Working towards a common language for accessible, interoperable, and reproducible historical data

One of the biggest challenges in the transition to *open science* is making data interoperable. Normally, ontologies and vocabularies are used to describe data, but these are generally problematic for historians as existing ontologies and vocabularies are insensitive to temporal variations. Within history, the subdiscipline of historical demography is a forerunner in dealing with this problem, as it studies large-scale reconstructions of populations and life courses. Historical demographers have designed their own ontologies and vocabularies to standardize historical data. We aim to gather these schemes, so that we can standardize existing insights into a common language for accessible, interoperable, and reproducible historical data (CLAIR-HD). The results from this enquiry will be published on the CLAIR-HD website over the course of 2023. We will show per variable whether accepted vocabularies exist, how much support they have, and whether conversion tables exist to translate between rival encodings. Furthermore, we report standardized ways to describe entire databases.