

International Interdisciplinary Conference Work, Age, Health and Employment - Evidence from Longitudinal Studies 19 - 21 September 2016 University of Wuppertal, Germany

Opening Presentation – Abstract

Cross-national epidemiological assessments –opportunities and challenges

Martin Hyde, Dr.

University of Manchester, United Kingdom

Globalization generates an increased need and capacity for cross-national studies. Such studies have many benefits. They allow; i) us to assess whether some countries gaining whilst others lose out; ii) for a 'case study' approach to look at the impact of policies and iii) to explore whether the 'determinants' of health and well-being are the same in different countries or whether mechanisms for good and bad health are country specific. However, there are a number of serious challenges: i) the relation between the unit of analysis and the unit of observation; ii) generating comparable samples and iii) conceptual and item comparability/validity across studies. In this introductory presentation for the session on comparative research, I will outline these challenges, how they might impact on undertaking research on work, health and retirement and possible solutions to these issues. In so doing I will review recent innovations in data harmonisation as well as the rise in digital technologies as possible solutions. Following this we will have 3 excellent papers by authors who each take an explicit cross-national approach to studying the factors that impact on work and retirement in later life.