

Our research is

Timely and relevant

Global ecological crises and looming climate catastrophe require rapid, far-reaching and transformative changes in society. We aim to help identify alternative societal and political solutions, as well as potential barriers and conflicts on the path toward sustainable bio-based societies.

Interdisciplinary and based on a plurality of methods

We combine statistical analyses and local field studies, archival research and sociological theory to gain a comprehensive image of the societal preconditions and consequences of bioeconomy transformations.

Transparent and participatory

We communicate our results in reports, articles and other publications; by organising and contributing to conferences, workshops and public events we seek to enter into a dialogue with the wider public.

Duration of project

The project started in March 2019 and will run for five years.

For more information see

www.soziologie.uni-jena.de/en/flumen

The production of this flyer was climate neutral and vegan.
It is printed on grass paper made of 50% grass fibres.
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MENTALITIES
IN FLUX

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MENTALITIES
IN FLUX



Mentalities in flux Imaginarities in modern circular bio-based societies

In the **BMBF junior research group *Mentalities in flux* (flumen)** we combine sociological and historical research to explore how people's mentalities change in post-fossil transformations and how this change is reflected in the occupational structure of society.

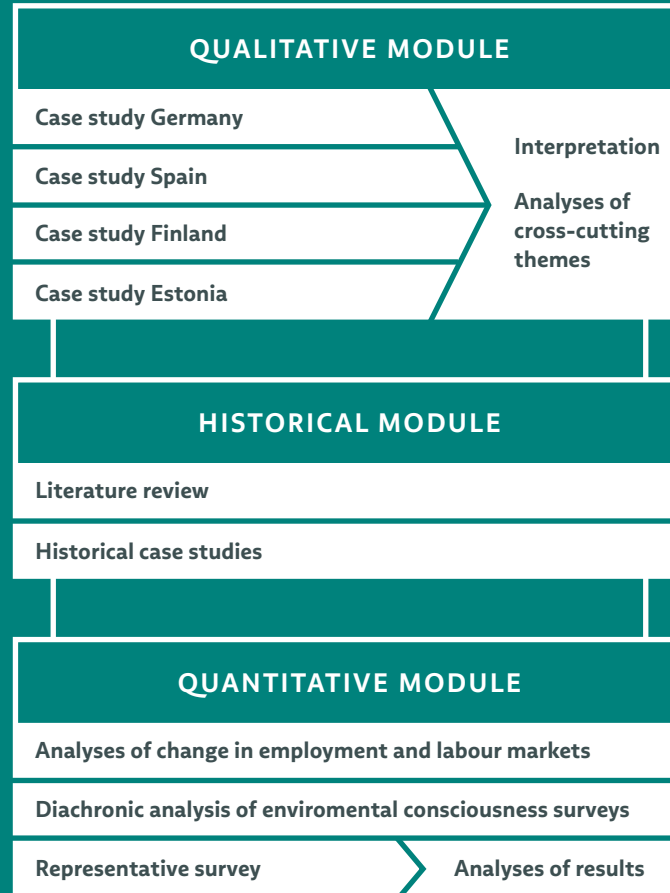
Today, there is broad agreement that fossil fuels, due to their limited availability and damaging effects for the climate, will need to be phased out within the coming decades. One proposed alternative is the idea of a bioeconomy, in which raw materials and energy are gained from renewable sources of plant and animal origin.

But this implies more than just a shift to renewable resources.

In fact, the whole way modern economies are organized will have to change: Fossil-fueled economies rely on a constantly accelerating linear throughput of materials, from extraction through production and distribution to consumption and waste disposal. In contrast, bio-based economies draw on materials and energy sources that regenerate cyclically. Their production cannot be increased at will, but is subject to the natural limitations of these circular flows of matter and energy.

The historical emergence of economies based on linear flows of fossil resources radically transformed human work and was closely linked to basic mindsets, attitudes and shared imaginations compatible with the logic of constant growth. These mentalities differ between social groups, and they will undergo far-reaching change once again in the transformation toward bio-based economies. In short, mentalities evolve in parallel with the transformations of societies' material and energetic basis – they are: ***Mentalities in flux***.

Structure



Our research questions

- How do attitudes, common imaginations and everyday practices change in the course of a transition to an economy based on cyclically reproducing biological resources?
- How do mentalities relating to these changes differ between social groups and what new kinds of conflicts may result from this?
- Is the presence of certain mentalities a necessary precondition for successful post-fossil transformations, or will the mental structures of a bio-based society only arise in the process?
- What lessons about the mental dimension of societal change can we learn from the historical process in which bio-based agrarian societies transformed into fossil-based industrial societies?
- How will work and the division of labour be organized in a bio-based economy?
- What alternative orientations will emerge to replace the logic of permanent linear growth in a modern society based on biological cycles, and what are the implications for mentalities and the societal division of labour?