

Dear Participants,

As you undoubtedly know, representative surveys - especially annual surveys - depend on every household taking part every year. Yours is one of the households that have been part of our study for years or perhaps decades. Thanks to your ongoing participation, our study is producing high-quality data that provide an accurate picture of living conditions in Germany. We are grateful to you for your participation - together, we have made scientific history! Maintaining this high level of quality in the years to come will require ongoing commitment from everyone involved.

Why is every individual person so important?

We'd like to tell you something very important about this survey that you might not realize. For our study LIVING IN GERMANY to continue to provide reliable, meaningful data, it's not only important that every household participates every year: It's also important that every person (of survey age) in each household - if possible - takes part. Why? Because of PUNR.

What's PUNR?

PUNR stands for "partial unit non-response." This term refers to an issue affecting representative population surveys to an increasing degree. In surveys conducted over long periods of time, it's normal that people occasionally drop out. There are a multitude of reasons why this may happen, but for scientific analyses, the effect is always negative: Missing answers can lead to distortions in the data that can only be overcome by making complex calculations of average values to fill in the gaps.



To give an example: Imagine that a household with several income-earners is participating in our survey. All of the household members of survey age provide thorough answers to all of the income questions.

Statisticians can use the data generated from their answers to produce precise figures. But if one or more household members stop answering the questions, we end up with gaps in the data that can only be filled with statistically calculated approximate values. The more of these gaps appear in the data, the more difficult it becomes to produce robust and reliable calculations. Incomplete information on a family's available resources can lead, for instance, to faulty measurements of child poverty in Germany. To avoid incorrect forecasts and conclusions, it is crucially important that we collect complete data.

With your help, we can provide these important data for scientific research!

We would like to ask every person in your household who is registered as a respondent to participate in our survey! Even if you did not complete the survey last year, or if you have not participated for several years, or ever, we invite you to join our survey this year.

Because every single person counts!

What happens with your data?

Your personal data are saved only in anonymous form, are never passed on to third parties, and are only used for scientific purposes. No information that could be traced back to you as an individual, to your partner, or to other members of your household is transmitted to anyone. That means: It is impossible to see from the survey results what individual person provided what information. Of course, all of the participating institutes ensure strict adherence to all the provisions of German data protection law.

Thank you for your participation and trust in our work!

Who is responsible for the project?

The German Institute for Economic Research (DIW Berlin) is responsible for the scientific management of the project.



Prof. Dr. Stefan Liebig
Director of the Research
Infrastructure SOEP in
DIW Berlin



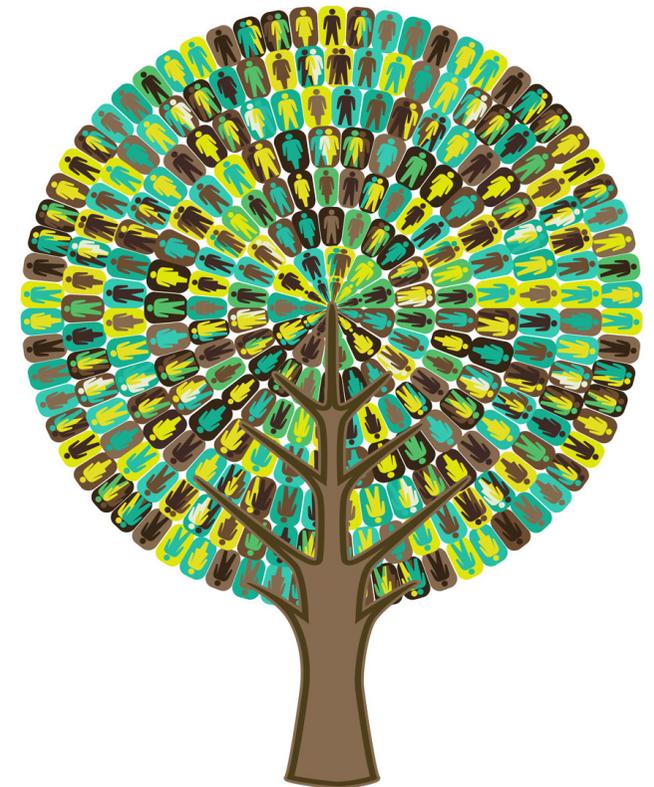
Kantar Public (formerly TNS Infratest) has been responsible for conducting the survey since 1984.



Axel Glemser
Senior Director SOEP
Kantar Public

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LEBEN IN  DEUTSCHLAND



Every single person counts!