

Introduction to the special issue on German micro datasets

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Editorial

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This special issue is devoted to the dissemination of systematic information on selected German micro datasets. Some of these datasets already enjoy many users while others are still less known. In any case, the main purpose of the issue is to get interested readers, as well as experienced and young scholars acquainted with the data, their content, and their providers. Rather than only describing what is in the data and what had been done with it in earlier work, I encouraged the authors to provide an outlook on interesting research questions and data features which had not been explored or not been available in the past.

Beyond disseminating the aforementioned information, a second purpose – admittedly a somewhat selfish one on the part of an editor – is to enable the relegation of standardized descriptive elements of the data sources to their respective article in this issue.

The order of the papers largely follows the logic “from firms to workers to households”. We start with the Bundesbank’s famous MiDi data-set, which is a (truncated) census-type data-set on the multinational firm activity of German units abroad or of foreign units in Germany. The second paper covers the IABs data on individuals in the labor market. The third paper addresses the SOEP, already very widely used in academic research, which tracks socio-economic data on German households over time. The last two papers focus on household assets (by the Bundesbank) and microdata on the housing market (by RWI).

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