and strong up- or downward mobility were merged here.

Source: own calculations (weighted) based on SOEP v.33.1.

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Gender differences were considerably reduced across cohorts.

in the late 1950s and 1960s.⁹ The baby boomers have a significantly lower rate of upward mobility relative to downward mobility compared to the other cohort groups.

Mobility rates for men and women have converged

When looking at the development of upward and downward mobility by gender (Figure 4), a significant decline in upward mobility for men from around 50 to just under 35 percent can be observed, accompanied by an increase in downward mobility. As was shown in previous studies, upward mobility for women has increased over time, from 20 to 32 percent.¹⁰ This development is probably due to the increasing participation of women in education and the labor market.¹¹

Whether or not mobility leads to more or less inequality depends on who is mobile. The findings discussed so far paint the picture of an upwardly mobile society: in each

⁹ Rainer Geißler, *Die Sozialstruktur Deutschlands* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften): 241f (in German).

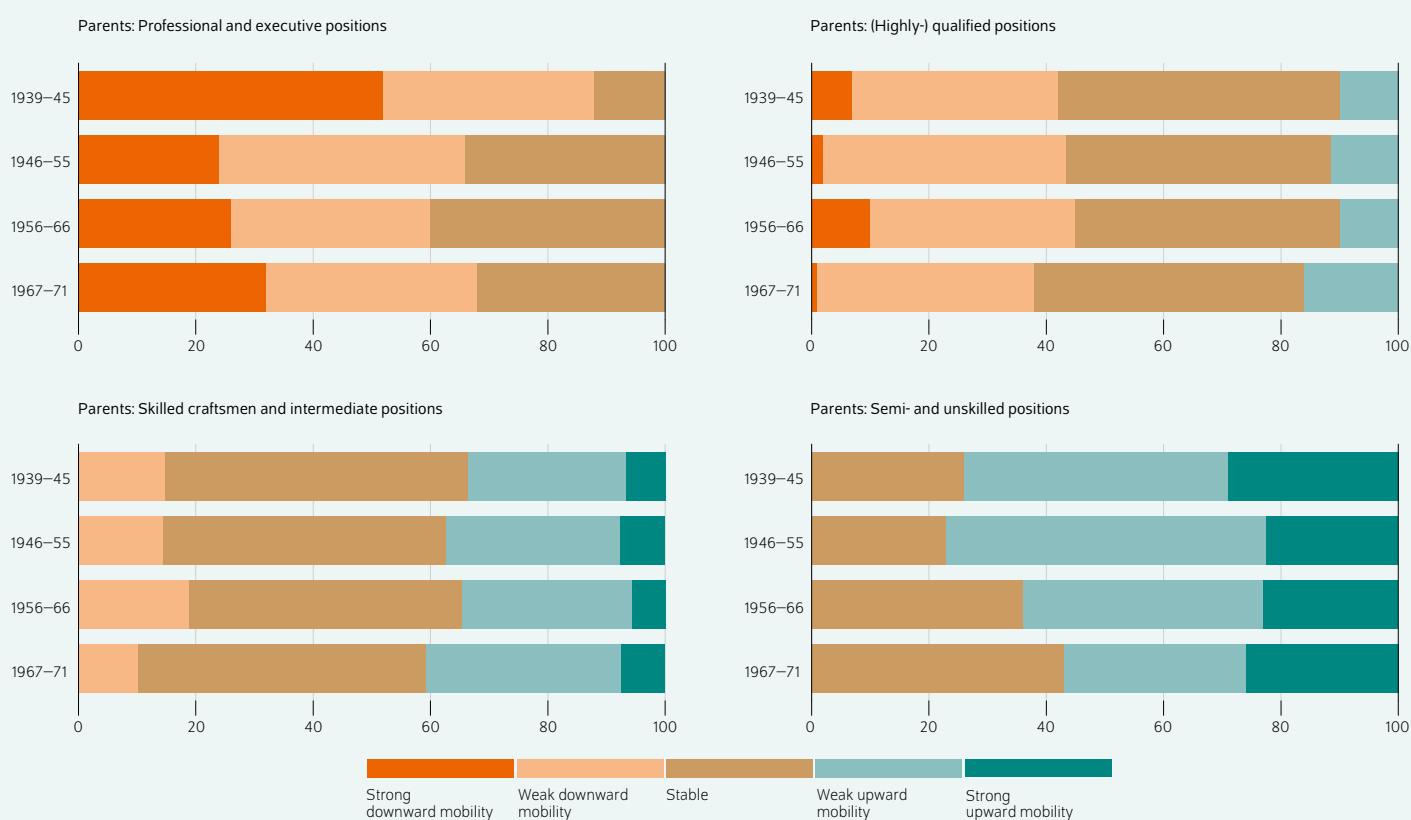
¹⁰ Reinhard Pollak, "Kaum Bewegung, viel Ungleichheit: Eine Studie zu sozialem Auf- und Abstieg in Deutschland," *Schriften zu Wirtschaft und Soziales*, vol. 5 (2010); Olaf Groh-Samberg and Florian Hertel, "Ende der Aufstiegsgesellschaft?" in *Oben – Mitte – Unten, Zur Vermessung der Gesellschaft* from the Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung (2015): 256–267 (in German).

¹¹ Gudrun Quenzel and Klaus Hurrelmann, "Geschlecht und Schulerfolg: Ein soziales Stratifikationsmuster kehrt sich um," *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 62, no. 1 (2010): 61–91 (in German); Rainer Geißler, *Die Sozialstruktur Deutschlands* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2006): 372 ff.

Figure 5

Mobility patterns by status of origin and cohorts

Transitions in percent



Source: Authors' own calculations (weighted) based on SOEP v.33.1.

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While there are some changes, the overall patterns of absolute mobility remained relatively stable across cohorts.

cohort group, more people experience upward mobility than downward mobility, while just over 40 percent experience no change in status. The share of upward mobility changes little among the cohort groups, with the rates for men and women converging. However, to answer questions about social inequality, it is important to know which groups in society are especially mobile or immobile. If mobility increases in the lowest and highest occupational status groups, inequality may decrease. High stability in these status groups tends to cause the gap to widen further. Additionally, it is important to consider which dynamics are present in the middle groups: stability, upward mobility, or downward mobility? Again, the different status groups can be examined for more detailed insights (Figure 5). The following sections will shed more light on the dynamics in the different status groups.

Status stability has increased amongst semi- and unskilled workers

The increase in status stability is most evident in the fourth status group, among semi- and unskilled workers. The two

youngest cohort groups differ significantly from the older cohort groups; a fear of falling behind does not seem to be unfounded. Nevertheless, in all cohort groups, about a fourth of people beginning in the lowest status group manages to move upward to the second or first status groups. However, only 0.4 percent of the respondents managed to make the leap from the fourth to the first status group of professionals and executive employees (such as the daughter of unskilled workers in production who becomes an attorney). Thus, this strongest form of upward social mobility is very rare.

In the first status group (professionals and executive employees), the Second World War becomes a clear turning point. The birth cohorts of the children born during the war experienced significantly more strong downward mobility than all other cohorts. Even though there was an increase in strong downward mobility from 23 to 32 percent for the younger cohorts, these differences are not significant due to the low number of observations.

Very few cases of strong downward mobility are going from the very top to the very bottom: only 0.3 percent move from the first status group to the fourth. With the exception of those born during the war, the status stability in the first status group remains unchanged at around 30 percent.

No increase in downward mobility in the middle status groups

Both of the status groups in the middle show relatively few differences between the cohorts overall, with the exception of slightly increasing rates of upward mobility in the second status group.

The second status group (white-collar workers) shows increasing upward mobility into the first status group for the youngest cohorts in comparison to the preceding cohorts: the rates of upward mobility in the second status group increased from 10 to 16 percent. About half of the people in the second status group keep their status. However, about 40 percent of people move down to the third status group. Significantly more people born during the war and baby boomers had to endure downward mobility than the youngest cohorts and those born after the war. Overall, the second status group shows the fewest differences between the cohorts.

There are also relatively few changes between the cohorts in the third status group. Strong upward mobility remains constant at a low level, around seven percent. Weak upward mobility also remains stable for the most part at about 30 percent. About half of the people who begin in the third status group stay there. The youngest cohorts show significantly less downward mobility than all other cohorts. The baby boomers stand out with a particularly high rate of downward mobility. Overall, the situation in the groups in the middle of the distribution appears to be relatively stable.

Barely any changes in social permeability

The findings on absolute mobility presented so far paint a differentiated picture of social mobility since the Second World War: there is increased status stability in the fourth status group and some instances of upward mobility from the second to the first status group in the youngest cohorts. Overall, there is relatively high stability across cohorts. The question now arises if these findings are confirmed when one abstracts from structural developments and investigates relative mobility. Looking at odds ratios can shed light on this (Table 3), which compare relative mobility opportunities for people beginning in different status groups by cohort group. The odds ratio indicates the factor by which the probability of a transition into a certain status group relative to the comparison group differs depending on the parents' status group (Box 3). In this analysis, the reference group are people whose parents pertained to the third status group

Compared with a person whose parents were in the third status group (meaning they were skilled craftsmen or in intermediate positions), it was a good two times more likely

for someone born during the war to parents in the first status group to achieve a position in the same status group as opposed to a profession in the third status group. In the two following cohort groups, this ratio increased to a good eleven-fold probability, meaning it became harder to transition into the first status group. In the youngest cohort group, children of parents from the first status group had "only" just under 5.5 times as high a chance of being in the first status group as children of skilled craftsmen or intermediate positions. This could be interpreted as a small increase in permeability of the top status group, but the data do not show a clear trend in this regard.

The situation is somewhat different for the second status group. The probability for weak downward mobility from the first status group has slightly decreased while the probability for weak upward mobility from the third status group (skilled craftsmen and intermediate positions) for the baby boomer cohorts has increased slightly and remained at that level since. This may suggest that relative status stability in the second status group and especially in the first status group has decreased somewhat when comparing cohorts.

There are indications of increasing status stability across the cohorts in the fourth status group (semi- and unskilled workers). For children beginning in the first status group, the probability of experiencing strong downward mobility into the fourth group is somewhat reduced, although this trend is only slightly significant. The probability that children of parents in the fourth status group will land in this group themselves was the lowest for the post-war cohorts (almost a 1.5-fold probability) and has been rising since, up to a three-fold probability in the youngest cohort group (Generation X). This indicates increased status stability in the fourth status group.

Despite such smaller changes, the overall picture remains largely unchanged: it is still much more likely for one to have a profession in the first status group if one's parents are in the same group. That means that structural changes may have partly led to an increase in absolute mobility; however, we are still quite far from strong social permeability in both directions—from low to high professional positions and from high to low positions.¹²

Conclusions

Our findings suggest that changes in patterns of social mobility should be assessed in a nuanced way. While changes in absolute mobility can certainly be observed, relative mobility has barely changed since the Second World War. It is still much more likely to have a profession in the first status group if one's own parents had such a profession. Thus, we are still quite far away from strong social permeability. Supporting

¹² This estimation is confirmed by using a calculation model that considers all possible odds ratios at once (Log-Multiplicative Model, see Yu Xie, "The Log-Multiplicative Layer Effect Model for Comparing Mobility Tables," *American Sociological Review* 57 (1992): 380–395 (available online). The results of this model, available upon request, confirm the finding that the correlation between family background and professional status has changed little over time.

Table 3

Status changes by status of origin

Odds Ratios

	1939–1945	1946–1955	1956–1965	1966–1971
Status of origin: professional and executive positions				
Status of destination: professional and executive positions	2.372 (0.122)	11.167*** (0.000)	11.112*** (0.000)	5.419*** (0.000)
Status of destination: (highly-) qualified positions	2.111 (0.101)	2.020*** (0.021)	2.373*** (0.000)	2.368*** (0.001)
Status of destination: skilled craftsmen and intermediate positions	Reference category			
Status of destination: semi- and unskilled positions	0.316 (0.127)	0.324** (0.020)	0.338*** (0.001)	0.622*** (0.272)
Constant	0.140*** (0.000)	0.168*** (0.000)	0.180*** (0.000)	0.185*** (0.000)
Status of origin: (highly-) qualified positions				
Status of destination: professional and executive positions	0.881 (0.296)	0.980*** (0.004)	0.999*** (0.000)	0.762** (0.047)
Status of destination: (highly-) qualified positions	1.151*** (0.000)	1.183*** (0.002)	1.197*** (0.000)	1.203*** (0.000)
Status of destination: skilled craftsmen and intermediate positions	Reference category			
Status of destination: semi- and unskilled positions	0.978 (0.939)	0.720 (0.118)	0.836 (0.188)	0.896 (0.634)
Constant	1.686*** (0.000)	1.885*** (0.000)	2.015*** (0.000)	2.005*** (0.000)
Status of origin: skilled craftsmen and intermediate positions	Reference category for status of origin			
Status of origin: semi- and unskilled positions				
Status of destination: professional and executive positions	0.233 (0.163)	1.709 (0.357)	0.436* (0.063)	0.162* (0.078)
Status of destination: (highly-) qualified positions	0.776 (0.595)	0.232*** (0.002)	0.551*** (0.003)	0.260*** (0.001)
Status of destination: skilled craftsmen and intermediate positions	Reference category			
Status of destination: semi- and unskilled positions	1.784* (0.055)	1.426* (0.096)	1.966*** (0.000)	3.025*** (0.000)
Constant	0.287*** (0.000)	0.366*** (0.000)	0.382*** (0.000)	0.309*** (0.000)
Observations	538	953	2,794	1,650

Note: The table shows odds ratios of the odds of individuals from different origin statuses to obtain a position in a certain status group, rather than obtaining a position in the group of skilled craftsmen and intermediate workers. For a more detailed explanation of odds ratios, please refer to Box 2. Individuals from the highest status of origin group (professionals and executive positions) still are more likely than individuals from all other groups to obtain a position in the highest group themselves. At the same time, the probability of children from individuals in the lowest status group to remain in the semi- and unskilled status group increased across birth cohorts.

p-values in brackets. * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01.

Source: Authors' own calculations (weighted) based on SOEP v.33.1.

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Box 3

Calculating relative mobility probabilities with odds ratios

The odds ratio is a measure by which two odds, or probabilities, are combined into a ratio. The probabilities of people from different status backgrounds to land in a certain status group are compared. The probabilities are always compared to a reference group.

If one assumes that there are only two status groups, "high" and "low," it is first calculated how likely it is for people from the high and low groups to reach an occupation in the high group. Furthermore, it is calculated how likely it is for people from the high or low groups to have a job corresponding to the low group. The odds ratio is obtained by combining these probabilities into a ratio. Using the fictitious probabilities "high" → "high": 70 percent; "high" → "low": 30 percent; "low" → "high": 40 percent; and "low" → "low": 60 percent, the following calculation results:

$$\text{Odds Ratio} = \frac{\frac{70\%}{30\%}}{\frac{40\%}{60\%}} = \frac{2.33}{0.66} = 3.53$$

In this simplified, fictional example, a person from the high group has a 3.5 times higher chance of ending up in a profession in the high group compared to a person from the low group.

Odds ratios can be calculated for the most diverse comparison pairs of origin and end occupational status groups. They are an attractive way to measure coherence, as they make it possible to abstract from structural changes in the labor market that affect the entire birth cohort group the same way.

The third professional status group of white-collar workers and skilled workers serves as a reference group in Table 3. The odds ratios displayed show the different groups' probability of reaching a certain professional status relative to the corresponding probability of the reference group.

policy measures should be considered, such as state-funded support programs for children from disadvantaged household, e.g., in the areas of early childhood education, school selection, or career entry.

On the positive side, the likelihood of upward mobility for men and women has converged since the Second World War.

Men experience upward mobility less frequently while women are experiencing it significantly more often than before. There has thus been a significant reduction in gender inequality in this respect. However, stronger gender equality can exacerbate social inequality between families or households—for example, if people prefer partners from their own occupational status and income groups when starting a family.

Nicolas Legewie is a research associate at the German Socio-Economic Panel study at DIW Berlin | nlegewie@diw.de

Sandra Bohmann is a Ph.D. student at the German Socio-Economic Panel study at DIW Berlin | sbohmann@diw.de

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DIW Berlin — Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung e. V.

Mohrenstraße 58, 10117 Berlin

www.diw.de

Phone: +49 30 897 89-0 Fax: -200

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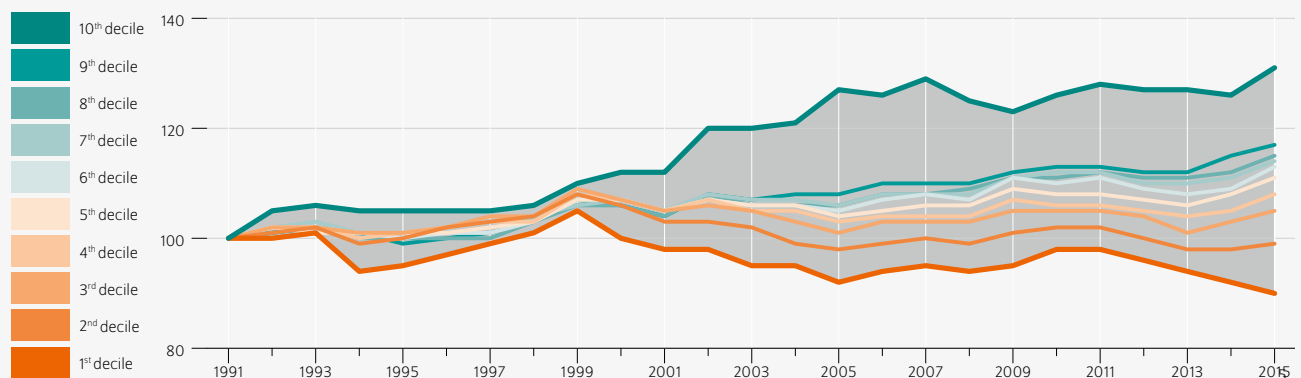
Income distribution in Germany: Real income on the rise since 1991 but more people with low incomes

By Markus M. Grabka and Jan Goebel

- Most income groups have benefited from average 15-percent rise of real disposable incomes between 1991 and 2005 – two lowest deciles have not
- In 2015 16.8 percent of the population were at risk of poverty, markedly up from 11 percent in the 1990s
- Immigration is one reason for the rise, because new migrants have low incomes in the first years
- Strong rise of risk-of-poverty rates for home renters, rate is way lower and stable for home owners
- More targeted supports of newly arrived migrants and more social housing policy called for

The income groups at the bottom of the distribution have experienced a decline in income since 1991

Disposable income of private households in Germany by decile since 1991 (change in percent, 1991 = 100)



Source: SOEPv33.1.

Note: Real income in 2010 prices. Population: Persons living in private households. Needs-adjusted annual income surveyed the following year, adjusted using the OECD scale. The shaded areas indicate the 95 percent confidence band.

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FROM THE AUTHORS

“Far from all people in Germany have benefited from the average growth of real incomes, originating mainly in a booming economy and the decline of unemployment”.

— Markus Grabka, study author —

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Audio Interview with Markus M. Grabka
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Income distribution in Germany: Real income on the rise since 1991 but more people with low incomes

By Markus M. Grabka and Jan Goebel

ABSTRACT

Between 1991 and 2015, the real disposable, needs-adjusted income of persons in private households in Germany rose by 15 percent on average. The majority of the population has benefited from the growth in real income, but the groups at the lower end of the income distribution have not. Inequality in both market and disposable needs-adjusted household income has remained high. These are the findings of the present study based on data from the Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) study. The risk-of-poverty rate was 16.8 percent in 2015, in comparison to around 11 percent in the mid-1990s. The risk-of-poverty rate among the population without a migration background was 13 percent. At 29 percent, it was more than twice as high for persons with a direct migration background—those who were born in a foreign country and then migrated to Germany. The increase in the risk-of-poverty rate is mainly the result of the higher proportion of migrants. Differentiating by housing status yields a constant low risk-of-poverty rate for homeowner households, while tenant households must confront a significant increase in the risk of poverty.

The present study updates previous studies of the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW Berlin) on personal income inequality and the risk of poverty in Germany from 1991 to 2015—the first year after reunification and the most recently available disposable income year, respectively (Box 1).¹ The empirical analysis is based on Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) data collected by DIW Berlin in partnership with Kantar Public.² Because the SOEP survey has been repeated every year for the past 30 years, it can be used to analyze trends in income over time.³

Increase in both real household market income ...

The average needs- and inflation-adjusted annual household market income⁴ of all persons living in private households rose slightly between 1991 and 2005 (Figure 1). Between 2005 and 2011, the increase was sharp, followed by a two-year phase with slightly falling real income. Most recently, a sharp increase was again apparent between 2014 and 2015—primarily due to above-average growth in wages,⁵ quantitatively the most important income component of private households. The significant growth in employment in Germany—by

¹ See most recently: Markus M. Grabka and Jan Goebel, "Real incomes rose between 1991 and 2014 on average—first indication of return to increased income inequality," *DIW Economic Bulletin* no. 5 (2017): 47–57 (available online, accessed May 3, 2018; This applies to all other online sources in this report unless stated otherwise).

² SOEP is a recurring annual representative survey of private households. It began in West Germany in 1984 and expanded its scope to include the new federal states in 1990; see Gert G. Wagner et al., "Das Sozio-ökonomische Panel (SOEP): Multidisziplinäres Haushaltspanel und Kohortenstudie für Deutschland – Eine Einführung (für neue Datennutzer) mit einem Ausblick (für erfahrene Anwender)," *ASTA Wirtschafts- und Sozialstatistisches Archiv* 2 no. 4 (2008): 301–328.

³ The respective income year is identified in this study in accordance with the conventions in the German federal government's *Report on Poverty and Wealth* (see Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, "Lebenslagen in Deutschland," report in German only, 2017, available online) and the appraisal of the German Council of Economic Experts. The SOEP collects annual income information in retrospect—for the previous calendar year—but weighted according to the population structure at the time of the survey. Hence the data for 2015 presented here were collected in the 2016 survey wave.

⁴ Market income equals the sum of capital and earned income, including private transfers and private pensions, before taxes, social security contributions, and monetary social benefits. The income of persons without market income has been included in the calculation as a value of zero.

⁵ At +0.5 percent and –0.1 percent respectively, growth in the real wage index was weak between 2012 and 2013 but rose significantly in 2014 (+1.9 percent) and 2015 (+2.4 percent). See German Federal Statistical Office, "Reallohnindex im Jahr 2017 um 0,8 Prozent gestiegen," press release, March 23, 2018 (available online).

around 3.8 million employed persons⁶ in the 2005 to 2015 period—also helped boost the real average household market income by just below ten percent in the same period.

The long-term trend for median⁷ household market income was slightly U-shaped in the period between 1991 and 2015. Between 1991 and 2005, the median fell by nine percent and in the following decade, rose again by 11 percent. By 2015, the real median was again equal to its value at the turn of the millennium. This is partially due to the rising proportion of older persons, many of whom have very little or no market income.⁸

... and disposable household income

In total, average needs- and inflation-adjusted disposable household income⁹ increased by around 15 percent between 1991 and 2015, showing approximately the same trend as average market income. But here as well, the trend was not perfectly linear. The years 2012 and 2013 were below average in comparison to the long-term trend.

Observing the median, at 12 percent the rise in disposable household income was somewhat weaker than that of the average. Here, the weak growth in pensions from the statutory pension fund is initially a major factor: in the 2000s, they were only partially adjusted for inflation.¹⁰ And the number of foreigners living in Germany increased by one-third to 9.1 million in 2015.¹¹ It can be assumed that most newly arrived migrants earn income in the lower half of the income distribution in their first years in Germany, which primarily has a dampening effect on the median.

Since 2013, median disposable household income has again risen. The real five percent increase between 2013 and 2015 was somewhat stronger than for the average value of three percent.

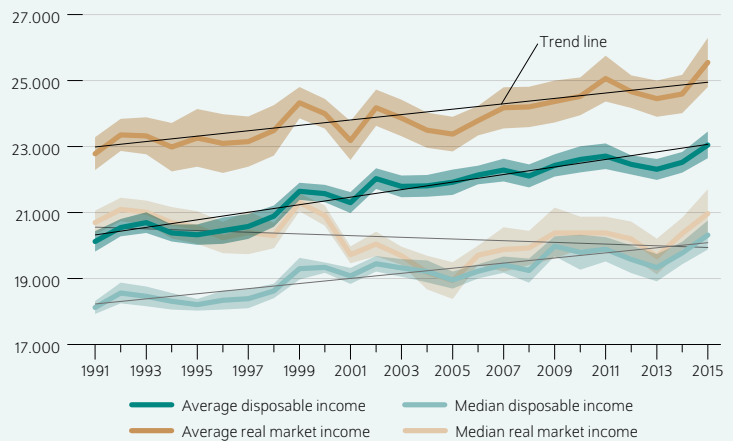
Income rose for most income groups

Average disposable household income did rise more sharply than the median (15 and 12 percent respectively), indicating that not all income groups were able to achieve the same high increase in income. Dividing the income groups into

Figure 1

Real household market income and disposable income in Germany since 1991

Average and median in euros



Note: Real income in 2010 prices. Population: Persons living in private households. Needs-adjusted annual income surveyed the following year, adjusted using the modified OECD scale. Market household income includes a fictive employer's contribution for civil servants. The shaded areas indicate the 95-percent confidence band.

Source: SOEPv33.1.

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On average, household income has risen in Germany since 1991.

deciles¹² and indexing the mean income of each decile to 1991 showed that incomes in the upper range of the distribution experienced the largest growth (Figure 2). The disposable income of the highest income group (10th decile) rose by 30 percent between 1991 and 2015.¹³ For eight of the deciles, real income increased between 1991 and 2005—by just below five percent for the third decile to over 16 percent in the ninth decile.¹⁴

In the second decile, at the end of the period real income rose after a longer downturn, almost attaining the level it had in 1991. The trend was different in the first decile. Between 1991 and 1994, real income dropped, primarily due to the migration of ethnic Germans. This drop was most significant in 1994. However, the database also played a role here: in 1994–95 the SOEP added a random sample of ethnic Germans having migrated from the former Soviet Union and Eastern European countries to its survey, and the group has been

⁶ See German Federal Statistical Office, "Employment," 2018 (available online).

⁷ The median is the value that separates the richer half from the poorer half of the population.

⁸ The proportion of the population over 60 rose significantly between 1991 (20.4 percent) and 2015 (27.4 percent). See German Federal Statistical Office, "Population by age groups," 2018 (available online).

⁹ Disposable household income is defined as household market income plus public pensions and state monetary transfers, minus direct tax and social security contributions, but the rental value of owner-occupied homes is included.

¹⁰ For example, between 2004 and 2006 and in 2010, pensions did not rise at all. When adjusted for inflation, these years are marked by income losses. Starting in 2011, the statutory pension fund raises its pensions at regular intervals.

¹¹ See German Federal Statistical Office, "Foreign population increased by 5.8 percent in 2017," press release no. 133, April 12, 2018 (available online). The IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees is not included in the information for 2015 shown here, and therefore the high migration levels starting in mid-2015 are not reflected.

¹² Sorting the population by income level and dividing the results into ten groups of equal size results in ten deciles. The lowest decile indicates the income situation of the poorest ten percent of the population and the top decile, the richest.

¹³ Top income-earners are underrepresented in SOEP surveys, such that the actual development in these incomes is very likely underestimated here (see Stefan Bach, Giacomo Corneo, and Viktor Steiner, "From Bottom to Top: The entire income distribution in Germany, 1992–2003," *Review of Income and Wealth* 55 (2009): 303–330.)

¹⁴ Since people can change their income position over time, we expressly did not measure individual income mobility in the analysis. Instead, we compared the relevant population as a whole in the different deciles at different times.

Box 1

Definitions, methodology, and assumptions for income measurement

The evaluations presented in this study are based on the currently available survey wave of the longitudinal Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) study and rely on annual income data. In each survey year (t), all income components that affect the responding household as a whole and all individual gross incomes of the persons currently surveyed in the household (market income derived from the sum of all capital and earned income, including private transfers and private pensions), were added together for the prior calendar year ($t-1$). Further, income from statutory pensions and social transfers (welfare, housing allowance, child benefit, support from the employment office, etc.) was taken into account and ultimately, with the help of a simulation of tax and social security payments, net annual income could be calculated. It also included one-time special payments (13th or 14th monthly wage, Christmas bonus, vacation bonus, etc.).

The annual burden of income taxes and social security payments was based on a microsimulation model¹ used to run a tax assessment that takes into account all types of income included in the income tax laws plus professional expenses, exemptions, and special expenses. Because German tax law is highly complex, the model could not be used to simulate all special tax regulations, and hence we assume that the income inequality measured in the SOEP is underestimated.

In the spirit of the international literature,²² fictive (net) income components related to owner-occupied homes (imputed rent) were also added to income. The EU Commission specifies that EU-wide income distribution calculations must be based on the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC), including non-monetary income components from low-cost rental units (social housing, low-cost private or company housing, households without rental payments), and we adopted this approach in the present study as well.

In line with international standards, the income situations of households of different sizes and compositions are made comparable by converting the total income of households into an equivalent income (per capita income modified by needs-related aspects). We converted household incomes using a scale generally accepted in Europe and recommended by the OECD. Every household member was assigned an equivalent income calculated in this manner, under the assumption that all household members benefit from their shared income equally. In the process, the head of household received a weight of one; the other adults in the household and children 14 and over a weight of 0.5. Children under 14 receive a weight of 0.3.³ We thus assumed a cost degression in larger households, meaning for example that the household income for a

¹ See Johannes Schwarze, "Simulating German income and social security tax payments using the GSOEP. Cross-national studies in aging," Syracuse University Program Project Paper no. 19 (1995).

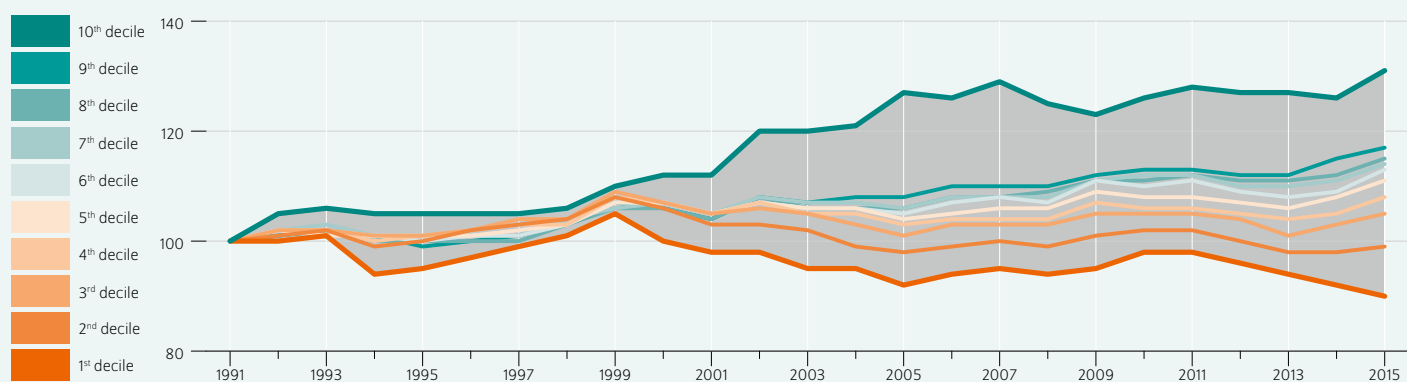
² See Joachim R. Frick, Jan Goebel, and Markus M. Grabka, "Assessing the distributional impact of "imputed rent" and "non-cash employee income" in micro-data," in *Comparative EU statistics on Income and Living Conditions: Issues and Challenges*, ed. European Communities (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2007).

³ See Brigitte Buhmann et al., "Equivalence Scales, Well-being, Inequality and Poverty," *Review of Income and Wealth* 34 (1998): 115–142.

Figure 2

Disposable household income in Germany by decile since 1991

Change in percent, 1991 = 100



Note: Real income in 2010 prices. Population: Persons living in private households. Needs-adjusted annual income surveyed the following year, adjusted using the modified OECD scale. The shaded areas indicate the 95-percent confidence band.

Source: SOEPv33.1.

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The two lowest deciles now have less disposable income than they did in 1991.

four-person household (parents and two children ages 16 and 13) is not divided by four (1+1+1+1) to arrive at the per capita amount. Instead, the divisor is 2.3 (1+0.5+0.5+0.3).

In all population surveys, taking missing information from individual respondents into consideration properly presents a specific challenge; particularly in the case of highly sensitive questions such as those involving income. And households with above- or below-average incomes frequently refuse to answer.

In the SOEP data analyzed here, missing information is replaced using elaborate, cross-sectional, and longitudinal imputation methods.⁴ This also applies to missing values for individual household members refusing to answer any questions in households otherwise willing to participate in the survey. In these cases, we applied a multi-stage statistical method to six individual gross income components (earned income, pensions, and transfer benefits in the case of unemployment, training/university, maternity leave/parental allowance/parental benefit and private transfers).⁵ The process included newly imputing all missing values in retrospect after each new data collection period, since new information from surveys can be used to add the data missing from prior years. This can lead to changes in earlier analyses. But as a rule, the changes are minor.

⁴ Joachim R. Frick and Markus M. Grabka, "Item Non-response on Income Questions in Panel Surveys: Incidence, Imputation and the Impact on Inequality and Mobility," *Allgemeines Statistisches Archiv*, 89(1) (2005): 49–61.

⁵ Joachim R. Frick, Markus M. Grabka, and Olaf Groh-Samberg, "Dealing with incomplete household panel data in inequality research," *Sociological Methods and Research* 41(1) (2012): 89–123.

To avoid method effects in the times series for the indicators calculated, the first survey wave of each SOEP sample was excluded from the calculations. Studies show that multiple adjustments in survey behavior occur during the first two survey waves, and they are not due to varying willingness to participate.⁶

Upon consideration of extrapolation and weighting factors, the underlying SOEP microdata (version v33.1 based on the 33rd survey wave in 2016), our analyses present a representative picture of the population in private households. They thus allow for conclusions about the overall population in 2016. In order to do justice to the increased migration of recent years, separate random samples of these population groups were taken in 2013, 2015, and 2016. However, the distribution analyses only included information from the first IAB-SOEP migration sample (M1)⁷ and immigration sample (M2) from 2013 and 2015. They do not contain the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees in Germany from 2016. The weighting factors correct the differences in sampling design among the various SOEP random samples and among respondents' participation behavior. In order to raise the compatibility level with official statistics, the factors are adjusted to the currently available framework data of the microcensus of official statistics. The institutionalized population (those living in nursing homes, for example) was excluded from the calculations.

⁶ Joachim R. Frick et al., "Using Analysis of Gini (ANOI) for Detecting Whether Two Subsamples Represent the Same Universe: The German Socio-Economic Panel Study (SOEP) Experience," *Sociological Methods Research* vol. 34 no. 4 (2006): 427–468.

⁷ Herbert Brücker et al., "Neue Muster der Migration," *DIW Wochenbericht* no. 42 (2014): 1126–1135 (available online).

represented in the SOEP ever since.¹⁵ Between 1994 and 1999, the real income of the lowest decile rose significantly. All income groups benefited from a generally positive economic climate. Hand in hand with rising unemployment, which peaked at almost 12 percent in 2005, real income in the first decile fell again between 2000 and 2005. Given the strong growth in annual GDP of around three percent at the time, income in the first decile rose thereafter until 2011—except in 2009, which was impacted by the economic and financial crisis. Since 2012, real income in the first decile has dropped, although the German economy is healthy and unemployment has fallen significantly.

Migration provides an explanation for the recent weak income trends in the first and second deciles. Since 2007, migration has considerably increased and most new migrants need some time before they find a foothold in the labor market. In the first months and years after their arrival, they have a high unemployment rate and therefore, earn low incomes.

The proportion of persons with a direct migration background¹⁶ and a low income is increasing. In 2015, they constituted 27 percent of the first and 25 percent of the second income decile. Ten years earlier, the proportion was around 20 percent in both deciles.¹⁷

Alongside demographic explanations, a few other aspects can explain the weak growth in the lower income deciles, e.g., the expansion of the low-income sector¹⁸ until 2015, the

¹⁶ A direct migration background is one where the person was born in a foreign country and migrated to Germany. An indirect migration background is defined as one where the person was born in Germany and can also be a German citizen, but at least one parent was born in a foreign country.

¹⁷ The trend in real income is likely to be too positive in the SOEP—in particular in the first and second income deciles before 2011, when the survey began systematically questioning people with a migration background. Panel studies such as the SOEP confront the problem of only being able to survey migration in existing households unless an additional random sample is taken, targeted at new migrants/households. In the 2000s, migration was below average and sometimes even negative, therefore the SOEP did not consider taking random samples of migrants. This type of sample was not taken again until 2013.

¹⁸ Thorsten Kalina and Claudia Weinkopf, "Niedriglohnbeschäftigung 2012 und was ein gesetzlicher Mindestlohn von 8,50 Euro verändern könnte," *IAQ Report* 2014-02 (2014) (available online). However, various effects must be taken into consideration. After all, an expansion of the low wage sector can create additional employment but it can also trigger displacement processes if, for example, full-time positions are converted into several low-wage jobs.

¹⁵ For an overview of the various sub-samples in the SOEP, see Martin Kroh et al., "SOEP-Core—Documentation of Sample Sizes and Panel Attrition (1984 until 2016)," *SOEP Survey Papers* no. 480 (2018) (available online).

incomplete adjustment of social security benefits to inflation,¹⁹ and the weak growth of old-age income.

Household income inequality remains high

The Gini index is a standard measure of income inequality. It can have a value of 0 to 1. The higher the value, the higher the measured inequality. In the period between 1991 and 2005, the Gini index of household market income in Germany rose significantly and then fell until 2009²⁰ (Figure 3). Since then, inequality in market incomes has increased again: in 2015 it was approximately at the same level as it was in the mid-2000s.

In contrast, the Gini index of disposable household income remained virtually the same between 1991 and 1999, then rose from 0.25 in 1999 to 0.29 in 2005. Unlike inequality in market income, inequality in disposable household income regressed only slightly between 2005 and 2009. Since 2009, inequality has been on the rise again in general.

In international comparison, Germany exhibited a below-average level of income inequality (Figure 4).

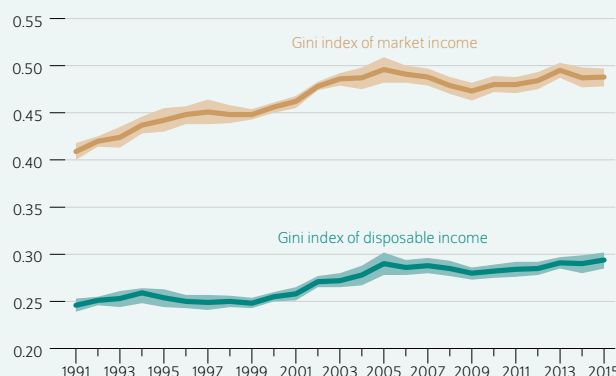
¹⁹ For example, between 2010 and 2014 the child benefit was not raised, leading to a loss in real value of more than six percent.

²⁰ In this period, capital income had less of an influence on inequality in general. See Markus M. Grabka, "Income and Wealth inequality after the financial crisis—the case of Germany," *Empirica—Journal of European Economics* 42 (2) (2015): 371–390.

Figure 3

Income inequality in Germany since 1991

Gini index of household real market income and disposable income



Note: Real income in 2010 prices. Population: Persons living in private households. Needs-adjusted annual income surveyed the following year, adjusted using the modified OECD scale. Household market income includes a fictive employer's contribution for civil servants. The shaded areas indicate the 95-percent confidence band.

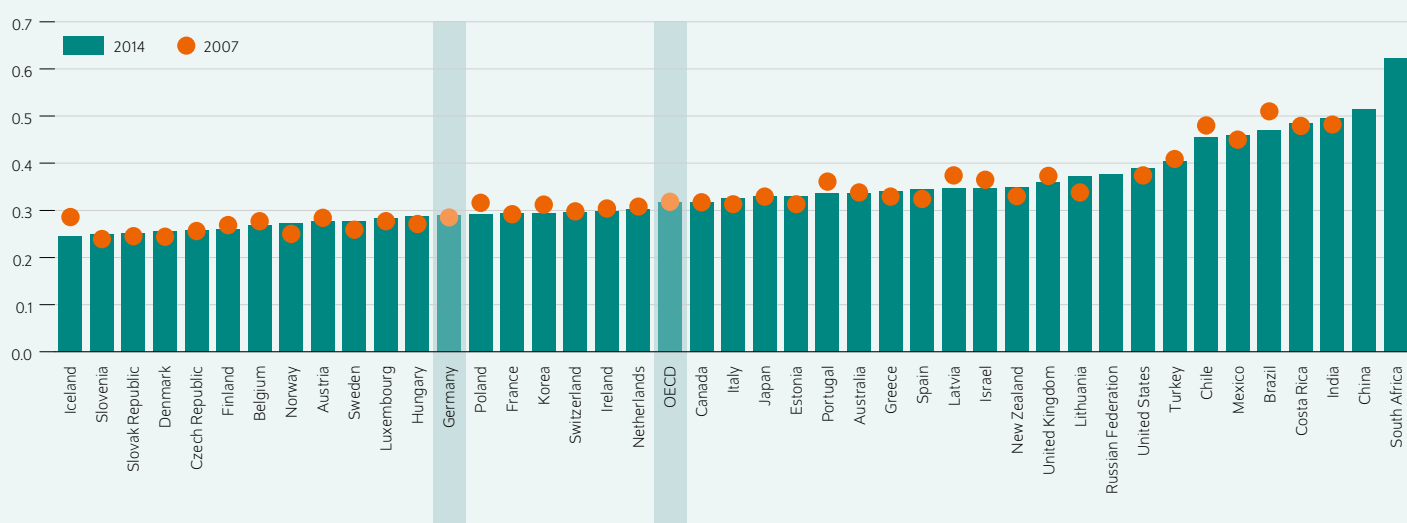
Source: SOEPv33.1.

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Inequality has risen since 1991.

Figure 4

Gini index of equivalized disposable household income in OECD countries, 2007 and 2014



Source: OECD Income Distribution Database (available online); authors' own calculations.

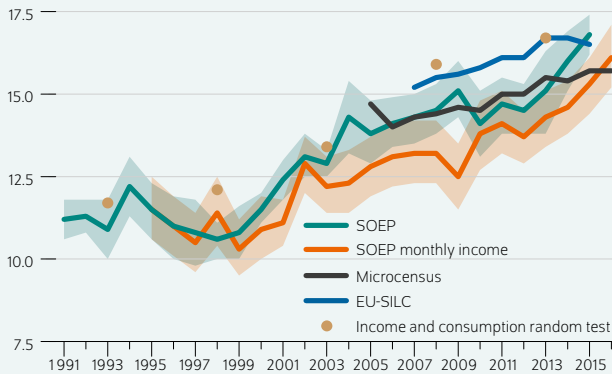
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In comparison with other OECD countries, Germany's Gini index is low.

Figure 5

Risk-of-poverty rate in Germany since 1991 according to different data sources

In percent



Note: The risk-of-poverty rate describes the proportion of the population living in households with less than 60 percent of the median net disposable household income. Population: Persons living in private households. Needs-adjusted annual income surveyed the following year, adjusted using the modified OECD scale. The shaded areas indicate the 95-percent confidence band.

Source: SOEPv33.1.

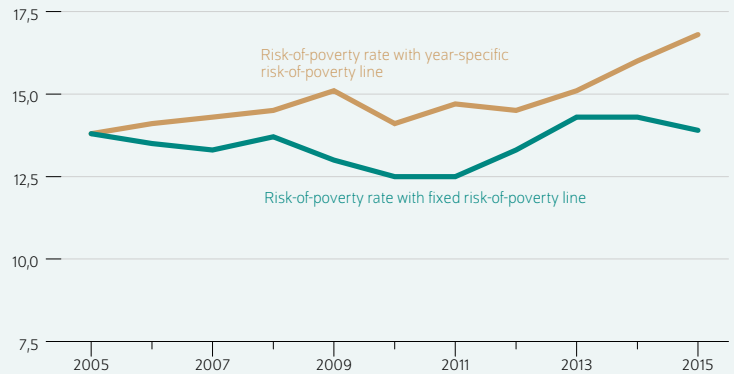
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The risk-of-poverty rate varies by source, but all sources indicate an increase since 2005.

Figure 6

Risk-of-poverty rate for year-specific and fixed poverty line since 2005

In percent



Note: The risk-of-poverty rate describes the proportion of the population living in households with less than 60 percent of the median net disposable household income. Calculations of the risk-of-poverty rate with a fixed poverty line are based on the poverty threshold of 2005. Population: Persons living in private households. Needs-adjusted annual income surveyed the following year, adjusted using the modified OECD scale.

Source: SOEP v33.1.

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Using a fixed poverty line, the risk-of-poverty rate in 2015 is the same than 2005.

Risk of poverty on upswing in the long term

People living at risk of poverty are those whose income is less than 60 percent of the median net household income. Their population share can be understood as the low-income rate.²¹ In the literature, this threshold value is also called the “risk-of-poverty rate.” Based on the SOEP sample, the poverty line for a one-person household was around 1,090 euros per month in 2015.²²

In Germany, 16.8 percent of the population were at risk of poverty in 2015. In the 1990s, the proportion was 11 percent (Figure 5).

The most recent findings based on the Microcensus or data from the German Federal Statistical Office’s *European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions* (EU-SILC) study indicated a somewhat lower rate.²³ The Statistical Office’s Sample Survey of Income and Expenditure (*Einkommens- und Verbrauchsstichprobe*, EVS) is another data source but is only conducted every five years. The last available data point

²¹ For a critical analysis of the term “poverty,” see Karl Brenke’s work. Instead of risk-of-poverty rate, he prefers the term “weak income” (*Einkommenschwache*). Another term is “low income rate” (*Niedrige Einkommensquote*), following the term “persons with low-paying jobs” (*Niedriglohnbeschäftigte*) established in labor market research. See Karl Brenke, “Armuts: vom Elend eines Begriffs,” *Wirtschaftsdienst* 4 (2018): 260–266.

²² In comparison to the German Federal Statistical Office’s system of social reporting in official statistics based on the microcensus (see www.amtliche-sozialberichterstattung.de/index_en), the risk-of-poverty threshold we use here is higher. As per international convention, we include the rental value of rental property used by owners as income in our income calculation.

²³ See www.amtliche-sozialberichterstattung.de.

for 2013 shows a risk-of-poverty rate of 16.7 percent, the highest rate of all the data sources at that time.

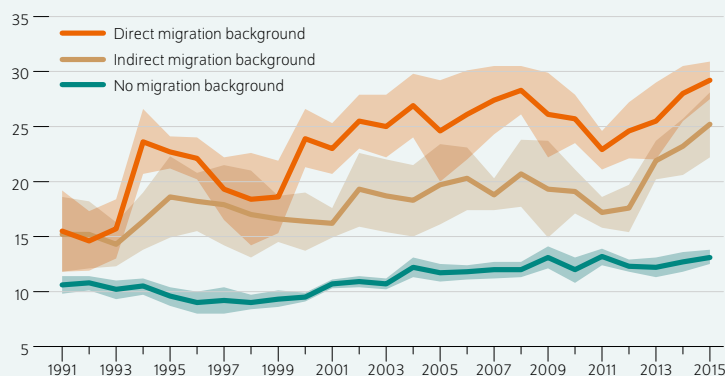
The SOEP also provides an alternative indicator for measuring the risk-of-poverty rate. It is the current net household income captured in the survey month. This income concept is virtually identical to that of the Microcensus. Since income components that are earned sporadically during the year tend to be underestimated and the rental value of owner-occupied homes is not taken into consideration, the poverty line for monthly income in the SOEP and Microcensus is typically lower than it is for annual income. At the current monthly income in the SOEP, a risk-of-poverty rate of 16.1 percent was reported in 2016. In a long-term comparison, both income concepts showed a higher risk-of-poverty rate than before the turn of the millennium.

Both concepts calculate the risk-of-poverty rate based on a poverty line of 60 percent of the median income. It should be noted that the poverty line can change over time. As previously explained, the median real disposable household income in Germany rose by 12 percent between 1991 and 2015 (see Figure 1). In order to take the effect of a rising level of prosperity into account when calculating the risk-of-poverty rate, the poverty line can be indexed to a specific year—2005 here. The result is a rate that has fluctuated between 12.5 and 14.3 percent since 2005 and was 13.9 percent in 2015 (Figure 6). This means that relative to the real level of prosperity in 2005, the risk-of-poverty rate was at the same level in 2015 as it was ten years previously (Box 2).

Figure 7

Risk-of-poverty rate since 1991 for persons with and without a migration background

In percent



Note: The risk-of-poverty rate describes the proportion of the population living in households with less than 60 percent of the median net disposable household income. Real income in 2010 prices. Population: Persons living in private households. Needs-adjusted annual income surveyed the following year, adjusted using the modified OECD scale. The shaded areas indicate the 95-percent confidence band.

Source: SOEP v33.1.

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Persons with a migration background have a higher risk-of-poverty rate than those without a migration background.

Risk of poverty among population without migration background holding steady

In the last two decades, Germany has experienced significant migration.²⁴ In 2016, the proportion of people with a migration background (both direct and indirect) was 22.5 percent.²⁵ In the long-term trend, the risk-of-poverty rate for people without a migration background was nine to ten percent in the 1990s (Figure 7) and in 2015, it was 13 percent. People with an indirect migration background have a consistently higher risk-of-poverty rate than the native population. The rate is one-quarter at the current tail, making it twice as high as that of the population without a migration background. Among people who migrated to Germany themselves—those with a direct migration background—the rate is 29 percent.²⁶ Both migrant groups show fluctuations over time, but these should be interpreted with care. We can assume that during specific phases (e.g., 1995-1999, 2008-2011), the risk-of-poverty rate among migrants was underestimated because during those periods there was no special sample of migrants in the SOEP. And when more recent samples are used for projections, the relevant migration year has not been adjusted for the current time series. In specific years, new arrivals in particular were underrepresented.

²⁴ For more on the migration trend, see Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, *The 2015 Migration Report*, (2015): 128. Also see footnote 12.

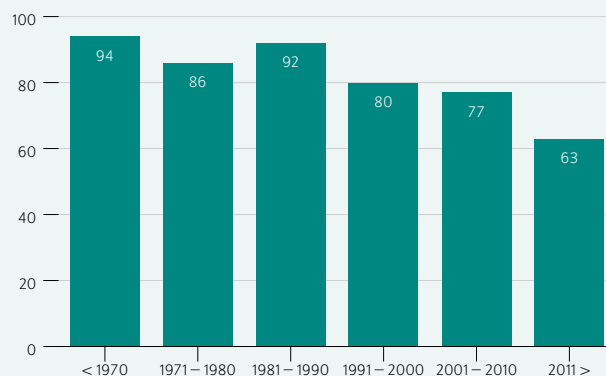
²⁵ See German Federal Statistical Office, "Bevölkerung mit Migrationshintergrund um 8,5 Prozent gestiegen," press release no. 261, August 1, 2017 (available online).

²⁶ It should be noted that the financial situation of the respective new migrants has basically not changed over time. Instead, the larger proportion of the population is relevant to the rise of the general population's risk of poverty.

Figure 8

Relative income of persons with a direct migration background in 2015 by year of arrival

Average disposable income = 100



Note: Real income in 2010 prices. Population: Persons living in private households. Needs-adjusted annual income surveyed the following year, adjusted using the modified OECD scale.

Source: SOEP v33.1.

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The shorter the time migrants have lived in Germany, the lower their income relative to the average.

The longer migrants live in Germany, the better their income position

Upon arrival, many migrants cannot speak the language or lack a social network—two factors that make finding a job difficult. The longer they are in Germany, the lower the hurdles. This is apparent in a relative income position that improves over time (Figure 8). The relative income position of direct migrants in comparison to the total population rises with the length of the time they have spent in Germany. People who came to Germany after 2010 had somewhat more than 60 percent of the average needs-adjusted disposable household income in 2015. At the same point in time, people who migrated to Germany between 2001 and 2010 had a disposable income that was over 75 percent of the average. The relative income position of those who came to Germany more than 25 years earlier (1981 to 1990) rose to over 90 percent of the average.²⁷

Alongside the duration of stay, educational and qualification levels factor into the relative income position of migrants. In recent years, compared to earlier waves of migration, more highly qualified people have come to Germany. Among the migrants who moved to Germany after 2000, the proportion with a university degree is approximately 30 percent, while the proportion among the native population is only 22 percent.

²⁷ Also see Joachim R. Frick et al., "Alterssicherung von Personen mit Migrationshintergrund. Endbericht zum Auftrag des Bundesministeriums für Arbeit und Soziales," *Research Report* no. 398 (2009); and Ingrid Tucci, Philipp Eisnecker, and Herbert Brücker, "Wie zufrieden sind Migranten mit ihrem Leben?" *DIW Wochenbericht* no. 43 (2014): 1152-1158 (available online).

Homeowners have a significantly lower risk-of-poverty rate than renters

The proportion of people who live in housing they own rose by five percentage points to 49 percent between 1995 and 2015.

People in owner-occupied homes have a risk-of-poverty rate of only around four percent—a figure that has virtually remained the same since 1991. Homeowners who live in completely debt-free housing do not have any monthly rental or mortgage payments. In 2010, the nationwide average monthly gross rental payment, excluding heating costs, was 440 euros, which equals a rent burden of around 28 percent of net household income.²⁸ The savings this represents is included as a fictive income advantage in the net household income analyzed here.

Until 2000, taking the rental value of owner-occupied homes into account actually had no influence on the risk-of-poverty rate for the total population. However, this factor has boosted the risk-of-poverty rate since 2010, the year in which rents began to rise sharply in most of Germany. In both 2014 and 2015, the increase was 0.7 percentage points.

Tenants are excluded from this advantage and in general, are financially worse off than homeowners. The risk-of-poverty rate among tenants has risen significantly since 1991. Around 16 percent at the beginning of the 1990s, the risk-of-poverty rate in this group was just under 29 percent by 2015 (Figure 9). This trend has hit young adults under 35 who rent their homes the hardest.²⁹ Their risk-of-poverty rate has risen by 15 percentage points since 2000.

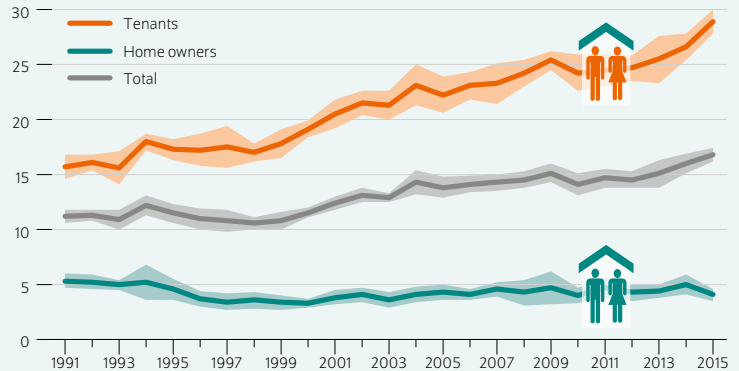
Given the environment of sharply increasing rents,³⁰ this finding indicates that it is increasingly difficult for many tenants to pay their housing costs.

Conclusion: Promote a more targeted integration of migrants and support social housing construction

Since 2010, Germany has experienced an economic upswing, which has translated into rising real income for most parts of the population. However, low income groups have not benefited from this trend—partially as a result of the high level of migration in recent years. Upon arrival, during their first years in particular, migrants earn low incomes. Around 40 percent of people with a migration background now make up the 20 percent of the population with the lowest income. Accordingly, the risk-of-poverty rate for people with a direct

Figure 9

Risk-of-poverty rate according to housing status In percent



Note: The risk-of-poverty rate describes the proportion of the population living in households with less than 60 percent of the median net disposable household income. Population: Persons living in private households. Needs-adjusted annual income surveyed the following year, adjusted using the modified OECD scale. The shaded areas indicate the 95-percent confidence band.

Source: SOEP v33.1.

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The risk-of-poverty rate of tenants has steadily increased since the 1990s, but remained stable for homeowners.

migration background was 29 percent in 2015, while it was only 13 percent for the population without a migration background.

The data show that the longer they live in Germany, migrants' financial situation gradually equals that of the native population. The task for society as a whole, and for policy makers in particular, is to support newcomers quickly and systematically in their effort to learn the language and integrate into the labor market, so they are on par with natives and can earn higher incomes earlier on in the integration process.

There is also a need for action in other areas. The increasing polarization in the housing market is a challenge for housing and urban policy.³¹ In comparison to homeowners, tenants have a higher risk-of-poverty rate that continues its upward spiral. Given that rent is rising in many cities, the issue becomes how people with low incomes will be able to pay their rent without making sacrifices in other areas of expenditure. Policy makers should make the construction of affordable (social) housing—an increasingly scarce commodity—a much higher priority.³²

²⁸ See Kristina Kott et al., "Wohnen," *Statistisches Bundesamt Datenreport 2016*, (2016): 269–273 (available online).

²⁹ At around 75 percent, the proportion of people in tenant households in the 25–34 age group is the highest.

³⁰ See Konstantin Kholodilin, Andreas Mense, and Claus Michelsen, "Die Mietpreisbremse wirkt bisher nicht," *DIW Wochenbericht* no. 22 (2016): 491–499 (available online).

³¹ See Konstantin Kholodilin, Andreas Mense, and Claus Michelsen, "Mietpreisbremse ist besser als ihr Ruf, aber nicht die Lösung des Wohnungsmarktproblems," *DIW Wochenbericht* no. 7 (2018): 108–117 (available online).

³² The number of people living in social housing dropped from 3.5 million in 1995 to 1.3 million in 2011. See Gerlinde Verbist and Markus M. Grabka, "Distributive and poverty-reducing effects of in-kind housing benefits in Europe: with a case study for Germany," *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 32(2) (2017): 289–312 and Andrej Holm et al., "Wie viele und welche Wohnungen fehlen in deutschen Großstädten? Die soziale Versorgungslücke nach Einkommen und Wohnungsgröße," *Hans-Böckler Stiftung Working Paper Forschungsförderung*, no. 63 (2018).

Markus M. Grabka is a senior researcher at the German Socio-Economic Panel study at DIW Berlin | mgrabka@diw.de

Jan Goebel is a board member of the German Socio-Economic Panel study at DIW Berlin | jgoebel@diw.de

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DIW Berlin — Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung e. V.

Mohrenstraße 58, 10117 Berlin

www.diw.de

Phone: +49 30 897 89-0 Fax: -200

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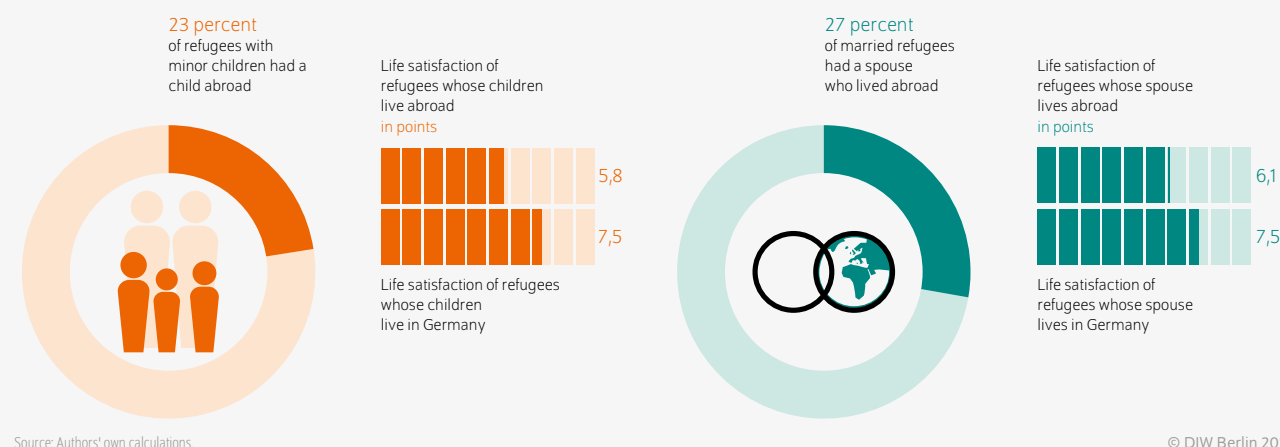
AT A GLANCE

Refugees in Germany with children still living abroad have lowest life satisfaction

By Ludovica Gambaro, Michaela Kreyenfeld, Diana Schacht, and C. Katharina Spieß

- Study based on IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees examines family structures and well-being of refugees in Germany for the first time
- Nine percent of refugees aged 18 to 49 who came to the country between January 2013 and January 2016 have minor children living outside Germany
- Twelve percent of refugees have a spouse living outside Germany
- Refugees whose nuclear family lives in Germany are measurably more satisfied with their lives than others
- Policy debate should take these findings into account, especially in the debate on family reunification

A significant proportion of the refugees had to leave their spouse or children behind abroad. They are considerably less happy with their lives than other refugees



FROM THE AUTHORS

“More has to be done to prevent the absence of refugees’ next of kin turning into an obstacle to integration and, for those who do have their closest relatives here, to reap the potential this represents. Simple measures of support for refugees and their families in their everyday life are called for, beyond mere language classes.”

— Diana Schacht, study author —

DATA

The refugee sample the study is based on comprises **3386 persons.**

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ABSTRACT

Family strongly influences personal well-being—especially in the case of refugees, whose family members often remain in their homeland. This report is the first to closely examine the well-being and family structures of refugees who came to Germany between January 2013 and January 2016. It uses data from the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees in Germany. Among individuals aged between 18 and 49, nine percent have minor children living outside Germany, whereas twelve percent have a husband or wife living abroad. If the nuclear family is living in Germany—which is more often the case for women than men—refugees are measurably more satisfied with their lives. These findings are also confirmed when accounting for other potential factors for well-being. These findings should be given greater consideration—not least in the debate on family reunification—to enable successful migration, integration, and family policies.

The American sociologist Rubén Rumbaut (1997)¹ once stressed that migration is a family affair, with the family being particularly important in the migration process. Familial ties can improve the well-being and social participation of individuals with migration background. However, familial ties sometimes are an obstacle to integration if families as a whole are not regularly in contact with and participating in society. Once again, the latest migration report by the Academic Advisory Council on Family Matters (*Wissenschaftlicher Beirat für Familienfragen*) has shown² that integration and social participation are always a family affair—for example, efforts to integrate children must also address their parents' situation and possible problems. These findings from general migration research should also apply to refugees and their families.

Countless individuals, especially from war-torn and crisis regions, have migrated to Germany over the past years. Many were unable to take their families with them but generally aim to bring them over later. According to German law, those with a right to asylum or recognized refugees under the 1951 Refugee Convention have a right to the subsequent immigration of their spouse and minor children (Box 1). For refugees with subsidiary protection status³ different rules applied until July 2018, as family reunification had not been possible for this group for three years. However, since August 2018, 1,000 family members of refugees with subsidiary protection have been allowed to move to Germany every month.⁴ According to a European Commission directive, family reunification is “a necessary way of making family life possible. It helps to create socio-cultural stability facilitating the integration

¹ Cf. Rubén G. Rumbaut, “Ties that bind. Immigration and immigrant families,” in *Immigration and the family. Research and Policy on U.S. Immigrants*, ed. Alan Booth et al. (Mahwah, 1997), 3–46.

² Cf. Wissenschaftlicher Beirat für Familienfragen beim Bundesministerium für Familien, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend, *Migration und Familie. Kindheit mit Zuwanderungshintergrund* (2016) (in German; available online, accessed October 4, 2018; this applies to all other online sources in this report unless stated otherwise).

³ Individuals are entitled to subsidiary protection if the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (*Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, BAMF*) recognizes that they are threatened with serious harm in their country of origin, for example as a result of an armed conflict (§ 4 para. 1 Asylgesetz).

⁴ Cf. Bundesregierung, *Entwurf eines Gesetzes zur Neuregelung des Familiennachzugs zu subsidiär Schutzberechtigten (Familiennachzugsneuregelungsgesetz)* (2018) (in German; available online).

Box 1

Legal regulations on family reunification in Germany

In Germany, refugees' right to family reunification is based on the protection of marriage and the family enshrined in the Basic Law for the Federal Republic (Basic Law, Article 6 para. 1 and para. 2 p. 1). It is also affirmed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the directives of the Council of the European Union, which emphasize the important role family reunification plays in the social integration of third-country nationals in EU member states.¹ The right to family reunification is regulated in § 29 of the Residence Act (*Aufenthaltsgesetz*). Family reunification is possible when a refugee files an application within three months after her refugee status has been granted. No other condition needs to be met, other than that the family cannot be reunited in a third country outside the EU. Other third country nationals have to meet more stringent conditions for family unification, such as proving sufficient living space and secure income.

The right to family reunification applies to the nuclear family. In the case of minors, this refers to their parents or other guardians if no other guardians are located in Germany; in the case of adults, this refers to their spouse or registered partner and unmarried minor children. In exceptional cases (as to "avoid exceptional hardship" in the sense of § 36 para. 2 Residence Act), other family members such as grandparents, nephews, nieces, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, adult children, or siblings may be granted reunification. In practice, however, family reunification beyond the nuclear family is rare. According to the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF),² the share of non-nuclear family members being granted the right to move to Germany based on the grounds of family reunification is only one percent.

As part of the second asylum policy package, the right to family reunification for individuals under subsidiary protection (§ 25 para. 2 sentence 1.2 Residence Act) who received a residence permit after March 17, 2016, was restricted.³ The right to family reunification was originally suspended until March 16, 2018 (§ 104

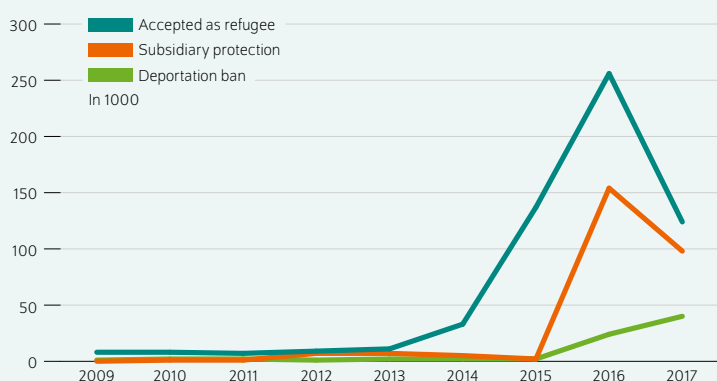
para. 13 Residence Act), and later extended to July 31, 2018, by the Act to Prolong the Suspension of Family Reunification (*Gesetz zur Verlängerung der Aussetzung des Familiennachzugs*). Since August 1, 2018, family reunification for individuals under subsidiary protection on humanitarian grounds has been granted for up to 1,000 family members per month to ensure a balance between "the establishment of familial relationships," which is required on humanitarian grounds, and the "absorption capacity of the Federal Republic of Germany."⁴

Since the second asylum package was implemented, the share of individuals who were granted subsidiary protection has risen sharply and currently accounts for almost half of all accepted asylum applications (Figure).

⁴ See the Federal Government's draft of the new regulation for family reunification for individuals under subsidiary protection, Bundestag-Drucksache 19/2438 (in German; available online).

Figure

Refugees in Germany by outcome of asylum procedure



Note: Without refused applications and formal decisions

Source: Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (BAMF); authors' own representation based on the decisions of asylum procedures.

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The number of refugees who only received subsidiary protection has risen sharply since the introduction of the second asylum policy package.

¹ See Directive 2003/86/EC of the Council of the European Union from September 22, 2003, regarding the right to family reunification (available online).

² Cf. BAMF, *Familiennachzug von Drittstaatsangehörigen. Fokusstudie der deutschen nationalen Kontaktstelle für das Europäische Migrationsnetzwerk (EMN) (2017)* (in German).

³ Bundesregierung, *Entwurf eines Gesetzes zur Neuordnung des Familiennachzugs zu subsidiär Schutzberechtigten (Familiennachzugsneuordnungsgesetz)* (in German).

of third-country nationals in the Member State, which also serves to promote economic and social cohesion."⁵

Although refugee family reunification has long been a topic of discussion in Germany, there is hardly any empirical evidence on refugees' families, their composition and characteristics, or on the significance of family for refugees. This

⁵ Cf. Supplementary grounds in paragraph 4 of Directive 2003/86/EC of the European Commission.

is also due to the fact that a reliable database for investigating the family structures of refugees was not available until recently. However, the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees enabled the creation of a database with such information (Box 2). The database contains representative survey data of individuals who applied for asylum in Germany between January 2013 and January 2016. In an initial analysis of this data, the Institute for Employment Research (*Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung, IAB*) in Nuremberg

Box 2

Data

The IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey of refugees is based on a random sample taken from the Central Alien Register (*Ausländerzentralregister*). The sample consists of individuals who migrated to Germany between January 1, 2013, and January 31, 2016, and submitted a formal asylum application to the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (*Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge*, BAMF).¹ These data have been integrated into the Socio-Economic Panel (*Sozio-ökonomische Panel*, SOEP).² The sampling was a two-step process with 170 sample regions randomly selected in the first stage. The sample regions contained addresses of one or more foreigners' offices from which a random sample was drawn in the second stage. Certain subgroups, such as recognized refugees, women, and individuals who were over 30 during the sample drawing, were oversampled. This is taken into account by a corresponding weighting in the analyses.

In the first survey wave, data were collected via in-person interviews from June to December 2016. The selected individuals received an invitation to the interview in the mail. The survey was translated into a total of six languages (Arabic, Northern Kurdish, Farsi/Dari, Urdu, Pashto, and English) and conducted by trained interviewers. The response rate was 51 percent.

The present analyses include refugees who took part in the personal interview (4,424 respondents). Excluded were individuals who did not provide valid answers to the questions (570 individuals), respondents who did not arrive in Germany between 2013 and 2016 (116 individuals), and those who were not between 18 and 49 years of age in 2016 (352 individuals). The final sample for the analyses comprises 3,386 individuals.

¹ Cf. Martin Kroh et al., "Sampling, Nonresponse, and Integrated Weighting of the 2016 IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees (M3/M4) – Revised Version," *SOEP Survey Paper* 477 (2018) (available online).

² Cf. Jürgen Schupp et al., Socio-economic Panel (SOEP), data from 1984-2016 (in German; available online).

estimated the number of spouses and children of refugees in Germany who are living abroad.⁶ The result indicated a rather low number of potential family reunions, as many refugees were single, childless, or their spouse and children were already living in Germany.

This report describes in detail the family structures and family characteristics of refugees in Germany using the same database. Moreover, the report analyzes to what extent the familial situation is related to the well-being of those surveyed. The analysis is restricted to refugees between the ages

of 18 and 49 who moved to Germany between 2013 and 2016. With this age restriction, the analysis thus concentrates on adults who potentially have minor children. The analysis is based on the first survey wave of the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees; further survey waves are currently not available for scientific analysis (Box 2).

Women more likely to have fled with family

The sample used in the analyses includes a high percentage of men (76 percent), who are mainly from Syria (46 percent) or other countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, or Pakistan (28 percent) (Table 1). Therefore, it was primarily men who migrated to Germany in the age group surveyed. On average, sample respondents had lived in Germany for a little over a year at the time the survey was conducted. On average, male refugees were 27 years old upon arrival in Germany while female refugees were 30 years old. Men mostly migrated alone (53 percent) or with friends and acquaintances (15 percent) while the majority of women came to Germany with family⁷ (81 percent); only 32 percent of men came with family. At the time the survey was conducted, around 56 percent of respondents had a temporary residence permit (most either with their case still being processed or with temporary suspension of deportation status). Approximately half lived in private accommodations with the other half in shared accommodations, whereby a differentiation shows that the share of individuals in private accommodations was significantly higher among women (64 percent) than men (44 percent). Sixteen percent of women and eleven percent of men had an education qualification at tertiary level.⁸ At the time of the survey, fifteen percent of men and five percent of women in the age group analyzed were employed, completing training, or pursuing other educational opportunities such as language courses.

Female refugees have significantly more children with them than men

The family structure of the refugees in the age groups examined here differed significantly by gender. Women rarely migrated alone; rather, they generally made the journey with their family. Accordingly, the vast majority of the female refugees surveyed were married at the time of the survey while the majority of men were still single (Table 2). Differences in marital status were reflected in childlessness and the number of minor children. On average, female refugees had 1.6 minor children and men 0.7 at the time of the survey. The differences were smaller between married women and men (2.0 and 1.9 minor children, respectively). Since the sample here

⁷ Individuals from the sample were asked if they came to Germany alone, with family members, with friends or acquaintances, or others. Among those coming with family members, it cannot be further distinguished who exactly is considered a family member by the respondent.

⁸ To generate the variables on refugees' highest educational and vocational qualifications, information on both the years of school attendance and the type of school last attended were used. This allowed accounting for school interruptions, as detailed in Herbert Brücker, Nina Rother, and Jürgen Schupp, "IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Befragung von Geflüchteten 2016: Studiendesign, Feldergebnisse sowie Analysen zu schulischer wie beruflicher Qualifikation, Sprachkenntnissen sowie kognitiven Potenzialen," *DIW Politikberatung kompakt* no. 123 (2017) (in German; available online).

⁶ Cf. Herbert Brücker, "Familiennachzug: 150000 bis 180000 Ehepartner und Kinder von Geflüchteten mit Schutzstatus leben im Ausland" in *IAB Forum* (2017) (available online).

Table 1

Refugees in Germany - Selected characteristics of those who fled to Germany between 2013 and 2016

	Total	Men	Women
Female	24		
Country of origin*			
Syria	46	46	45
Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan	28	28	26
Subsaharan Africa	14	15	11
Others	12	10	18
Duration of stay (in years)	1,3	1.3	1.2
Age at immigration (in years)	28	27	30
Age at interview (in years)	29	28	31
Arrival			
Alone	43	53	13
Family	44	32	81
Friends or others	13	15	6
Residence status			
Recognized	44	45	43
Application pending	41	42	41
Other (toleration, deportation)	15	14	16
Private accommodation	49	44	64
Highest level of education			
None or primary education	38	37	39
Secondary education	50	51	45
Tertiary education	12	11	16
Employed or in training at interview	12	15	5
N	3,386	2,147	1,239

Notes: * Subsaharan Africa: Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Eritrea, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kamerun, Kenia, Congo, Mali, Nigeria, Niger, Uganda, Ruanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Tschad; Others: mostly (former) Jugoslawia and Russia.

Source: SOEP, v33.1 - Refugees between the ages of 18 and 49 years (survey year 2016).

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consists of individuals who recently migrated to Germany, it is not surprising that, so far, only a small share of children were born the year their parent(s) migrated or thereafter⁹ (see also Box 3).

Almost ten percent of refugees have minor children living abroad

The share of refugees who indicated they had a spouse still living abroad is overall low, at 12 percent (Table 2).¹⁰ In the majority of cases, the category "abroad" refers to the country of origin. In some rare instances, the spouse was living in a country other than the one of origin. Ten percent of all married women had their husband abroad. The share is significantly higher for married men, 38 percent of whom had spouses abroad.

Whether or not minor children were living abroad also depends greatly on the respondent's gender. Ten percent of men had children living abroad. When the figures are

⁹ The average number of children is somewhat higher (2.3) for individuals living in private accommodations than those living in shared accommodations.

¹⁰ See also Brücker, "IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Befragung von Geflüchteten 2016."

Table 2

Marital status and number of minor children

	Total	Men	Women
Spouse			
Single	54	64	21
Married	43	35	69
Divorced	3	1	7
Widowed	1	0	3
Average number of minor children: Whole sample			
All	0.9	0.7	1.6
Births abroad	0.8	0.6	1.3
Births in the year of migration or thereafter	0.2	0.1	0.3
Average number of minor children: Married persons			
All	1.9	1.9	2.0
Births abroad	1.6	1.6	1.6
Births in the year of migration or thereafter	0.3	0.3	0.3
Average number of minor children: Private accommodation			
All	2.3	2.4	2.3
Births abroad	2.0	2.0	1.9
Births in the year of migration or thereafter	0.4	0.4	0.4

Notes: *Minor children (under the age of 18 in 2016); respondents with more than eight children were not questioned with regards to the children's place of birth/year of birth.

Source: SOEP, v33.1 - Refugees between the ages of 18 and 49 years (survey year 2016).

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restricted to men with children, a third of fathers were living without their children. In other words, every third father of a minor child who has migrated to Germany was living in a different country than his child(ren) (and generally, in a different country than his spouse as well). In contrast, only five percent of all women and eight percent of all mothers were living in a different country than their child(ren).

African refugees most often have children living in their home country

To be able to make more differentiated statements about which factors were related to refugees being in Germany without their spouse or children, multivariate models which consider many characteristics simultaneously were estimated (Table 4).

As previous analyses have shown, it was primarily men who were separated from their children. However, there were differences between countries of origin. In particular, individuals from Sub-Saharan Africa reported more frequently than others that they had left at least one child in their country of origin or another country.

A similar pattern emerged for the chances that the spouse was still in the country of origin. Men who migrated to Germany had much more frequently left a spouse behind than women. Compared to Syrian refugees, refugees from Sub-Saharan Africa also reported more frequently that their spouse lived abroad.

There is no significant difference between refugees who arrived in Germany in 2013 or at a later time. It can therefore

Box 3

Indications and estimations on the refugees' final number of children

Statements about the sample respondents' final number of children cannot yet be made, as the respondents in the sample were on average only 30 years old at the time of the survey. In general, the total fertility rate in the refugees' countries of origin is higher

than the current German birth rate of 1.6 children,¹ so it can be assumed that the birth potential among the refugees is higher than among the local population. Conclusions on the fertility behavior of refugees based on the birth rates in the countries of origin can, however, only be drawn to a very limited extent since the refugees are a selective group. They differ, for example, in their educational structures and attitudes from individuals who remained in their country of origin. Moreover, there are large differences in the birth rates and birth trends between the individual countries of origin. While Syria, Iran, and Iraq have been recording a significant decline in their birth rates since the 1990s, the birth rate in Afghanistan is currently six children per woman, with only a slight downward trend according to UN estimates.

A closer look at the number of children reveals a large share of individuals with several children, especially in the older age groups (Figure). Around 37 percent of respondents between 35 and 49 years old have three or more minor children (no figure). The large differences in childlessness between younger men and women are striking. While approximately 97 percent of men aged 18 to 24 are still childless, only 51 percent of 18- to 24-year-old women are.

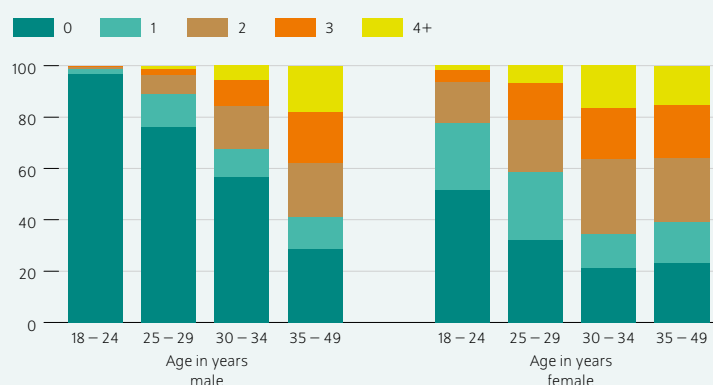
How the younger respondents' number of children will develop in the future depends—in the case of men in particular—on their chances of finding a partner. In the case of the small group of men who are already married, it is also important whether their spouses are already in Germany or, if not, if they can bring them to Germany.

¹ Cf. Statistisches Bundesamt, *Die Statistik der Geburten* (in German; available online).

Figure

Distribution of the number of children by age

In percent



Note: Different from previous analysis all children, and not only minor children, are included in this figure.

Source: SOEP, v33.1 - Refugees between the ages of 18 and 49 years (survey year 2016).

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Many refugees, especially among the older ones, have more than one child.

be assumed that only a few people succeed in bringing their children over to Germany. This emphasizes both the difficulties of reuniting families in the new country, as repeatedly emphasized by the UNHCR and other organizations,¹¹ and the fact that successful family reunification often takes several years.¹²

The respondents' educational background did not seem to be related to whether or not their children lived abroad. Nor were there notable differences between refugees with and without a secure residence status.

Recognized refugees more often have family in Germany

At 41 percent, a large share of refugees had still their application pending at the time of the interview—therefore no information can be given about their status (Table 5). Forty-four percent of respondents were recognized refugees and 15 percent had either a temporary suspension of deportation status for humanitarian reasons or were awaiting deportation. Individuals with minor children or a spouse abroad are particularly seldom represented in the latter group (16 percent and 10 percent, respectively). However, it should also be noted that the information used in the analysis is from 2016. Since then, the proportion of asylum applications granted only subsidiary protection has risen sharply (Box 1). Against this background, it can be assumed that among those individuals whose application was still pending in 2016, a relatively large number received subsidiary protection and thus have limited opportunities to bring their family to Germany. Otherwise, there were no major differences in the family

¹¹ Cf. for example UNHCR, *Refugee Family Reunification. UNHCR's Response to the European Commission Green Paper on the Right to Family Reunification of Third Country Nationals Living in the European Union Directive 2003/86/EC* (2012); Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, *Realising the right to family reunification of refugees in Europe* (Strasbourg, 2017) (available online).

¹² Cf. for example Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, *Realising the right to family reunification of refugees in Europe*.

Table 3

Spouses and children: Family structure and location of residence

In percent

	Whole sample			Married persons		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Residence of spouse						
No spouse	57	65	31	0	0	0
Spouse abroad	12	13	7	27	38	10
Spouse in Germany	31	21	62	73	62	90
Minor children						
No children	60	70	29	21	23	17
At least one child abroad	9	10	5	17	25	4
(All) children in Germany	30	20	65	62	51	79

Source: SOEP, v33.1 - Refugees between the ages of 18 and 49 years (survey year 2016).

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Table 4

Determinants of at least one child or a spouse living abroad

Logistic regression

	At least one child living abroad		Spouse living abroad	
Year of immigration (reference: 2013)				
2014	0.18	(0.49)	0.02	(0.39)
2015	0.54	(0.45)	0.40	(0.33)
2016	0.73	(0.70)	0.82	(0.44)
Gender (reference: male)				
Female	-2.06***	(0.26)	-1.80***	(0.18)
Highest level of education (reference: secondary)				
None or primary education	-0.20	(0.23)	-0.27	(0.19)
Tertiary education	0.36	(0.31)	-0.07	(0.25)
Country of origin (reference: Syria)				
Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan	0.01	(0.34)	-0.21	(0.26)
Subsaharan Africa	1.55***	(0.36)	0.98**	(0.36)
Others	-0.70	(0.52)	-1.51**	(0.55)
Residence status (reference: application pending, or others such as toleration, deportation)				
Recognized	0.11	(0.30)	0.06	(0.23)
Constant	-1.57**	(0.51)	-0.65	(0.37)
N	2,013		2,186	
Pseudo R ²	0.192		0.159	

Notes: The table displays the regression coefficients of a logistic regression and standard errors in brackets. Statistical significance* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001, controlled for federal states.

Source: SOEP, v33.1 - Refugees between the ages of 18 and 49 years (survey year 2016, only persons with children/spouse).

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structure according to protection status. It is noteworthy, however, that the shares of those who had family members in Germany were similarly high in the group of refugees with granted status and the group whose asylum applications were still being processed.

Extended family mostly lives abroad

The majority of refugees in Germany—around 94 percent—had siblings (Figure 1). On average, those with siblings had five brothers and/or sisters, most of whom lived abroad (around 86 percent). Only eight percent of cases had siblings who also lived in Germany. Similarly, refugees' parents

mostly lived abroad (74 percent of the mothers and 59 percent of the fathers). In addition, 59 percent of refugees in Germany had close contact with other relatives—on average 13 individuals, most of whom live abroad (52 percent, no table).

Female refugees have higher life satisfaction in Germany than male refugees

Migration research has amply shown the particularly important role that family plays for refugees. For those with migrant background, contact with the nuclear family (spouse and children) is often even more important than for individuals

Table 5

Protection status according to whereabouts of spouse and children

Percentage of rows and columns

	Application pending	Recognized	Others (toleration, deportation)	Total
Residence of spouse				
No spouse	44	41	15	100
	61	53	60	57
Spouse abroad	38	53	10	100
	11	14	8	12
Spouse in Germany	38	47	15	100
	28	33	33	31
Total	41	44	15	100
	100	100	100	100
Minor children				
No child(ren)	41	45	14	100
	60	61	59	60
At least one child abroad	40	44	16	100
	29	30	34	30
(All) children in Germany	47	41	12	100
	11	9	8	9
Total	41	44	15	100
	100	100	100	100

Source: SOEP, v33.1 - Refugees between the ages of 18 and 49 years (survey year 2016).

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without migrant background.¹³ Therefore, it is expected that individuals who have family already living in Germany will have higher well-being than refugees whose families are still living abroad.

The well-being of refugees can be measured using the IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey on general life satisfaction. The survey uses a construct frequently utilized in international and national literature to record individuals' well-being and mental health.¹⁴ Satisfaction is rated on a scale of zero (absolutely not satisfied) to ten (completely satisfied). Refugees were also surveyed on their life satisfaction from before they migrated—however, this finding must be interpreted with caution as many people do not reliably assess their life satisfaction in retrospect.

In the context of family relationships, life satisfaction is not only important because it improves personal well-being but also because parental life satisfaction affects children's development:¹⁵ for example, the higher the mother's life satisfaction, the higher the socio-emotional stability of her children. An analysis of refugees' well-being must also be seen in relation to the experiences they have had—often traumatic ones as they migrated to Germany. After arriving in Germany, refugees are frequently faced with other potentially stressful situations that make it difficult to process their traumatic experiences: living in shared accommodations, uncertainty regarding the outcome of their asylum procedure and the future, discrimination and xenophobic threats, and problems with the German language.¹⁶

Yet it turns out that refugees were rather satisfied with their current life situation. The average value (on a scale of zero to ten) was 6.9 (Figure 2).¹⁷ Respondents retrospectively rated their life satisfaction from before the crisis, war, or conflict in their country of origin lower on average (6.3). Women were more satisfied with their lives than men—especially in the present (7.2 and 6.8) but also before the crisis, war, or conflict (6.5 and 6.2). A more differentiated analysis shows that in the high satisfaction range particularly (completely satisfied), the proportion of women was higher than the proportion of men at 21 percent (compared to 18 percent). However, this also applies to the share of those completely dissatisfied (Figure 3).

¹³ Cf. for example Wissenschaftlicher Beirat für Familienfragen beim Bundesministerium für Familien, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend, *Migration und Familie. Kindheit mit Zuwanderungshintergrund*.

¹⁴ For more on measuring life satisfaction in the SOEP, cf. for example Frank Fujita and Ed Diener, "Life satisfaction set point: Stability and change," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 88 (2005): 158–164 and Martin Kroh, "An experimental evaluation of popular well-being measures," *DIW Discussion Papers* no. 546 (available online).

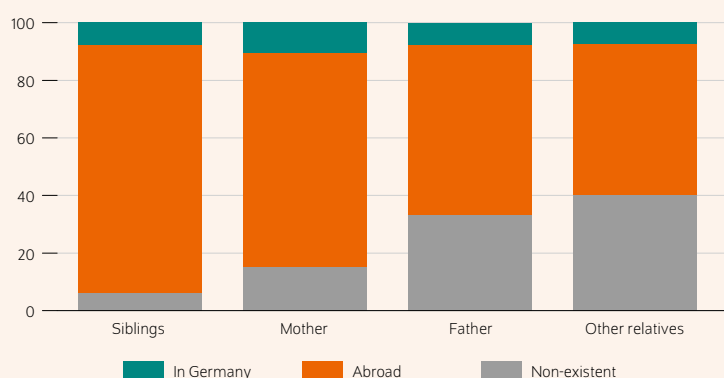
¹⁵ Cf. for example Eva Berger and C. Katharina Spieß, "Maternal life satisfaction and child outcomes: are they related?" *Journal of Economic Psychology* 31 (2011): 142–158.

¹⁶ Cf. for example Wissenschaftlicher Beirat für Familienfragen beim Bundesministerium für Familien, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend, *Migration und Familie. Kindheit mit Zuwanderungshintergrund*.

¹⁷ An analysis based on the SOEP data from the 2013 survey year, which are not included in the IAB-BAMF-SOEP sample, shows that both individuals without a migration background and migrants and their descendants indicate an average life satisfaction value of between 7.4 and 7.5, cf. Ingrid Tucci, Philipp Eisnecker, and Herbert Brücker, "Wie zufrieden sind Migranten mit ihrem Leben?" *DIW Wochenbericht* no. 43 (2014): 1152–1158 (in German; available online). However, this study takes into account the fact that the values in the SOEP survey are queried annually, which can lead to distortions, making the two values not fully comparable.

Figure 1

Location of residence of other relatives



Source: SOEP, v33.1 - Refugees between the ages of 18 and 49 years (survey date 2016).

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When refugees have siblings, in most cases these live abroad.

Refugees with minor children abroad have significantly lower life satisfaction

The current level of life satisfaction differed depending on family structure and the location of family members. Refugees whose family members lived in Germany had higher life satisfaction (Figure 4). The difference in average life satisfaction between refugees with children in Germany (7.5) and children abroad (5.8) was very pronounced. The 5.8 rating by parents with children abroad was the lowest measured in this analysis. Life satisfaction was lower if siblings or parents lived abroad compared to if they lived in Germany, but the absolute values were not quite as low and differences in satisfaction not quite as large.

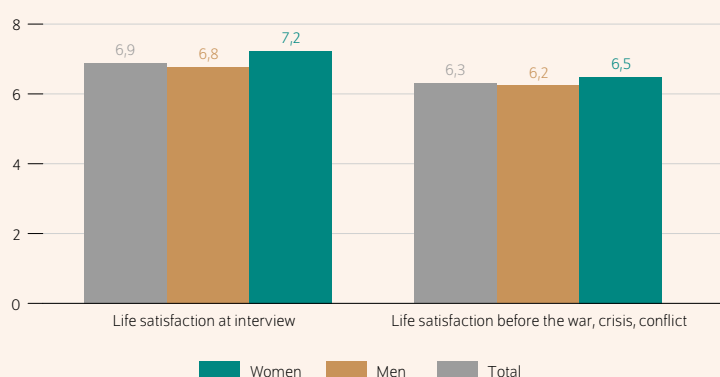
Gender differences in life satisfaction are mainly due to differences in the family situation

As many other studies have shown, life satisfaction correlates with numerous other characteristics. A further analysis examines which factors these are. Regression models show that there are no differences according to the year in which the individuals migrated to Germany (Table 6, all models). It is notable that the difference in life satisfaction between the genders (Model 1) disappeared as soon as the existence and location of the nuclear family were accounted for (Model 2). Refugees who migrated at a young age were generally more satisfied with their lives than those who migrated when older. The country of origin also influenced life satisfaction. Refugees from Sub-Saharan African countries had the highest levels of satisfaction whereas Syrian refugees were relatively unsatisfied. Recognized refugees were by far the most satisfied. Additionally, refugees living in private accommodations and those who had already found a job or

Figure 2

Life satisfaction - at interview as well as before the war, crisis or conflict

On a scale from 0 (entirely satisfied) to 10 (entirely unsatisfied)



Source: SOEP, v33.1 - Refugees between the ages of 18 and 49 years (survey date 2016).

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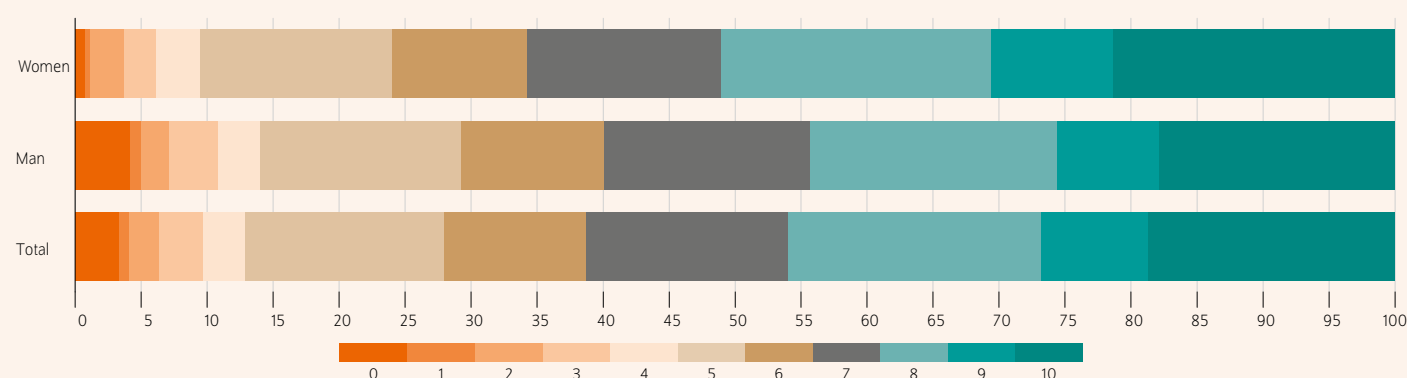
Refugees are more satisfied in Germany than they were in their country of origin before the war or crisis that caused them to flee.

apprenticeship training position were generally much more satisfied with their lives than refugees in shared accommodations or without a job or apprenticeship. As other studies on life satisfaction have shown, satisfaction decreases with higher education. If individuals were already more satisfied than others before their migration to Germany, this remained the case after arriving.

Figure 3

Distribution of refugees' life satisfaction at the time of the interview

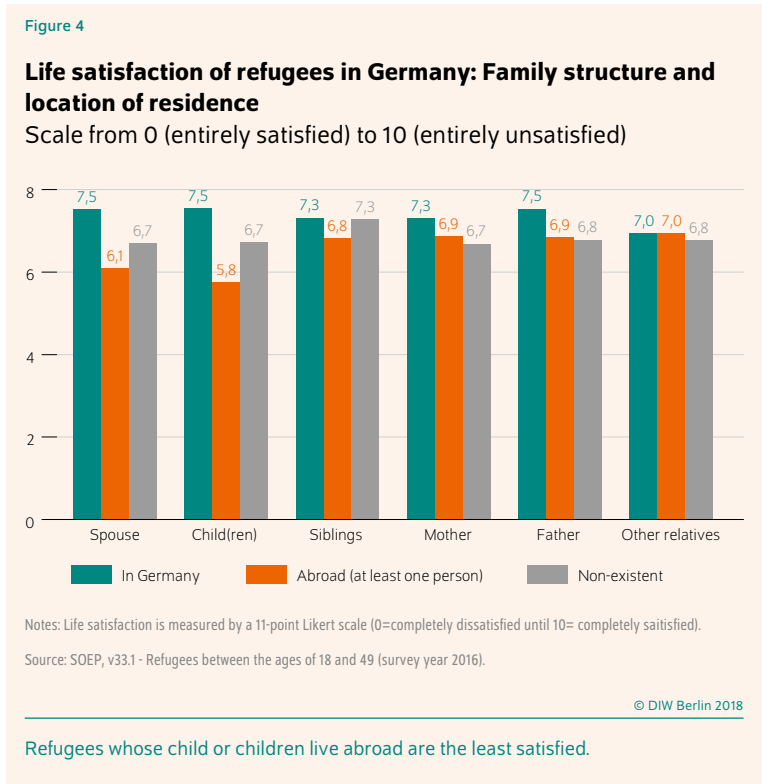
Shares in percent, values on a scale from 0 (entirely satisfied) to 10 (entirely unsatisfied)



SOEP, v33.1 - Refugees between the ages of 18 and 49 years (survey year 2016).

© DIW Berlin 2018

Women are more satisfied if one focuses on the higher scores of life satisfaction.



In relation to the family situation (Model 2), the result described in the less complex analyses is also confirmed here: individuals whose spouse lived in Germany were much more satisfied than individuals whose spouse lived abroad. If at least one child was living abroad, life satisfaction dropped by almost one point, the largest drop in satisfaction among all characteristics. In particular, having

one or all children abroad substantially and statistically reduced refugees' well-being. The above findings remained valid even if the locations of other family members were considered (Model 3). However, there was no difference in life satisfaction depending on the country in which family members live.

Conclusion

This report examined the family structure of 18- to 49-year-old refugees who migrated to Germany. The analysis showed that women in particular migrated to Germany together with their family (spouses and children). Nine percent of all refugees had minor children living abroad. A significantly large share of refugees left parents and/or siblings behind in their home country.

Whether or not refugees' spouses or children are living in Germany appeared of central importance for refugees' well-being. If their family was with them in Germany, they were substantially and statistically significantly more satisfied with their lives. Being separated from the nuclear family is thus demonstrably associated with greater dissatisfaction for many refugees. This in turn can be detrimental to, for example, their integration into the new society and labor market as well as participation in public life.

Policies regarding family reunification should take this information into account. Refugees living in Germany should be supported in a variety of ways so they can successfully integrate without their (missing) family hampering this process. Refugees and their families need support measures that are easy to achieve; such measures are to be found in the realms of family policy and many other policy fields, especially migration and integration policy.

Ludovica Gambaro is a research associate at the Education and Family department at DIW Berlin | lgambaro@diw.de

Michaela Kreyenfeld is professor for sociology at the Hertie School of Governance and a member of the scientific advisory board of the federal ministry for family affairs | kreyenfeld@hertie-school.org

Diana Schacht is a research associate at the German Socio-Economic Panel Study at DIW Berlin | dschacht@diw.de

C. Katharina Spieß is head of the Education and Family department at DIW Berlin, professor for education and family economics at the Freie Universität Berlin and a member of the scientific advisory board of the federal ministry for family affairs | kspiess@diw.de

JEL: H31, I31, J12

Keywords: Refugees, family structure, family reunification, children, well-being

Table 6

Determinants of current life satisfaction**OLS regression**

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
Year of immigration (reference: 2013)						
2014	-0.21	(0.15)	-0.24	(0.14)	-0.25	(0.14)
2015	-0.15	(0.14)	-0.11	(0.14)	-0.10	(0.14)
2016	-0.18	(0.27)	-0.13	(0.26)	-0.13	(0.26)
Female (reference: male)	0.24**	(0.08)	0.01	(0.08)	-0.01	(0.08)
Age at immigration	-0.01*	(0.01)	-0.04***	(0.01)	-0.04***	(0.01)
Country of origin (reference: Syria)						
Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan	0.38**	(0.12)	0.35**	(0.12)	0.35**	(0.12)
Subsaharan Africa	0.22	(0.17)	0.46**	(0.17)	0.51**	(0.17)
Others	0.62***	(0.16)	0.50**	(0.16)	0.49**	(0.16)
Residence status (reference: recognized)						
Application pending	-0.52***	(0.11)	-0.53***	(0.11)	-0.53***	(0.11)
Others (toleration, deportation)	-0.53***	(0.15)	-0.54***	(0.14)	-0.55***	(0.15)
Private accommodation	0.79***	(0.11)	0.58***	(0.11)	0.55***	(0.11)
Employed or in training at the moment	0.27*	(0.13)	0.37**	(0.13)	0.37**	(0.13)
Highest level of education (reference: none/primary)						
Secondary	-0.28**	(0.09)	-0.19*	(0.09)	-0.18*	(0.09)
Tertiary	-0.60***	(0.13)	-0.46***	(0.13)	-0.45***	(0.13)
Life satisfaction before crisis/war/conflict		(0.02)	0.05**	(0.02)	0.05**	(0.02)
Spouse (reference: in Germany)						
Single			-0.50***	(0.14)	-0.53***	(0.14)
Abroad			-0.48*	(0.20)	-0.48*	(0.20)
Number of children			0.11**	(0.03)	0.11**	(0.03)
Children (reference: children in Germany)						
No child(ren)			-0.15	(0.16)	-0.16	(0.17)
At least one child abroad			-1.11***	(0.26)	-1.11***	(0.26)
Siblings (reference: in Germany)						
Non-existent					-0.02	(0.23)
Abroad					-0.10	(0.16)
Mother (reference: in Germany)						
Deceased					-0.01	(0.18)
Abroad					-0.15	(0.16)
Father (reference: in Germany)						
Deceased					-0.11	(0.18)
Abroad					0.00	(0.19)
Other relatives (reference: in Germany)						
Non-existent					0.08	(0.16)
Abroad					0.03	(0.16)
Constant	7.18***	(0.28)	8.24***	(0.32)	8.38***	(0.36)
N	3,386		3,386		3,386	
R ²	0.068		0.103		0.105	

Notes: The Table displays the regression coefficients of an OLS-regression, clustered standard errors for households are in brackets. Statistical significance* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001, controlled for federal states.

Source: SOEP, v33.1 - Refugees between the ages of 18 and 49 years (survey year 2016)

LEGAL AND EDITORIAL DETAILS



DIW Berlin — Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung e.V.

Mohrenstraße 58, 10117 Berlin

www.diw.de

Phone: +49 30 897 89-0 Fax: -200

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Prof. Dr. Tomaso Duso; Prof. Marcel Fratzscher, Ph.D.; Prof. Dr. Peter Haan;
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Sale and distribution

DIW Berlin Leserservice, Postfach 74, 77649 Offenburg

leserservice@diw.de

Phone: +49 1806 14 00 50 25 (20 cents per phone call)

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PART 4

SOEP Service Activities & Knowledge Transfer in 2018

2018

SOEP in the Media

How does inequality affect people's lives in Germany? This question was the theme of the 13th International SOEP User Conference in Berlin on July 19–20, 2018. Social inequality has been a focus of SOEP research since the beginning of the study 35 years ago. The sustained attention to this topic in the media both during and after this year's conference reflects the intense public interest in issues of inequality. In addition to reports on the Tagesschau, Germany's most widely watched television news program, and reports by the German Press Agency (dpa), there were numerous radio broadcasts on the question of whether and to what extent the gap between rich and poor has widened in Germany in recent years. Another topic of media reports was the minimum wage, the subject of an important SOEP expert report in 2018. *Spiegel* magazine published the article "Wages up, working hours down" based on a *DIW Weekly Report* using SOEP data that showed the minimum wage had not significantly increased monthly wages in the low-wage sector.

The state of the middle class in Germany was discussed in numerous media reports based on SOEP data. An article in *Welt* entitled "Germany's middle class is split" focused on a report by the Cologne Institute for Economic Research using SOEP data. And SOEP team member Markus M. Grabka was interviewed as an expert on income distribution in a *Handelsblatt* article, where he discussed the thresholds between the different income groups and the reasons why almost everyone in Germany is considered part of the middle class.

Later in the year, the SOEP was prominent in media coverage of another topic: justice. SOEP Director Stefan Liebig commented that "injustice is poison for society" in an interview on NDR during a week of special reports on the subject of justice. Following publication of a DIW Weekly Report on wage fairness, the weekly business news magazine *Wirtschaftswoche* published an article entitled "Low wages are considered unjust."

Media interest in the "generation gap" was also high after Marburg sociologist Martin Schröder published an article based on SOEP data revealing the purported differences between generations to be a myth. "Everyone changes their attitudes as they get older" said Schröder in a broadcast on *Deutschlandfunk* radio. Whether generation x or y or baby boomers, people differ little in their life goals and value conceptions.

For a selection of media coverage on the SOEP, see our [website](#) (in German only). We also share press articles on our [SOEP Facebook page](#).

Getting Started with the SOEP

The SOEP team wants to make it as easy as possible to work with the SOEP data. In 2018, we developed a new toolbox for users: “Getting Started”. It is aimed both at users who are just beginning to work with SOEP data and at experienced users who need to refresh their knowledge on specific topics. Researchers can also use Getting Started to quickly determine whether the SOEP data fit their research topic. Both new and experienced users are guided through the [Getting Started](#) tools according to their needs. Getting Started includes the following tools:

1. **SOEPtutorials: Short video tutorials**

With the help of our free online SOEPtutorials, users can learn to work with the SOEP data without having to attend a course. The tutorial series has a modular structure. Users can start at the beginning to learn how to work with the SOEP data step by step, or can view individual clips to get quick answers to specific questions. The topics of the videos range from a basic introduction to the SOEP to data structure and weighting and methods of panel data analysis.

2. **SOEPCampus: Workshops taught by SOEP staff at universities**

SOEPCampus workshops are normally two-day courses where SOEP beginners learn how to prepare the SOEP dataset for analysis. Workshops start with an overview of the topics surveyed in the SOEP, the structure of the samples, and survey details, followed by practice creating an analyzable longitudinal dataset from the original data. In addition, workshops cover the use of weighting variables and intergenerational analysis. Advanced SOEPCampus workshops deal with the analysis of longitudinal data.

3. **SOEPcompanion: Your online guide for working with the SOEP-Core data**

The SOEPcompanion is your online assistant when working with the data from our main study SOEP-Core. It serves as both a reference book and a practical guide.

The SOEPcompanion covers the main topics of the SOEP-Core study and associated variables. It provides information about the different questionnaires, the composition of the sample, and the structure of the data. It also provides practical guidance on finding the appropriate variables and analyzing SOEP data based on the exercises from SOEPCampus training.

4. **SOEPhelp for Stata users: Support in working with datasets**

SOEPhelp is a Stata ado file that displays information about datasets and variables in the Stata window. To work with datasets, you must first install the Stata.ado. You will find detailed instructions in our SOEPcompanion. SOEPhelp can be used with Stata version 12 and higher, and is directly linked to SOEPcompanion.

The following commands can be used:

- For a general introduction to SOEPhelp, enter the command “help soephelp”.
- The command “soephelp” provides users with a basic description of the dataset open in Stata.
- The command “soephelp” gives information on the respective variable in the dataset that is open in Stata. It tells which questionnaires use the variable, gives the full question for that variable in each questionnaire, and tells what generated long variables are available on the topic at hand.

5. **Paneldata.org: The database for variable search**

With the help of Paneldata.org, our web-based information system, users find the variables they need for their research topics. Users can search the datasets from several studies (SOEP-Core, SOEP-IS, and BASE II).

For all variables, there are labels and case numbers, including unweighted frequency distributions as well as associated variables from a longitudinal perspective (item correspondence list). The literature based on the SOEP data is also included in paneldata.org (previously SOEPLIT).

The 13th International German Socio-Economic Panel User Conference (SOEP 2018)



Above: Conference participants

Right: Ralph Hertwig, Gert G. Wagner, Jürgen Schupp



The 13th SOEP User Conference on July 19–20, 2018 was held at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW), where the first SOEP conference took place 25 years earlier, in 1993, under the leadership of Gert G. Wagner.

Of the almost 100 papers submitted by researchers from 14 different countries, the scientific committee for the SOEP conference (Charlotte Bartels, Martin Biewen, Diana Schacht, Fabian Pfeffer, Holger Görg) accepted 64 submissions for presentation at the conference and nine for the poster sessions.

Keynote speeches were given by Stephen Jenkins (LSE) on “How valid are synthetic panel estimates of poverty dynamics? New evidence from HILDA and the BHPS” and by Armin Falk (briq, Bonn University) on “Global Evidence on Economic Preferences”.

A highlight of the conference was a celebration of **Gert G. Wagner’s** career achievements, held on the occasion of his retirement. **Ralph Hertwig**, Director of the Max Planck Institute for Human Development, highlighted Wagner’s numerous accomplishments on behalf of the SOEP and his outstanding contributions to the research in a special presentation at this event.

The conference ended with an awards ceremony. The Felix Büchel Award went to **Armin Falk**. The first Joachim R. Frick Memorial Prize awarded for best presentation at the conference went to **Juan Palacios** and his co-author **Steffen Künn** from Maastricht University. Two second Joachim R. Frick Memorial Prizes were awarded: one to **Benjamin Fischer** and **Dominik Hügler** from the Freie Universität Berlin, and the other to **Stefanie Heyne** from LMU Munich and **Jonas Voßemer** from the University of Bamberg. The 2018 Joachim R. Frick Best Poster Prize went to **Tanja Fendel** for her poster “The effect of housework on migrants’ and native-born individuals’ wages”.

10th Annual European DDI User Conference (EDDI18)



The 10th Annual European DDI User Conference (EDDI18) was held December 4–5, 2018. EDDI18 was organized by SOEP (The German Socio-Economic Panel), GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, and IDSC of IZA – International Data Service Center of the Institute for the Study of Labor, and hosted by SOEP at DIW Berlin (German Institute for Economic Research), Berlin, Germany. The program is available on the [conference website](#).

There were nearly 90 participants from over 49 organizations (38 academic organizations, including 9 archives, 6 official statistical agencies, 3 supra-national, and 2 commercial organizations) and 20 countries attending EDDI18.

The conference committee had the following members: Alina Danciu (Center of Socio-Political Data, Sciences Po Paris), Jon Johnson (UK Data Service), Mari Kleemola (Finnish Social Science Data Archive), Mikko Saloila (Statistics Finland), Joachim Wackerow (GESIS – Leibniz-Institut für Sozialwissenschaften), Knut Wenzig (SOEP/DIW Berlin),

Wolfgang Zenk-Möltgen (GESIS – Leibniz-Institut für Sozialwissenschaften). Christine Kurka, Andreas Franken, and Knut Wenzig were responsible for local organization.

The conference opened with the keynote speech, “Making Fair Data a Reality... and the Challenges of Interoperability and Reusability” by Simon Hodson (Executive Director of CODATA, the Committee on Data of the International Council for Science), and included 26 presentations, 2 tutorials, poster sessions, discussions, and a side meeting. Nearly all presentations and posters are available at <https://zenodo.org/communities/edd18/>.

The second day of the conference opened with a panel discussion introduced by Jon Johnson (<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.2530104>) on the question of licenses for metadata publishing and how to credit metadata producers appropriately. The conference ended with the announcement of the next year’s host: the Finnish Social Science Data Archive Finland will be holding **EDDI2019** in Tampere on December 3–4, 2019.

Above: Poster session

Left: Keynote speech by Simon Hodson

Invitation to Bellevue Palace: A visit with the German President



Without the more than 30,000 respondents who take part in the SOEP survey every year, this study would not be possible. On September 7, SOEP respondents received a special honor at an event recognizing exemplary civic engagement at Bellevue Palace in Berlin. A family of four from the Ruhr Valley was invited by Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier to take part on behalf of all SOEP respondents.

They have been participating in the SOEP study since the first wave in 1984, and their granddaughters are now also SOEP respondents. President Frank-Walter Steinmeier is the third federal president of Germany after Horst Köhler and Joachim Gauck to have invited representatives of the SOEP to represent the study in events at Bellevue Palace.

SOEP Service

SOEPCampus 2018

SOEPCampus is a flexible, modular training program that aims to familiarize first-time users with the dataset and the type of analyses it allows. The training program currently ranges from a 90-minute basic introduction to a three-day workshop covering the general aims and content of the survey, data collection methods, the structure of the data, sample development, sample selection and weighting strategies, appropriate longitudinal methods, and an overview of study documentation and the data information system paneldata.org.

We also offer sessions focused on particular topics as well as more practically oriented hands-on sessions focusing on specific questions about data handling. All formats provide room to discuss participants' questions about the dataset and documentation material with SOEP staff members. In 2018, we held a total of seven SOEPCampus workshops in Germany—in Berlin, Bielefeld, Cologne, Frankfurt, Mannheim, Mainz, and Sankelmark. We also held two international workshops, one in Berlin in cooperation with the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID), and one in cooperation with the Society of Longitudinal and Lifecourse Studies (SLLS) in Milan. Upcoming SOEPCampus events are listed on our website: www.diw.de/soepcampus_en.

The SOEP is also part of the Doctoral Study Network for Ph.D. Courses, a group of several northern German universities and research institutes that have joined together to improve doctoral-level education and training.

InGRID Summer School 2018

The 2018 summer school for early-stage researchers combined advanced research on the integration of refugees and migrants with training in the use of a clone of EU-SILC longitudinal data for Germany. The clone was created with the help of SOEP data and is especially valuable in the study of methodological issues in migration research. The different migration subsamples in the SOEP allow more detailed analysis of first- and later-generation migrants in Germany than the original EU-SILC sample provided by Eurostat.

The InGRID Team at DIW Berlin selected 27 of the 154 proposals submitted for the summer school. The event was attended by 22 young researchers from the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Italy, Ireland, Hungary, Poland, Germany, Luxembourg, Norway, and the Czech Republic. Jürgen Schupp, Vice-Director of SOEP at DIW Berlin, and Maria Metzger opened the summer school on Monday. Over the course of the week, there were four keynote speeches, eight sessions, a poster session, and a training workshop on the EU-SILC clone.

The first keynote by Tuba Bircan (HIVA-KU Leuven) discussed the representation of migrants in large-scale surveys. The second keynote by Herbert Brücker (IAB, BIM, and Humboldt University Berlin) presented the theoretical framework and discussed descriptive results on the integration of refugees into the labor market. On Wednesday, Roland Verwiebe (University of Vienna) gave a third keynote "On changing social stratification of the city: Why are migrants declining from the middle of society in Vienna?" In the late afternoon, participants attended a screening of the documentary "Juventa" on the rescue of refugees in the Mediterranean Sea. After the film, conference participants discussed the refugee situation in the Mediterranean and the work of NGOs with one of the film's producers and



Above: Participants of the InGRID-Summer School

Right: Lecture by Paula Fomby



one of the central figures in the film. On Thursday, there were training workshops on EU-SILC, including a presentation by Heike Nachtigall (SOEP/DIW) on EU-SILC and the SOEP clone, a presentation by Sandra Bohmann (SOEP/DIW) on the SOEP, and an introduction to the clone in STATA. On Friday, Alyssa Schneebaum (WU Vienna) gave the last keynote on the “Intergenerational educational mobility of children of immigrants and natives across Europe: Evidence from the EU-SILC”.

The summer school gave participants the opportunity to present their research and receive constructive critical feedback from one of the four keynote speakers, Jürgen Schupp, Silke Hans (Georg August University Göttingen), Nicolas Legewie (SOEP / DIW Berlin), and other participants. It also featured a presentation on the InGRID-2 project with information on visiting grants and application procedures. For more information, see p.155 on the InGRID-2 project.

CNEF Workshop 2018

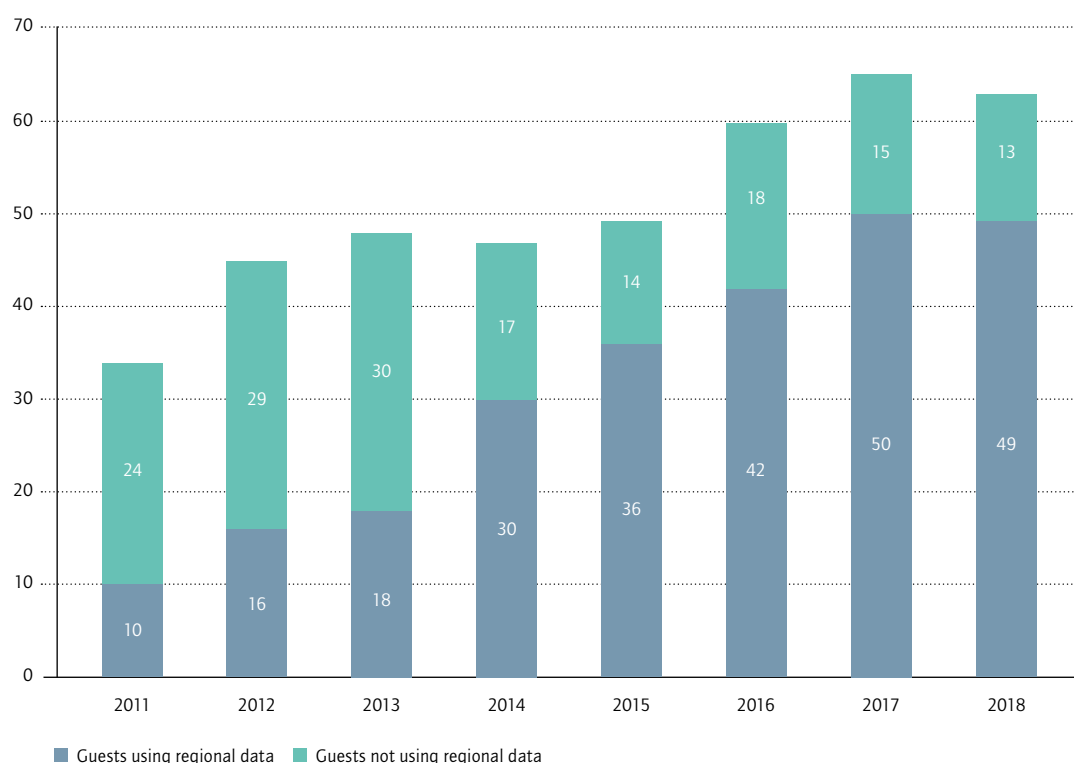
From November 5–7, DIW Berlin hosted the SOEP’s first international workshop on longitudinal data management and analysis.

In contrast to our regular German SOEP workshops, this one was devoted specifically to comparative longitudinal and cross-country designs using the SOEP and its international sister household panels. Paula Fomby of the University of Michigan and Marco Giesselmann of the SOEP introduced the 20 researchers from four continents to the SOEP and the US Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) over the first two days of the workshop. The third day of the workshop consisted of sessions on cross-country survey designs; an introduction to the CNEF project, which focuses on providing harmonized cross-national micro-data variables; and a lecture by SOEP staff member Markus M. Grabka.

In line with its commitment to expanding work in the provision and harmonization of cross-national panel data, the SOEP plans to hold workshops like these on an annual basis in the future.

Figure 1

Number of guests per year and type of data used



SOEP in Residence 2018

The SOEP provides numerous services to facilitate use of the SOEP data ranging from provision of the standard Scientific Use File to special modes of online data access (SOEPremote) and assistance through our SOEP Hotline. Users can also visit the SOEP department at DIW Berlin as part of the SOEP in Residence program. A visit to the SOEP allows visiting researchers all the benefits of the SOEP research environment, including input and support from staff experts and the logistical infrastructure of the SOEP Research Data Center. Research visits can be arranged to work on ongoing research projects or to address special research questions and topics. For researchers interested in using small-scale coded geodata, there is no getting around a research stay at the SOEP—the data are only available for use on site at the SOEP Research Data Center. Research visits to the SOEP’s fieldwork organization, Kantar Public, may also be arranged.

In 2018, as in recent years, a large number of SOEP’s data users took advantage of this service and came to Berlin for a short or longer-term research stay. Since the beginning of the SOEP in Residence program in 2009, the SOEP team has hosted over 420 guests from countries including the UK, the US, Austria, Belgium, France, Italy, Poland, Hungary, Israel, Spain, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, Australia, and Germany. The vast majority of visitors were researchers from elsewhere in Germany who came to work with the geodata. In 2018, we had 62 visiting researchers, 62 percent of whom used the SOEP geodata. Most of them visited the SOEP multiple times to revise their analyses and complete their research. The overall number of visits to the SOEP Research Data Center thus increased considerably to around 200 in 2018. Our guest researchers come from a range of research fields: the majority are economists, followed by sociologists, political scientists, urban planners, psychologists, and “others”.

SOEP User Survey 2018

In 2018, the SOEP User Survey entered its ninth year as an online survey. The annual survey invites users to give us their opinions, ideas, wishes, and critique, and to alert us to potential problems. This year, we shortened the questionnaire slightly to focus more on how researchers use and assess the different datasets and to give users more opportunities for feedback. We are grateful to the 797 respondents to our 2018 User Survey for their suggestions, which will help us to continue improving our data and services.

Data Analysis

To stay abreast of the changing needs of SOEP data users and to create the best possible conditions for analyzing the SOEP data, we regularly ask what statistical software users work with. While Stata use had increased in popularity in previous years, it declined in 2018 (**Figure 2**, multiple answers allowed). Stata remains the most popular statistical software among SOEP users at 76 percent, followed by the programming language R at 31 percent. To respond to this trend, we will be providing a version of future data releases formatted for analysis in R.

Use of the Studies

We are not only interested in finding out what software SOEP users work with, but also in what they are analyzing. The question of which SOEP datasets users work with regularly has been part of our user survey for many years. The results for 2018 present a stable picture relative to previous years (**Figure 3**). In 2018, 36% of users reported using SOEP-Core on a regular basis, and over two thirds of SOEP users have worked with SOEP-Core at least once. Just under one third of users reported regular use of SOEP-Long, a dataset that we provide in easier-to-use “long” form. Survey results showed that users are less familiar with SOEP-Long than with SOEP-Core. Regular use of SOEP-IS, a sample designed for innovative research questions, is relatively low (3%). Around one third of all users were not aware of SOEP-IS.

Important Aspects of the SOEP

As in 2017, our 2018 User Survey asked users to rate the SOEP on specific quality criteria (**Figure 4**). Again using a seven-point Likert scale, users first rated how important each of the quality criteria was to them, and then evaluated the SOEP’s current performance in each area. The results show that users place the highest importance on understanding the process of data generation and on getting a quick idea of whether SOEP data would fit their research project. Both categories show a negative difference between expectations and realities. The SOEP is exceeding users’ expectations in the punctuality of data releases and in the e-mail information sent out to users about new SOEP studies and projects. For an overview of last year’s User Survey results, click [here](#).

Strengths and Weaknesses

Sometimes we see ourselves differently from how others see us. To be able to build on our strengths and improve on our weaknesses, we asked users to tell us the SOEP’s three greatest strengths and weaknesses in an open-answer question. We sorted the diverse answers into 16 thematic categories. We compared the number of respondents who considered each category a strength or weakness and compiled the overview in **Table 1**. The SOEP’s three greatest strengths were in the diversity and number of themes and variables, the long duration of the study, and the data format. Data access is a less pronounced strength: users regard it as positive but see some potential for improvement. Significant weaknesses lie in the user-friendliness of the data and documentation. We addressed both points in the data release following the 2018 user survey: we now provide an integrated version of the data, and our new SOEPcompanion is online at <http://companion.soep.de/index.html>

We are grateful to all of the respondents to our 2018 User Survey for their useful feedback and suggestions!

Figure 2

Which statistical packages do you use to analyze SOEP data?

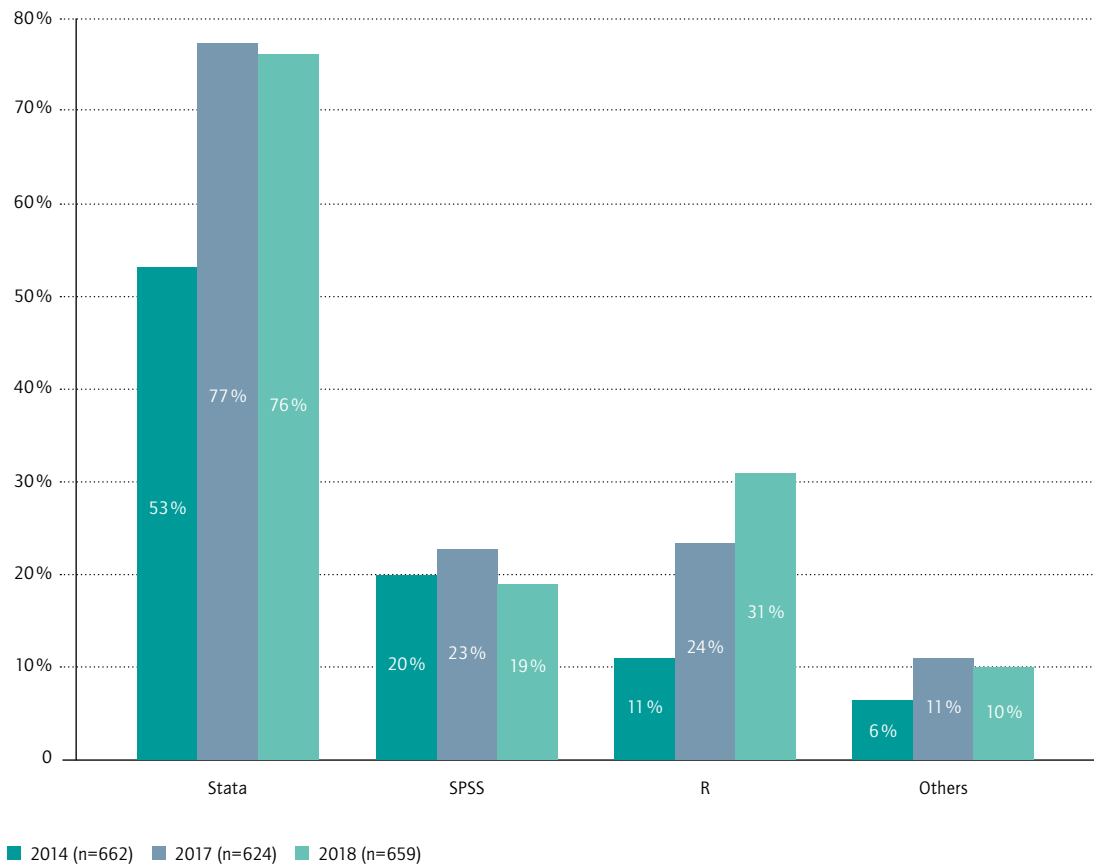


Figure 3

Use of SOEP data

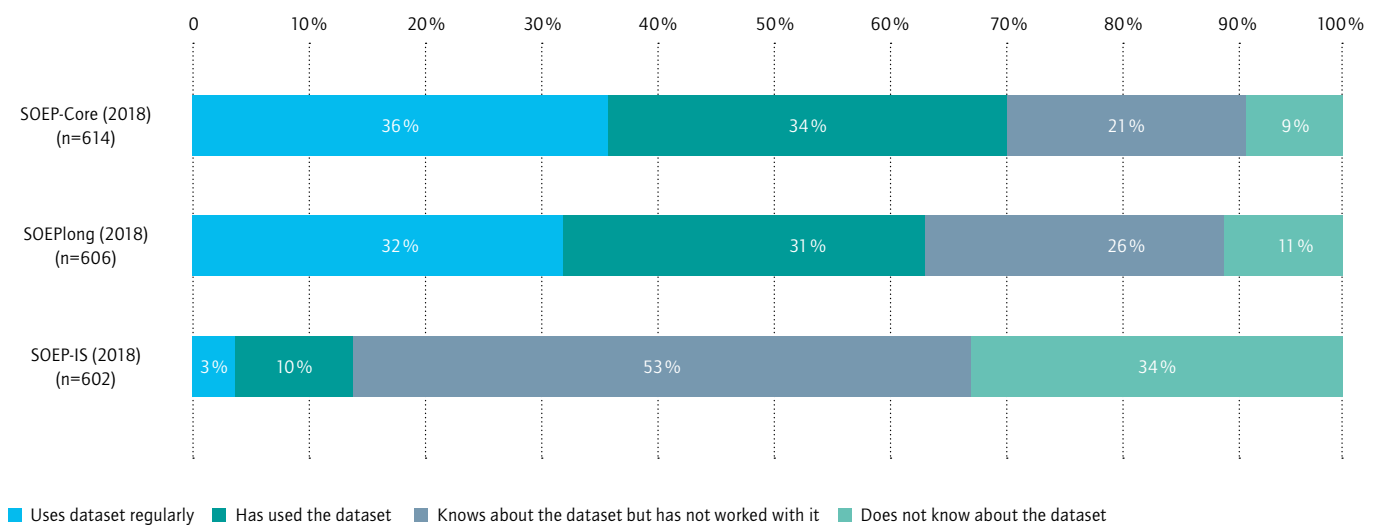


Figure 4

User ratings of SOEP quality criteria (n=570)

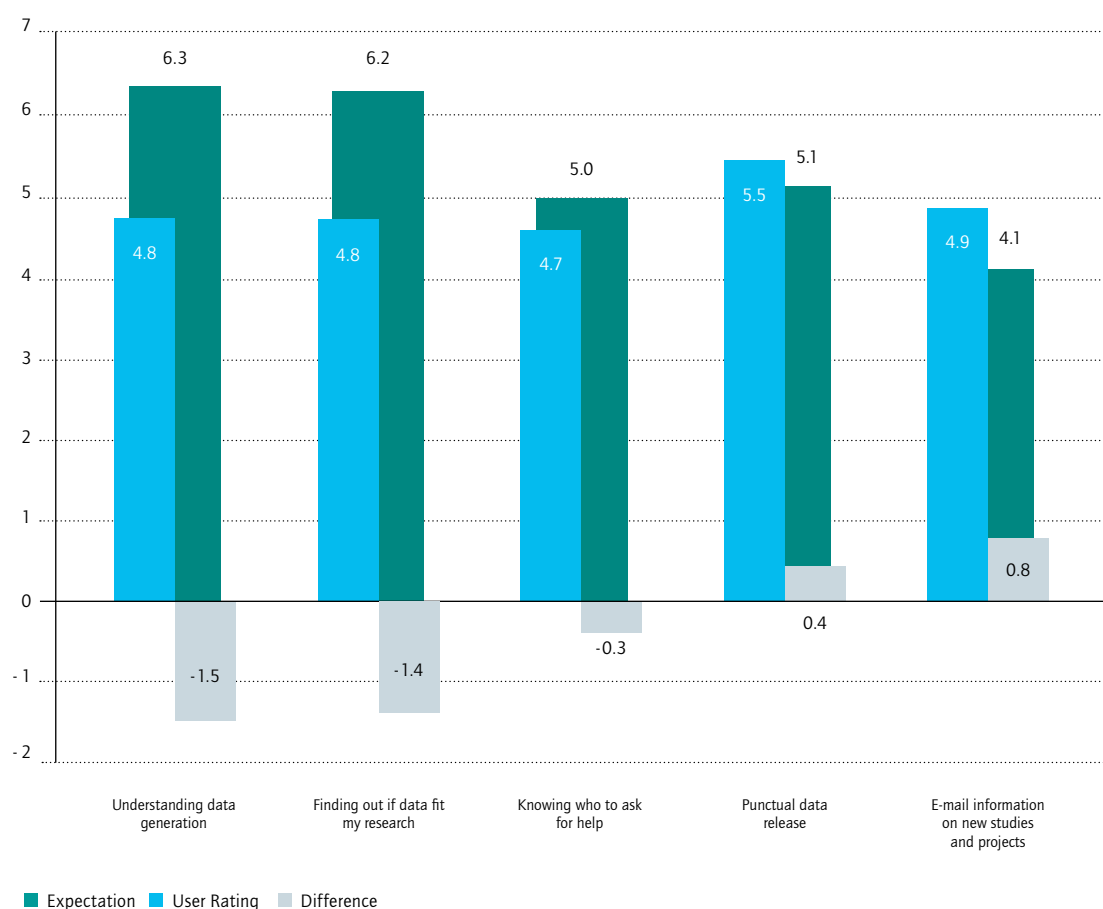


Table 1

Strengths/Weaknesses Category	Rated as Strength	Rated as Weakness	Ranking
Range and number of topics/ variables	233	52	181
Duration of the study	149	0	149
Data quality/ format	109	27	82
Up-to-dateness, innovation	38	6	32
Data access	60	32	28
Labels	1	21	-20
Documentation	38	101	-63
User-friendliness of the data	35	110	-75
n = 380			

EU-SILC Clone

Currently, the official German EU-SILC is provided only as a cross-sectional dataset by the German Federal Statistical Office. A panel dataset is expected to become available in 2020. As a consequence, Germany is excluded from cross-country studies exploiting the longitudinal dimension of EU-SILC. The aim of the EU-SILC clone is to provide an EU-SILC-like panel dataset for Germany from the year 2005 onwards so that Germany can be included in cross-country studies using EU-SILC panel data. The EU-SILC clone is based on the Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) and, therefore, includes all EU-SILC panel variables for which the required information is recorded in the SOEP. Only a few EU-SILC variables cannot be replicated by the SOEP data due to a lack of information. The personal and household IDs of SOEP respondents remain the same in the EU-SILC clone, allowing users to merge the data with additional information from SOEP that is not part of the official EU-SILC data.

EU-SILC provides cross-country comparative statistics on income distribution and social exclusion at the European level. It also covers topics related to housing, labor, education, and health. By providing high-quality comparable micro-data, EU-SILC is designed to facilitate the identification of effective methods of fighting poverty as well as the implementation of respective measures to accomplish social convergence among all Europeans. It provides both, cross-sectional and longitudinal data in four sub-datasets: The household register (D-File), the personal register (R-File), personal data (P-File) and household data (H-File).

The EU-SILC clone data conforms almost entirely to the official EU-SILC guidelines. However, there are a few deviations, the main being related to the panel design and the underlying population. As opposed to the official EU-SILC panel requirement, the EU-SILC clone does not take the form of a 4-year rotating panel, but survey participants are kept in the dataset for as long as they participate. In order to adjust the EU-SILC clone to a 4-year rotating panel, users may drop respondents accordingly. It is worth noting that several EU countries deviate from the 4-year rotating panel requirement, e.g. France. While the original EU-SILC survey population as stated by the official guidelines must include all household members aged 16 and above, the EU-SILC clone includes all household members aged 18 and above (and those members who turn 18 in the survey year).

All variables are listed individually in the EU-SILC clone codebook, which is available on the SOEP/DIW webpage. It includes the following information: First, the description of each EU-SILC variable as in the official EU-SILC guidelines is provided. Then, technicalities and contents of each equivalent clone variable are explained. For most variables, a comparison between the original EU-SILC variable and the respective EU-SILC clone variable is provided in order to illustrate any sort of deviation of the EU-SILC clone variable from the official EU-SILC requirement. Lastly, in the cases of the P- and the H-File variables, the codebook includes a graphical comparison between the EU-SILC clone data and the official German EU-SILC cross-sectional data. More cross-country dataset information can be found on our [website](#).

SOEP Staff & Community News

- **Jürgen Schupp** joined the editorial board of the journal *Soziale Welt*, published by Nomos, on January 1, 2018.
- The DIW Graduate Center welcomed **Jürgen Schupp** as its new Vice Dean in February 2018.
- **Alisa Fränkel** joined the SOEP as team assistant on February 1, 2018. She is filling in for Christiane Eichhorst up to mid-2019.
- **Selin Kara** and **Stefan Zimmermann** successfully completed their training as specialists in market and social research, and are now working as trained specialists on the SOEP team.
- **Martin Kroh**, former Division Head of Survey Methodology and Management at the SOEP, was appointed Professor of Methods of Empirical Social Research with a focus on quantitative methods at the University of Bielefeld starting January 1, 2018. He is supporting the SOEP in the area of survey methodology during a transitional period, and will continue to work on joint ongoing research projects.
- **Nicolas Legewie** and **Prof. Dr. Anne Nassauer's** (FU Berlin) proposal for a Blankensee Colloquium on "Capturing and Analyzing Social Change: Opportunities of Analyzing Visual Data in the 21st Century" was approved. The colloquium will take place in spring 2019. The Blankensee Colloquia are international workshops on innovative issues in the humanities and social sciences. Legewie and Nassauer have invited an interdisciplinary group of researchers to the colloquium whose work deals with the use of visual data in studying human behavior and situational dynamics. Their goal is to link existing approaches in the social sciences with new developments in automatized analysis and processing of visual data in fields such as robotics, criminology, and artificial intelligence.
- **Katja Schmidt** joined the AFFIN project ("Affective and Cultural Dimensions of Integration as a Result of Flight and Immigration") as a postgraduate at SOEP. She studied social sciences at Heinrich-Heine-Universität in Düsseldorf and international relations at Reading University in England. In 2017, she finished her master's degree in sociology at the Freie Universität Berlin. While completing her studies, she worked as a student assistant in the field of international politics at the Körber Foundation in Berlin.
- **Jürgen Schupp** was appointed by the Federal for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth to the Advisory Council for the fifth wave of the German Survey on Volunteering in 2019. He was also elected to the board of the Association of Social Science Research Institutes (ASI) at the annual meeting of the association's members.
- **Jule Adriaans** joined the SOEP as a research associate on the DFG-project "Legitimation of Inequalities over the life course" (LINOS). After completing a degree in sociology at the University of Bielefeld in 2016, she worked as a research associate in the Department of Social Structure and Social Inequality with Prof. Dr. Stefan Liebig. She is currently a member of the Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology (BGHS). Her PhD project focuses on empirical justice research from a cross-national perspective. She is also interested in the use of administrative records in inequality research.
- **Timm Bönke** has been visiting the SOEP for a period of six months from April 1 to September 30, 2018. During his stay, he was leading a project on the evolution and forecasting of lifetime income in Germany funded by the Bertelsmann Foundation.

- **Michaela Engelmann** retired in September 2018. Many data users and respondents know her from the SOEPHotline, where she answered questions and connected users with experts on the SOEP team starting in 2005. Starting in 2008, she also served as the liaison for SOEP respondents at DIW Berlin. She sent out more than a dozen waves of SOEP data by DVD and more recently in encrypted digital form and transmitted innumerable passwords for data downloads to SOEP users. The SOEP team wishes Michaela all the best for her well-deserved retirement after 40 years at DIW Berlin. Janine Napieraj took her place on the SOEPHotline on September 1, 2018, and is now also the contact for SOEP users on contract questions.
- **Gert G. Wagner** was appointed to another term on the Social Advisory Council (Sozialbeirat) by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Federal Minister Hubertus Heil presented him with his certificate of appointment on April 23, 2018. In early May, Wagner was appointed by Minister Heil to serve as a scientific member of the German federal government's commission "Reliable Intergenerational Contract" (Verlässlicher Generationenvertrag). The goal of the commission is to find ways of maintaining and developing sustainable pension systems from the year 2025 onward and thus to create the foundation for a renewed intergenerational contract.
- **David Richter**, a SOEP researcher in psychology, was appointed to the faculty of the LIFE International Max Planck Research School on the Life Course. LIFE is a joint international PhD program of the Max Planck Institute for Human Development (MPIB), the Freie Universität Berlin, the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, SOEP, the German Centre of Gerontology (DZA), the University of Michigan, the University of Virginia, and the University of Zurich.
- **Magdalena Krieger** was awarded a 2018 Joachim Herz Foundation "Add-on Fellowship for Interdisciplinary Economics" in the amount of 12,500 euros. The fellowship's aim is to support PhD students and post-docs working on interdisciplinary economic questions. The fellowship goes to support her dissertation on immigrant families and their integration into the German labor market.
- **Jürgen Schupp** was reappointed to the Council for Cultural Education as an expert for three years up to 2021. The Council for Cultural Education (Rat für Kulturelle Bildung) is an independent advisory board that analyzes the situation and quality of cultural education in Germany and makes recommendations based on exposés and studies for policy makers, researchers, and practical applications.
- **Gert G. Wagner** was awarded the Cross of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany on September 3, 2018, by Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier for his services to the Federal Republic of Germany. The cross was presented on November 19, 2018, by Berlin's Secretary of State, Christian Gaebler.

The SOEP People Video Series



Since 2014, the video series SOEP People has been spotlighting some of the many interesting people who make up the worldwide SOEP community. In our short video portraits, members of the SOEP community give a personal perspective on their work, telling us what drives their research interests, what first led them to work on these subjects, and how their research affects their lives.

SOEP People videos up to 2018 featured: Jule Specht, John P. Haiken-DeNew, Elke Holst, Thorsten Schneider, and Matthias Pollmann-Schult, Jennifer Hunt, Katharina Mahne, Rainer Winkelmann, Nicolas R. Ziebarth, Judith Niehues, Stefan Liebig, Alexandra Fedorets, and Bruce Headey.

In 2018, we produced three video portraits in the SOEP People series: **Stefan Liebig**, the new Director of the SOEP, **Alexandra Fedorets**, labor market economist in the SOEP, and Australian Political Scientist **Bruce Headey**, one of the first SOEP data users and one of the first researchers worldwide to use SOEP data for research on happiness.

The videos can be found in the DIW Berlin Media Center at www.diw.de/soeppeople, on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/user/SOEPstudie>, and are posted on the SOEP Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/SOEPnet.de/>. The interviews are also published in written form in our quarterly SOEP Newsletter under the heading “SOEP People: Five questions to...”.



SOEP People: Five questions to Stefan Liebig

Stefan Liebig became the new SOEP Director and a member of the DIW Executive Board on January 1, 2018. As a sociologist, Stefan Liebig has been using the SOEP data in research on topics of social inequality and justice for many years. Before coming to DIW Berlin, he was a Professor of Sociology at the University of Bielefeld from 2008 to 2017. Prior to that, he taught and conducted research at Ludwig-Maximilian University Munich and at the Universities of Trier and Duisburg-Essen. Stefan Liebig is a member of German Data Forum (RatSWD) and the Council for Scientific Information Infrastructures (RfI).

The video of our interview can be found at:
https://youtu.be/pKhC50Ub_5w (in German).

1. You became director of the SOEP just a few weeks ago. What are you most looking forward to about your new job?

I've spoken to a lot of people here in the SOEP over the last few weeks. And what I thought was really extraordinary were the many ideas flying around here through the halls and offices. I think it will be exciting to build on that.

2. Where do you see the biggest challenges in the years to come?

The biggest challenge will be the question of how to deal with big data. At the same time, we have to ensure that ten years from now, the researchers in our user community still feel the SOEP data are important for addressing their research questions and that they're still using the data.

To achieve that goal, we have to find new approaches. On the one hand, we'll definitely be integrating big data into the SOEP, and we're already working in that direction by testing how to link the SOEP to new kinds of data. On the other hand, we'll need to explore how to make highly complex data and research findings more easily accessible. The aim will be to find new ways of opening up the treasure trove of the SOEP data to our users.

3. What makes the SOEP data so valuable?

The fascinating thing about the SOEP is that the research being done here isn't sealed off in an ivory tower, but is connected to the questions that are being asked in society and the issues people are grappling with. The data we've been collecting for many years enable us to answer these questions.

4. Migration and inequality are central topics of SOEP research. Why is inequality such an important issue today?

Numerous factors contribute to the rising inequality of income and wealth. The problem is that you can no longer say exactly which "dials" need to be turned which way to make the world a little bit more just—there are so many factors that play a role in inequality. That's the one aspect. The other is that in the world today, people live their lives with a greater awareness of their equality, and they expect to be treated as equal by the state and by other people. (...) People don't just accept inequality, but question it and want to understand the reasons behind it. That's why inequality is a central issue in modern society, and one that we still know relatively little about.

5. Many people associate inequality with questions of justice, another key theme in your research...

The reason why I study it is because I think the sense of justice is a basic human disposition. It shows up in numerous areas. You can have justice in the household, in parenting, in school, in working life. Justice appears as a criterion wherever something is distributed. For us as researchers, this opens up diverse opportunities because we can focus on so many different aspects of the same issue. That's what makes it so exciting.



SOEP People: Five questions to Alexandra Fedorets

Alexandra Fedorets is a labor market economist in the SOEP at DIW Berlin. Originally from Moscow, Fedorets joined the SOEP in 2014 while working on her doctoral dissertation at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, completing her degree in 2015. Her responsibilities at the SOEP currently include work as part of a research team studying the effects of Germany's minimum wage reform. Using SOEP data, the team found that in 2016, 1.8 million people were being paid less than the €8.50 per hour to which they were entitled—a finding that surprised Fedorets and her colleagues. To better understand what was going on, Fedorets accompanied labor inspectors on a raid.

The SOEP People video interview can be found at:

<https://youtu.be/4XM9yAat16Q>

1. It's fairly uncommon for researchers to accompany labor inspectors on a raid. What was it like?

We went to two restaurants with a group of around 15 inspectors, fully armed and wearing bulletproof vests. They questioned all of the employees in each restaurant about their working conditions and contracts. They also checked the accounting department to see if what the employees told them matched the paperwork.

2. What did you find out?

We were surprised at the very “interesting” statements many employees gave—for instance, that they had just started working in the restaurant an hour ago, or that the important documents we wanted to see just happened to be at the tax advisor. And when we were able to look at the paperwork, we often found that it did not match what the employees had told

us. It was shocking. Overall, you could see that work reality is often very different from what's reported in the official documents. All in all, we came to the same conclusions that we had come to using the SOEP data: employers are not complying with the minimum wage law across the board.

3. You had the opportunity to compare different data sources while working on the minimum wage project. What are the advantages of the SOEP data?

There's a major discussion underway in the research community about which data are best. Some say that administrative data are better than survey data like the SOEP. But in our minimum wage project, we found that the administrative data show only one part of the picture—the part from the official accounting statements. The SOEP data are collected by interviewing employed people directly, so they present a more realistic picture of what working life actually looks like.

4. Your study attracted considerable media interest. How important is it to you that your research sparks debate?

I always thought it was exciting to work on current issues. But the idea of wanting to change society wasn't such a strong motivation for me. The minimum wage project changed that. When I see the number of reactions I've received and the discussion we've triggered, it makes this kind of research even more enjoyable for me, and it gives me an additional sense of confidence and ambition.

5. You have been part of the SOEP team for four years. Can you remember what it was like being new on the team?

When I started at the SOEP it was like it is for all newcomers: I knocked on a lot of doors and asked: How does this work? How does that work? I had a great deal of support from my coworkers from the very beginning, and I saw how much they do for the SOEP data. That, of course, made it even more fun for me to get involved—not just in research and data preparation but also in department life.



SOEP People: Five questions to Bruce Headey

What makes people happy? Australian Political Scientist Bruce Headey was not only one of the first SOEP data users—he was one of the first researchers in the world to discover the value of the SOEP for research on happiness. Headey is a Principal Fellow at the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research in the University of Melbourne. He is a specialist in welfare and distributional issues and at the forefront of current international research on the efficacy of social welfare policies in Western Europe and North America.

The SOEP People video interview can be found at:
<https://youtu.be/7QMk63LFSzk>

1. Happiness has been one focus of your research for several decades. Do your findings point to a kind of “recipe” for happiness?

One of the strange things in the West is the assumption that the same recipe for happiness would suit everybody. I don't think that's true. I think there are different approaches that work well for different people. People who are relatively altruistic and co-operative tend to be rather happy. Sometimes these are religious people. Other people's happiness comes mainly through the family. What doesn't work so well is a materialistic and careerist approach, which seems to lead to unhappiness even in those areas of life to which materialistic people give priority, such as their job and their income.

2. Your findings overturned the idea of a genetically determined “set point” for happiness across the life. That brought about a paradigm shift.

There was a period between 1985 and 2005 when Western life satisfaction researchers believed that most people had a “set point” of life satisfaction that depended on genetic personality traits. But with the panel data, it slowly became obvious that that paradigm for life satisfaction research was just wrong. There were loads of people in the SOEP—the first panel to provide this evidence—who had rather volatile patterns of life satisfaction. If you traced their life satisfaction from year to year on a graph, you could see that some people's lives were a wild ride: They had ups and downs and periods when they were happy and periods of misery. So the set point theory was actually kicked out by the SOEP data, pure and simple.

That caused quite a stir in the scientific community

What always happens in all the sciences is that people fight like hell to retain the old paradigm and patch it up in weird ways. So there are still people around who say that in the long run, people may revert to a set point that might be predicted by their personality traits. But our research showed that, while personality is a stabilizing factor, happiness is also made up of a lot of choices. If you marry somebody who is more neurotic than yourself, you're done. If you marry somebody who is rather nice and less neurotic than yourself, that permanently increases your well-being. Your work also makes a difference: People who work a lot more hours than they want to are a lot less happy than people who work about the hours they prefer. Of course, that's not entirely your choice—it also depends on your employer.

3. Academics are relatively free to set their own working hours. Are they also more likely to end up being happy?

Academics have a wide choice of time uses and topics of research, and by and large we don't have a boss bearing down on us all that fiercely. We also know that academics and vicars are the longest lived people on the planet—the shortest lived are doctors and dentists. The reason why people live longer if they are academics or vicars is probably connected to happiness. The occupations that people get into have an effect on longevity. People in more autonomous occupations tend to be happier...and happy people do live longer than others—that's clear. We recently published a study on the relationship between happiness and longevity, using SOEP data, in Social Indicators Research “Happiness and Longevity: Unhappy People Die Young, Otherwise Happiness Probably Makes No Difference”.

4. *If you look at the SOEP study today, what makes it unique?*

It's the only panel study in which you can observe all kinds of changes in people's lives across three generations—there are now a number of grandparents in addition to parents and kids from the same families. As the time we observe people gets longer and longer, the more we will be able to address long-run questions about social and economic change. And in the end, I think that the idea of transgenerational structured inequality will turn out to be more untrue than true. I think ultimately SOEP will show that traditional sociology is just bilge.

5. *What would you recommend to young people today who are starting a career in research?*

If you're a young researcher these days, you're almost forced to design your research in terms of real experiments—randomized control trials—or natural experiments. And I think that the people who work on SOEP will want to combine SOEP data, maybe using it as a sort of background file, with other datasets that allow them to analyze it in an experimental or quasi-experimental way. My kids, who are young economists, can't get stuff published in top journals unless it's experimental or quasi-experimental. So something like the global financial crisis is a terrific opportunity: A whole lot of people take a wealth hit and you can see how they react in all kinds of ways—financially, in terms of life satisfaction, everything. But it's getting harder and harder to publish if you're just analyzing panel data in the way it's collected.

SOEP Glossary

SOEP-Core

The German Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) is a wide-ranging representative longitudinal study of private households based at the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW Berlin). Every year, nearly 11,000 households and about 30,000 persons are surveyed by the fieldwork organization Kantar Public Germany for the SOEP-Core study.

Topics

The SOEP started in 1984 as a longitudinal survey of private households in the Federal Republic of Germany. The central aim has always been to collect representative micro-data to measure stability and change in living conditions. It uses a microeconomic approach enriched with variables from sociology and political science. The main survey instruments are a household questionnaire completed by the head of the household and an individual questionnaire completed by each household member. Furthermore, since 1997, the SOEP has collected retrospective biographical information on every new respondent. Based on the information from these questionnaires, user-friendly BIO\$\$ data files are constructed (e.g., BIOBIRTH). The survey uses a relatively stable set of core questions every year covering the main areas of interest in the SOEP:

- population and demographics
- education, training, and qualifications
- labor market and occupational dynamics
- earnings, income, and social security
- housing
- health
- household production
- preferences and values
- satisfaction with life in general and specific aspects of life.

In addition to this standard information, special modules with detailed questions on specific topics are included each year. The topics are documented in the following table. Most of these modules appear in the individual questionnaire, and a few in the household questionnaire. Starting in 2001, several different health measures and well-known psychological concepts were added to the standard individual questionnaire and to age-specific questionnaires.

SOEPlong

SOEPlong is a highly condensed version of the SOEP data that is much easier to handle and analyze than the usual SOEP-Core data. It contains a significantly reduced number of datasets and variables. The data are not provided as wave-specific individual files but are pooled across all available years (in a “long” format). In some cases, variables are harmonized to ensure that they are defined consistently over time. For example, the income information up to 2001 is provided in euros, and categories are modified over time when versions of the questionnaire are changed. All these modifications are clearly documented and described for ease of understanding. In the case of recoding or integration of data (for example, datasets specific to East German or foreign populations), documentation is generated automatically, and all modified variables are provided in their original form as well. SOEP-Long thus provides a well-documented compilation of all variables and data that is consistent over time. <https://paneldata.org/soep-long>

A more detailed overview can be found in the Desktop Companion in the chapter on the structure of the SOEP-Core data.

Table 1

SOEP-Core topics

Year	Wave number	Wave letter	Topic
1986	3	C	Residential environment and neighborhood
1987	4	D	Social security, transition to retirement
1988	5	E	Household finances and wealth
1989	6	F	Further occupational training and professional qualifications
1990	7	G	Time use and time preferences; Labor market and subjective indicators
1991	8	H	Family and social networks
1992	9	I	Social security (2nd measurement)
1993	10	J	Further occupational training (2nd)
1994	11	K	Residential environment and neighborhood (2nd); Working conditions; Expectations for the future
1995	12	L	Time use (2nd)
1996	13	M	Family and social networks (2nd)
1997	14	N	Social security (3rd)
1998	15	O	Transportation and energy use; Time use (3rd)
1999	16	P	Residential environment and neighborhood (3rd); Expectations for the future (2nd)
2000	17	Q	Further occupational training (3rd)
2001	18	R	Family and social networks (3rd)
2002	19	S	Wealth and assets (2nd); Social security (4th); Health (SF12, BMI)
2003	20	T	Transportation and energy use (2nd); Trust; Time use (4th)
2004	21	U	Residential environment and neighborhood (4th); Further occupational training (4th); Risk aversion; Health (2nd)
2005	22	V	Expectations for the future (3rd); Big Five; Reciprocity
2006	23	W	Family and social networks (4th); Working conditions (ERI); Health (3rd); Grip strength
2007	24	X	Wealth and assets (3rd); Social security (5th)
2008	25	Y	Further occupational training (5th); Health (4th); Grip strength (2nd); Trust (2nd); Time use (5th)
2009	26	Z	Residential environment and neighborhood (5th); Risk aversion (2nd); Big Five (2nd); Globalization and transnationalization; Diseases
2010	27	Ba	Consumption and saving; Reciprocity (2nd); Health (5th); Grip strength (3rd)
2011	28	BB	Family and social networks (5th); Working conditions (ERI) (2nd); Diseases (2nd)
2012	29	BC	Wealth and assets (4th); Social security (6th); Health (6th); Grip strength (4th)
2013	30	BD	Big Five (3rd); Trust (3rd); Loneliness; Working conditions (ERI) (3rd); Diseases (3rd)
2014	31	BE	Health (7th); Risk aversion (3rd); Globalization and transnationalization (2nd); Residential environment and neighborhood (6th);
2015	32	BF	Minimum wage, Reciprocity (3rd), Transportation and energy use (3rd)
2016	33	BG	Minimum wage (2nd); Family and social networks (6th); Working conditions (ERI); Activities and attitudes towards migration issues
2017	34	BH	Minimum wage (3rd); Wealth and assets (5th); Social security (7th), Big Five (4th); Trust (4th); Loneliness (2nd); Inheritances (2nd)
2018	35	BI	Minimum wage (4th); Trust (4th); parliamentary elections (2nd); Health (9th); Activities and attitudes towards migration issues (2nd)

SOEP-Regio

SOEP offers diverse possibilities for regional and spatial analysis. With the anonymized regional information on the residences of SOEP respondents (households and individuals), it is possible to link numerous regional indicators on the levels of states (Bundesländer), spatial planning regions, districts, and postal codes with the SOEP data on households. However, specific security provisions must be observed due to the sensitivity of the data under data protection law (see overview). Users are not allowed to make specific statements about respondents' place of residence or administrative district. Nevertheless, the data provide valuable background information for analysis.

contact information to their employer. The employer contact data then formed the basis for a standardized employer survey conducted separately from the rest of the SOEP survey. This employer information can be linked with the individual and household data from the SOEP study. The new linked employer-employee dataset opens up new opportunities for wide-ranging forms of secondary analysis with innovative questions from diverse disciplines in the social and economic sciences. An additional unique feature of SOEP-LEE is the analysis of employer survey data quality, carried out through the measurement of meta- and paradata over the course of data collection. As a result, this project also contributes to the ongoing development and refinement of survey methodology in organizational studies.

http://www.diw.de/soep-lee_en.

SOEP-Pretests

The SOEP conducts pretests before questionnaires are fielded each year. The aim is to test new questions or modifications of existing questions. In some cases, behavioral experiments are tested and included in the main SOEP survey. A pretest usually goes out to about 1,000 respondents. The samples are representative by approximation for the adult population (aged 16 years and older). Data are collected by Kantar Public, passed on to the SOEP, and released by SOEP to users. Since 2012, pretests have been conducted with the SOEP-IS sub-samples.

<https://paneldata.org/soep-pretest>

CNEF

The Cross-National Equivalent File (CNEF) project is a collaboration between the Ohio State University, SOEP, and other panel studies. The CNEF contains equivalently defined variables from ten different household panel studies in countries including the US, Germany, and the UK. For more information on the Cross-National Equivalent File, see:

<http://cnef.ehe.osu.edu/>

LIS

LIS, the cross-national data center in Luxembourg formerly known as the Luxembourg Income Study was founded in 1983. Its mission and core work have not changed since its inception: to acquire and harmonize high-quality microdatasets and to make them available to researchers around the world. At the same time, LIS is constantly evolving and growing, as is its user community, which currently numbers in the thousands. LIS' data holdings are organized into two databases. The longstanding Luxembourg Income Study (LIS) Database, which is focused on income data, will soon contain over 300 datasets from more than 50 high- and middle-income countries. The smaller and newer Luxembourg Wealth Study (LWS) Database contains microdata on assets and debt; LWS now includes 20 datasets from 12 countries. (Germany was one of the earliest participating countries; the LIS and LWS Databases contain 11 and 2 datasets from Germany, respectively.)

<http://www.lisdatacenter.org>

SOEP-LEE

There is increasing consensus in economics and the social sciences that the workplace plays a crucial role in individual life outcomes. This is true in labor market research in economics and sociology, in the research on networks and social capital, health research, the research on educational and competency acquisition processes, wage information, and the work-life interface, as well as in the broader research on inequality. For this reason, there has been increasing interest in what are known as "linked employer-employee" (LEE) datasets, in which employees' individual data are linked with information on their employers. The workplace data collected in the framework of the SOEP-LEE project will substantially expand the information on the work contexts and working conditions of respondents to the SOEP survey. The project started by asking all dependent employees in all of the SOEP samples in 2011 to provide

SOEP Infrastructure Projects

IAB-SOEP Migration Sample

The IAB-SOEP Migration Sample is a joint project of the Institute for Employment Research (IAB) and the Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) at the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW Berlin). The project attempts to overcome limitations of previous datasets through a sample that takes into account changes in the structure of migration to Germany since 1995. The dataset is an additional SOEP-Core sample. It is completely harmonized with the SOEP and integrated into SOEP v30 (identical questionnaire with additional questions on the respondent's migration situation). The study opens up new perspectives for migration research and gives insights into the living situations of new immigrants to Germany. Data collector: Kantar Public Germany. <https://paneldata.org/iab-soep-mig>

GeFam

The project “Refugee Families in Germany” (GeFam) was designed as a panel study to be conducted in the years 2016, 2017, and 2018 with the aim of improving the data infrastructure for social and economic research on the living situations of refugees in Germany. The Research Centre on Migration, Integration, and Asylum of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF-FZ) created the sample by random selection from the Central Register of Foreigners (AZR). The target population consists of individuals who came to Germany seeking asylum between January 2013 and January 2016. The survey covers topics including the refugees' living situations; their schooling, higher education, and vocational training; and their current occupational situations and social participation. Participation in the survey is voluntary. The study is designed around the SOEP household concept, with the “anchor” respondent drawn from the AZR being surveyed along with his or her family members. The survey is conducted by Kantar Public with specially trained interviewers and with support from interpreters when needed.

The first round of the IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey covering 1,600 “anchor” respondents and their family members was fielded in June 2016. The survey is funded by the Federal Employment Agency. The project “Conception, Implementation, Preparation, Register Linkage, Analysis, and Data Provision/

Distribution of a Representative Sample of Refugee Families (GeFam)” recently approved by the BMBF will double the sample by another 1,600 “anchor” respondents and their families. The GeFam boost sample was designed to increase the number of individuals in the sample who came to Germany with their children or other underage family members. Fieldwork for the boost sample began in August 2016. According to current data, around one-third of all refugees arriving in Germany are minors, and about 90% are accompanied by parents or other adult family members.

http://www.diw.de/gefam_en

MORE

The scientific study MORE is designed to deliver first results on the role of civic engagement to promote the short- and long-term integration of refugees in Germany. The intervention study is being carried out by the Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) at the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW Berlin) in partnership with the Institute for Employment Research (IAB). It is funded through the Leibniz Competition (funding line: innovative projects) and is being conducted between 2017–2019.

For the purpose of this study, MORE has partnered with Start with a Friend, a social start-up that has created more than 2,500 mentoring-style relationships (known in German as “Tandems”) between refugees and locals since 2014. Like many other civic initiatives for refugees, Start with a Friend aims at creating friendships between refugees and locals and providing emotional as well as practical support. Locals who are interested in participating in the program can register on the Start with a Friend website. The MORE study uses a randomized controlled trial that will be conducted with participants of the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Sample 2017 and 2018. Participants who are interested in participating in the study are randomly selected into either the group of 300 participants (the treatment group) or the group of 500 non-participants (the control group). All participants are matched with a local by Start with a Friend. Both the treatment and the control group will be interviewed annually as part of the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees. One of the main questions the study seeks to answer is whether active support from a mentor plays a causal role in expanding refugees' social networks, improving their language use, or aiding them in the search for education or employment. In addition to the Survey of Refugees, there will be a survey on how the mentoring relationship evolved. The participating mentors will be surveyed on their expectations and the relationship with the refugee developed over time

from their perspective. This will focus on the intensity of the mentoring relationship, shared activities, and the dynamics of the relationship over the course of the program. The data on refugees and locals can be combined for analysis. All data and analyses will be made available. If the refugee has given consent, it will be possible to link the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees with the Integrated Employment Biographies sample (IE) of the IAB.

http://www.diw.de/MORE_en

EVA-MIN

The Leibniz research project EVA-MIN is conducted jointly by researchers at the SOEP, the Institute for Employment Research (IAB) in Nuremberg, and the University of Potsdam. The project was commissioned by the Leibniz Association and was funded from 2015 to 2018. It aimed to comprehensively evaluate the effects of the minimum wage introduced in Germany in 2015 and to promote the exchange of knowledge among stakeholders. The project is also providing the data for use by researchers worldwide. More information on EVA-MIN can be found at: <https://eva-min.soep.de/> (in German only)

AFFIN

The research project “Affective and cultural dimensions of integration following forced migration and immigration” (AFFIN) aims at analyzing affective and cultural dimensions of integration that have received only marginal attention in the research to date using an interdisciplinary and multi-method approach. The focus is on attaining a better understanding of social changes resulting from immigration and on developing recommendations for political decision makers.

The project consists of four subprojects conducted by: Freie Universität Berlin (Subproject 1), Campus Charité Mitte (Subproject 2), the Socio-Economic Panel Study (SOEP) at DIW Berlin (Subproject 3), and University of Göttingen (Subproject 4). In line with the larger questions of the research network, the SOEP-based subproject addresses the question of

what attitudes local populations display toward refugees, how these attitudes change over time, and how they relate to the presence of refugees in neighborhoods and municipalities. AFFIN is funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and is being conducted between 2018–2020.

http://diw.de/affin_en

InGRID-2

InGRID-2 aims to promote integration of and innovation in social science research infrastructures (RI) dealing with “poverty, living conditions and social policies” as well as “working conditions, vulnerability and labor policies” in line with the ambitious EU2020 goal of inclusive growth.

The project organizes networking activities (summer schools), in-depth discussions (expert workshops), and provides help to promote key innovations for sustainable inclusive growth. Extending the RI to all EU countries is high on the agenda of InGRID-2. Based on surveyed users’ needs, the project carries out joint research activities in important research areas with a focus on increasing data integration, exploring new data linkages and sources, innovating microsimulation tools, improving comparative policy data, and investigating new high-quality indicators. The project received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 730998 and runs from 2017 to 2021. The project consists of 18 partners coordinated by the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KU Leuven/Belgium).

http://www.diw.de/ingrid-2_en

SOEP-IS

The SOEP introduced the longitudinal SOEP Innovation Sample (SOEP-IS) in 2011 for innovative research projects. SOEP-IS was designed primarily to test survey methods and topics that involve too high a risk of non-response for the long-term SOEP study. The first wave of the first subsample of SOEP-IS started in September 2011 with the new core questionnaire “SOEP Innovations” and used new methods to measure gender stereotypes. SOEP-IS was developed further between 2012–2017.

Annual fieldwork runs from September to December. The overall volume and costs of the surveys conducted in SOEP-IS are lower than if “fresh” samples were used: central household and individual characteristics, which are invariant over time, are already available and do not have to be collected again. A two-step module of governance was established to regulate the selection of topics and modules: first, SOEP survey management runs a basic methodological test to establish whether the size, format, and survey mode outlined in a proposal seem appropriate for implementation in the SOEP-IS. The SOEP Survey Committee then checks the content of proposals and prioritizes these for selection purposes. For more information about SOEP-IS or to submit a proposal, see: “SOEP-Innovation Sample (SOEP-IS) – Description, Structure and Documentation” by David Richter and Jürgen Schupp (SOEP-paper 463) and <https://paneldata.org/soep-is> and <http://www.diw.de/soep-is> (See pages 57–72 of this report)

SOEP Service

SOEPnewsletter

In addition to providing comprehensive documentation and user support services, the SOEP Research Data Center also publishes the quarterly SOEPnewsletter containing the latest information on data updates, conferences, and SOEP-based publications. The newsletter is distributed by email to the growing international SOEP user community.

http://www.diw.de/SOEPnewsletter_en

SOEPlit

Many of the research findings and publications based on SOEP data are archived at DIW Berlin. Bibliographic descriptions can be found in our SOEPlit database. In addition, we archive publications based on the European Community Household Panel (ECHP) and the Luxembourg Income Study (LIS), as the data on Germany contained within these international comparable datasets are partly generated from SOEP data. To keep this database up to date, we ask all authors to send us copies of all of their publications based on SOEP data by e-mail to:

soeplit@diw.de

<http://www.diw.de/SOEPlit>

SOEppapers

In 2007, we launched the discussion paper series SOEppapers on Multidisciplinary Panel Data Research. It publishes papers based either directly on SOEP data or using SOEP data as part of an international comparative dataset (for example CNEF, LIS, LWS). In line with SOEP’s multidisciplinary design, we welcome research from all of the social sciences: Sociology, psychology and behavioral genetics, survey methodology, economics, econometrics and advanced statistics, demography, educational science, political science, public health, geography, and sport science. SOEppapers are published on a non-exclusive basis, so there is nothing to prevent an author from publishing elsewhere as well. All SOEP users are invited to use SOEppapers as a platform for their SOEP-based research. The series is designed to open up ongoing research work to an international audience for discussion and debate. To submit paper, please contact: soeppapers@diw.de

http://www.diw.de/soeppapers_en

SOEPcampus

The SOEP is working to constantly improve methodological training in the use of SOEP data—especially for young scholars in sociology, economics, and psychology. In addition to holding workshops at universities, we offer introductions to the use of the SOEP data and workshops on particular issues of data use. They are listed on our website at:

http://www.diw.de/soepcampus_en.

SOEPmonitor

The SOEPmonitor compiles time series since the mid-1990s for chosen indicators calculated on the basis of SOEP data. The most important function of the SOEPmonitor—aside from reporting detailed information on the situations of individuals and households—is to give SOEP users a benchmark for their own studies. With the figures contained in the SOEPmonitor, we offer an important reference point to evaluate the results of users' own research. Simultaneously, the numerical series of the SOEPmonitor represent social indicators. With every issue of the SOEPmonitor, we provide data series for the years 1984 to the current wave, disaggregated for East and West Germany since 1990 by households and individuals. Since the 2007 SOEPmonitor, tables are provided in English as well.

http://www.diw.de/SOEPmonitor_en

SOEP in Residence

In addition to offering SOEP users the standard Scientific Use File (by encrypted download), online access (via SOEPremote), and advice from our SOEPHotline, we also provide opportunities for research visits to the SOEP. SOEP in Residence offers opportunities for discussion with SOEP team members and feedback on work in progress. For users interested in using the small-scale geodata, a research stay at the SOEP Data Research Center at DIW Berlin is mandatory. SOEP also provides research stays to address special research questions and topics. Research visits to SOEP's fieldwork organization, Kantar Public Germany, are also possible.

<http://www.diw.de/soep-in-residence>

SOEP Archive for Reanalysis of Published Findings
The SOEP supports efforts in the scientific community to make data easily available for replication and reanalysis. At the same time, the SOEP is obligated to ensure that respondents' data are used solely for scientific purposes. This means that data users have to sign a data distribution contract with DIW Berlin and are forbidden from disseminating any part of

the data to third parties. To facilitate reanalysis and replication, the SOEP Research Data Center offers to archive the syntax used by researchers in preparing and analyzing the data for analysis, and makes the syntax available for download from the SOEP-RDC website. The syntax should contain the version of SOEP data used in the form of the DOI to enable replication.

Some journals require that researchers provide access to the dataset used in their research. To meet this demand, we also offer to archive users' research datasets. The SOEP-RDC will provide the dataset upon request to researchers who have signed a data distribution contract with DIW Berlin.

<http://www.diw.de/soep-re-analysis>

Digital Object Identifier (DOI)

To ensure replicability of research findings, precise citation of data sources is crucial. To this end, the SOEP has introduced Digital Object Identifiers (DOI) to identify SOEP publications and datasets. DOIs make it possible to cite research data on the Internet even when the location (URL) is subject to change. A series of metadata are linked with each DOI to guarantee improved description and recognition of the data. The SOEP RDC, as a publisher, has the prefix 5684 in each DOI registered via da|ra. It is important for SOEP users to know that this does not change anything about our proposed mode of citation for the SOEP data. Rather, it provides you with the additional possibility to add a unique DOI to your citations. To ensure that data sources are cited precisely, the SOEP group recommends the following mode of citation:

English: Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP), data for the years 1984–2017, version 34, SOEP, 2019, doi:10.5684/soep.v34.

German: Sozio-oekonomisches Panel (SOEP), Daten für die Jahre 1984–2017, Version 34, SOEP, 2019, doi:10.5684/soep.v34.

Short Version: SOEP v34

PART 5

SOEP-Based Publications in 2018

2018

SOEP-Based Publications over the Last Decade

Figure 1

SOEP-based (S)SCI publications 2004–2018 (1518 out of 1885 overall)

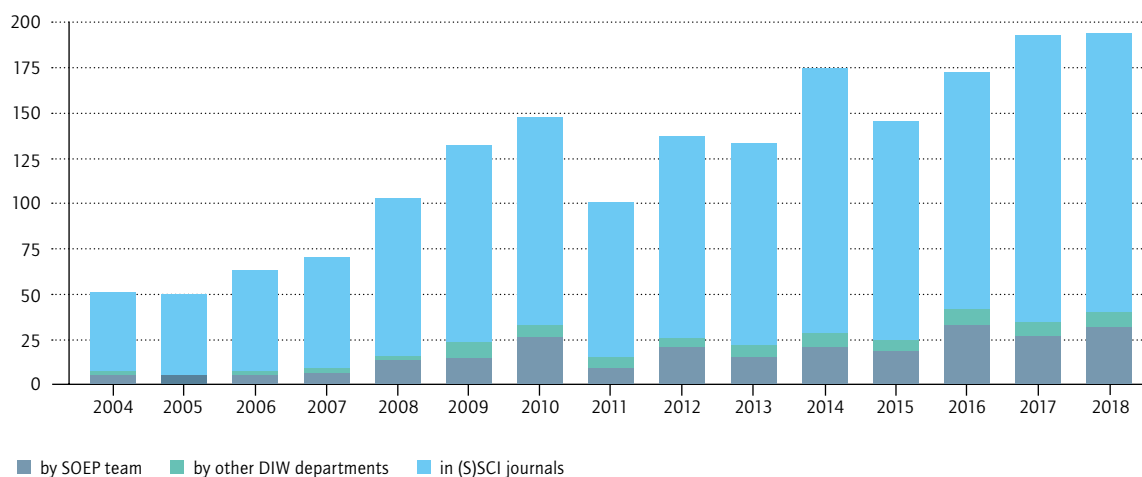
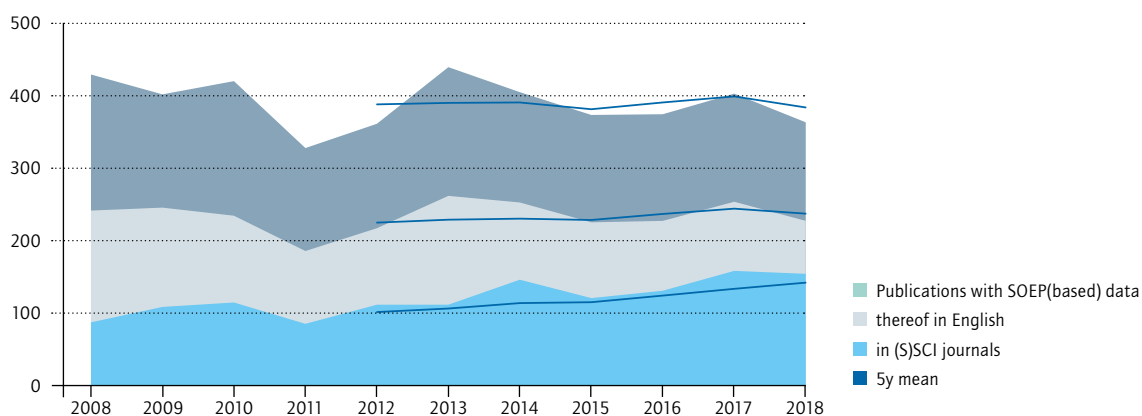


Figure 2

SOEP-based publications 2008–2018 (4292 out of 8444)



(S)SCI Publications in 2018 by SOEP Staff

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(S)SCI Publications in 2018 by the SOEP User Community

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Internet: www.diw.de/soep

SOEP Director

Stefan Liebig

Editors

Janina Britzke, Jürgen Schupp

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