Gender mainstreaming in surveys: Germany

This is the German contribution to the comparative analytical report on gender mainstreaming in surveys, coordinated via questionnaire by Anne-Marie Nicot from ANACT, France, and Irene Houtman from TNO, the Netherlands, for the European Working Conditions Observatory (EWCO). This report has not been subjected to the standard Foundation editorial procedures.

Introduction by national correspondent

This contribution to the EWCO comparative analytical report is based on an analysis of gender mainstreaming in the two German surveys identified in a report of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Working conditions surveys: An international comparison. With regard to some of the questions, the national correspondent asked representatives of the surveys for information that is not available to those outside of the responsible institute or discernible from survey documentation.

Q1. Who is responsible for administering national surveys in your country?

The analysis for Germany focuses on two surveys identified in the comparative analysis for the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Working conditions surveys: An international comparison. These are the German Socio-Economic Panel Study (GSOEP) and the BIBB/IAB survey (see below).

Is there a special unit in this institute dealing with gender statistics?

GSOEP: No. Interests of the scientific community have influence.

BIBB/IAB/BAuA surveys: No.

Please expand on the types of topics covered by this questionnaire/these questionnaires, and mention the year it started as a national survey, and whether this survey is a yearly exercise, every second year or has another periodicity.

GSOEP:

The GSOEP is a wide-ranging representative longitudinal study of private households in Germany. It provides information on all household members, consisting of Germans living in the old and new German states, foreigners and recent immigrants to Germany. The panel was started in 1984 and is conducted annually. In 2003, more than 12,000 households and nearly 24,000 persons were sampled.

The GSOEP provides broad information on diverse aspects of household composition, occupational biographies, employment, earnings, health and satisfaction indicators.
Subjects covered in topical modules of the survey are personal values, preferences and expectations, social security, education and training, and allocation of time.

The GSOEP is located at the **German Institute for Economic Research (DIW)**.

Data from the GSOEP will in future **flow into the European Community Household Panel (ECHP)**.

**BIBB/IAB/BAuA surveys:**

The BIBB/IAB surveys are representative surveys of 34,000 employed people. The surveys have been conducted jointly by the **Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB)** and the **Institute for Employment Research (IAB)** operating as the Federal Employment Services research institution. The surveys have been funded by the **Federal Ministry for Education and Research**. The first BIBB/IAB survey took place in 1979. Further surveys were conducted in 1985/86 and 1991/92. Each of the four surveys had a specific topic.

The fourth and most recent survey, at the time of writing, took place in 1998/1999. The **Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (BAuA)** also participated in the survey.

The survey aimed to shed light on the structural change in the working world and the impact on working conditions and the individual mobility behaviour of employed people. The survey gathered detailed information on qualification profiles and occupational developments as well as the organisational, technological and qualifications situation of their working place.

A new **BIBB/BAuA survey (in German, 58Kb PDF)** was scheduled to be conducted in 2005/2006. In addition, the IAB plans the establishment of a new panel on development of competences over the life course.

New features of the BIBB/BAuA 2005/2006 survey are:
- CATI (computer assisted telephone interview) instead of CAPI (computer assisted personal interview) survey;
- 15,000 instead of 34,000 employed people surveyed.

**Q2. In what way has the national survey(s) or questionnaire(s) on quality of working life (and health or employment) changed over the last decade(s)?**

*Which questions have been added, and which have been deleted in order to make the surveys more gender sensitive, and have any questions or topics changed (if so, in what way)?*

*Do you think that the survey(s) or questionnaire(s) have become more gender sensitive due to these changes?*

**GSOEP:**

In an analysis of gender mainstreaming, the context and background of the surveys have to be taken into account. In particular, the GSOEP is a household panel with a strong focus on social structures. It cannot be regarded as a working conditions survey in a narrow sense.

The analysis of gender mainstreaming should not only look at the questions. The survey offers the opportunity to look both at work and non-work situations. The panel design also allows the monitoring of life cycles, such as marriage, birth of a child, etc.

The following assessment of the GSOEP is based on the individual questionnaires for the period 1997–2005. Some indicating questions will be examined and further considerations regarding gender mainstreaming discussed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Q-No.</th>
<th>Question – Issue</th>
<th>Gender mainstreaming considerations on other or further questions, relevance of the question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Among other questions on satisfaction: Satisfaction with existing childcare facilities</td>
<td>More concrete questions on the needs …… Elder care?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>What is a normal day like? Questions on time use</td>
<td>Question on sharing domestic work or childcare would give further insights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Question regarding employment One option: Maternity / parental leave</td>
<td>The formulation has changed several times. Context of legal changes and formulations in the law – from parental leave (in German ‘education holidays’) to ‘parents’ time’. This is explained in the questionnaire with: Interruption or reduction of employment after the birth of a child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Interest in either full-time or part-time employment</td>
<td>How far can this be achieved?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Working time preferences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>66</td>
<td>Overview on the activities in the previous years One category is housewife/house husband</td>
<td>Gender neutrality of the formulation is given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>92</td>
<td>Questions on the role of the state or private care for a number of issues related to social security and social infrastructures among others: Childcare for pre-school and for school children, elder care</td>
<td>More detailed questions on the needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>95</td>
<td>Questions on concerns regarding a number of issues (‘Are you worried about …?’ One question out of nine and directly after ‘job security’ refers to opportunities for childcare</td>
<td>Further question on prospects of the job, promotion, chances of further qualification ….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>107</td>
<td>Question to foreigners / immigrants: ‘Have you ever experienced discrimination or disadvantages in Germany because of your origins?’</td>
<td>Similar question regarding gender discrimination? – In general? In particular in work?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

General: Only a few questions directly related to quality of work and employment. No question on
gender equality in the job, etc.
Remark: Survey has a broader perspective than working and employment conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Q-No.</th>
<th>Question – Issue</th>
<th>Gender mainstreaming considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>Questions on concerns regarding a number of issues</td>
<td>This question was no longer asked in 1999 and subsequent years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(95</td>
<td>One question out of nine and directly after ‘job security’ refers to opportunities for childcare</td>
<td>One new question in 1999: Concerns about the introduction of the euro instead of German marks In 2004: new questions: consequences of enlargement, immigration to Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in 1997</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Question 41 is only included in this survey. It covers 14 specific questions on working conditions</td>
<td>The questions appear balanced as regards gender at first glance. However, the second question is: ‘Do you have to do hard manual labour in your job?’ An alternative question more common for typical women’s manual jobs is not included in the list. This could have been for example: Do you carry out repetitive tasks in a tiring position?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Among other questions on satisfaction: Satisfaction with existing childcare facilities</td>
<td>More concrete questions on the needs …….. Elder care?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>What is a normal day like? Questions on time use</td>
<td>Question on sharing domestic work or childcare?</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• for work</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• domestic work</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• child care</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• and others</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>On week days, Saturdays, Sundays according to average hours?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Additional to 1997: ‘Care and support for persons in need of care’ (introduced: 2001)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Interest in either full-time or part-time employment</td>
<td>How far can this be achieved?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Occupational changes</td>
<td>Some questions for example on promotion, change from full-time to part-time work or vice versa, potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Likelihood of changes within the next two years</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
for receiving further education or training can offer some insight with regard to gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>53–70</td>
<td>Detailed questions on working time</td>
<td>Allows analysis of: different working time patterns Q53 D: Flexitime – Certain degree of self-determination of daily working hours with working hours account Q66: Working time preference regarding number of hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>Question if part-time occupation is in accordance with the law concerning parental part-time work (Federal Child Benefit Law) (already in 2004 survey)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>144</td>
<td>Question to foreigners / immigrants: Have you ever experienced discrimination or disadvantages in Germany because of your origins?</td>
<td>Gender discrimination?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81–86</td>
<td>Questions on income equity</td>
<td>A question on gender pay equity could have completed the list of questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>144</td>
<td>Experiences of discrimination or disadvantages of foreigners in Germany</td>
<td>A similar question could focus on gender</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Questions no longer asked**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Description</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95 in 1997 98 in 1998</td>
<td>~ Q.131 List of concerns about a number of issues – new issues such as consequences of enlargement, immigration to Germany, or health Questions on opportunities for child is no longer included</td>
<td>List of concerns about a number of issues – new issues such as consequences of enlargement, immigration to Germany</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Main changes compared to 1997:
A number of questions on unemployment and searching for new employment have been included. A number of new questions on working time and overtime are considered in detail. Working time has a significant impact on female employment opportunities and career prospects. However, in general this is an issue of major concern and debate.

**BIBB/IAB:**
For the BIBB/IAB survey, the assessment is only based on the questionnaire for the 1998/1999 survey. The previous survey took place in 1991/992 when gender mainstreaming had not yet been a topic on the agenda. Additionally, the focus of the surveys differed.
The questionnaire (in German, 327Kb PDF) for the BIBB/IAB Survey 1998/99 is available.
The survey focuses on:
- education and training;
• occupational position;
• working tools;
• physical environment – demands and risks in working conditions;
• job demands/control;
• occupational health (outcomes, prevention etc).

Psychosocial demands in working conditions are included but are not given as much attention as physical demands.

The questions on education and training are balanced. However, there seems to be a stronger focus on ‘typical male’ than ‘typical female’ qualifications.

In relation to the fact that more women than men tend to be employed below their qualification level, the following two questions included in the questionnaire could give insight on job access and career development:

• ‘Could someone with a lower qualification than you perform your job?’
• ‘How much of your knowledge and skills that you acquired in your occupational education can you use in your current job?’

Some examples of potential additional questions that could have been included from a viewpoint of gender mainstreaming follow.

The potential of career breaks for care for children or elder family members is not considered in questions on qualification and access to jobs or change of employment. Only in one question very general ‘family reasons’ is the last issue on a list of possible reasons for a change of occupation. This is too general to make any conclusions of the nature of the family reasons.

Childcare provision during education or vocational further training could be a question from the viewpoint of gender mainstreaming.

So-called tacit skills acquired in phases of leave or career breaks for the care of children etc are not considered in the questionnaire.

In the context of career development, the questionnaire incorporates a question on the gender of the superior.

As regards working time, there is only a very general question in the case of dependent employees. In the case of self-employed people, there are more detailed questions but no reference to work–life balance or working time preferences.

In the context of pay, the respondents are presented with categories of income groups to choose from. Other questions focus on some details of variable pay elements.

There are no questions regarding pay grades or occupational classification systems, or the relative share of fixed or variable pay elements, or recent changes. This would be a core question in relation to gender pay equity.

For work satisfaction, a list of issues is provided. Work–life balance is not included. There is only a general question on satisfaction with the regulation of working time.

With regard to work–life balance, a question refers to the number of children.
Q3. Please outline the way gender statistics are being produced and mainstreamed.

Who are the ‘users’ (e.g. policymakers or ministries, research institutions, gender issues advocates, etc)?

How are they involved in the production process of gender statistics? Are their needs collected in a systematic way?

Access to the raw data is restricted in both cases.

BIBB/BAuA 2005/2006: The survey is funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). The concept of the survey is the task of BIBB and BAuA but requests by the BMBF are considered.

GSOEP: The GSOEP is understood as a scientific study, looked after and conducted by scientific research for scientific research. The dataset is available to all scientists within Germany and from other countries. The dataset is frequently analysed with regard to gender aspects in national and international comparative research.

Are there any guidelines on how to produce engendered statistics?


GSOEP: No. See previous question.

Are there any formal procedures to assess statistics produced with a gender perspective?


GSOEP: The GSOEP does not gather statistics in the way of providing statistics by the Federal Statistical Office. The objective of the GSOEP is to provide a dataset for analysis and evaluation by the scientific community.

Are there specific publications dealing with gender that present and interpret topical data on women and men in a form suitable for a wide range of non-technical users?

GSOEP: Yes, for example in the Weekly reports. See also the publication lists and remarks to the following question.

BIBB/IAB 1998/99: Yes. See publication lists and remarks to the following question.

Is there a publication on working conditions or quality of work and employment issues that takes into account gender issues?

GSOEP:

In the case of the GSOEP, no general overview publication on working conditions or quality of work and employment issues is published by the GSOEP team. The publications based on the GSOEP cover the broad range of issues that are the subject of this household panel.

The DIW itself publishes analysis on specific issues of quality of work and employment, and these take into account gender issues or are dedicated specifically to questions of gender and quality of work and employment.

BIBB/IAB 1998/99:

A number of publications (105Kb PDF) on quality of work and employment are based on the BIBB/IAB survey 1998/99. Gender differences are taken into account in several of the publications.

BIBB’s contribution in the Report on occupational education 2003 (in German, 6Mb PDF) (pp. 188–189) specifically addresses gender differences based on the BIBB/IAB 1998/99 survey.
Qualifications and demands of the job and conditions at the workplaces are the primary concerns of the survey and in the BIBB publications.

Are statistics on individuals collected and presented or reported by gender?

Yes, in both surveys.

An evaluation of the survey data according to gender is possible in both surveys.

What strategies have been put in place in order to produce, present and disseminate gender sensitive statistics?

Both responsible institutes consider the main task as providing the survey dataset that also allows analysis and evaluation according to gender.

Q4. What development(s) or causes may have been responsible for these changes in national statistics on quality of work and health in employment?

You are asked to comment briefly on major driving forces related to: 1) demographic changes, ageing of the work force; 2) the economy, such as recession; 3) legislative changes (acts or regulations that came into force); or 4) technical developments that have raised awareness of gender sensitive issues in your country.

BIBB/IAB survey: The focus only on the BIBB/IAB survey 1998/99 does not allow for any assessment of development.

GSOEP: Attention to gender sensitive issues has not changed in the years under review. There was a similar degree of gender sensitivity in 1997.

Q5. Can you provide (quantitative) information on gender sensitive indicators and their effects/outcomes?

You are asked to indicate which gender sensitive indicators are implemented in the national survey(s), and to provide this quantitative information for the workforce as a whole, as well as for both men and women.

Areas which these indicators may refer to are:

- gender specific working conditions, or gender specific ‘female’ or ‘male’ job characteristics (aesthetic, emotional demands) as identified by horizontal segregation, and/or female/health conditions, discrimination issues;
- gender pay gap;
- gender specific time preferences, working times or working time arrangements;
- care, work–family balance/work home interference, based on family information, caring responsibilities of workers and, possibly, availability of care infrastructure;
- or more generally unpaid work, and different attitudes/roles for men and women towards work and/or preferences;
- other (complex) indicators that may be present.

Comment on gaps you identify in the survey(s) concerning its gender sensitivity.

For detailed analysis, see reply to question 3.
GSOEP:
The dataset already allows for analysis and evaluation according to the indicators listed. Due to the panel nature of the survey, it is possible to look at individual developments over a longer period of time. One could, for example, follow women’s and men’s occupational development and income after the birth of children, etc. The panel feature also allows for analysis of educational and training background, etc.

BIBB/IAB survey 1998/99:
The focus and purpose of the survey/questionnaire has to be considered in the institutional context in order to do justice from a viewpoint of gender mainstreaming.

Q6. Can you, in a more qualitative way, reflect on the quality of employment of men and women, and the political, societal or other discussion on the degree of, or need for gender mainstreaming in general in your country.

Is it an issue at all, or maybe even a topical issue?

With a cabinet decision of 23 June 1999, the German federal government ‘recognised the equality of women and men as a consistent principle guiding its governance and decided to promote this endeavour by means of the gender mainstreaming strategy’.

This is based on the national objective enshrined in Article 3 paragraph 2 sentence 2 of the Basic Law, the German constitution. On 26 July 2000, subsequent to this decision, the federal government adopted section 2 of the Joint Rules of Procedure of the federal ministries that all departments should observe this approach in all political, normative and administrative measures of the federal government.

The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth developed a relevant concept built around the Inter-ministerial Working Group on Gender Mainstreaming (IMA) to implement these provisions (Implementation of gender mainstreaming (35Kb PDF)).

The Coalition Agreement of 16 October 2002 has a section on gender mainstreaming:

We will continue our large social policy reform package to implement the ‘equality of women and men’. Only a gender equity policy allows the modernisation of our society. Article 3 of the Basic Law requires us to establish the framework conditions that facilitate the equitable sharing of power and responsibility between the genders. We are striving to achieve a speedy implementation of gender mainstreaming. The translation into actual reality of the equality between women and men is a consistent guiding principle pursued by the federal government in every ministry... Gender mainstreaming is to be established in a sustained manner throughout all ministries of the federal government as a method to implement article 3 of the Basic Law.

Gender budgeting forms part of this strategy. We will build up a gender competence centre that supports the introduction of gender mainstreaming in all policy fields, initiates research, coordinates knowledge and will train experts. (Implementation of gender mainstreaming (35Kb PDF))

Later on, regular reports were given on the state of the equality of women and men in the Federal Republic of Germany.

The Gender competence centre, which was established in October 2003, is an independent research and consulting facility. It covers the initial counselling demand of the federal ministries
and acts as coordinator and intermediary between the ministries, on the one hand, and the gender experts, institutes and practitioners, on the other.

The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth has a website on gender mainstreaming and issues a newsletter on the subject.

The Gender competence centre provides guidelines (in German, 866Kb PDF) for gender mainstreaming in research projects.


Beyond this governmental approach of implementing the gender mainstreaming approach, the German discussion on quality of work and employment for women and men is an issue in research institutes, such as for example Gender mainstreaming and demographic change.

The German debate on quality of work and employment for women and men has now moved on to gender diversity.

_Do the potential users of the gender statistics show any interest in learning about gender issues relating to quality of working life and employment, and are needs formulated on this topic? If so, what are these needs?_

It is not possible to answer this question without further research on the ‘potential user’ of gender statistics with regard to the surveys discussed.

The honorary SOEP User Committee was appointed for the first time in 2004 and comprised up to eight (two female/six male) active and internationally recognised scientists.

_If relevant, do you think the topic of gender mainstreaming is approached somewhat differently in your country, using different concepts?_

The government approach is in line with the EU approach towards gender mainstreaming.

**Q7. Can any lessons be learned from the gender mainstreaming in surveys within your country for European level?**

The two surveys differ considerably regarding the focus of content and methodology, so the answer may differ between the two. The answer should also be seen in relation to a specific European survey.

In a comparison with the European Working Conditions Surveys (EWCS), it should be explained that neither the GSOEP nor the BIBB/IAB survey is a working conditions survey in the narrow sense. The GSOEP includes questions on work and employment in a broad range of questions, while the BIBB/IAB survey focuses on some central questions of quality of work and employment, namely qualifications. The survey also covers questions on working conditions but in a less broad perspective than the EWCS.

All in all, surveys on quality of work and employment and working conditions should find a balance in the focus and in the issues so that the data gathered can mirror the conditions for women and men in their societal background. In all steps of the development and implementation of the survey, as well as in the interpretation, a gender mainstreaming perspective is required. Such an analysis should not only investigate single questions related to gender and a potential gender impact; the whole picture must be the frame of reference covering working life and non-working life of women and men in their societal context.
A further general underlying understanding for the assessment is that gender mainstreaming requires an active intervention. This implies the need to investigate whether any questions aim at a change of working conditions, the sharing of family responsibilities or opportunities for other non-working life activities. The focus should be on a change of gender segregation and traditional gender divisions in working life and non-working life.

As regards single issues, a core area in European policies – namely gender pay equity – should be addressed. This would require a number of questions related to pay grades, variable pay, premiums etc.

The questions on occupational changes in the 2005 questionnaire (Q23) for the GSOEP suggest an interesting approach in analysing developments.

In general, the approach of a panel that includes questions about work and non-working life can offer advantages with regard to gender mainstreaming as it covers a broader range of factors that are relevant for gender equality within one survey. Additionally, people’s development can be observed over a longer period of time and this also offers the chance to analyse differences between women and men as regards training and employment histories or the impact of family groups.

References


Author of the German contribution:
Anni Weiler, AWWW GmbH ArbeitsWelt – Working World

The German national correspondent thanks Anja Hall from the Federal Institute for VocationEducation and Training (BIBB) and Elke Holst from the German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP) at the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW) for their contributions to some questions of the questionnaire.