

Project C1

Transnationality and Inequality: Pilot Project for the Panel Study

The aim of this project is to develop a panel study to investigate social inequality within a transnational context. Although the issue is currently attracting increasing attention, there is still a lack of concepts and concrete research questions with which to understand it in more detail. This necessitates a research design that is capable of studying inequality in the transnational context.

In this framework, "transnationality" is regarded as a feature of heterogeneity that contributes to the genesis and reproduction of social inequalities. It is a feature defined by cross-border social and symbolic bonds and practices maintained by individuals and households. These give rise to processes of inequality at various locations within transnational social spaces which intersect states. The project seeks to identify the underlying mechanisms in order to understand how inequalities arise and change.

Innovative research design is a key requirement for an empirical study of this issue. The present approach employs a mixed-methods design and multisited research. It combines the analysis of existing panel data (SOEP) with the use of longitudinal, qualitative and quantitative transnational surveys. The first funding period will be used to prepare the panel study for implementation in the subsequent funding period, and is therefore devoted to developing research questions, methods and instruments. These will need to take account of the cross-border character of the phenomenon. The project begins this task by focusing on the German-Turkish reference area.

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