

## **Anchoring labour market behaviour to life-course events: the effect of the survey design on the determinants of women's labour mobility.**

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The analyses presented in this poster are part of a broader project in which I want to study the determinants of employment dynamics according to retrospective life-course data and panel data. The specific focus of this poster is on the interdependence between life-course and labour supply, which has received a great deal of attention in the economic and sociological literature. There is abundant evidence that the marital status and childbirth affect labour force participation, especially for women.

Employment patterns over the life-course have recently been studied using longitudinal data. But longitudinal data can be gathered prospectively or retrospectively, which may lead to differences in the recall process.

In this poster, I raise two main issues: On the one hand, a substantive question regards the extent to which family-related factors affect the likelihood of a transition between employment states. On the other hand, concerns are raised on the influence of the survey design (prospective vs. retrospective) on the recall process and on the way in which this might affect findings on the link between events in different life domains. The question concerns the extent to which the association between life-course events and labour market behaviour reflects the tendency of the respondents to anchor one event to another when recalling. We hypothesise that the greater difficulty of the recall task in a retrospective study leads respondents to use particular events as landmarks.

We apply multilevel discrete-time models for event-history data to model transitions between labour market states using the German Socio Economic Panel and the German Life History Study.

We confirm that the stage in the life-course has a significant effect on labour market mobility. Being married implies for female workers increased chances to leave employment and reduced chances to re-enter the labour market, while the increasing number of children reduces all the transitions, which is consistent with the growing financial needs of larger families. On the other hand, having small children increases the likelihood of leaving employment while it reduces re-entry in the labour market. Including a dummy indicating the period around marriage reveals a strong positive effect for the retrospective study only, which may be an indication of anchoring employment events to the marital history. However, being married continues to have a strong positive effect on exit, significantly stronger in the retrospective data. The inclusion of a variable indicating the period around childbirth clearly indicates a drop in the participation of women when having a child, but the effect is significantly weaker in the life-course study, not supporting the 'anchoring' hypotheses.