EPUNet 3

EuroPanel Users Network

EPUNet 2005
International Research Conference

The 2005 Conference of the European Panel Users Network will be held between 30th June - 2nd July 2005 in Colchester, UK in conjunction with the bi-annual conference of the British Household Panel study.

EPUNet 2005 aims to provide an international forum for the exchange of research based on the European Community Household Panel Survey (ECHP). The conference includes parallel sessions and a small number of plenary sessions, and will include papers on fertility and the labour market, pay, subjective well-being, health, income and the life course, labour markets and income dynamics. Two plenary sessions will feature papers by Andrew Clark on "Happiness, Habits and High Rank: Comparisons in Economic and Social Life" and by Giorgio Brunello on "Training in Imperfect Labour Markets: Evidence from Europe". In a final session, a panel of representatives from major household panel studies in the United Kingdom (BHPS), Germany (SOEP), and Australia (HILDA) together with a speaker from Eurostat on the forthcoming EU-SILC survey and two speakers on panel studies in transition countries will consider "Current Issues and Challenges".

This conference is being organised by EPUNet through its coordinating node at the Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Essex. The EPUNet Steering Group served as the Conference Programme Committee.

For the final programme and for links to downloadable copies of all the papers, see the EPUNet web at http://epunet.essex.ac.uk

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EPUNet Short Research Visits

The European Community Household Panel (ECHP) is a complex dataset that contains both cross-sectional and longitudinal micro-data. Since 1999, the Eurostat ECHP Users' Database (UDB) has become available to the scientific community. Interested institutions can now buy the UDB after signing an ECHP research contract stipulating in detail the data use conditions, and in particular the strict confidentiality rules to be applied by any ECHP data users. However, the price of the UDB has remained quite high, thereby limiting access to, and hence analysis, of this unique comparative EU dataset. Academics interested in carrying out a small research project or in running a handful of tables, perhaps to see whether the data are likely to meet the longer-term needs of their institutions, are effectively excluded.

EPUNet has therefore offered researchers with no access to the ECHP in their home institution the opportunity to work with the data on a small research project at one of the four main partner institutions, familiarising themselves with its potential and then, hopefully, becoming regular users of the ECHP and other longitudinal datasets.

EPUNet research visits are short-term visits of no more than three weeks during which researchers are offered access to the ECHP-UDB with the required computing and office facilities, as well as technical and scientific support. Funding is available to cover travel and subsistence expenses. To date, 27 EPUNet research visits have taken place (or are planned for the coming three months). The full list of visitors and their research projects are provided on pages 4 and 5.

The fourth call for applications is expected in the second half of 2005. The dates and deadlines will be anounced on our mailing list and posted on the EPUNet website. If you wish to be notified when the call comes out, send a note to philippe.vankerm@ceps.lu

Below are short extracts of a few of the reports provided by these research visitors, illustrating the potential of these EPUNet visits.

Vincenzo Andrietti, who visited the DIW Berlin in January of this year, used all waves of the ECHP in his investigation of "Unemployment Duration, Unemployment Benefits and Labour Market Transitions in the European Union". His work focused initially on Spain which will be replicated later on other countries. His work begun at the DIW has two main stages – first preparing the data to be used for the estimation of hazards rate models and the analysis of the Spanish unemployment insurance system and second, in the calculation of some initial descriptive statistics. The preliminary results for Spain show that individuals receiving unemployment benefits have statistically significant lower exit rates from unemployment, while unobserved heterogeneity does not seem to play an important role. The opportunities offered to him to discuss his work with local researchers allowed him to begin a co-authored paper with a DIW staff member.

Christoph Knoppik, Barno Rahmatullaeva and Thomas Beissinger, a three-person team from Germany visited the Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of Essex for a three-week period. They worked on a project on wage rigidities in Europe based on the analysis of the ECHP data for 1994-2001. The project aimed to attempt to find consistent evidence on the extent of downward nominal wage rigidity in the European Union, the Euro Area and the national European Union economies using ECHP data to analyze the potential labour market consequences of downward nominal wage rigidity on real wages and unemployment and, finally, to analyze the policy implications of wage rigidity. Taking advantage of the unique opportunity to access ECHP data and to work together as a team and with other researchers at ISER, the team will present the outcome of their research at EPUNet2005 in June/July of this year.

Steffen Hillmert of the University of Bamberg, Germany visited the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), Dublin in March 2005. He carried out research on "family background and education". The main focus was on differences in education as they are associated with characteristics of social background (e.g., parents' level of education or social class) and an investigation of the ways in which the European Community Household Panel (ECHP) data can be used to analyse these issues. To take advantage of the longitudinal structure of the data set, background variables were first constructed using information about parent-children relationships within households, all waves of the dataset were then combined to produce information on parents for all children who have lived in a common household with at least one of their parents for at least one wave – even if they leave their parents' household in later waves.

He concluded that the derived variables on (highest) education provided in the ECHP dataset are essentially cross-sectional, which potentially causes a problem because of the limited observation window in the ECHP and the need to find relatively young people for whom background variables can be constructed. He found that the longitudinal information on educational participation as it is collected in every wave is more useful when studying questions of educational inequality, although dropout and successful completion cannot be distinguished. It seems promising to link the wave-specific information on recent educational activities with the general activity calendars.

Dorota Kwiatkowska-Ciotucha and Urszula Zaluska spent three weeks at CEPS/INSTEAD in Luxembourg. "Job Satisfaction as an Assessment Criterion of Labor Market Policy Efficiency. Lessons for Poland from International Experience" was the subject of the research of these two visitors from the Department of Forecasting and Economic Analyses, Wrocaw University of

Economics, Poland. The goal of the study was the assessment and measurement of the job related satisfaction perception among employees using data from ECHP for 1994 to 2001 and data from a special survey on Poland conducted before the study visit. The aim was to investigate all important aspects of job-related dissatisfaction in "old" European Member States and in Poland to assess how the "Best European Solutions" may be transferred to Poland. Methods of analysis of statistical data included cross–national and inter–temporal comparison of collected and acquired data, leading to insight into all important aspects of job related satisfaction i.e. satisfaction with type of activity, job security, earnings, working condition, distance to place of work and so on in the old EU Member States and in Poland.

Mauro Migliavacca of the Università Cattolica Milano visited the Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of Essex for three weeks to investigate "The transformation in the labour market between family and social vulnerability: the relationship between work instability and family structure, in two south European countries, Italy and Spain." The project, which forms part of the PhD of the researcher, is aimed at an analysis of the role and structure of work in the social vulnerability context. Using waves 2 and 8 in particular, Migliavacca concentrated first on creating a family-work typology and then a social vulnerability index (containing, for example, information on income, housing and care problems). Initial analysis identified some significant differences between Italy and Spain in relation to work/family interrelationships which merit further in-depth investigation. An initial paper is underway.

Michael Maschke of the Institut für Sozialwissenschaften of the Humboldt University, Berlin spent three weeks at the DIW Berlin carrying out research on the "Constitution and Dynamic of Disability Policies in Europe". During this period, he essentially duplicated an analysis made by EUROSTAT in 2001 (Disability and social participation in Europe) and added to it various analyses including calculation of poverty rates and multivariate regressions controlling for disability by other socio demographic indicators.

Although research is so far rather preliminary, initial results indicate that the altogether unfavourable situation of disabled people in 1996 shown in the analysis of Eurostat had hardly improved by the year 2001. Indeed the average unemployment ratio in the ECHP countries has declined (1995: 23%; 2001: 20.2%), but the percentage of inactive persons, (that is, persons neither gainfully employed nor registered as unemployed) remains quite high (63%). In contrast to the analysis of the OECD 2003 (Transforming Disability into Ability) the picture of successful economic integration seems questionable. The average equivalised income of households with a disabled person is reasonably high (approximately 90%), however the average does not reveal anything about the lower edge of the distribution and poverty ratios are clearly higher. In the year 2001, the EU-standard-poverty ratio (60% median) of households without severely disabled persons was at 14.0% (2001) against 18.8% for households with severely disabled persons.

Margharita Sabrina Perra of the Department of Sociology and Social Research at the University of Trento, Italy made "Gender and Welfare State Facing a New Division of Labour" the subject of her research carried out during her stay at the DIW Berlin. Her work included an analysis of social inequalities and the study of life cycles, with the goal of comparing different welfare state systems – in particular Italian and British, in the most recent decades. She compared two groups – those who got their first job in the 1970's and those who began employment in the 1990's – and their job careers during the ensuing ten years. The advantages of the ECHP database for this research which she cites include the ease with which analyses can move from sociological to economic aspects – that is, the possibility to create indicators of a socio-economic type, for example the typologies of family and the detailed information on income including source and quantity of income and wealth.

Perra reflected on the possibility of measuring class membership and social inequalities systems with the help of different indicators and of reconstructing the role of welfare systems in the correction of distortions linked to class membership. Preliminary results affirm that welfare systems are now operating as mechanisms reinforcing social inequalities but also as ways of reproducing value orientations with respect to the sexual division of work, incrementing the risk of poverty for several categories, in particular single mothers, once out of the labour market.

Ivan Voynov of Sofia University in Bulgaria studied "Household income patterns of European countries in the period 1994 – 2003" during his visit at CEPS/INSTEAD in Luxembourg. Using a mixture of comparative analysis of the ECHP data for all countries and literature searches, Voynov investigated the hypothesis that there are significant differences in the household income pattern of European countries and that they reflect a hidden model of such differences and similarities which changes over the years.

Monica Magadi of the Centre for Research in Social Policy of Loughborough University, UK, carried out research on "The Association between Household Poverty and Transitions to Parenthood and Union Formation among Young Females in Europe" at CEPS/INSTEAD. Her project's objectives were the examination of levels and trends in timing and sequence of transitions to parenthood and union formation among young females in different countries in Europe, the examination of the extent to which household poverty influence transitions to parenthood and union formation in Europe, and determination of the effect of timing and sequence of transitions to parenthood and union formation on the risk of poverty. Following a significant amount of data preparation (merging files and deriving variables), Magadi carried out both cross-sectional analysis of individual waves and longitudinal analyses bases on merged data across waves. The work will be presented at various conferences (including EPUNet2005 this year) and submitted for publication.
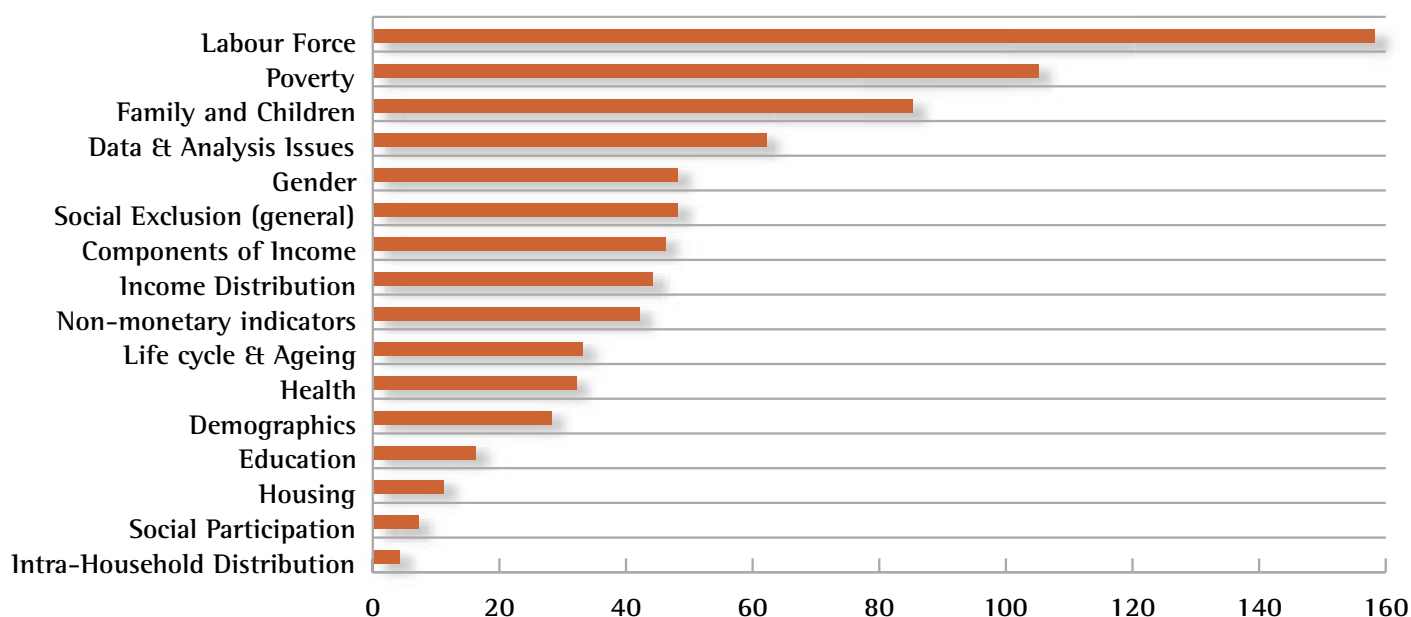
EPUNet Research Visitors

Name	Topic	Institution	Host
Hugo Figueiredo	Gender and Age-Specific Aspects of Human Capital Accumulation in Europe: the case of the southern European Countries in a comparative perspective	Manchester School of Management -UMIST	ISER
Thomas Beissinger	How Real are Wage Rigidities in Europe? An Analysis of European Micro Data from the ECHP 1994 - 2001	University of Kaiserslautern	ISER
Christoph Knoppik	How Real are Wage Rigidities in Europe? An Analysis of European Micro Data from the ECHP 1994-2001	University of Regensburg	ISER
Barno Rahmatullaeva	How Real are Wage Rigidities in Europe? An Analysis of European Micro Data from the ECHP 1994-2001	University of Regensburg	ISER
Rhys Davies	The Family Gap in Pay in Europe: a Cross-Country Study	University of Warwick	ISER
Piotr Michon	Social policy and socio-economical determinants of mothers' employment and childcare responsibilities in five European Union countries in 1996-2000	University of Stirling	ESRI
Monica Magadi	Association between household poverty and adolescent transitions to union formation and parenthood in Europe: Evidence from the European Community Household Panel survey	Loughborough University	CEPS/ INSTEAD
Vincenzo Andrietti	Unemployment Duration, Unemployment Benefits and Labor Market Transitions in the European Union. The case of Spain.	Università D'Annunzio di Chieti e Pescara	DIW
Katrin Golsch	Globalisation, social inequality and the impact of institutional determinants on patterns of labour market integration in Europe	University of Cologne	DIW
Dorota Kwiatkowska-Ciotucha	Job Satisfaction as an Assessment Criterion of Labor Market Policy Efficiency. Lesson for Poland from International Experience	Wroclaw University of Economics	CEPS/ INSTEAD
Urszula Zaluska	Job Satisfaction as an Assessment Criterion of Labor Market Policy Efficiency. Lesson for Poland from International Experience - joint project, leader Dorota Kwiatkowska-Ciotucha	Wroclaw University of Economics	CEPS/ INSTEAD
Steffen Hillmert	Educational inequalities in a longitudinal perspective	Bamberg University	ESRI
Margherita Sabrina Perra	Gender and welfare state facing a new division of labour	University of Trento	DIW
Elmar Schlueter	Determinants of immigrants subjective well-being: toward a cross-national dynamic multi-level analysis of the European Community Household Panel	Philipps-University Marburg	ESRI
Michael Maschke	Constitution and Dynamic of Disability Policies in Europe an Analysis of National Disability Policies and their Outcomes	Humboldt University Berlin	DIW
Ivan Vasilev Voynov	Household income patterns of European countries in the period 1994–2003	University of Sofia, Bulgaria	CEPS/ INSTEAD
Mauro Migliavacca	The Transformation in The Labour Market Between Family and Social Vulnerability: the Relationship Between Work Instability and Family Structure in Two South European Countries, Italy and Spain.	Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore-Milano	ISER
Almudena Moreno Minguez	The Effect of Family and Labour Market on Female Employment: Differences and Similarities in Northern and Southern Europe	Universidad De Valladolid	CEPS/ INSTEAD

Magdalena Andralojc	The Global Wage System: A Comparative Analysis of Wages across EU Countries	Poznan University of Economics	CEPS/ INSTEAD
Adrienne Csizmady	Comparative Analysis of Poverty and Ethnicity	Etvs Lorand University	DIW
Geranda Notten	Poverty in the European Union: Laeken Poverty-at-risk Indicator versus Orsansky Poverty Threshold	Maastricht University	CEPS/ INSTEAD
Olaf Groh-Samberg	Multiple Disadvantage in European Welfare States	University of Munster	ISER
Eldin Fahmy	Poverty, Youth Transitions and Life Satisfaction in Europe	University of Bristol	ESRI
Victoria M Ateca-Amestoy	On the Nature of Leisure Time: evidence from the ECHP'S satisfaction with leisure time question	Universidad de Mlaga	DIW
Anthony Montgomery	Satisfaction, Work/Life Characteristics and Health	Economics, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece	ESRI
Mathias Till	Stations of Being Poor in New Europe - Social Change and Persistence of Precarious Living Conditions in Budapest, Dublin and Vienna	Technical University of Vienna	ESRI
Pia Sophia Schober	The effect of work/family reconciliation policies in different welfare state regimes on 'feminisation' of male life cycles - Denmark, Germany and the United Kingdom in comparative perspective	University of Edinburgh	ISER

Research & Publications database

The EPUNet database of research projects and publications based on the ECHP is available as a searchable database on the EPUNet-website. It includes books, articles, working papers and ongoing research projects. Each entry has information on author(s), title, keywords, ECHP waves and countries used. An abstract has also been added to most of the records and, where applicable, a link to an electronic version available somewhere else on the web. The version on the web is to be updated shortly to bring the total number of entries to over 380. The table below gives an indication of the topics covered by research using the ECHP, based on the keywords in the database. It is clear from the Figure, that the ECHP is used by researchers interested in a wide range of research areas. The data is particularly useful for research in the areas of poverty and social exclusion, labour force dynamics and families and children.

EPUNet Training Courses

The ECHP is quite a complex dataset to analyse, even for experienced
(UDB) format. To help familiarise new users with the use of the ECHP
instruction in analytical techniques for panel analysis, EPUNet organi
course organised by the Tilburg Institute for Social and Socio-econom
Netherlands and a course for beginning users held at the German Inst

For more information on these and future training courses, see the
EPUNet web at http://epunet.essex.ac.uk where announcements
of courses and application forms are made available.

EPUNet Training Course on Advanced Panel Analysis

The third EPUNet training course, on advanced panel analysis, was held from March 11-15 2005. It was organised at Tilburg University (TISSER - Tilburg Institute for Social and Socio-Economic Research, The Department of Social and Cultural Sciences and the Department of Methods) by Ruud Muffels, and the instructors were Ruud Muffels, Jeroen Vermunt, Wilfred Uunk, and Didier Fouarge. There were 13 participants from Germany, Belgium, Spain, Greece, Italy, Finland, Ireland and the UK.

Participants at the Tilburg Training Course

Ms. Eirini Andriopolou	Athens University of Economics and Business
Ms. Sara Ayllon	U.A. Barcelona
Ms. Annelies Debels	K.U. Leuven
Ms. Martina Dieckhoff	Nuffield College
Mr. Juho Harkonen	European University Institute
Ms. Janine Leschke	WZ Berlin
Mr. Henning Lohmann	University of Cologne
Dr. Anne Nolan	ESRI
Ms. Serena Pattaro	Nuffield College
Ms. Leira Salazar	Nuffield College
Ms. Alison Smith	Nuffield College
Dr. Jan Van Bavel	K.U. Leuven
Ms. Leen Vandecasteele	K.U. Leuven

Coverage and Goals

The course was designed to enable students to:

- Work with longitudinal data and in particular with the ECHP User Database file

- Have a basic understanding of data issues such as attrition, imputation of missing information, and of known issues with the comparability of data across countries/regions/waves

- Understand the main differences between panel-data and cross-sectional data analyses and between retrospective and prospective designs

- Understand the methodology of various panel data analysis techniques

- Understand the way categorical dependent variables are to be analysed using panel-data

- Understand the methodology of event history and panel regression techniques and how it can be estimated using statistical packages such as SPSS or STATA

- Understand the methodology of multi-level techniques and how it can be estimated using packages like STATA

- Know how to use the data and to prepare the data for panel-data analyses (event-history and panel-regression)

An outline of the material covered in the course is available on the EPUNet website.

researchers and even in the more user-friendly User Database
for longitudinal analysis and to provide more advanced users with
ses Research Training Sessions. The latest two were an advanced
nic Security Research (TISSER) in Tilburg, the
titute for Economic Research (DIW) in Berlin.

EPUNet Training Course for New Users of ECHP

The fourth EPUNet training course, for new users using SPSS, was held from April 11-15, 2005 at DIW Berlin. It was organised by Olaf Jürgens and Joachim Frick. The instructors were Olaf Jürgens and Christian Schmitt. There were 10 participants from institutions in Spain, the UK, Italy, Greece, as shown in the table at the right - photographs of participants appear right and on page one.

Participants at the Berlin Training Course

Mr. Christos Zografos	Scottish Agricultural College
Ms. Asimina Christoforou	Athens U. Economics & Business
Dr. Seraphim Alvanides	University of Newcastle
Mr. Sergi Vidal Torre	University Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona
Ms. Silvia Rueda Pozo	University Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona
Ms. Chung Yan Ip	Nuffield College, Oxford
Dr. Lorenzo Todesco	University of Turin
Prof. Mike Rose	University of Bath
Ms. Efrosyni Adamopoulou	University of Patras
Ms. Sara McLoughlin	University of Nottingham

Coverage and Goals

The course, for new users of the ECHP, was designed to enable participants to:

- Handle original Eurostat UDB distribution (converting ASCII-files to SPSS-format files)

- Handle different data sets provided with the UDB distribution

- Matching within waves to collect information on individual and household level

- Analysing complex cross-sectional data at individual or household level

- Matching information for individuals across waves

- Using cross-sectional weights and longitudinal weights

- Basic cross-country analysis

- Make use of online resources

- Start own research projects using ECHP-UDB data

At the end of course, the participants were given a zip-file containing the presentations and the syntax files used in the course as well as general ECHP documentation. An outline of the material covered in the course is available on the EPUNet website.

EPUNet Partners

Seven research institutes from Denmark, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Italy and the UK form the project consortium. Representatives of these institutes form the Steering Group of the EuroPanel Users Network. It is co-ordinated by the Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of Essex.

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United Kingdom
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Marcia Freed Taylor

DIW Berlin
German Institute for Economic Research
Berlin, Germany
Joachim Frick
Olaf Juergens

ESRI
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CEPS/INSTEAD
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et de Politiques Socio-Économiques/International
Networks for Studies in Technology,
Environment, Alternatives, Development
Differdange, Luxembourg
Eric Marlier
Philippe Van Kerm

CLS
Centre for Labour Market and Social
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Peder J. Pedersen

TISSER
Tilburg Institute for Social and
Socio-economic Research
Tilburg, The Netherlands
Ruud Muffels

DSSR
Department of Sociology and Social
Research, University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy
Antonio Schizzerotto

Gaining Access to the ECHP

EPUNet does not distribute the ECHP data. Interested institutions can buy the ECHP Users' Database (UDB), which contains anonymised ECHP micro-data re-organised in a more user-friendly format after signing an ECHP research contract stipulating in detail the data use conditions, and in particular the strict confidentiality rules to be applied by any ECHP data users.

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