

European Data Watch

This section offers descriptions as well as discussions of data sources that are of interest to social scientists engaged in empirical research or teaching courses that include empirical investigations performed by students. The purpose is to describe the information in the data source, to give examples of questions tackled with the data and to tell how to access the data for research and teaching. We focus on data from German speaking countries that allow international comparative research. While most of the data are at the micro level (individuals, households, or firms), more aggregate data and meta data (for regions, industries, or nations) are included as well. Suggestions for data sources to be described in future columns (or comments on past columns) should be sent to: Joachim Wagner, Leuphana University of Lueneburg, Institute of Economics, Campus 4.210, 21332 Lueneburg, Germany, or e-mailed to wagner@leuphana.de. Past “European Data Watch” articles can be downloaded free of charge from the homepage of the German Council for Social and Economic Data (RatSWD) at: <http://www.ratswd.de>.

National Health Data from the Robert Koch Institute

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1. Health Surveys at the Robert Koch Institute

If you look up *Gesundheit* (“health”) and *public use file* (PUF) in the (German) internet, you are most likely to find links to the corresponding websites of the Robert Koch Institute (RKI)¹. A closer look will reveal that the data sources offered date as far back as the 1980s. Indeed the history of population-representative health surveys², on which the PUFs are based, began with the multi-centric German Cardiovascular Prevention Study (DHP) in April 1984. The three “waves” of what has become known as the National Examination

¹ See for example www.rki.de/nn_220830/puf.html.

² Then West Germany incl. West Berlin.