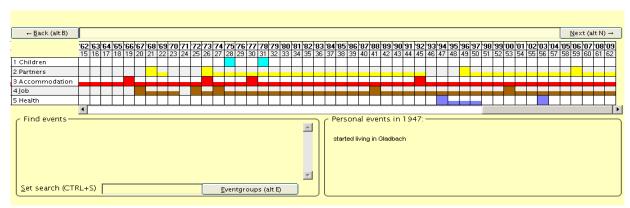


Harmonization meeting Jo'burg, 14 Oct 2019

SHARE LIFE histories in Waves 3 and 7

Axel Börsch-Supan, PI SHARE







Retrospective Design



Design process:

- What do people remember easily?
- What should we rather not waste time asking?
- Exploit results from cognitive research:
 - The rare life events are easy, such as children and partners
 - Job and accommodation can become more difficult
 - ▶ Health and health care usage is nearly impossible
- Certain design elements help the memory:
 - ▶ The order of questions
 - Life grid representation allowing comparisons across different life domains, thus detecting errors becomes easier
 - Anchoring by using "landmark events"
- ▶ These features for electronic implementation





SHARELIFE



- SHARELIFE allows linking individual decisions to institutional background variables
- The SPLASH project collects data on institutional context to ease cross-country evaluation of welfare state policies







Conclusions

- Life histories have been very powerful for SHARE: number of users, number and quality scientific papers
- Power comes from interaction: cross-country x time (secular welfare state changes)
- Data quality much better than expected
- Not just another module: takes about 1 hour
- Efficient recall if domains are done in parallel (mental anchors)
- Childhood and parental background variables most powerful