

## Abstract

The goal of this project is to study individual and social resources that foster individuals' coping with long-term consequences of social change (including, for instance, globalization or aftermath effects of German reunification) from adolescence to middle adulthood.

## Aim

The aim of the project is to analyze:

- the specific challenges that individuals are confronted with in the domains of work, family, and leisure
- ways of coping with these challenges
- the role of individual and social resources in coping with social change
- Influences of the interplay of challenges, coping processes, and resources on individual development
- related age differences, East-West differences, regional differences

## Theoretical Background

A theoretical model is being tested that is based on challenge- response theories (e.g., the concept of control cycles; Elder, 1974, 1996) and coping theoretical approaches to individual adaptation (e.g., Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; McCubbin & Patterson, 1983).

## Methods

A combination of cross-sectional and longitudinal assessments is employed. The project started in October 2005 with a representative cross-sectional survey of about  $N = 3,000$  14 to 42-year-olds from four federal states. Response rates were very satisfactory and the sample is quite representative for the German household population. For the longitudinal assessment, a corrected random subsample of about  $N = 600$  participants was drawn which oversamples the proportion of high-risk individuals. This subsample was followed up on one additional occasions this year.

## First Results

First results based on the 2005 cross-sectional survey are published in Silbereisen, R. K. & Piquart, M. (2008). *Individuum und sozialer Wandel: Eine Studie zu Anforderungen, psychosozialen Ressourcen und individueller Bewältigung* [Individual and social change: A study on demands, psychosocial resources and individual coping]. Weinheim und München: Juventa. Topics covered comprise demands in work, family and public life, their distribution in different populations, related coping processes, the role of personal and social resources, effects of social change on life satisfaction and well-being, civic engagement in times of social change, and many more.

## Outlook

The cross-sectional and longitudinal data is correlational and does not allow a causal interpretation. Therefore, the longitudinal assessments will be combined with interventional trials. From this data we will also learn how individual activities can feed back to societal structures.

