

## NEPSdata No. 5

### First Major Data Releases Achieved: NEPS Data Available On Starting Cohorts 2, 3, 4, and Thuringia Study

In a major data release in September and October, the NEPS has published first scientific use data from starting cohort 2 (Kindergarten), starting cohort 3 (fifth grade), starting cohort 4 (ninth grade) as well as data from the additional study in Thuringia. Scientific use files are now available to all contracted research users of the NEPS. Moreover, comprehensive documentation such as data manuals, questionnaires, codebooks, technical reports, or supporting syntax are provided. To facilitate international research using NEPS data, all data sets are delivered with German and English metadata (i.e., variable and value labels). Instruments and large parts of the documentation are provided in English, too. Detailed information on data and data access can be found on the webpages of the [NEPS Data Center](#).

The Kindergarten cohort comprises ample data on a sample of 2,996 children in day-care facilities two years prior to school enrollment in Germany. Competence data on children—achieved via picture-based tests—and context data collected from educators, from Kindergarten principals as well as from parents are available in the first wave release (starting cohort 2, data version SC2 1.0.0). The first wave release of the fifth grade cohort (starting cohort 3, data version SC3 1.0.0) provides data on 6,112 students in fifth grade from different school tracks in Germany. The data comprise questionnaire as well as test data on those students. Additionally, context data collected from teachers and school heads are available. Analogous to the Kindergarten sample, there are also comprehensive data from the parent interviews, for example, data on the family's sociocultural and socioeconomic background or the student's school history. Data on starting cohort 4, the ninth-grade sample, are structured in a very similar way and contain a large sample of 16,425 students. Furthermore, the first release of starting cohort 4 (data version SC4 1.0.0) already

contains data from two waves, because the sample was surveyed for the first time in fall 2010, quickly followed by a second data-collection sweep in spring 2011. Besides students at regular schools (*Schülerinnen und Schüler an Regelschulen*) the NEPS is also surveying a sample of students with special educational needs in the area of learning at special schools (*Schülerinnen und Schüler an Förderschulen*). With the exception of test data, full data on students with special needs are already included in the first release.

Many German *Länder* are currently reforming the curriculum and the organization of upper Gymnasium level (*Gymnasiale Oberstufe*). These changes place a stronger emphasis on general education by restricting the differentiated *Leistungskurs-Grundkurs-System* (choice of advanced and basic courses in upper Gymnasium level) during the last two years in the *Gymnasiale Oberstufe*. The Thuringia study aims to capture the possible effects of such a reform. The data released for this study comprise two cross-sectional surveys that were conducted during the graduation years of 2010 (last year before the reform) and 2011 (first year after the reform) in Thuringia. The target population of the study encompasses all grade 12 students in 2010 und 2011 in Thuringia. The realized sample from 32 randomly selected *Gymnasien* in Thuringia consists of 2,260 students. Additionally, questionnaire data from parents and teachers are available (Additional Study Thuringia, data version TH 1.0.0).

The research database of the NEPS is growing continuously. In sum, data on starting cohorts 2 (Kindergarten), 3 (fifth grade), 4 (ninth grade), 6 (adults), as well as the Thuringia study (Organizational Reform Study in Thuringia) are now ready for scientific use. Over the next year, second, and partly, third-wave updates of these data will follow.

## Second NEPS Data Workshop for the Members of the DFG Priority Programme SPP1646: "Education as a Lifelong Process. Analyzing Data of the National Educational Panel Study (NEPS)"

Hans-Peter Blossfeld, Professor at the European University Institute in Florence, opened the second NEPS data workshop for the members of the DFG Priority Programme SPP1646: "Education as a Lifelong Process. Analyzing Data of the National Educational Panel Study (NEPS)" taking place on October 8-9, 2012, at the NEPS Data Center located in Bamberg. The Data Center staff presented an extensive program featuring relevant topics on the recently released data on NEPS starting cohorts 2 (Kindergarten), 3 (fifth grade), 4 (ninth grade), and 6 (adults).

First, an introduction to the structure of data, data protection, and RemoteNEPS was given. The workshop then also discussed a wide range of methodological and practical issues in relation to using NEPS data. Additionally, specific research problems from the SPP participants' very own research experience were extensively discussed. During coffee breaks and joint dinner, rich opportunities for fruitful exchange and discussion arose. Numerous participants benefited from this highly relevant event and we are all looking forward to the SPP

colloquium in spring 2013 and to the SPP summer school in the upcoming year.

The DFG Priority Programme aims to be a starting point for promoting widespread public use of the data and the research opportunities of NEPS. Individual projects are funded for three years initially. After this first funding phase, new projects can then be included in the Priority Programme, and the projects approved for funding in the first phase may be extended throughout the second funding phase (2015–2017). At present, the Priority Programme encompasses 17 research projects from five different disciplines. These projects are distributed across seven German universities, one Italian university, and seven German research institutes.

The Priority Programme is coordinated by Prof. Dr. h.c. Hans-Peter Blossfeld (European University Institute, Florence) and Prof. Dr. Sabine Weinert (University of Bamberg).

### NEPS User Trainings 2013

The dates for the NEPS User Trainings 2013 have been fixed:

Date	Event
1/15/2013 - 1/16/2013	17th NEPS user training: Introduction: Starting cohort 2 (Kindergarten), starting cohort 3 (fifth grade), starting cohort 4 (ninth grade)
2/5/2013 - 2/6/2013	18th NEPS user training: Starting cohort 6: Introduction and advanced analysis
3/26/2013 - 3/27/2013	19th NEPS user training: School data of the NEPS (SC3, SC4, TH, BW) with a focus on data on competencies
5/14/2013 - 5/15/2013	20th NEPS user training: Introduction: Starting cohort 5 (first-year students)
7/17/2013	21st NEPS user training: Introduction: School data of the NEPS study (SC3, SC4, TH, BW)
10/29/2013 - 10/30/2013	22nd NEPS user training: Kindergarten and school: Introduction and advanced analysis with SC2, SC3 and SC4
12/10/2013 - 12/11/2013	23rd NEPS user training: Introduction: Starting cohort 5 (first-year students)

For more information on user trainings and registration, please visit our [website](#).

## NEPS Data Center accredited by German Data Forum (RatSWD)

On November 8, 2012, the [German Data Forum \(RatSWD\)](#) took the decision to induct the Data Center of the National Educational Panel Study (NEPS) into the group of accredited research data centers.

The NEPS Data Center complies with all the requirements on research data infrastructure imposed by the RatSWD. These include providing service to users, hosting data workshops, preparing effectively anonymous scientific use data, and compiling data documentation, as well as the nonpreferential provision of research data. In October, Operational Manager of the NEPS Data Center, Dr.

Jan Skopek, presented the core tasks and service areas of the future NEPS research data center (Forschungsdatenzentrum, FDZ) to the Standing Commission for Research Data Infrastructure of the RatSWD. These include editing, provision, and documentation of usable scientific data collected through NEPS, as well as comprehensive support of the scientific community in the use of NEPS data. With Dr. Skopek as Operational Manager of the newly accredited NEPS Data Center, the National Educational Panel Study will from now on be represented as part of the Standing Commission Research Data Infrastructure (FDI) of the RatSWD.

## Current NEPS Working Papers

The following NEPS Working Papers have recently been released:

- Edele, A., Schotte, K., Hecht, M., & Stanat, P. (2012). Listening comprehension tests of immigrant students' first languages (L1) Russian and Turkish in grade 9: Scaling procedure and results (NEPS Working Paper No. 13). Bamberg: Otto-Friedrich-Universität, Nationales Bildungspanel.
- Pohl, S. & Carstensen, C. H. (2012): NEPS Technical Report – Scaling the Data of the Competence Tests (NEPS Working Paper No. 14). Bamberg: Otto-Friedrich-Universität, Nationales Bildungspanel.
- Pohl, S., Haberkorn, K., Hardt, K., & Wiegand, E. (2012). NEPS Technical Report for Reading – Scaling Results of Starting Cohort 3 in Fifth Grade (NEPS Working Paper No. 15). Bamberg: Otto-Friedrich-Universität, Nationales Bildungspanel.
- Haberkorn, K., Pohl, S., Hardt, K., & Wiegand, E. (2012). NEPS Technical Report for Reading – Scaling Results of Starting Cohort 4 in Ninth Grade (NEPS Working Paper No. 16). Bamberg: Otto-Friedrich-Universität, Nationales Bildungspanel.
- Senkbeil, M. & Ihme, J. M. (2012). NEPS Technical Report for Computer Literacy – Scaling Results of Starting Cohort 4 in Ninth Grade (NEPS Working Paper No. 17). Bamberg: Otto-Friedrich-Universität, Nationales Bildungspanel.
- Rohwer, G. (2012). Selection, Choice and Causal Interpretations (NEPS Working Paper No. 18). Bamberg: Otto-Friedrich-Universität, Nationales Bildungspanel.

All NEPS Working Papers are available for download on our [website](#).

## For any further questions, please contact us

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