

Workshop 2

‘Social-to-Biological’ Research: Conceptual Framework and Quantitative Data to Investigate How Social Circumstances Get Under the Skin

An increasing number of datasets contain information on social and biological measures, such as socio-economic circumstances and biomarkers. Against this background, research has shown that socially structured experiences across the life course elicit a biological response, leading to the observation that many biological measures are socially patterned. This ‘social-biological’ research is of interest to researchers across a range of disciplines and topics, typically those interested in understanding how social, economic and cultural factors are associated with health and well-being.

In this workshop, we will introduce concepts for analysing the social and biological dynamics across the life course that influence health and well-being. We will also present data and measurement approaches based on international studies that allow to investigate such questions (incl. harmonized data from the Gateway to Global Aging Data platform (www.g2aging.org)), and provide practical examples of how social and biological measures are commonly linked in research. The aims of the workshop are: (1) to establish a conceptual understanding of the social and biological dynamics involved over the life course with relevance for health (2) to provide practical knowledge and resources about how to conduct social-to-biological research Methods: The workshop is organized by the Interdisciplinary health research group of the SLLS and will be taught by experienced scientists from France and Germany in a combination of theoretical and methodological sessions.

The workshop will be held as full-day workshop, focussing on conceptual frameworks in the morning, and on methodological perspectives in the afternoon.