Summary of course content

How does a societal shock affect people's preferences and beliefs, and thereby decisions? How does knowledge of this give us the opportunity to improve public policy? The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the lives of all of us in different ways. What can economists learn?

While in economics, preferences have been treated as exogenously given for a long time, recent evidence shows that our experiences can have an endogenous impact on preferences which is likely to have important economic consequences.

You will develop and answer your own research question based on the large representative survey “Living under exceptional circumstances” among Germans, conducted by the Cluster of Excellence “The Politics of Inequality” at the University of Konstanz. This panel survey, relying on the same respondents in three waves during the pandemic, allows you to track changes within the same individuals.

The survey captures a large range of topics including responses to enforced versus voluntary anti-COVID-19 policies, gender inequality, protest movements, vaccination, solidarity in private domains and across Europe, data privacy, fairness perceptions of economic interventions for firms, trust in government and public institutions, etc. You will receive all survey questions asked and the large data sets.

The language of the seminar is English. You are free to write your seminar paper in English or German.

Dates

• Kick-off meeting: Wed, Nov 3, 10:00-11:30 (room tba)

Requires reading of a book chapter of about 25 pages and having a rough idea about your topic

• Block seminar 1: Fri, Nov 26, 9:00-17:00 (TWI, Hafenstr. 4, Kreuzlingen)

Present your research question, its motivation and potential policy implications

• Block seminar 2: Di, Feb 1, 9:00-17:00 (TWI, Hafenstr. 4, Kreuzlingen)

Present your findings

• Submission of seminar paper: end of March 2022

Requirements

• In teams of two students, you will develop your research question and answer it by analyzing the data.
• Present and discuss your question and the data analysis in the seminar. (both talks together count 50% for grading).

• A seminar paper stating and motivating your research question, presenting your results and discussing policy implications (counts 50% for grading).

**Preconditions**
• Knowledge in statistics and some interest in analyzing data.

This version: July 2, 2021