

Internship opportunity: Understanding health declines across adulthood

Project overview

Most adults develop at least one chronic disease in their lifetimes. Chronic diseases tend to accumulate into multimorbidity, lowering quality of life and leading to premature death. The co-occurrence of 2 or more chronic diseases is known as multimorbidity. People with multimorbidity have substantially higher disability and mortality risks than those with just 1 chronic disease and also have higher care needs and medical costs. In this project, the research intern will work with Prof. Solveig Cunningham (NIDI) to advance our understanding of the origins, progression, sequence, and accumulation of chronic diseases across adulthood. Using SHARE, a population-representative longitudinal dataset from across Europe, the intern will select from one of the following 2 projects:

1. Estimate the progression to multimorbidity starting at age 50 years

We will estimate the age-specific rates of progression to multimorbidity, identify the conditions associated with higher risks of progression to additional morbidities, and calculate the sequencing and pacing of multimorbidity.

2. Compare age-specific risk of multimorbidity across European countries

We will estimate age-specific progression rates, sentinel conditions, and disease clusters across countries, to identify higher and lower-risk populations. We will link these health risks with contextual exposures.

What you will do

- Review literature to become familiar with the research question and what is already known
- Prepare the cross-country panel dataset for analysis, including compiling a longitudinal dataset and coding variables for analysis.
- Descriptive analyses, data checks, and resolving missing data and anomalous data
- Implement longitudinal analytic methods, such as regressions or network analyses
- Contribute to drafting a research article

Faculty mentor

Prof. Solveig Argeşeanu Cunningham is Senior Researcher at the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute, in the Netherlands. Her areas of expertise are in quantitative research methods, obesity and diabetes, contextual factors of chronic diseases, and the implications of childhood exposure for long-term health.

Logistic details

Location: The internship will be based at the NIDI offices, in the Hague

Dates: Starting Fall semester 2024

Duration: The project will take approximately 300 hours, which can be distributed with at least 10 hours per week across the school year

Qualifications

- Enrolled in research master
- Some experience with data management and analysis in Stata.
- Interest in quantitative research and attention to detail

Experience and skills to be gained

- Data management of multi-country longitudinal dataset
- Advanced longitudinal analysis
- Collaboration with international team of experts
- Contributing to and, if interested, co-authoring, research publication

Applying

Contact Prof. Cunningham with questions at Cunningham@nidi.nl

To apply, send letter of interest and CV/resume to Prof. Cunningham.