

DARE25-047 - From Registers to Research: Building an AMDC-based Household Panel

Abstract

Since the creation of the Austrian Micro Data Center (AMDC), researchers have access to extensive Austrian register data covering key life domains such as family, education, employment, earnings, housing, and health. These administrative data offer exceptional potential for economic and social science research, but are primarily provided in raw form. At the start of AMDC projects, researchers spend considerable time defining key variables, linking datasets and building analytical structures, as the data were not originally designed for research. This typically entails several person-months per project for operationalization (e.g., defining socio-demographic indicators, identifying family members, reconstructing life courses, educational and vocational trajectories, etc.) and handling missing data and inconsistencies. As monthly costs for personnel and AMDC access are high, lengthy data preparation significantly increases project costs.

Moreover, there is currently no ready-made household panel structure that allows for analyses of household and family dynamics over time in a way that is directly comparable to established household panels in other countries. Such comparability is essential for cross-national research and would substantially increase the value and international visibility of Austrian register data.

This project seeks to fill this gap by developing code to construct a household panel that is purely based on administrative and register data from the AMDC. Specifically, we will provide code to: (1) create a set of standard socio-economic indicators derived from raw AMDC data and (2) establish a longitudinal data structure covering all household members from 2011 onwards.

All code will be released as an open-source R-package with clear documentation, enabling other researchers to use it directly or adapt it to their needs. An online forum will support discussion, peer review, and collaborative extensions, ensuring the resource evolves alongside the AMDC.

Scientific disciplines:

Empirical social research (50%) | Economics (25%) | Demography (25%)

Keywords:

register data household panel open-source code

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Further links to the persons involved and to the project can be found under
<https://www.gmbh.wwtf.at/funding/programmes/ei/DARE25-047/>