Labor mobility patterns over the life-course. 
A comparison of retrospective and prospective data in different labor markets

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This study consists of a collection of empirical studies on labor market dynamics in various European countries using panel and life history data. It contributes to an assessment of the extent to which different survey methods are likely to generate biased results through recall or measurement error. It adds to the existing knowledge on the nature of bias in the recall of labor market spells, proposing new approaches to deal empirically with memory bias.

The main substantive questions refer to the changing labor market mobility patterns over time and across cohorts. Since it is rather risky to derive substantive conclusions from the analysis of allegedly less reliable retrospective data, the substantive questions are supplemented with relevant methodological questions concerning the quality of retrospective data.

The extent by which life history and panel data come to similar or different conclusions with respect to labor market mobility over time is examined, correcting for memory bias in order to be able to properly address the substantive research questions.

The possible implications of the design effect are investigated, focusing on whether individual determinants of careers are different when the two designs are compared, looking both at micro- and macro-level determinants.