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Keynote Speech - Abstract

Statistical analysis of longitudinal studies: how to evaluate change in risk factor and outcome?

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There is an abundance of longitudinal studies on the effects of work-related factors on various diseases and their consequences for sustained employability. Typically, independent variables collected at enrolment of workers into the study are used to predict occurrence of health problems, sickness absence, or disability during the follow-up period. Such an analysis does not address the time-varying patterns of working conditions and disease responses. Two new strategies have become increasingly popular to address the dynamic pattern of the interplay of determinants, health, and consequences over time: (i) life-course approach with trajectories over time and trajectory group membership, and (ii) multi-state models for changes in risk factors and health states over time. Examples will be presented.