

Fifty Issues of European Data Watch

By Joachim Wagner

Since its relaunch in 2000, *Schmollers Jahrbuch* has contained a special section entitled *European Data Watch*. This section offers descriptions as well as discussions of data sources that may be of interest to social scientists engaged in empirical research or involved in teaching courses with a practical empirical component. Most of the data sets described are micro data at the level of individuals, households, or firms (including linked employer-employee data sets), and some them cover more than one country.

The Data Watch section has the objective of describing the information in the data source, giving examples of research questions approached using this data, and providing information on how to access the data for research and teaching. All of the contributions are written by experts in the field; many by the individuals were in charge of compiling or constructing the data sets. The Data Watch section also spotlights the new research data centres and data service centres emerging throughout Germany and the rich data sets they host.

When we started this section, many readers warned that we would soon run out of interesting material and that the series might become boring after a few issues of the relaunched *Jahrbuch*. However, our experience clearly shows that this is not the case. Among empirical social scientists, the “micro data scene” is a very lively one, with new (or newly available) data sets, and new, more convenient ways to access confidential micro data appearing almost every quarter. The 50 portraits published up to now of data sets and the institutions that offer the scientific community access to them are widely read, and many have become standard reference material for these data sets. This is important for all contributors to *Schmollers Jahrbuch* because these citations increase the journal’s impact factor.

As a further service to the scientific community, all but the most recent papers published in the *Data Watch* series can be downloaded free of charge from the website of the German Council for Social and Economic Data (www.ratswd.de/eng/index.html) – just click on “Publications” and then on “European Data Watch”.

If you have any suggestions for data sets or data sources to be described in future articles – or other comments – please send a mail to Joachim Wagner <wagner@leuphana.de>. We look forward to the next 50 exciting contributions!