

Extending the coverage to non-private citizens: exclusion of the institutional population and the comparability of administrative data in Europe

Topic 7 – Better statistics for a globalised world

Keywords: Institutional population, non-coverage, censuses, frame imperfections

Introduction

The institutional population (in average about 1.14 percent of the overall European population) in retirement and nursing homes, prisons or refugee hostels is usually excluded in social surveys. Survey researchers justify the exclusion with practical concerns (hard-to-survey) and the assumed high costs of data collection. In the light of recent societal developments (e.g. demographic aging, increasing immigration of refugees) this approach to accept non-coverage can be questioned. The presentation presents preliminary results of research conducted within task 2.5 ("Including the institutional population into a sample survey of the general population") of the EU-funded SERISS project and tries to answer the overarching questions which data are available for the institutional population and how comparable those data are.

Methods / Problem statement

After giving a definition of institutions and the institutional population the presentation provides some rationales why an extension of the coverage might be necessary due to significant differences between the institutional and the private population. The insufficient availability of comprehensive and cross-national survey data in combination with scarce scientific literature causes a lack of knowledge about the institutional population in European countries. Against this background the censuses with their full coverage could serve as gold standard for a data collection in institutions. The presentation examines the feasibility and constraints for a cross-national comparison of those data, also taking into account the country-specific methods of data collection in the census.