

**Statement by the Senate of the Leibniz Association
on the German Institute for Economic Research, DIW Berlin
(Institut für Konjunkturforschung)¹**

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1 Evaluation and Recommendations

The Senate agrees with the assessments and recommendation of the group of evaluators. The “German Institute for Economic Research, DIW Berlin (Institut für Konjunkturforschung)” is dedicated to basic and applied research in economics, the social and behavioral sciences, and survey statistics. It provides extensive, and with the “Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP)” outstanding research infrastructures. The institute uses the results of its work in the provision of economic policy advice and conveys its findings to the general public.

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The Senate approves of the **process of restructuring** introduced by the current leadership of the institute in February 2011 and the increased focus on the tasks carried out at the institute. The structural organization is now much clearer. The four clusters are connected to existing research areas, and tie these together effectively. Since the last evaluation, one cluster has produced **work results** ranging from “good” to “very good,” and two have produced “very good” results. The SOEP, which has been successfully incorporated into one of the clusters evaluated as “very good,” has been achieving consistently outstanding performance for many years. ...

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With its research, the DIW Berlin is working in a broad range of fields in the economic and social sciences. It carries out important economic and social policy advisory activities for policy makers, government administrators, and the broader public. With the “Socio-Economic Panel,” DIW Berlin is providing a widely recognized research infrastructure. It would be impossible for a university to carry out the range of tasks that are conducted by DIW Berlin. DIW Berlin fulfills the demands that should be placed on an institution of supraregional importance and of national economic policy interest.

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¹ Parts of the official report translated by SOEP – The complete report (in German):

http://www.leibniz-gemeinschaft.de/fileadmin/user_upload/downloads/Evaluierung/Senatsstellungennahmen/DIW_-_Senatsstellungnahme_2012-11-29_mit_Anlagen.pdf

Annex B: Evaluation Report
German Institute for Economic Research, DIW Berlin
(Institut für Konjunkturforschung)
Berlin

1. Summary: Evaluation and Importance of the Institution and Main Recommendations

As stated in the Statutes, the “German Institute for Economic Research, DIW Berlin (Institut für Konjunkturforschung)” observes and investigates economic processes in Germany and internationally. The work carried out at the institute includes both basic and applied research and covers a wide range of fields in the economic and social sciences. The DIW provides wide-ranging and extraordinarily important research infrastructures, especially with the Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP). The institute uses its research results to provide policy advice and communicates its findings to the broader public.

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2. Overall Concept and Focal Points of Research

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The **cluster “Public Finances and Living Conditions”** unites one department, one thematically focused research department, and the SOEP (Socio-Economic Panel), with its specific tasks and structure.

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The **“Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP)”** provides data that have been collected since 1984 in annual surveys of approximately 13,000 German households with approximately 25,000 adults and over 5,000 children living in them. The data contain comprehensive information about these individuals’ living and working conditions. This extraordinarily long-term data collection is of great importance for national and international social and economic research.

In addition to building and expanding the panel, the SOEP also provides related research services, advises policy makers, and, not least in importance, conducts independent research. The SOEP, which carries out research infrastructure tasks to a considerable degree, has a special position within DIW Berlin. This was set down in the institute’s Statutes and in the SOEP’s Bylaws with good reason some time ago. There is also a SOEP Survey Committee, which deals primarily with specific methodological questions around the panel. It is regarded as positive that from 2013 on, the SOEP’s contribution to the DFG will be paid out of the institutional funding of the SOEP (as is the case with the rest of the DIW). ***The overall performance of the department is evaluated as excellent.***

Research Infrastructure Tasks and Research Services: The SOEP is among the leading panel studies of its kind in the world today. It has an impressive international reputation. With the SOEP, the DIW possesses an outstanding unique selling point.

The SOEP is currently being expanded very successfully. This has been made possible by a significant increase in institutional funding as the result of a recommendation of the German Council of Science and Humanities (*Wissenschaftsrat*). The methodological changes that have been made are substantial and convincing. They should be continued systematically.

The SOEP Innovation Sample, a promising complement to the SOEP survey, has been implemented successfully.

The SOEP's cooperation with other DIW departments that want to use the SOEP data is outstanding. The departments benefit from the methodological expertise present within the SOEP, both in microeconomic research and in the individual and household data provided.

The data provided are also used by a large number of researchers outside DIW Berlin. This is evident in the impressive number of publications based on SOEP data. The SOEP provides the data in conjunction with outstanding advice and assistance in data use. The members of the SOEP team possess impressive methodological expertise.

Plans to link the SOEP data with data from other institutions such as the German Pension System are welcomed. The linkage, quality assurance, and documentation of large datasets, but also the cost-efficient collection of these data, are raising many new questions. The SOEP should use its institutional networks in Germany and abroad to play an internationally leading role in resolving these questions.

Research and Policy Advice: the members of the SOEP research staff are very active in research. The research approaches are state-of-the-art and of the highest quality, leading to innovative and valuable studies. They are published at an exceptionally high level, both qualitatively and quantitatively. The findings are also used for policy advice and are communicated to the wider public in specific and appropriate forms.