

Author's response to reviews

Title: Calculation of Health Expectancies with Administrative Data for North Rhine-Westphalia, a Federal State of Germany, 1999-2005

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Version: 2 **Date:** 20 November 2008

Author's response to reviews:

Dear Sir,

Please find enclosed our revised manuscript "MS: 1416478040210270: Calculation of Health Expectancies with Administrative Data for North Rhine-Westphalia, a Federal State of Germany, 1999-2005". We made a thorough revision of the paper and implemented as many of the reviewers' valuable comments as possible. In detail we made the following changes:

- We substituted the term "official" by "administrative" according to reviewer 2 whenever it was possible. Thus, we also slightly modified the title of the paper.
- We made minor revisions in the background section according to comment 2 of reviewer 1. As we intend to give a short introduction to the methodology and not to discuss the pros and cons of the HLY measure, we did not implement the comments 1 and 3 of reviewer 1.
- In the methods section, we dropped the information on the EHEMU as suggested by reviewer 1. In addition, we dropped the reference Calot and Sardon because this was considered to be inexact by reviewer 2.
- The health concepts section was cut down in accordance with reviewer's 1 comment.
- In the data section, we changed the listing of the population and deaths according to the comments of reviewer 1.
- We made a thorough revision of the results section according to the reviewers' suggestions. We substantially shortened the section by presenting fewer figures in the text in order to make it more readable. We dropped those figures in the text which were not adequate according to reviewer 2. We also dispensed with the results at 15, 65, and 85 years of age because we agree that these results are of minor importance.
- Table 2 was changed due to the comments of reviewer 2. The figures were also changed and the age axis is now displayed only at the age of 85 years in conformity with the reviewer's suggestion.
- In the discussion section, we dropped our statement that the Sullivan Method is limited to dichotomous valuations (see comments of reviewer 2).

- Finally, we edited the manuscript to make the English suitable for written publication.

We think that our revision substantially improved the manuscript's quality and hope that the paper now meets the reviewers' requirements. We are therefore looking forward to hearing about your final decision on the publication.

With best regards

Paulo Pinheiro