

# The German National Academics' Panel Study (Nacaps) – a new longitudinal study observing young researcher's careers and life courses

## Background

On the societal level, education and training of young academics have an essential meaning for the capacity, competitiveness and innovative capability for Germany as a leading place in economics and sciences. On the individual level, attaining educational certificates on a higher tertiary level is linked to advantageous labour market outcomes (Enders/Bornmann 2001, Heineck/Matthes 2012) and promotes attaining elite and leadership positions in different sectors (Hartmann/Kopp 2001). However, due to a lack of consistent and reliable database, numerous current scientific and political questions regarding qualification and recruitment as well as professional careers of young academics cannot be answered adequately in an empiric way (BuWiN 2017).

The *National Academics Panel Study (Nacaps)*, a theoretically founded multi-cohort panel study, makes an essential contribution to filling this data gap.

## Objectives of the project

The project's goal is twofold: Regularly collecting

- representative **cross-sectional data** for Germany concerning the qualification of young academics as well as
- **longitudinal data** observing individual career paths of doctoral candidates and postdocs inside and outside of the scientific sector.

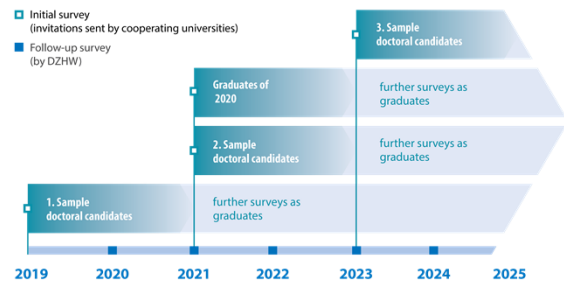
Furthermore, these datasets will be made available to the scientific community.

Thereby, Nacaps is regarded to be an important data base in the field of theory-based, empirical research in education in general and higher education in special. The existing longitudinal data infrastructure in Germany (e.g. SOEP, PIACC-L and NEPS) will be complemented by another panel study focusing on young academics.

## Topics of interest

Motives and attitudes	Qualification process	Scientific work	Career paths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Motives for graduating</li> <li>■ Decisions for certain universities</li> <li>■ Attitudes towards sciences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Mentor-Mentee relationship</li> <li>■ Ways of mentoring and support</li> <li>■ Satisfaction with mentoring</li> <li>■ Promotion and financing</li> <li>■ Fellowships in programmes and assessment</li> <li>■ Industrial doctorates</li> <li>■ Knowledge transfer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Competence development</li> <li>■ Cognitive career</li> <li>■ Networks and collaborative research</li> <li>■ Employment conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Career strategies and decisions</li> <li>■ Careers inside and outside academia</li> <li>■ Tenure track</li> <li>■ Recruitment strategies at universities of applied sciences</li> </ul>
Individual background		Outcomes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Aims in life</li> <li>■ Family and cohabitation</li> <li>■ Social origin</li> <li>■ Social capital</li> <li>■ Educational trajectories</li> <li>■ Personality traits</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Research performance</li> <li>■ Involvement in teaching</li> <li>■ Publications</li> <li>■ Ph.D. success and drop-out</li> <li>■ Individual and societal returns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Balancing out work and family life</li> <li>■ Spacial, international and intersectoral mobility</li> </ul>

## Study design and data collection



From 2019: Results available in the data portal  
Regularly updated with results of follow-up surveys

The focused theoretical constructs will be surveyed retrospectively (e.g. previous educational trajectories) as well as prospectively (e.g. career intentions).

## Potential research questions

As Nacaps is able to identify individual and contextual determinants of academic careers in the academic sector as well as in other fields (like R&D) from a life-course and causal perspective, the following research questions can be empirically answered:

- How do different formal and informal contexts, support and mentoring during Ph.D. affects individual competence acquisition and socialization for young academics?
- What determines Ph.D. success and individual career paths? And, how is the relation between structural, individual and ascribed characteristics?
- How is the relation between individual decision processes and institutional, system-relevant selection processes?
- How do occupational situations between Postdocs who stayed in academia and Postdocs who left academia differ?
- What are individual and collective returns for Ph.D. certificates inside and outside the scientific sector?

## Reporting and data dissemination strategy

Data Portal	Reporting	Micro Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ For participating universities: exclusive access to surveydata and aggregated data for purposes of comparison</li> <li>■ For professional and interested audience: indicator-based reporting on aggregate level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Reports with special focus</li> <li>■ Scientific publications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Providing Scientific Use Files (SUF) for scientific analyses via DZHW research data archive</li> <li>■ Methodological reports for single surveys</li> </ul>

## References:

- Enders, Jürgen / Bornmann, Lutz (2001): Karriere mit Dokortitel? Ausbildung, Berufsverlauf und Berufserfolg von Promovierten. Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag.
- Hartmann, Michael / Kopp, Johannes (2001): Elitenselektion durch Bildung oder durch Herkunft? Promotion, soziale Herkunft und der Zugang zu Führungspositionen in der deutschen Wirtschaft. Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie 53: 436-466.
- Heineck, Guido / Matthes, Britta (2012): Zahlt sich der Dokortitel aus?. Eine Analyse zu monetären und nicht-monetären Renditen der Promotion. In: N. Huber, A. Schelling & S. Hornbostel (Hrsg.), Der Dokortitel zwischen Status und Qualifikation, (IFQ Working Paper, 12), Berlin: Institut für Forschungsinformation und Qualitätssicherung, 85-99.
- Konsortium Bundesbericht wissenschaftlicher Nachwuchs (BuWiN) (2017): Bundesbericht wissenschaftlicher Nachwuchs. Unter: <http://www.buwin.de/dateien/buwin-2017.pdf>. Letzter Zugriff: 30.09.2017.

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