

Health Economics and Policy

Annual Report 2021



WU

WIRTSCHAFTS
UNIVERSITÄT
WIEN VIENNA
UNIVERSITY OF
ECONOMICS
AND BUSINESS

Health Economics and Policy (HEP) Division

2021 Annual Activity Report

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1 HIGHLIGHTS

- The HEP team published 4 more articles in **international academic journals** and 1 chapter in an international academic book.
- Marcel Bilger and Barbara Haas from the WU Department of Socioeconomics were awarded as Co-PIs the **competitive research grant from the Digitalisierungsfonds Arbeit 4.0 der AK Wien**. This 2-year funding (150,849€) will make it possible for HEP to hire new Prea Doc Research Assistants and conduct a mixed methods analysis of the working conditions and health of German-speaking crowdworkers.
- In collaboration with the WU Institute for Social Policy, the HEP team has developed a **new Bachelor's course in Social Policy Evaluation** for the WU Bachelor's Specialization in Health and Social Policy.
- In collaboration with the WU Institute for Social Policy, the HEP team continues teaching and managing the **5-course WU Bachelor's Specialization in Health and Social Policy**. This specialization meets a strong demand and runs at its full capacity of 30 new Bachelor's students per semester.
- The HEP team continues organizing the **2024 European Health Economics Association (EUHEA) Conference**, in partnership with the Institute for Advanced Studies (IHS) and Gesundheit Österreich GmbH.
- Marcel Bilger was re-elected as **President of the Austrian Health Economics Association (ATHEA)** and will continue serving in this position until 2023.

2 THE HEALTH ECONOMICS AND POLICY DIVISION

2.1 THE TEAM

Marcel Bilger, Professor of Health Economics and Policy, Head of Division

Marcel Bilger holds a Ph.D. in Economics and Social Sciences with a specialization in Econometrics and Statistics from the University of Geneva. During his doctoral studies, he completed the International Doctoral Program in Health Economics and Policy from the Swiss School of Public Health+. After his Ph.D., Marcel worked as a Consultant for the Development Research Group at the World Bank, and as a Post-doctoral Research Scholar at the Harris School of Public Policy at the University of Chicago. As a tenure-track Assistant Professor, he then led the Laboratory of Health Econometrics in the Signature Program for Health Services and Systems Research at Duke-NUS Medical School in Singapore while being Assistant Director for Education in the Program. Marcel has joined the Vienna University of Economics and Business in October 2018 as the new Head of the Health Economics and Policy Group.



During his career, Marcel has published in leading journals in health economics, health services research, and medicine as well as a book on health equity and financial protection. He is deeply passionate about the equity and sustainability of health systems. His work also includes the study of modifiable health risk factors such as obesity, lack of physical activity, and non-adherence to medications. In his new position, he now aims at offering innovative courses in health economics and policy in close partnership with the healthcare industry. His research objectives include developing a new framework that will consider both efficiency and equity considerations in efforts to guide health policymaking in Austria and internationally. His ultimate goal is to contribute to health equity and to the strengthening of health systems, while simultaneously training the next generation of leaders.



Tina Radler, Administrative Assistant (on sabbatical starting November 2021)

Tina has a Master's degree in Theatre, Film and Media (Mag.phil.) from the University of Vienna. She arrived at HEP in February 2016. She is HEP's eyes and ears when it comes to administrative duties, but she also follows research projects from a close perspective and developed the HEP website. Before joining HEP, she has worked as an assistant for an orthopaedic surgeon in Vienna and in the HR Department of a publicly traded real estate company. Tina is familiar with standard computer packages and with film-editing and web-editing programs. Her mother tongue is German, she's perfectly fluent in English and is taking French and Spanish classes regularly.

Hannah Lou Harrison, Administrative Assistant (joined in November 2021)

Hannah Lou is replacing Tina Radler for the time of her sabbatical. Due to her scientific background, she was able to familiarise herself quickly and systematically with the tasks of an administrative assistant. Her goal is to successfully supersede Tina during this sabbatical year, to further optimise HEP's administrative processes and website, and to gain more detailed insights into the research field of health economics and policy. Hannah Lou has a Bachelor's degree in Sociology (BA) from the University of Vienna and is currently completing her Master's degree in Sociology. Her master's thesis, located in the interdisciplinary field of death studies,



focuses on the connection between discourses about good dying and the institutional practices that enable such good dying.



Sophie Guthmuller, Assistant Professor

Sophie Guthmuller holds a Ph.D. in Economics with a specialization in Health Economics from Paris Dauphine University. During her doctoral studies, she completed the International Doctoral Program in Health Economics and Policy from the Swiss School of Public Health+. After her Ph.D. and thanks to this expertise, Sophie has worked on several health econometrics projects and various economic evaluation projects within multi-disciplinary and international research teams. First as Postdoctoral Fellow at the Bordeaux School of Public Health (ISPED) in France, then as Research Fellow in the Academic Unit of Health Economics of the University of Leeds in the UK.

Finally, as Economic Analyst at the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, she has particularly applied her expertise in public policy evaluation methods at the European level. Sophie has joined the Vienna University of Economics and Business in October 2020 as tenure track Assistant Professor in the Health Economics and Policy Group. Since October 2020, she is also part of the RWI Research Network <https://www.rwi-essen.de/forschung-und-beratung/network/rwi-research-fellows/>. Her research has led to papers published in French and international peer-reviewed journals, and was granted two PhD prizes. Her research interests include health economics, public policy evaluation and applied econometrics.

Daniela Weber, Research Assistant Professor

Daniela Weber completed a master in technical mathematics from the Vienna University of Technology, a master in Statistics from the University of Vienna and a doctorate with distinction in Social and Economic Sciences from the Vienna University of Economics and Business. Next to her assistant professorship within the HEP division, she is also a research scholar within the Population and Just Societies Program at the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, Laxenburg. Her research focuses on the demographic and economic perspectives in research on aging and health. She published her research findings in several high level journals such as PNAS, Scientific Reports or PlosOne. "Aging Health Capital" is her ongoing project funded by OEAW with the prestigious APART GSK grant.



Viktoria Szenkurök, PhD student

Viktoria Szenkurök joined the Department of Health Economics and Policy at the Vienna University of Economics and Business in November 2020 as a Teaching and Research Associate. Her dissertation project will deal with socioeconomic and sociodemographic disparities in the use and provision of informal and formal long-term care. Viktoria received her Master's degree (MSc) in Economics from the Vienna University of Economics and Business in October 2020. In her Master thesis she analysed the linkage between demographic trends, poverty and income inequality. As Teaching and Research Associate her scientific research focus lies on the economics of health, ageing and distribution. In her first research project, she is working with both macro- and micro-level data to investigate socio-economic and societal differences in the use of home care services by older adults in Europe.

Maddalena Josefin Lamura, Research Assistant (Prea Doc)

Since November 2021, Maddalena J. Lamura is a research associate at the Department of Health Economics and Policy at the Vienna University of Economics and Business. She collaborates in a mixed methods study, researching the spread of precarious working conditions in online platform work and how these impact workers' health. Maddalena attained her Master degree (MSc) in Socio-ecological Economics and Policy at the Vienna University of Economics and Business in October 2021. During the Master, she specialized in Ecological economics, Social policy and Advanced qualitative and quantitative methods.



Gabriel Haintz, Tutor

Gabriel holds a Bachelor in Sociology from the University of Vienna and is currently enrolled as a student in the WU Master's in Socioeconomics. He supports the team with organizational, research and teaching tasks. His scientific research interest lies on socioeconomic inequalities, especially, in the field of social policy. Gabriel is currently working on his Master's Thesis under the supervision of Marcel Bilger which focusses on the topic of COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy and the role of social class.

For more information and for the long-version CVs of all the members, please visit the HEP website:

<https://www.wu.ac.at/hep>

2.2 CHANGES IN PERSONNEL

Administrative Assistant

Hannah Lou Harrison has joined the Division in November 2021. She temporarily replaces Tina Radler who is on educational leave.

New Research Assistant position (Prea Doc)

Maddalena Josefin Lamura has joined the Division in November 2021. Her position is funded by an external research grant.

New Tutor position

In efforts to support the Division's teaching and research activities, Gabriel Haintz, a WU Master's student, was hired as a tutor for one day a week for a duration of 6 months.

3 RESEARCH

The overarching objective of HEP's research effort is to generate new empirical results, methods, and theoretical frameworks that inform health policy making.

3.1 PUBLICATIONS

Bilger, Marcel, Shah, Mitesh, Tan, Ngiap Chuan, Tan, Cynthia, Bundoc, Fillipinas, Bairavi, Joann, Finkelstein, Eric. Process- and Outcome-Based Financial Incentives to Improve Self-Management and Glycemic Control in People with Type 2 Diabetes in Singapore: A Randomized Controlled Trial. *The Patient - Patient-Centered Outcomes Research* 2021; 14(5):555-567.

Bilger, Marcel, Koong, Agnes Ling Yeng, Phoon, Ian Kwong Yun, Tan, Ngiap Chuan, Bahadin, Juliana, Bairavi, Joann, Batcagan-Abueg, Ada Portia M, Finkelstein, Eric A. 2021. Wireless Home Blood Pressure Monitoring System With Automatic Outcome-Based Feedback and Financial Incentives to Improve Blood Pressure in People With Hypertension: Protocol for a Randomized Controlled Trial. *JMIR Research Protocols* 2021; 10(6):e27496.

Kwan, Yu Heng, Fong, Warren, Ang, Xiang Ling, Chew, Xiu Yan, Yoon, Sungwon, Tan, Chuen Seng, Tai, Bee Choo, Huang, Youyi, **Bilger, Marcel**, Phang, Jie Kie, Tan, Hui Chin, Quek, Su-An, Eng, Sing Yee Clara, Tan, Choy Tip, Tan, Choy Tip, Dong, Bao Qiang, Koh, Hwee Ling, Leung, Ying Ying, Ng, Swee Cheng, Fong, Kok Yong, Thumboo, Julian, Østbye, Truls. Facilitators of and barriers to implementing a traditional Chinese medicine collaborative model of care for axial spondyloarthritis: a qualitative study. *Acupuncture in Medicine* 2021; 39(6):629-636.

Garas, Antonios, **Guthmuller, Sophie**, Lapatinas, Athanasios. The development of nations conditions the disease space. *PLoS ONE* 2021; 16 (1), 1-35.

Guthmuller, Sophie, Paulo, Paruolo, Stefano, Verzillo. Positive Externalities of EU Actions on Sustainability of Health Systems. In: *The Sustainability of Health Care Systems in Europe. Contributions to Economic Analysis*, Hrsg. Badi H. Baltagi and Francesco Moscone, 2021; 1-21. Volume 295: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

3.2 ACTIVE RESEARCH GRANTS

Guthmuller S. (PI), Heger D., Wübker A. Project 1 "Loneliness amongst older adults" in Research Area C) of the Leibniz Science Campus Ruhr "Regional Variation in Health Care" that was granted 1.2 Million Euro in funding for 4 years.

Loneliness among the European ageing population

The objective of this research project is to study loneliness among ageing populations. More specifically, the aims include: (1) analysing the correlation between the rates of loneliness and living in a region with declining and ageing populations, (2) studying the impact of retirement on loneliness, (3) investigating the link between loneliness and health and health care use in ageing populations. To identify the causal impact of loneliness, advanced counterfactual impact evaluation methods will be used.

More detailed information on this project is available here: <https://www.rwi-essen.de/lscr>.

Aging Health Capital

This project aims at investigating the development of old-age health capital from an international perspective. It will identify life course factors associated with cognitive and physical performance and the prevalence of non-communicable diseases of the 50+ population in Europe, the United States, and Asia using several comparable national panel surveys on health and aging. The factors are characteristics on the individual, regional/neighbourhood, and country level and are collected at different points during the life course. Results gained by this research project will be very important for policy makers as societies across the world face an aging population. Therefore, maintaining active older adults with high cognitive and physical capacities and intervene at proper time will be an important objective.

Weber D. (PI). Aging Health Capital: Evolution of physical and cognitive health over the life course from an international perspective. APART-GSK-Stipend by the Austrian Academy of Sciences (392,000€ for 4 years).

Weber D. (Co-PI), Robert Zniva (Co-PI). REdesigning HeAlth ProduCTs 2.0. Received from WISS-2025 by the Amt der Salzburger Landesregierung (120,000€ for 18 months).

REdesigning HeAlth ProduCTs 2.0

The objective of this project is to focus on the users' perspective when developing care products. The targeted region for this interdisciplinary project is Salzburg, where collaborations with partners from demand and supply side are confirmed.

Working conditions and health of crowdworkers

The increasing use of cloud computing facilitates the digitalisation of work and its platform-based outsourcing to an undefined amount of external workers. The effects on working conditions and the health of workers play an important role, but remain largely unexplored. The aim of the project is to empirically analyse precarious and health-endangering tendencies of virtual crowdworking, where work is done or uploaded directly in the interface of the platforms. Low-skilled work (microtasks) will be treated in the quantitative-qualitative mixed methods approach as well as demanding knowledge work (macrotasks).

Bilger M. (Co-PI), Barbara Haas (Co-PI). Precarious working conditions and health of crowdworkers? A mixed methods analysis of an online survey and qualitative interviews. Digitalisierungsfonds Arbeit 4.0 der AK Wien (150,849€ for 2 years).

3.3 OTHER ONGOING RESEARCH PROJECTS

Long-Term Care Utilization across Europe: Examining Socioeconomic Inequalities and Societal Differences using a Two-Part Multilevel Regression Model

As the number of people with physical disabilities and limitations in daily activities increases, long-term care systems in Europe are under increasing pressure to meet these additional needs. The overarching goal of this research project is therefore to deepen our understanding of a socioeconomic gradient in older adult's use of home care services and determine whether it differs across countries with varying institutional, labour market and care supply characteristics. Methodologically we are using a two-part multilevel decomposition technique based on individual-level data from the

Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE) and a wide range of macro-level indicators drawn from various sources such as the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), ESS (European Social Survey) and MISSOC (Mutual Information System on Social Protection database). The results of this study are particularly relevant for policymakers aiming to fill emerging gaps in current long-term care systems.

HEP researchers involved: *Marcel Bilger, Viktoria Szenkurök, Daniela Weber*

Cancer screening, diagnosis, and mortality in Europe

Cancer is a major social issue in Western societies because of its high incidence and high mortality risk that particularly affects aging societies. The good side of the coin is that cancer is in many cases avoidable, and early detection is key to increase the chance of cure. For that reason, many countries in Europe introduced organised screening programmes (OSP) for breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer. However, there are large regional differences across Europe as to whether and when OSPs were introduced. We exploit these variations in this project to comprehensively evaluate OSP. The first OSPs in Europe date back to the 1980s and most of them are still active nowadays. However, after almost 40 years of implementation, a comprehensive evaluation of this policy is still missing. For instance, do OSPs have an impact on screening uptake? Do they reach the population at higher risk? Do OSPs help increasing early diagnoses and reducing mortality? Do OSPs impact inequality in healthcare use and health? This project aim is to fill this gap.

HEP researchers involved: *Sophie Guthmuller*

In collaboration with: *Vincenzo Carrieri (Magna Graecia University of Catanzaro) and Ansgar Wübker (RWI Essen, Hochschule Harz)*

A systematic review of social cohesion measurements in empirical research. A public health perspective

We aim to systematically review the validity of applied social cohesion measurements to test contextual effects of social cohesion on health. After many empirical and theoretical contributions to this multidisciplinary field of research, we will review how social cohesion has been measured so far in light of a now converging conceptual debate. The criteria along which identified measurements will be reviewed are inspired by psychometric (COSMIN Consensus-based standards for the Selection of Health Measurement Instruments) and econometric methodology. Additionally, this review aims to provide a foundation for new innovative measurement approaches by assessing which errors are inherent to how social cohesion has been measured so far. Finally, considering the potential unintended overlaps with other concepts like social inclusion, social support, social environment, social capital, or social integration, we aim to contrast our findings with previous reviews on such related concepts.

HEP researchers involved: *Marcel Bilger*

In collaboration with: *Moritz Oberndorfer, Igor Grabovac, Lukas Sramek, Thomas Schober, Thomas Dorner (all from MedUni Wien, Austria), and Alastair Leyland (University of Glasgow).*

Discrete Choice Experiments to Analyze Long-term Care Financing Preferences among Midlife Singaporeans

The past three decades have seen rapid population aging in advanced economies. In Singapore, the number of seniors with activity limitations is projected to more than double between 2010 and 2030. At the same time, nuclearization of families, increased labour force participation by women and increased population mobility has reduced the potential supply of informal caregivers around the world. Many governments now face the urgent challenge of financing and providing formal long-term care in a fiscally sustainable manner. One way to mitigate the financial burden on the public

sector is by encouraging individuals to prepare for their own long-term care expenses through insurance. Globally, long-term care (LTC) insurance coverage rates are low and, for those who are enrolled, only part of their potential future LTC expenses are covered. We propose to conduct a series of four surveys involving Singaporean citizens aged 40 to 49 to choose between hypothetical insurance plans and financing scenarios. The objective is to analyse the preferences of the respondents for different characteristics of LTC insurance plans and alternative financing mechanisms. Our overall aim is to increase financial protection against LTC costs in Singapore and internationally. This project was awarded a Health Services Research Competitive Grant from the Ministry of Health of Singapore (NMRC/HSRG/0069/2016).

HEP researchers involved: Marcel Bilger

In collaboration with: Wan Chen Graham (Agency for Integrated Care, Singapore)

Predicting Behavioral Change using Stated Preferences: Comparison of Preferences Expressed in a Discrete Choice Experiment to Results of a Randomized Controlled Trial on Pedometer-Based Activity Programs

Initially developed in marketing science, Discrete Choice Experiments (DCEs) are being applied in an increasing number of fields, including the environment, transportation, and health. While DCEs can be used to analyse a great variety of issues such as calculating market shares, quantifying the value of non-market goods, and predicting uptake of new services, all applications share a key feature that is intrinsic to DCEs: respondents need to trade between the attributes of the choice tasks they are presented with. The validity of all studies involving DCEs thus critically depends on the validity of the tradeoffs made by the respondents. A well-documented concern is that various hypothetical biases can affect the elicitation of these tradeoffs. The external validity of DCEs is currently under-researched because few settings provide the analyst with data on both revealed and stated preferences simultaneously. In this study, we administered a DCE to participants of a randomized controlled trial (RCT) to make it possible to compare these two types of data. We focus on one type of hypothetical bias that can adversely affect the validity of DCEs. When an attribute relates to a behaviour, respondents might underestimate the effort that is required from them to change their behaviour and report unrealistic tradeoffs. While such potential bias can in theory apply to numerous settings, its study is especially relevant to health as respondents might be overly optimistic while stating not only their participation in new public health programs but also the extent of their involvement.

HEP researchers involved: Marcel Bilger

In collaboration with: Eric Finkelstein and Isha Chaudhry (Duke-NUS Medical School, Singapore)

Targeted Incentives: On the Non-Fungibility of Incentives

Incentives for behaviour change generally yield small and short-lived benefits. We hypothesize that targeting incentives at an appropriate mental account can increase effectiveness. We test this hypothesis via a field experiment with taxi drivers. Half received a monetary reward for increased activity and half were offered the equivalent amount framed as the value of one day's taxi rental. Both groups increased activity levels—during and after the incentives were stopped—but the increase was significantly greater for those in the mental accounting treatment. Preliminary results support the non-fungibility of incentives and the value of targeting incentives at salient mental accounts.

HEP researchers involved: Marcel Bilger

In collaboration with: Eric Finkelstein (Duke-NUS Medical School, Singapore)

Trends in Socioeconomic Inequality in Obesity among Children and Adults in the United States

In a period of steady increase in income inequality, it is crucial to monitor the relationship between income and health. Given the considerable health and economic burden of obesity, such monitoring helps tailoring the medical and policy response to the epidemic, and planning the financing of obesity-related costs. To quantify socioeconomic inequality in obesity and the obesity gap between poor and non-poor in 2015-2016, and examine trends from 1999 through 2016 in these measures. The data analysed consists of pooled datasets that include measured weight and height from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) over the 1999-2016 period. Each dataset is cross-sectional and nationally-representative of the US civilian noninstitutionalized population over a 2-year period. Child (2 to 19), working adult (20 to 65) and older adult (66 to 85) populations have been studied. Socioeconomic status was measured using the family poverty income ratio (PIR), and poverty defined as $PIR < 1.3$. Obesity was measured using body mass index (BMI) z-scores relative to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) BMI-for-age growth charts, and the obesity threshold set at the 95th%ile of the CDC charts. Socioeconomic inequality was measured by Foster-Greer-Thorbecke (FGT) concentration indices for the prevalence, depth, and severity of obesity, and the obesity gap measured by mean differences in these three aspects of obesity between poor and non-poor.

HEP researchers involved: Marcel Bilger

In collaboration with: Eric Finkelstein and Fillipinas Bundoc (both from Duke-NUS Medical School, Singapore)

The Effect of a Social Education Grant on Academic Success: Evidence from Portugal

This project studies the impact of the higher education grant system for less privileged students in Portugal on academic success. Thanks to administrative data on the applicants, linked with data on students' academic situation, we are able to reconstruct the full academic history of these students. Eligibility to the higher education grant is conditioned on having resources below a threshold. We adopt a regression discontinuity approach based on this exogenous assignment rule to measure the impact of the grant on various outcomes measuring academic success.

HEP researchers involved: Sophie Guthmuller

In collaboration with: Elena Meroni (Joint Reseach Centre, European Commission)

The Role of Education and Age Cohort in Shaping Attitudes toward Immigration in Europe

This project complements the existing literature on determinants of attitudes to foreign populations by explicitly addressing the role of education, using repeated cross-sectional data combined with contextual information on yearly migrant inflow rates to European countries.

HEP researchers involved: Daniela Weber

In collaboration with: Karen Umansky (University Potsdam, Germany)

3.4 SCIENTIFIC PRESENTATIONS AND RESEARCH VISITS

Bilger, Marcel. 2021. Targeting Screening for Cardiovascular Disease Risk Factors: Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Evidence from 4 LMICs. Discussant role at the 2021 iHEA Online Congress, 14.07.

Guthmuller, Sophie. 2021. The Impact of a Social Education Grant on Academic Success: Evidence from Portugal. Eleventh International Workshop on Applied Economics of Education, Catanzaro, Italy, 21.06.-22.06.

Guthmuller, Sophie. 2021. The impact of Breast Cancer Organised Screening Programmes on Uptake, Inequality, and Mortality. 2nd Conference of the Swiss Society of Health Economics, Zurich, Switzerland, 15.01.

Guthmuller, Sophie. 2021. The impact of Breast Cancer Organised Screening Programmes on Uptake, Inequality, and Mortality. Rotterdam Health Economics seminar, the Netherlands, 20.01.

Guthmuller, Sophie. 2021. The impact of Breast Cancer Organised Screening Programmes on Uptake, Inequality, and Mortality. Essen Health Economics Seminar, Germany, 17.05.

Szenkurök, Viktoria. 2021. Long-Term Care Utilization across Europe: Examining Socioeconomic Inequalities and Societal Differences using a Two-Part Multilevel Regression Model. 7th International Workshop on the Socioeconomics of Ageing (IWSEA), Lisbon, Portugal, 29.10.21 - 30.10.21.

Szenkurök, Viktoria. 2021. Long-Term Care Utilization in Europe: Examining Socioeconomic Inequalities and Societal Differences using a Two-Part Multilevel Regression Model. 6th Conference of the Austrian Health Economics Association (ATHEA), Wien, Österreich, 23.09.21.-24.09.21.

3.5 PEER-REVIEWS FOR ACADEMIC JOURNALS

- Age and Ageing
- Ageing and Society
- Comparative Population Studies
- Health Economics
- Journal of Aging and Health
- Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences
- Journal of Health Economics
- Social Science and Medicine
- Value in Health
- Journal of Social Policy
- Social Science and Medicine – Population Health

3.6 GUEST RESEARCHERS AT HEP

Johannes Hollenbach (PhD Student, RWI Essen, Germany). Research visit. Loneliness amongst older populations in Europe. 24-29 October 2021.

Prof. Vincenzo Carrieri ("Magna Græcia" University, Italy, RWI Essen, IZA Bonn). Health's Kitchen: TV, Edutainment and Nutrition. Virtual Presentation at the Research Seminar of the Department of Socioeconomics, Nov. 2021.

4 TEACHING

HEP's teaching philosophy consists in developing the understanding of key health economic concepts, fostering the ability to apply health economic theory to real life situations, and creating skills that are directly relevant to the industry.

4.1 COURSES

The HEP team teaches approximately 16 hours per week on average at all academic levels. At the Bachelor's level, HEP, in collaboration with the Institute for Social Policy, offers a 5-course Specialization that is open to students enrolled in three different programs: Business and Economics, Business Law, and Business, Economics, and Social Sciences. This Specialization in Health and Social Policy enables the Division to teach health economics and policy within a broader interdisciplinary perspective and to reach a larger number of students. This specialization is currently running at its full capacity of 30 new Bachelor's students per semester.

The table below summarizes HEP's teaching portfolio. More detail on each course offered can be found in the WU course catalogue (<https://learn.wu.ac.at/vvz/>).

Course	Program	HEP Lecturer(s)	Semester
Economics and Policy of the Public Healthcare Industry	Bachelor's Specialization in Health and Social Policy (Course II)	Marcel Bilger, Thomas Czypionka ^b Sophie Guthmuller Viktoria Szenkurök	SS 2021 WS 2021/22
Economics and Policy of the Private Healthcare Industry	Bachelor's Specialization in Health and Social Policy (Course III)	Marcel Bilger Timo Fischer ^b Andreas Goltz ^b Viktoria Szenkurök	SS 2021 WS 2021/22
Social Policy Evaluation^a	Bachelor's Specialization in Health and Social Policy (Course V)	Sophie Föbtleitner ^b Sophie Guthmuller Ulrike Schneider	WS 2021/22
Interdisciplinary Socio-Economic Research Lab I: Quantitative Methods for evaluation of Social and Health Policies	Master's in Socioeconomics	Sophie Föbtleitner ^b Ulrike Schneider	WS 2021/22
Interdisciplinary Socio-Economic Research Lab II: Quantitative Methods for evaluation of Health and Health Policy	Master's in Socioeconomics	Marcel Bilger Sophie Föbtleitner ^b	SS 2021
Applied Socio-Economic Theories and Methods	Master's in Socioeconomics	Marcel Bilger Sophie Guthmuller	SS 2021 WS 2021/22
Mikroökonomie Teil 1: Gesundheitsökonomie	MBA in Health Care Management	Marcel Bilger	WS 2020/21
Advanced Quantitative Methods for Social and Economic Research	Ph.D. in Economics and Social Sciences	Marcel Bilger	WS 2021/22

^a Taught in collaboration with the Institute for Social Policy.

^b External lecturers.

4.2 EXTERNAL LECTURERS

Dr. Thomas Czypionka, Head of the Health Economics and Health Policy Unit, Institute for Advanced Studies (IHS)

Dr. Timo Fischer, Österreichische Gesundheitskasse (ÖGK)

Sophie Föbleitner, MSc BSc, Health Economics and Health Policy Unit, Institute for Advanced Studies (IHS)

Mag. Andreas Goltz, Österreichische Gesundheitskasse (ÖGK)

4.3 EXAMINATIONS, AND THESIS SUPERVISIONS

Examination of Habilitations

- ✓ Angel, Stefan. The relevance of housing (policy) for social stratification. Habilitation to teach in the field of Socioeconomics, November 2021.
- ✓ Leoni, Thomas. Welfare state change and labour market dynamics: Essays on employment, health, and activation. Habilitation to teach in the field of Socioeconomics, Mai 2021.

Examination of Ph.D. and Doctoral theses

- Eisenberg, Siegfried. Essays on the effectiveness of information and communication technology-based interventions on active aging among older adults. WU Ph.D. Program in Economics and Social Sciences (Research proposal).

Ph.D. and Doctoral theses supervised

- Föbleitner, Sophie: Inequalities within the Austrian Health Care System, WU Doctoral Program in Social and Economic Sciences (ongoing).
- Gösenbauer, Barbara: Socioeconomic Analysis of Quality and Cost of Outpatient and Hospitalized Long-Term Care in Austria, WU Doctoral Program in Social and Economic Sciences (ongoing).
- Oberndorfer, Moritz. Unequally unequal? Social cohesion and health in times of rising income inequality, Doctoral Program at the Medical University of Vienna (ongoing).
- Schneider, Peter. Pharmaceutical Policy for High-priced and innovative medicines, WU Doctoral Program in Social and Economic Sciences (ongoing).
- Szenkurök, Viktoria. Socioeconomic Inequalities in Long-Term Care. WU Ph.D. Program in Economics and Social Sciences (ongoing).

Master's theses supervised

- Bartels, Hannah. Sustainability information and German retail investors' investment preferences: A Behavioural Finance perspective, Master's thesis in Socio-Ecological Economics and Policy (ongoing).
- Bartling, Mara Sophie. Influencing choices of the population towards more socially and environmentally conscious consumption on clothing/textiles, Master's thesis in Socio-Ecological Economics and Policy (ongoing).
- ✓ Gruber, Laurenz. Evaluation eines Nudging Experiments in der UK: Der Effekt des Soft Drink Industry Levy, Master's thesis in Socioeconomics (completed).
- ✓ Hauder, Lukas. Cross-national inequalities in Lung Cancer Mortality: A panel data analysis of 184 countries, Master's thesis in Socioeconomics (completed).
- Haintz, Gabriel. Covid-19 Vaccine Hesitancy and Social Class, Master's thesis in Socioeconomics (ongoing).
- Köpfler, Florian Christian. Socioeconomic status and mental health among the elderly in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, Master's thesis in Socioeconomics (ongoing).

- ✓ Löffler, Marie Sophie. The impact of a sugar-sweetened beverage tax on older adults' body-mass index and obesity-related diseases. Evidence from European countries, Master's thesis in Socioeconomics (completed).
- ✓ Stradner, Anja. The role of socioeconomic status and health beliefs and attitudes on the incidence and mortality of Covid-19: a spatial analysis of Austrian municipality-level data, Master's thesis in Socioeconomics (completed).
- Wich, Tabea Emilia. The relationship between relative income and mental health among individuals with distinct basic human value priorities, Master's thesis in Socio-Ecological Economics and Policy (ongoing).
- ✓ Zommer, Patrick. The relationship between changes in social role and cardiovascular disease at advanced age, Master's thesis in Economics (completed).

Bachelor's theses supervised

- ✓ Horvart Ema. Are mergers and acquisitions hampering research and development in the pharmaceutical industry: A review of the antibiotic industry, Bachelor's thesis in Business, Economics, and Social Sciences (completed).
- ✓ Neumayer, David. The Impact of Poverty on the Risk of Contracting COVID-19, Bachelor's thesis in Business, Economics, and Social Sciences (completed).
- ✓ Steinmetz, Sebastian. Evaluation of the cost-effectiveness of the Austrian SARS-CoV-2 testing strategy, Bachelor's thesis in Business, Economics, and Social Sciences (completed).
- ✓ Strahl, Maximilian. Economic consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic and of its policy measures in the DACH countries, Bachelor's thesis in Business, Economics, and Social Sciences (completed).
- ✓ Zourek, Jan Stefan. On the epidemiology of SARS and COVID-19 and the effectiveness of non-pharmaceutical interventions: a literature review, Bachelor's thesis in Business, Economics, and Social Sciences (completed).

5 OUTREACH

The goals of HEP's outreach activities is to network with the healthcare industry and academic researchers, and communicate research results and engage with the public.

In 2021, the HEP team conducted the following outreach activities:

EuHEA

The HEP team is organizing the 2024 European Health Economics Association (EUHEA) Conference, in partnership with the Institute for Advanced Studies (IHS) and Gesundheit Österreich GmbH (<http://www.euhea.eu/>).

Sophie Guthmuller is a Member of the scientific committee of the Empirical Health Econometrics Workshop (former HEW), Ispra, Italy, which was postponed to July 2022 due to the pandemic.

HEW

ATHEA

Marcel Bilger (member of the organising and scientific committees) and Sophie Guthmuller (member of the scientific committee) supported the organization of the 6th Conference of the Austrian Health Economics Association (ATHEA) "Covid-19 and Beyond", Vienna, September 23-24, 2021.

Marcel Bilger was re-elected as President of the Austrian Health Economics Association (ATHEA) and will continue serving in this position until 2023 (<http://www.athea.at/en/about/>).

Sophie Guthmuller is a Member of the Platform „RegisterForschung.at“ to promote access to administrative data to researchers and the creation of the Austrian Micro Data Center (AMDC).

Register Forschung.at

WU matters

On May 26, 2021, Marcel Bilger gave the public lecture "Improving Health with Behavioral Economics" for *WU matters. WU talks*. In this lecture series, important economic and social issues of our time are addressed and brought to the attention of the audience. *WU matters. WU talks*. aims to strengthen sustainable thinking and responsibility in the business community and to help solve economic, social, and ecological problems.

Marcel Bilger is a member of the Scientific Advisory Board for the project "*Alles gurgelt!*" *The project offers self-administered COVID-19 PCR tests in Vienna and other regions in Austria* (<https://allesgurgelt.at/en/wien/>).

Alles Gurgelt

INFOS AND CONTACT

Health Economics and Policy
Welthandelsplatz 1, Building D4
1020 Vienna
T +43-1-313 36-4820
F +43-1-313 36-904820
martina.radler@wu.ac.at
www.wu.wien.ac.at/hep

