

# Food and Poverty in Germany

Prof. Dr. habil. Sabine Pfeiffer  
ISF Munich  
University of Applied Sciences Munich

Household Food Security Securing  
in the Global North  
University of Warwick

## Qualitative insights

variety of individual coping



## Qualitative longitudinal study

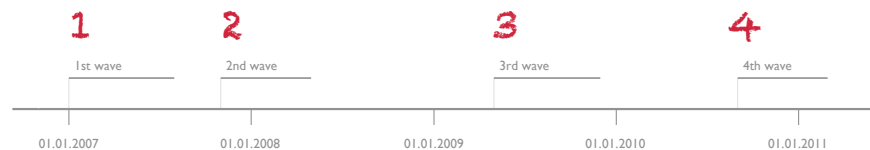
Biographic-narrative interviews at home.

106 initial interviews of 3 hours.

4 waves in 4,5 years.

All interviewing waves completed.

Actually 453 interviews and 81 „living“ cases.



**But quantitative?**

There are hunger and nutritional poverty –  
in the midst of our supposedly affluent society.

**Germany**

No mass problem, but...

Mostly overseen and neglected...

...existent and spreading.

...in public and scientific awareness.

One reason for that:

No systematic and regular surveys on nutrition in Germany.

## National Consumption Study (NVS)

Only two surveys:  
↳ 1980s (NVS I)  
↳ 2005-2007 (NVS II)

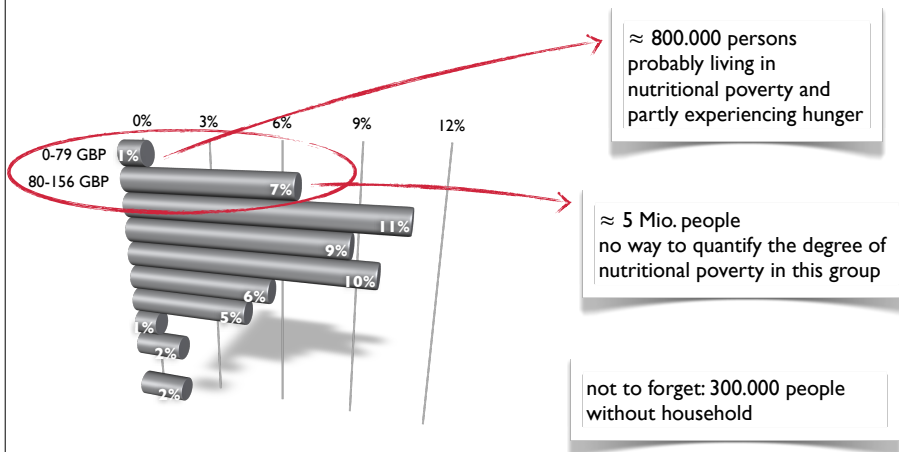
**main problem / critique**

- ↳ poorer population strata are largely lacking
- ↳ population groups at higher risk of nutritional poverty were deliberately excluded
- ↳ unemployed households are underrepresented.

circumstantial evidence I

Too many people  
have too less money  
to spend on food.

## Monthly household expenses in GBP

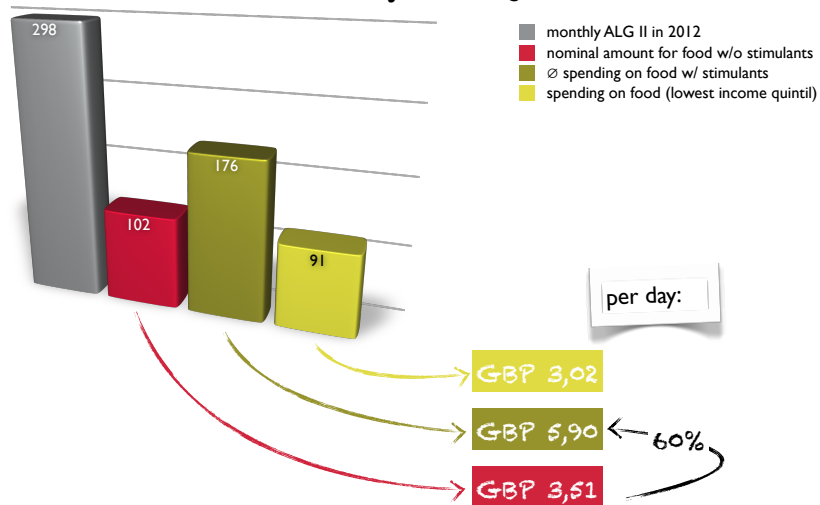


circumstantial evidence 2

ALG-II benefits for food are ridiculously small dimensioned.

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## Spending on food in GBP



circumstantial evidence 3

Germany experiences a food bank „explosion“.

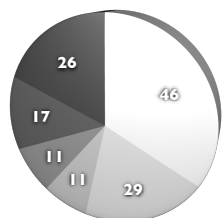
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## Food bank explosion in Germany

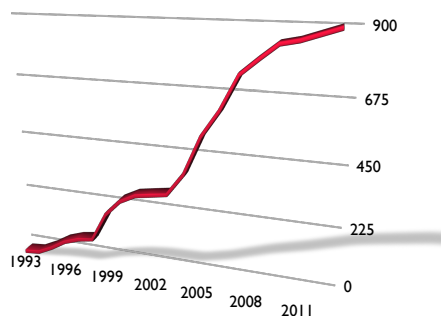
> 100,000 tons of food

1,500,000 people

900 foodbanks



social welfare  
unemployed  
homeless  
retired persons  
migrant  
„German“ migrants (Aussiedler)



Normann 2003; Selke 2009; Bundesverband Deutsche Tafeln e.V. 2012; graphics: Pfeiffer

3 circumstantial evidences



There must be hunger and nutritional poverty in Germany.

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## Alimentary participation

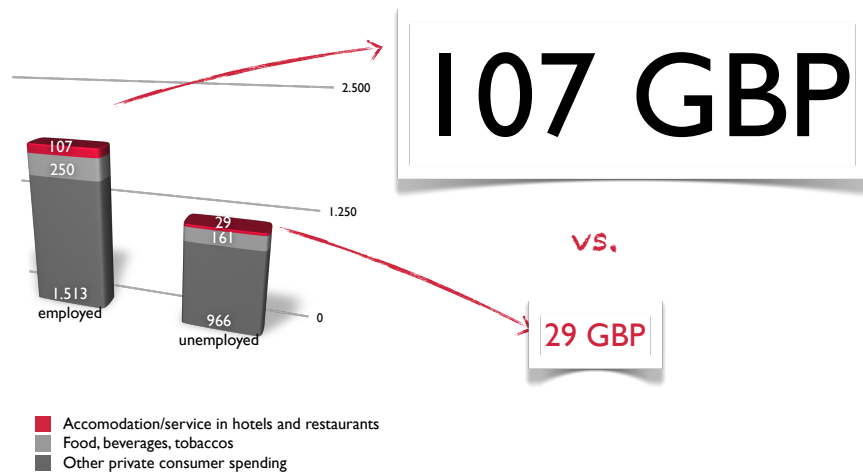
eating out as example

circumstantial evidence 4

Unemployed households' spendings on gastronomic services are way down the average.

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## Household expenditures 2005

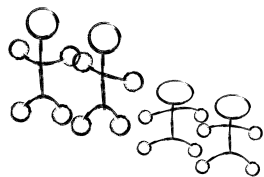


Destatis 2008; graphics: Pfeiffer.

circumstantial evidence 5

On eating out, there is no food choice for unemployed households whatsoever.

Unemployed household with around 1.200 € private consumption



29 GBP

average bill for eating out  
per person  
11,50 GBP

four persons eating out once would need: **46 GBP**

Dine out once a month and leave somebody at home?

Or only every two months with all four?

Or the occasional McDonalds visit with all?

food „choice“ ?

CHD Experts 2009; graphics and combination: Pfeiffer.

circumstantial evidence 6

The great majority of unemployed households is never ever eating out.

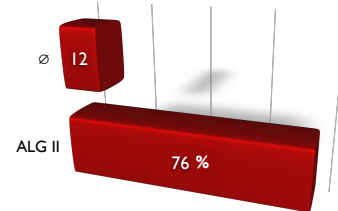
## Not affording dining out at all

average eating out occasions  
per person per year

85x

per month =

7x



European Quality of Life Survey (2003) und Bernhard (2008); graphics and combination: Pfeiffer.

3 circumstantial evidences



ALG-II recipients are systematically  
excluded from alimentary participation.

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## conclusion

Living with ALG II means

risk of nutritional poverty and occasional hunger

systematic exclusion from alimentary participation (e.g. eating out)

individual coping strategies instead of societal/governmental ones

=> new research project starts end of 2012

Thank you - looking  
forward to the discussion!



sabine.pfeiffer@isf-muenchen.de  
twitter.com/sabinepfeiffer



www.sabine-pfeiffer.de