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Samples, Weights and Nonresponse

NEPS Starting Cohort 5 — First-Year Students
From Higher Education to the Labor Market

Wave 14

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Samples, Weights, and Nonresponse: Wave 14 of the Student Sample of the National Educational Panel Study

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1 Summary of Study

This report refers to Wave 14 of the Scientific Use File (SUF) of the survey “first-year undergraduate students in higher education in 2011” (Starting Cohort 5) conducted within the National Educational Panel Study (NEPS). The current SUF 14.0.0 of the First-Year Students sample is available online at [DOI:10.5157/NEPS:SC5:14.0.0](https://doi.org/10.5157/NEPS:SC5:14.0.0).¹ This paper supplements the previous NEPS Survey Paper by Zinn, Steinhauer, and Aßmann (2017) as well as the Wave 9 up to Wave 13 weighting documentations (Würbach, 2020; Zinn, 2017, 2018a, 2018b, 2019), which give detailed information on the applied sampling procedure, the derivation of design weights, their successive adjustments, and the derivation of panel weights for all of the previous waves.

Table 1 summarizes the study numbers, the survey modes, the periods of the studies as well as the numbers of participants in each panel wave available in the current SUF. The studies B52 (Wave 1), B55 (Wave 3), B59 (Wave 5), B94 (Wave 7), B111 (Wave 9), B112 (Wave 10), and B138 (Wave 13) were conducted via computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATIs). The studies B54 (Wave 2), B56 (Wave 4), B58 (Wave 6), B95 (Wave 8), B113 (Wave 11), and B139 (Wave 14) are online surveys. The study B53 (Wave 1 Test) involves competence tests that have been conducted in parallel to the telephone interviews of the B52 study. In study B114 (Wave 12) a mixed mode design was applied: participants could chose between being interviewed and tested via CATI/CAWI or CAPI. For each wave weights are available for those persons that participated in an interview. Weights for persons participating in competence tests are only available for Wave 1 (i.e. study B53). No weights are provided for persons who attended the competence tests in Wave 5 (study B57), Wave 7 (study B90), and Wave 12 (study B114). Table 2 gives the wave-specific number of participants, temporary dropouts, and final drop-outs in and after the survey.

¹For general information on the NEPS, see Blossfeld, Roßbach, and von Maurice (2011). More detailed information is available in the documentation section on the [homepage](#).

Table 1: Attribution of studies to panel waves.

Wave	Study number	Survey Time
Wave 1	B52 CATI	Winter 2010/11
Wave 1 Test	B53 Test	Winter 2010/11
Wave 2	B54 CAWI	Autumn 2011
Wave 3	B55 CATI	Spring 2012
Wave 4	B56 CAWI	Autumn 2012
Wave 5	B59 CATI	Spring/Summer 2013
Wave 5 Test	B57 Test	Spring/Summer 2013
Wave 6	B58 CAWI	Autumn 2013
Wave 7	B94 CATI	Summer 2014
Wave 7 Test	B90 Test	Winter/Spring 2014
Wave 8	B95 CAWI	Autumn 2014
Wave 9	B111 CATI	Spring/Summer 2015
Wave 10	B112 CATI	Spring/Summer 2016
Wave 11	B113 CAWI	Autumn 2016
Wave 12	B114 CAWI	Spring/Summer/Autumn 2017
Wave 13	B138 CATI	Spring/Summer 2018
Wave 14	B139 CAWI	Autumn 2018

2 Panel progress

The following Table 2 details the panel progress of Starting Cohort 5 by differentiating participants, temporary dropouts, and final dropouts for each group separately and in total. Final dropouts are separated into final dropouts due to refusal during the survey period and final dropouts between two consecutive waves.

Table 2: Panel progress of Starting Cohort 5 by wave.

Wave	Sub-sample	Panel Cohort		Status at the end of the wave				
		Panel sample	Gross sample	Participants	Participation proportion	Temporary dropouts	Final dropout (within wave)	Final dropout (after wave)
1	Total	-	31082	17910	0.576	0	13172	0
	LA	-	7864	5555	0.706	0	2309	0
	UNI	-	11904	8024	0.674	0	3880	0
	FH	-	7460	3894	0.522	0	3566	0
	PR	-	3854	437	0.113	0	3417	0
1T	Total	17910	17910	5949	0.332	11942	19	0
	LA	5555	5555	2021	0.364	3527	7	0
	UNI	8024	8024	2715	0.338	5304	5	0
	FH	3894	3894	1115	0.286	2772	7	0
	PR	437	437	98	0.224	339	0	0
2	Total	17891	17891	12273	0.686	5591	27	13
	LA	5548	5548	3839	0.692	1701	8	2
	UNI	8019	8019	5609	0.699	2395	15	8
	FH	3887	3887	2510	0.646	1374	3	3
	PR	437	437	315	0.721	121	1	0
3	Total	17851	17851	13113	0.735	4558	180	31
	LA	5538	5538	4253	0.768	1234	51	9
	UNI	7996	7996	5841	0.730	2077	78	10
	FH	3881	3881	2701	0.696	1135	45	10
	PR	436	436	318	0.729	112	6	2
4	Total	17640	17640	11202	0.635	6424	14	19
	LA	5478	5478	3695	0.675	1780	3	2
	UNI	7908	7908	5003	0.633	2899	6	12
	FH	3826	3826	2219	0.580	1602	5	5
	PR	428	428	285	0.666	143	0	0

Table 2: Panel progress of Starting Cohort 5 by wave.

Wave	Sub-sample	Panel Cohort		Status at the end of the wave				
		Panel sample	Gross sample	Participants	Participation proportion	Temporary dropouts	Final dropout (within wave)	Final dropout (after wave)
5	Total	17607	17607	12694	0.721	4620	293	3
	LA	5473	5473	4186	0.765	1215	72	0
	UNI	7890	7890	5615	0.712	2149	126	0
	FH	3816	3816	2582	0.677	1145	89	3
	PR	428	428	311	0.727	111	6	0
5T	Total	17311	17311	8767	0.506	8538	6	60
	LA	5401	5401	2907	0.538	2493	1	17
	UNI	7764	7764	3963	0.510	3799	2	30
	FH	3724	3724	1687	0.453	2035	2	10
	PR	422	422	210	0.498	211	1	3
6	Total	17245	17245	10183	0.590	7041	21	6
	LA	5383	5383	3352	0.623	2028	3	1
	UNI	7732	7732	4594	0.594	3124	14	4
	FH	3712	3712	1975	0.532	1733	4	1
	PR	418	418	262	0.627	156	0	0
7T	Gesamt	17218	600	339	0.565	237	24	3
	LA	5379	57	38	0.667	19	0	1
	UNI	7714	343	202	0.589	127	14	1
	FH	3707	158	77	0.487	72	9	1
	Privat	418	42	22	0.524	19	1	0
7	Total	17191	14465	9611	0.664	4432	422	2104
	LA	5378	2653	1924	0.725	666	63	564
	UNI	7699	7698	5133	0.667	2382	183	976
	FH	3697	3697	2277	0.616	1264	156	519
	PR	417	417	277	0.664	120	20	45

Table 2: Panel progress of Starting Cohort 5 by wave.

Wave	Sub-sample	Panel Cohort		Status at the end of the wave				
		Panel sample	Gross sample	Participants	Participation proportion	Temporary dropouts	Final dropout (within wave)	Final dropout (after wave)
8	Total	14665	14665	8629	0.588	6025	11	1
	LA	4751	4751	2933	0.617	1817	1	0
	UNI	6540	6540	3945	0.603	2588	7	0
	FH	3022	3022	1546	0.512	1473	3	1
	PR	352	352	205	0.582	147	0	0
9	Total	14653	14653	10096	0.689	4323	234	920
	LA	4750	4750	3430	0.722	1252	68	276
	UNI	6533	6533	4522	0.692	1937	74	411
	FH	3018	3018	1898	0.629	1039	81	214
	PR	352	352	246	0.699	95	11	19
10	Total	13499	13499	9090	0.673	4191	218	1208
	LA	4406	4406	3072	0.697	1275	59	457
	UNI	6048	6048	4149	0.686	1818	81	452
	FH	2723	2723	1650	0.606	1001	72	276
	Privat	322	322	219	0.680	97	6	23
11	Total	12073	12073	7020	0.581	5042	11	7
	LA	3890	3890	2232	0.574	1654	4	2
	UNI	5515	5515	3396	0.616	2116	3	4
	FH	2375	2375	1225	0.516	1146	4	1
	Privat	293	293	167	0.570	126	0	0
12	Total	12055	12055	8551	0.709	3042	462	726
	LA	3884	3884	2866	0.738	889	129	126
	UNI	5508	5508	3903	0.709	1411	194	367
	FH	2370	2370	1576	0.665	666	128	218
	Privat	293	293	206	0.703	76	11	15

Table 2: Panel progress of Starting Cohort 5 by wave.

Wave	Sub-sample	Panel Cohort		Status at the end of the wave				
		Panel sample	Gross sample	Participants	Participation proportion	Temporary dropouts	Final dropout (within wave)	Final dropout (after wave)
13	Total	10867	10867	7293	0.671	3316	258	708
	LA	3629	3629	2418	0.666	1122	89	250
	UNI	4947	4947	3392	0.686	1451	104	294
	FH	2024	2024	1296	0.640	670	58	147
	Privat	267	267	187	0.700	73	7	17
14	Total	9901	9901	5161	0.521	4733	7	4
	LA	3290	3290	1673	0.509	1615	2	2
	UNI	4549	4549	2479	0.545	2066	4	1
	FH	1819	1819	881	0.484	937	1	1
	Privat	243	243	128	0.527	115	0	0

Notes: (i) LA: students in teacher education, UNI: students at public university without LA, FH: students at public universities of applied science, PR: students at private universities, (ii) 'T' indicates testing, (iii) Discrepancies between the sizes of the gross and the panel cohort samples are due to the short time periods available between forming the wave-specific gross samples and recording all the final drop-outs from previous waves. In some cases, the study of the previous wave was still running while the next wave-specific study already started.

3 Weighting Adjustments for Wave Participation

To mirror the recruitment and participation process within the weighting adjustments, consecutive modeling of the decision and participation process is performed. The first step in this process corresponds to the sampling of universities and fields of study, and to the recruitment of students. Here, design weights compensate for unequal selection probabilities and selectivity due to initial nonresponse. Then, starting from Wave 2, nonresponse adjusted design weights are derived for each wave. For this purpose, logistic regression models are used. On their basis nonresponse models are estimated and participation probabilities are predicted. These are used as adjustment factors to derive cross-sectional and longitudinal survey weights. The results of the analyses corresponding to the initial wave and all subsequent waves until Wave 8 are given in Zinn et al. (2017), for Wave 9 in Zinn (2017), for Wave 10 in Zinn (2018a), for Wave 11 in Zinn (2018b), for Wave 12 in Zinn (2019), and for Wave 13 in Würbach (2020). In Zinn et al. (2017) also the procedures applied to derive design weights as well as the cross-sectional and longitudinal survey weights is described. Table 3 shows the estimated model for Wave 14. Previous wave participation, measured as frequency, is still the primary factor in explaining current participation behavior. The more often a person participated in previous waves the higher is the probability for participation in the current wave.² Also students with upper medium and high reading competence in Wave 1 have significant higher participation propensities compared to their counterparts. On the opposite, students with migration background (generation status lower or equal than 3) have a lower probability for participation (measured on the basis of the panel cohort at start, N=17,910).

²The associated variable is coded as follows: always/very often (participation in thirteen to eleven waves), often (participation in at least half of the waves), seldom (otherwise).

Table 3: Modeling Participation in Wave 14 (i.e., Study B139).

Variable	Reference Category	Estimate	SE
Participation in previous waves	always/very often		
often		−1.893***	0.044
seldom		−5.536***	0.143
University	no		
yes		0.114	0.062
Gender	female		
male		0.027	0.048
Teacher Education	no		
yes		−0.096	0.056
Funding	private		
public		−0.003	0.142
Field of Study	Field 9		
Field 1		−0.243	0.179
Field 2		−0.108	0.068
Field 3		−0.075	0.062
Field 4		−0.227*	0.104
Field 5		0.224	0.402
Field 6		−0.235	0.161
Field 7		−0.263**	0.083
Field 8		0.024	0.143
Reading Competence Wave 1	low		
lower medium		−0.008	0.095
upper medium		0.219*	0.091
high		0.218*	0.092
missing		−0.055	0.070
Region	East		
West		−0.007	0.054
Educational Attainment Mother	1a, 1b, 2b		
1c, 2a		−0.034	0.099
2a		−0.082	0.109
3a, 3b		−0.035	0.140
missing		0.024	0.108
Educational Attainment Father	1a, 1b, 2b		
1c, 2a		0.074	0.125
2a		0.085	0.135
3a, 3b		0.143	0.140
missing		0.152	0.129
Birth Year	< 1989		
1989/90		−0.021	0.056
> 1990		0.067	0.064
Migration Background	generation status ≥ 3		
generation status < 3		−0.137*	0.064
Sample size	17,907 ^a		

Notes: ^a Three of the 17910 students of the Wave 1 panel cohort were abroad at panel start. Thus, per definition they are not part of the SC5 target population.

***, **, and * denote significance at the 0.1%, 1%, and 5% level, respectively.

4 Summary of Weights

Table 4 lists the types of weights provided for SUF release version 14-0-0 and Table 5 gives some summary statistics of the weights provided. All weights are provided in a trimmed and standardized form. For Wave 1, additionally a set of extrapolated cross-sectional weights is given allowing extrapolating sample distributions to the population level of first-year students in the winter semester 2010/2011 according to the field of study, institution type, sex, nationality, and kind of funding. No general recommendation for the usage of sampling weights can be given. However, some advices are given in Zinn et al. (2017) and in Zinn, Würbach, Steinhauer, and Hammon (2018).

Table 4: Types of weights provided.

Type of weight	Label
Weights of strata	w_h
Weights of students participating in B52	w_t1
Weights (extrapolated) of students participating in B52	w_t1ext
Weights of students participating in B53	w_t1comp
Weights of students participating in B54	w_t2
Weights of students participating in B55	w_t3
Weights of students participating in B56	w_t4
Weights of students participating in B59	w_t5
Weights of students participating in B58	w_t6
Weights of students participating in B94	w_t7
Weights of students participating in B111	w_t9
Weights of students participating in B112	w_t10
Weights of students participating in B113	w_t11
Weights of students participating in B114	w_t12
Weights of students participating in B138	w_t13
Weights of students participating in B139	w_t14
Weights of students participating in all online studies	w_allCAWI
Weights of students participating in the telephone interviews	w_allCATI
Weights of students participating in all studies so far	w_allWaves

Table 5: Summary statistics for all weights provided.

Label of weight	Cases	Min.	Lower Quart.	Median	Mean	Upper Quart.	Max.
w_h	11,541	1.667	1.667	6.286	4.764	6.286	6.366
w_t1	17,907	0.009	0.329	0.997	1.000	1.328	3.386
w_t1ext	17,907	0.174	6.020	18.272	18.470	24.327	325.273
w_t1comp	5,949	0.146	0.302	0.825	1.000	1.299	4.134
w_t2	12,271 ^a	0.009	0.348	0.920	1.000	1.331	3.679
w_t3	13,110 ^b	0.008	0.308	0.875	1.000	1.275	3.917
w_t4	11,200 ^a	0.008	0.308	0.835	1.000	1.277	4.117
w_t5	12,691 ^b	0.009	0.302	0.871	1.000	1.269	4.012
w_t6	10,182 ^c	0.017	0.319	0.798	1.000	1.277	4.257
w_t7	9,609 ^a	0.007	0.577	0.795	1.000	1.125	3.802
w_t8	8,628 ^c	0.011	0.272	0.752	1.000	1.147	4.671
w_t9	10,095 ^c	0.008	0.324	0.842	1.000	1.253	4.118
w_t10	9,089 ^c	0.008	0.281	0.805	1.000	1.184	4.367
w_t11	7,019 ^c	0.009	0.349	0.748	1.000	1.203	4.403
w_t12	8,549 ^a	0.008	0.297	0.836	1.000	1.293	4.225
w_t13	7,292 ^a	0.008	0.309	0.787	1.000	1.285	4.280
w_t14	5,160 ^a	0.009	0.402	0.712	1.000	1.144	4.494
w_allCAWI	2,976 ^c	0.044	0.287	0.591	1.000	1.098	5.046
w_allCATI	3,776 ^c	0.015	0.362	0.558	1.000	1.031	4.924
w_allWaves	1,529 ^c	0.136	0.475	0.761	1.000	1.281	3.906

Notes: ^aFor two of the participants no weights are provided since they studied abroad at panel start (in Wave 1). For them no calibrated weights can be derived. ^bFor three of the participants no weights are provided since they studied abroad at panel start (in Wave 1). ^cFor one participant no weight is provided since she/he studied abroad at panel start (in Wave 1). For her/him no calibrated weight can be derived.

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