

Doctoral programme Humanities and social sciences 2024/25

Schedule of seminar sessions: METHODOLOGY AND EPISTEMOLOGY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

There will be 7 sessions, mostly on Mondays 5 PM to 8 PM with few exceptions. The topics are presented below.

The classroom information can be found on the website ([FDV – timetables](#))

Date	Title
March 4, 2025	Ethnography in the digital context Ethnography of media practices and relationships in everyday life
March 11, 2025	Ethnographic research of public spaces, solidarity practices and new citizenship(s): European Commons and common spaces Post-qualitative approaches: Analysing affect
March 14, 2025	Positionality in Online and Offline Ethnography Basics of qualitative data analysis
March 17, 2025	Researching everyday life of gays and lesbians in Slovenia: experiences from combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies
March 24, 2025	Methods for policy analysis An overview of statistical methods for program evaluation in the social sciences
March 31, 2025	Cross-national qualitative comparative analysis (Qualitative comparative analysis – QCA) Cross-national quantitative comparative analysis (International social surveys)
April 7, 2025	Systematics reviews and meta-analyses

From Ethnography to Digital Ethnography (10 hours altogether) **Prof. dr. Tanja Oblak Črnič**

(Lecturers: *Prof. dr. Tanja Oblak Črnič, Oddelek za komunikologijo, FDV, Asist. dr. Marko Ribač, Mirovni inštitut in Oddelek za komunikologijo, FDV, Doc. Dr. Sandi Abram, Oddelek za etnologijo in kulturno antropologijo, Filozofska fakulteta, Izr. prof. Dr. Bojana Lobe, Oddelek za sociologijo, FDV, Prof. ddr. Aljoša Pužar, Oddelek za kulturologijo, FDV*)

Ethnography is a qualitative research approach, and its main purpose is to describe, interpret and understand the shared patterns, values, and beliefs of a selected group of participants within a particular social and cultural setting. It is also a highly reflexive method, primarily focused on a specific social situation. It is based on short- or long-term participant observation and additional in-depth qualitative data drawn from personal or group interviews, oral histories, shared documents, and various visual materials.

Ethnography is the study of cultural and social phenomena from the point of view of the subjects. A prominent approach in social research, ethnography involves the analysis of participants' behaviours, practices, or experiences, as well as their relationships, localities, events, and wider social worlds. The method is also used to study groups and organisations of various kinds. Its origins are in social and cultural anthropology, but it is also widely used in other social disciplines, especially sociology and communication and cultural studies. With the prominence of digital technologies and social media, a new wave of 'virtual' or 'digital ethnography' has emerged, exploring the consequences of digital media in shaping social worlds and personal behaviour.

The aim of this set of seminars is twofold:

- a) To introduce this diverse and reflexive approach to qualitative research and
- b) to inform students about the main assumptions, aims and methods used in ethnographic research.

The complete set of two 4-hours and one 2-hours seminars with narrowly focused topics, research frameworks and data set will demonstrate its potential for analyzing diverse social, political, and cultural phenomena. Finally, the seminar aims to show the relevance of ethnography for a better understanding of the recently digitalised and automated society.

Literature:

Fujii, L. A. (2017): *Interviewing in Social Science Research*. Chapter 2: Building working relationships. New York: Routledge.

Pink, S. et al. (2016): *Digital Ethnography Principles and Practice*. London: Sage.

Przybylski, Liz (2021): *Hybrid Ethnography: Online, offline, and in between*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Vannini, Ph., (2011): *Non Representational Theory and Ethnography*. https://www.academia.edu/693096/Non_Representational_Theory_and_Ethnography

Wacquant, Loïc (2004): *Following Pierre Bourdieu into the Field*. *Ethnography* 5 (4): 387–414.

WEEKLY PLAN:

SEMINAR	LECTURER	TOPIC	READINGS
March 4, 2025	Dr. Tanja Oblak Črnič & to be announced	Etnografija v digitalnem kontekstu / Ethnography in the digital context Etnografsko raziskovanje družbenih odnosov skozi medijske prakse in vsakdan/ Ethnography of media practices and relationships in everyday life	Pink (2016): Ethnography in a digital world (see below) Pink (2016): Chapter Researching practices / Chapter Researching relationships (see below)
March 11, 2025	Dr. Marko Ribač & Dr. Sandi Abram	Etnografsko raziskovanje javnih prostorov, solidarnostnih praks in novih oblik državljanstev: evropski skupnostni prostori / Ethnographic research of public spaces, solidarity practices and new citizenship(s): European Commons and common spaces	Wacquant (2004): Following Pierre Bourdieu into the field (see below) Przybylski (2021): Hybrid ethnography: online, offline, and in between (see below).
March 11, 2025	Ddr. Aljoša Pužar	Post-kvalitativni pristopi: afekti v raziskovanju/ Post-qualitative approaches: Analysing affect	Vannini (2011): Non Representational Theory and Ethnography (see below)
March 14, 2025	Dr. Bojana Lobe	Pozicioniranje v online in offline etnografiji/ Positionality in Online and Offline Ethnography	Fujii (2017): Building working relationships (see below)

Basics of qualitative data analysis (Dr. Bojana Lobe, 2 hours, March 14, 2025)

Qualitative coding is a pivotal process in qualitative research, involving the systematic categorization of textual data to identify patterns, themes, and insights. This method enables researchers to transform raw data into meaningful segments, facilitating a deeper understanding of the studied phenomena. By employing various coding techniques such as open, axial, and selective coding, researchers can meticulously analyze and interpret complex data sets. The process often involves iterative cycles of coding. This is essential for developing robust theoretical frameworks and contributes significantly to the credibility and rigor of qualitative research. The seminar will provide the introduction into the process of qualitative coding as described above.

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage. – Chapter 8

Saldaña, J. (2009). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Sage Publications Ltd. – Chapter 2

Coffey A. & Atkinson P. (1996): *making sense of qualitative data*. Sage.

Researching everyday life of gays and lesbians in Slovenia: experiences from combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies (Dr. Alenka Švab, Dr. Roman Kuhar, 2 hours, March 17, 2025)

The sociological study *Everyday Life of Gays and Lesbians* was first conducted in 2003/04 in the form of a face-to-face survey and seven focus groups. The survey was exploratory in nature, as there was no data on this social group in Slovenia, especially not from the perspective of everyday life. Ten years later (2013/14) we repeated the study, this time using an online survey and eight focus groups. The purpose of the second study was to review changes over a ten-year period and, in particular, to obtain data on young people - a new generation that was not covered in the first study.

Literature:

Švab, Alenka, Kuhar, Roman (2005). *The Unbearable Comfort of Privacy. The Everyday Life of Gays and Lesbians*. Ljubljana: The Peace Institute. PDF version available: <https://www.mirovni-institut.si/en/publications/the-unbearable-comfort-of-privacy-the-everyday-life-of-gays-and-lesbians/>

Kuhar, Roman, Švab, Alenka (2023). Between heteronormativity and acceptance : gays and lesbians in private and public space in a comparative perspective. *Journal of homosexuality*. DOI: [10.1080/00918369.2023.2287039](https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2023.2287039).

Švab, Alenka, Kuhar, Roman (2008). Researching hard-to-reach social groups : the example of gay and lesbian population in Slovenia. *Društvena istraživanja : časopis za opća društvena pitanja*. svi.-lip. 2008, god. 17, br. 3, str. 529-552. PDF available: <https://hrcak.srce.hr/25491>

Methods for policy analysis (Dr. Meta Novak, 2 hours, March 24, 2025)

The purpose of the seminar is to acquaint students with the rationale and process of policy analysis, different types of policy analysis, an overview of the methodological bases for different types of policy analysis, and basic methods that can be applied to a range of public policy problems. As part of the seminar, we will learn about the basics of theoretical-methodological planning of policy analysis, obtaining relevant data, synthesizing data, formulating public policy recommendations, and the importance of involving stakeholders in the research process of policy analysis. Students will also get familiar with the literature in this field, which can further guide them in their research.

Literature:

Dunn, William N. [Public policy analysis : an integrated approach](#) » 6th ed. New York ; Abingdon : Routledge. E-publication: <http://nukweb.nuk.uni-lj.si/login?url=https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9781315181226/public-policy-analysis-william-dunn>

Patton, Carl V.; Sawicki, David S.; Clark, Jennifer J. [Basic methods of policy analysis and planning](#) » 3rd ed. Publishing: Abingdon ; New York : Routledge. E-publication: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/fdv-odkjq/detail.action?docID=2193616>

**An overview of statistical methods for program evaluation in the social sciences
(Dr. Anže Burger, 2 hours, March 24, 2025)**

The lecture provides a brief overview of both theoretical and applied tools for implementation of modern statistical methods for program evaluation in the social sciences. First part of the course presents statistical setup and a short description of identification issues in estimating causal effects of a program or some other policy change under different assumptions about the selection into the program. The second part presents the most common evaluation techniques discussed in the literature, such as the Regression-adjustment, Matching, Difference-in-differences, Instrumental variables, Regression-discontinuity-design, Synthetic control method. A series of practical guidelines for the selection and application of the most suitable approach to implement under different policy contexts will be offered. Each method presented will be illustrated with an application from a published scientific article.

Cerulli, G. (2022). *Econometric evaluation of socio-economic programs: Theory and Applications (2nd Edition)*. Advanced studies in theoretical and applied econometrics series, Heidelberg: Springer, 340.

Cross-national qualitative comparative analysis (Qualitative comparative analysis – QCA) (Dr. Mitja Hafner Fink, 2 hours, March 31, 2025)

In international comparative research, where the units of analysis (comparison) are countries, researchers often encounter the problem of small N, which complicates, if not even prevents, quantitative analyses. When explaining the differences between countries regarding the observed phenomenon, the complexity of national contexts must be taken into account - the presence or specific (same) intensity of the phenomenon can, therefore, result from different combinations of different conditions. To address this problem, Charles Ragin pioneered an approach known generically as Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA). It is an approach that puts cases in the foreground (in international studies, these are usually countries), but at the same time, it also talks about causality and variables. Here, we will look at some basic principles of QCA and illustrate them with an example.

Ragin, C.C. (2014, 1987). *The comparative method: moving beyond qualitative and quantitative strategies*. University of California Press.

Rihoux, B. and Ragin, C.C. (eds.). 2009: *Configurational comparative methods: qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) and related techniques*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Rihoux, B. and Lobe, B. (2009): *The Case for Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA): Adding Leverage for Thick Cross-Case Comparison*. In Byrne & Ragin (eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Case-Based Methods* (pp: .222- 242). London (etc.): SAGE.

Cross-national quantitative comparative analysis (International social surveys) (Dr. Mitja Hafner Fink, 2 hours, March 31, 2025)

Social survey data are frequently used for analysis in international comparisons. In this pursuit, social scientists face a series of challenges, all connected by a common problem: the need for data collected through international surveys to be of sufficient quality. This is crucial for enabling credible comparisons and conclusions of the analyses. Researchers, therefore, strive to ensure the equivalence and, thus, comparability of data collected through social surveys in different cultural settings. The next problem is how to include the characteristics of these cultural environments (settings), which represent complex configurations of various factors, in the quantitative analysis of social survey data. In the lecture, we will provide brief information about some main international social survey programs (e.g. ESS and ISSP) and how they attempt to ensure the comparability (equivalence) of the collected data. We will also discuss approaches for quantitative analysis in international comparisons, using examples of simple multilevel analyses of international social survey data.

Hafner-Fink, M., Kurdija, S., and Uhan, S. (2017): *Social Research: From Paradigmatic Divide to Pragmatic Eclecticism*. (Chapter 4: Selected problems of international social survey research: The case of the ISSP, pp: 85-106). Wien: edition Echoraum.

(Online edition: <https://www.fdv.uni-lj.si/docs/default-source/zalozba/hafner-kurdija-uhan-socialresearch-from-paradigmatic-web-21jul2022.pdf?sfvrsn=2>)

Hoffmeyer-Zlotnik, J.H.P., Harkness, J.A. (Eds.) (2005): *Methodological Aspects in Cross-National Research*. Mannheim: ZUMA.

https://www.gesis.org/fileadmin/upload/forschung/publikationen/zeitschriften/zuma_nachrichten_spezial/znspezial11.pdf

Jowell, R., Roberts, C., Fitzgerald, R., and Gillian, E. (Eds.) (2007): *Measuring Attitudes Cross-Nationally: Lessons From the European Social Survey*. London: SAGE Publications.

Schmidt-Catran, A.W., Fairbrother, M. & Andreß, HJ. (2019): *Multilevel Models for the Analysis of Comparative Survey Data: Common Problems and Some Solutions*. Köln Z Soziol 71 (Suppl 1), 99–128 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11577-019-00607-9>

Systematics reviews and meta-analyses (Dr. Katja Lozar Manfreda & Dr. Gregor Čehovin, 2+2 hours, April 7, 2025)

Part 1: An introduction to systematic literature reviews and meta-analyses

Part 2: An example of systematic literature search and a meta-analysis

The two-part lecture will focus on systematic literature reviews and meta-analyses as key tools for understanding diverse results in empirical research. It will place this approach in the context of the hierarchy of empirical-based research. In the first part of the lecture, participants will learn how meta-analyses combine results from multiple individual studies, leading to more reliable conclusions. Special emphasis will be placed on the methodological advantages of meta-analyses, such as increased epistemological power and the ability to generalize findings. In the second part of the lecture, an example of a meta-analysis will be presented. Finally, the practical application of meta-analyses in resolving scientific dilemmas, such as choosing research methods or deciding between different diagnostic tests, will also be highlighted. Participants will also learn how meta-analyses enable better planning of new research that focuses on underexplored areas.

Sources:

Borenstein, M., Hedges, L. V., Higgins, J. P. T., & Rothstein, H. R. (2021). *Introduction to Meta-Analysis* (2nd ed.). Wiley.

Böger, B., in drugi (2021). Systematic review with meta-analysis of the accuracy of diagnostic tests for COVID-19. *American Journal of Infection Control*, 49(1), strani 21-29. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajic.2020.07.011>

Card, Noel. A. (2012). *Applied meta-analysis for social science research*. Guilford Press.

Cooper, H. (2017). *Research Synthesis and Meta-Analysis: A Step-by-Step Approach* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Cumming, G. (2013). *Understanding the new statistics: Effect sizes, confidence intervals, and meta-analysis* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Čehovin, G. (2019). The contribution of meta-analysis to knowledge on survey research operations on nonresponse. Doktorska disertacija. Univerza v Ljubljani, Fakulteta za družbene vede, Ljubljana. <https://repozitorij.uni-lj.si/Dokument.php?id=176818&lang=slv>

Čehovin, G., Bošnjak, M. in Lozar Manfreda, K. (2022). Item Nonresponse in Web Versus Other Survey Modes: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *Social Science Computer Review*, 41(3), strani 926-945. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08944393211056229>

Daikeler, J., Bošnjak, M. in Lozar Manfreda, K. (2020). Web Versus Other Survey Modes: An Updated and Extended Meta-Analysis Comparing Response Rates. *Journal of Survey Statistics and Methodology*, 8(3), strani 513-539. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jssam/smz008>

Glass, G. V. (1976). Primary, secondary, and meta-analysis of research. *Educational Researcher*, 5(10), 3–8. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/1174772.pdf>

Lozar Manfreda, K., Bošnjak, M., Berzelak, J., Haas, I., Vehovar, V. (2008). Web surveys versus other survey modes : a meta-analysis comparing response rates. *International Journal of Market Research*. 50 (1), pp. 79-104.