

Data for Term Papers and Theses

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This list offers a brief overview of sources for data usable in term papers and theses. It complements the guidelines for term papers at our chair. Together with a relevant research question and a robust research design, empirical data and its convincing analysis is a necessary condition for a successful term paper. Which data you need depends on your research question, your theory and the resulting model. Thus, this list should not be seen as a guide. Instead, these are selected examples to inspire further research to find data serving your research interest.

1. Official data and documents

Primary sources are a good point of departure for your research. These can be official statistics, legal texts or documents. Here, we illustrate how to research such information on the example of Germany and the European Union. You find similar institutions providing official data in most other countries.

Most governments disseminate public data through **statistical offices**. These institutions provide demographic, economic and other indicators. In Germany, the [federal statistical office](#) is responsible for providing this data. Some statistics are also prepared by the statistical offices of the *Bundesländer*. For Lower Saxony, the [Landesamt für Statistik Niedersachsen](#) makes data available. In the European Union, the [European Statistical Office](#) (Eurostat) aggregates data from member states. Often, you find more in-depth data at governmental branches specialising on your research topic. If you are interested in environmental policy, for instance, both the [German Environment Agency](#) and the [European Environment Agency](#) provide information and data about the state of the environment for their respective area. It is thus recommendable to research on the homepages of authorities in the policy field you are interested in.

If you are interested in political processes, most parliaments provide helpful resources on policy-making processes and parliamentary debates. The German *Bundestag*, for example, allows to download [minutes](#) from parliamentary debates. The European Parliament maintains a [legislative observatory](#) in which you may find information about ongoing and completed policy-making procedures including minutes from committee meetings and legislative drafts. Most parliaments have a scientific service that provides expert opinions to parliamentarians. Usually, the results are also made public. Hence, you find analyses on policy issues on the homepages of the *Bundestag*'s [scientific service](#) or of the [European Parliament Research Service](#).

If you analyse policy fields or constitutional systems, you require official legal texts. Most countries maintain also online platforms for such documents. The German government provides access to federal laws on the homepage [Gesetze im Internet](#) which also offers (legally not binding) translations of many [acts](#). If you are interested in legal acts of the German *Bundesländer*, you find further information on the [joined legal platform](#) of the German federal government and the regional governments. The European Union grants access to all EU legal acts via [Eur-lex](#).

2. Governance indicators and international statistics

For comparative research, statistics and data from individual countries are not sufficient. For these cases, many international organisations and think tanks provide indicators on governance issues that are suitable for comparative purposes.

Bertelsmann Sustainable Governance Indicators	Indicators on OECD countries on the management and performance of their public sector.	http://www.sgi-network.org/2020/
Bertelsmann Transformation Index	Indicators on development and emerging countries building upon the Sustainable Governance Indicators.	https://www.bti-project.org/en/home.html?&cb=00000
CEPII Institutional Profiles Database (IPD)	Indicators on the institutional properties of 143 countries since 2001.	http://www.cepii.fr/institutions/EN/ipd.asp
Hertie School Governance Indicators	Data of the annual Governance Report of the Hertie School of Governance (Berlin).	https://www.hertie-school.org/en/governance-report/govreport-indicators/
OECD: Government at a Glance	This is “the only international comparator which provides a dashboard of 50 indicators covering the whole production chain of public goods and services” (according to the website).	http://www.oecd.org/gov/govataglance.htm
The Quality of Government Institute	This institute provides various datasets which combine different sources of information (including the institute’s own expert survey).	http://qog.pol.gu.se/data
Transparency International Corruption Index	Index on corruption world-wide.	http://www.transparency.org/research/cpi/overview
World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI)	Governance indicators for more than 200 countries.	https://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/
Freedom House Index	Indicators for citizen and freedom rights in 210 countries.	https://freedomhouse.org/countries/freedom-world/scores
Human Development Index	United Nations Index with data on life quality, education and inequality.	http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi

3. Political Science Data Sets

Political science research projects increasingly aim to create larger data collections that can also be used by other researchers in other contexts. These databases have a similar goal as the governance indicators above but are explicitly created to be used in scientific work.

Parlgov	Data on parties, elections and cabinets in 37 countries.	http://www.parlgov.org/
Manifesto Project Database	Data on manifestos of more than 1 000 parties since 1945.	https://manifesto-project.wzb.eu/
Chappel Hill Expert Survey	Expert survey on the properties of 277 parties in 32 European countries.	https://www.chesdata.eu/
Comparative Political Data Set	Yearly political and institutional data for 36 democracies from 1960 until 2018.	https://www.cps-data.org/index.php
World Justice Project Rule of Law Index	According to their homepage, this index relies on more than 100 000 surveys of experts and citizens to measure experiences with the rule of law in daily life.	http://worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index

COCOPS	Executive Survey on Public Sector Reform in Europe, data on 10 European Countries and the European Commission	https://search.gesis.org/research_data/ZA6599
Comparative Agendas Project	Collection of different projects on governmental and parliamentary policy agendas using a unified coding scheme in 25 countries and the American states.	https://www.comparativeagendas.net/
Polity Project (Polity V)	Classification of the degree of democracies in 167 countries.	http://www.systemicpeace.org/polityproject.html

4. Survey

Survey and panel databases allow to include public opinion as a variable in your models.

Eurobarometer	https://www.gesis.org/en/eurobarometer-data-service/home
Sozioökonomisches Panel	https://www.diw.de/de/diw_01.c.615551.de/forschungsbasierte_infrastruktureinrichtung_sozio-oekonomisches_panel_soep.html
Allgemeine Bevölkerungsumfrage der Sozialwissenschaften (ALLBUS)	https://www.gesis.org/allbus/allbus
European Social Survey	https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/
European Values Study	https://www.gesis.org/angebot/daten-finden-und-abrufen/european-values-study

5. Repositories

Universities and research associations increasingly build platforms that provide an overview of existing datasets and/or raw data of scientific studies. These repositories aim to save researched data and make it available to other researchers for further analysis and replication.

Sowidatanet/Datorium	https://data.gesis.org/sharing/#!/Home
European University Institute Data Portal and Repository	Data Portal: https://www.eui.eu/Research/Library/ResearchGuides/Economics/Statistics/DataPortal Data Repository: https://cadmus.eui.eu/handle/1814/64544
Harvard Dataverse	https://dataverse.harvard.edu/