



# IPSDS Assessment Report

## Target group and accepted test-cohorts

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## **A. Goal of the report**

The funding of the project allowed for accepting 2 test-cohorts (in total 31 students) who were allowed to take IPSDS courses at no costs in exchange for participation in the evaluation. The goal of this report is to compare the planned target group of the project and the accepted test-cohorts (prior to their program participation).

## **B. Data sources**

Data was collected via a web-based start-of-the-program survey conducted in February-March 2016 (for 1<sup>st</sup> cohort) and 2017 (for 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort) as well as administrative data collected via application forms. The response rate for the survey was 100% for both cohorts.

## **C. Target Group**

The International Program in Survey and Data Science offers a multidisciplinary curriculum with a focus on survey methodology and data science that prepares working professionals for the challenges of working with designed data from surveys and organic data (aka “found data” or “big data”).

The program targets:

- people working in the areas of opinion, market and social surveys;
- employees of survey research enterprises as well as of ministries and statistical agencies;
- people with a B.A. degree and professional experience who are interested in continuing education.

Unlike many other programs in continuing education, the project strongly resorts to modern technology (short on-site component + synchronous and asynchronous online learning components) to accommodate people in the labor force and people with family duties. The program is international (language is English) and is designed to allow students to experience an international network of peers.

## D. Admission procedures

To apply for the program in 2016 and 2017, applicants had to submit an online application. Application requirements included:

- Academic degree (min. Bachelor's degree)
- At least 12 ECTS/6 credits in mathematical/applied statistics
- At least one year of work experience in a position dealing with data generation, collection, or analysis.
- English proficiency

The number of applications received in 2016 and 2017 was similar (39 and 36 respectively). The number of accepted participants constituted 16 in 2016 and 15 in 2017.

## E. Geographic location

As expected due to the format and language of the program, both 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort students are highly international: 15 different residence countries in total. While most students come from Europe (n=25), other countries include Chile (n=1), Brazil (n=2), Mexico (n=1), Oman (n=1), Qatar (n=1), and Kenya (n=1).

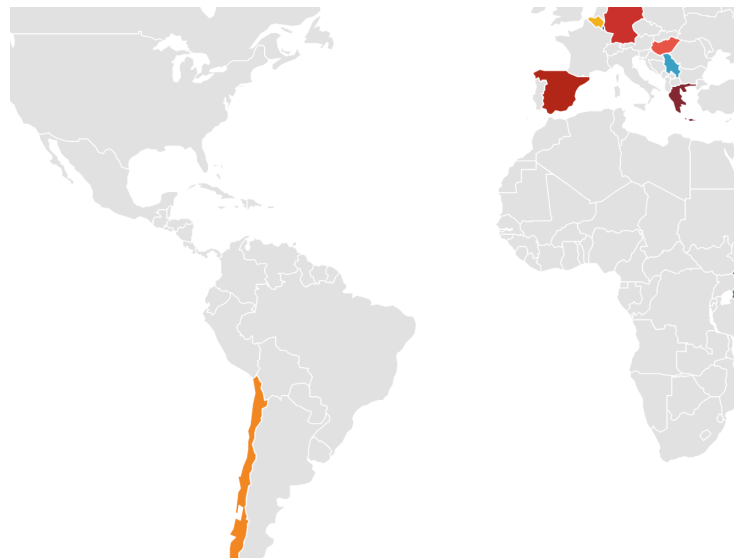


Figure 1. Countries of residence of the 1<sup>st</sup> IPSDS cohort



Figure 2. 6 additional countries represented by the 2<sup>nd</sup> IPSDS cohort

## **F. Demographics & areas of employment**

Although the goal of the IPSDS is to be able to offer a Master's degree upon the completion of the project, most students in the test-cohorts already have a Master's degree (or Diplom – equivalent of Master's in Germany before introducing Bachelor's and Master's degrees). Only 4 participants in the 1<sup>st</sup> cohort and 3 participants in the 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort entered the program with a Bachelor's degree. In both cohorts, there is one participant with a PhD.

While in the 1<sup>st</sup> cohort, the majority of students are women (10 women and 6 men), in the 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort the share of men and women is almost equal (7 men and 8 women). Out of 31 test-students 7 participants combine full- or part-time job with child care duties.

In both cohorts, most students are employed in industry, public institutes, NGOs or universities (see Fig. 3). In total 8 participants are employed in statistical agencies.

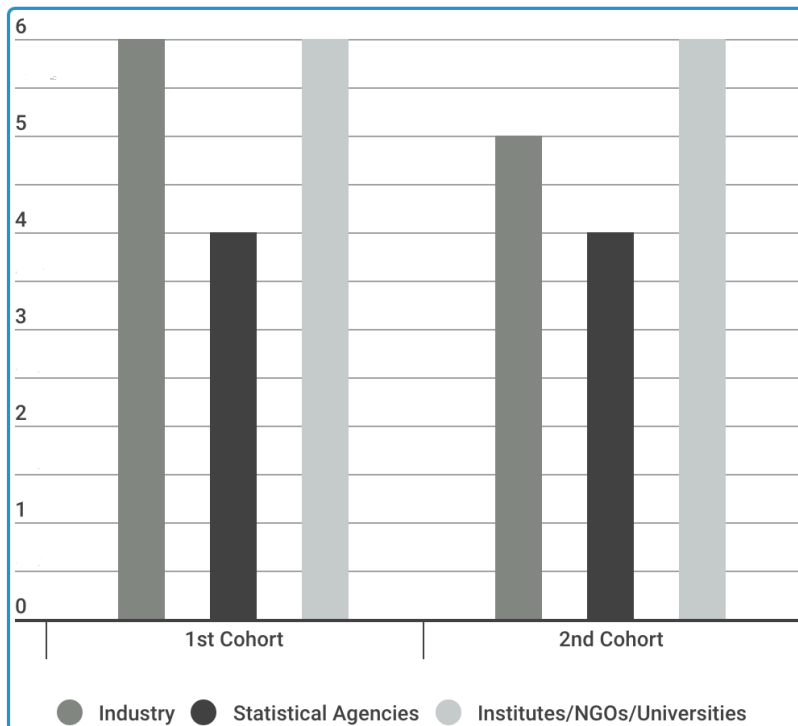


Figure 3. Number of students employed in industry/statistical agencies/institutes, NGOs or Universities within each cohort

### G. Students' reasons to apply and expectations

Figure 4 depicts boxplots for the answers to the survey question: "How important were the following reasons in choosing to apply for the IPSDS program? (1-Not at all important, 2-A little important, 3-Somewhat important, 4- Very important)". For most students, most important reasons for applying for the program constituted relevance of the subject for the current job and career development, the online administration as well as the lack of tuition.

In the 1st cohort and 2nd cohort, there are 2 and 1 participants respectively who reported that relevance for their current work was not at all important for the application. Relevance for career development is at least somewhat important for all of the participants. 5 participants in the 1<sup>st</sup> cohort and 6 participants in the 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort reported that the instructors were a little or not at all important for choosing to apply. Online administration of the program was at least a little important for all of the participants (9 students in the 1<sup>st</sup> cohort and 10 students in the 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort indicated that the online administration was very important for their application decision). Similarly,

lack of tuition was chosen by 8 participants in the 1<sup>st</sup> cohort and 9 participants in the second cohort as a very important reason.

Except for 1 participant in the first cohort and 2 participants in the 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort, all of the students expect to improve their work performance as a result of participating in the IPSDS program.

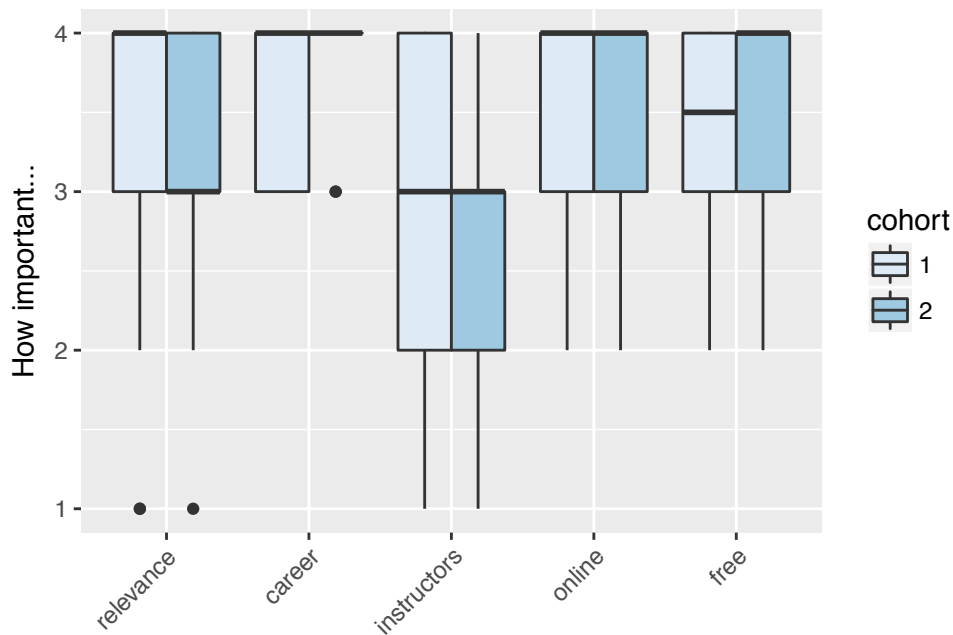


Figure 4. Boxplots of various reasons important for applying for the IPSDS by cohort

**relevance**=the subject is relevant for my current work

**career**=the subject is relevant for my career development

**instructors**=the instructors teaching the courses

**online**= the program is administered online

**free**= the program is tuition-free

## H. Time-use and work-life balance

### *Working time*

As Figure 5 shows, most of the IPSDS participants work full time (1<sup>st</sup> cohort: Median=41, SD=5.6; 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort: Median=43, SD=9.8) with only 4 participants who work less than 40 hours a week and 16 participants who work more than 40 hours a week.

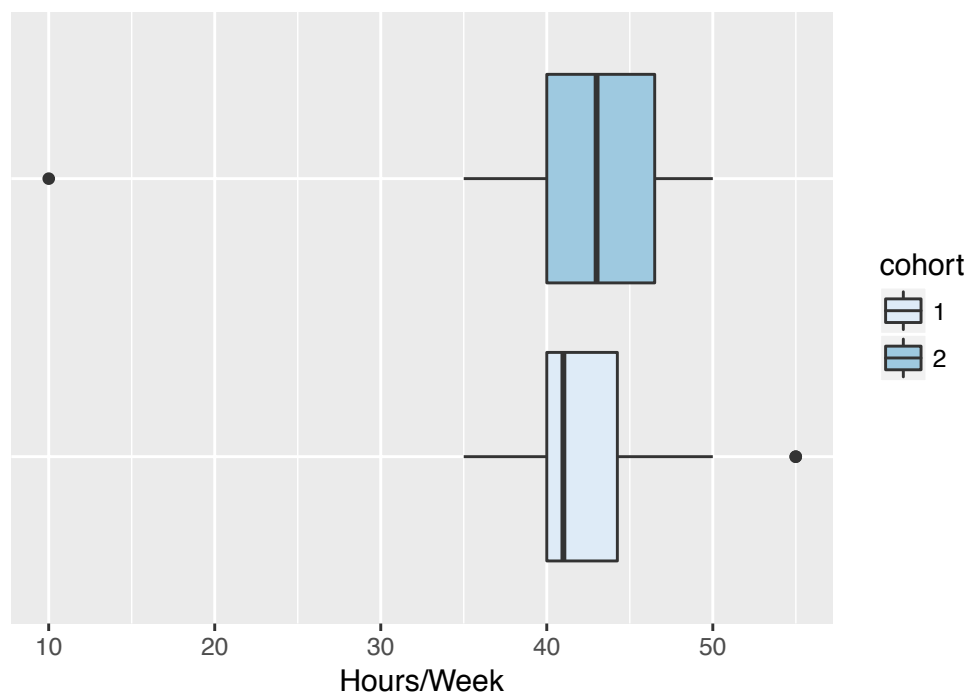


Figure 5. Boxplots of reported work time in hours (per week) by cohort

Most students have quite a lot of flexibility at work. 12 participants in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 10 participants in 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort can decide when they start and finish their work and choose the work pace. However, 5 participants in each cohort have to work evenings, nights or on weekends at least several times a month. 8 participants in the 1<sup>st</sup> cohort and 9 participants in the 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort have to work overtime on short notice at least several times a month.

### *Commuting time*

As Figure 6 shows, in addition to work and family responsibilities, most participants spend time commuting (1<sup>st</sup> cohort: Median=3, SD=2.5; 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort: Median=5, SD=4.0).

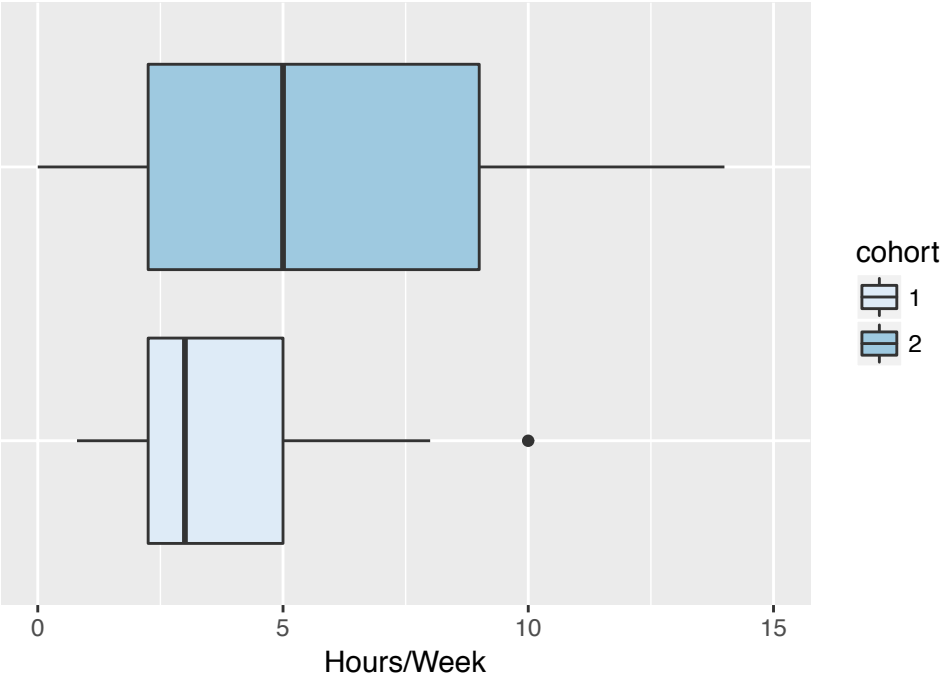


Figure 6. Boxplots of reported time for traveling between work and home in hours (per week) by cohort

*Leisure time*

As Figure 7 demonstrates, at the time of the program’s start, 8 participants (reported having less than 10 hours of leisure time in a typical week (1<sup>st</sup> cohort: Median=12.5, SD=8.7; 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort: Median=10, SD=10.7).



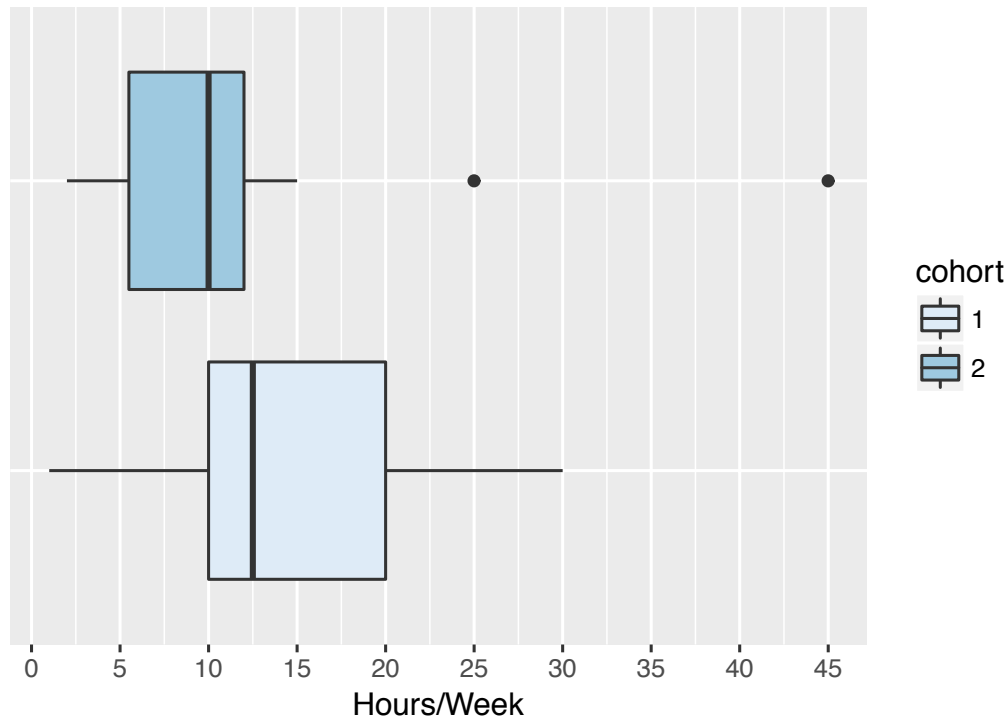


Figure 7. Boxplots of reported leisure time in hours (in a typical week) by cohort

### *Work-life balance*

At the start-of-the-program survey, students were also asked to report how satisfied they were with their work-balance:

“How satisfied are you with the balance between the time you spend on your paid work and the time you spend on other aspects of your life?” (0 - Extremely dissatisfied; 10-Extremely satisfied).

The average score for both cohorts was similar (1<sup>st</sup> cohort: Median=7, SD=2.8; 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort: Median=8, SD=2.12). 3 participants in the 1<sup>st</sup> cohort and 4 participants in the 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort chose a score below “5”, indicating a very low level of satisfaction with their work-life balance.

## **I. Summary**

- As expected, the program has attracted a very international group of participants.

- Most of the participants already have a Master's degree.
- A common denominator among all of the participants is their limited time due to long work hours, family responsibilities and/or commuting time.
- Therefore, it is tenable that for all of the participants the online format constituted an important reason to apply for the program.
- At the start of the program, 7 participants have reported a low level of satisfaction with their work-life balance