

40959 Mobility, Stratification and Inequality

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Objectives

Welfare state studies and research on social inequality, although theoretically and analytically strictly linked to one another, often run in parallel. On one hand, welfare state studies focus on social demand, policy processes and outcomes (including inequality) at the macro level, but social inequality remains in the background and it is analysed in a usually very simplified way. On the other hand, social inequality research, especially if related to social class, focuses often its attention more to other social mechanisms, using welfare state characteristics in a simplified way and putting them in the background of the analysis.

What both streams of research tend to overlook is how specific mechanisms of welfare state functioning help to reproduce social inequalities or to limit it. From a methodological perspective, adopting such approach requires that researchers need to use much more than in the past large datasets not just offering information on the social class of individuals or other potential sources of inequality (gender, the migratory background, area of residence, etc.) but also on welfare state provision. These datasets offer information obtained through social surveys, administrative data or both. The last decade has witnessed an increasing availability of this type of data, opening up new research opportunities.

The course will provide information and insights on the interaction between welfare state studies and social inequality, offering the opportunity to students to learn how to develop their own research from an analytical, methodological and contents' perspective.

Short Course Description

The course will focus on specific social policy fields, and it will show how concretely their way of functioning helps to create or to hinder social inequalities. It will adopt a comparative perspective.

The course does not intend to offer a whole review of the research in these fields but to focus on studies (and the relative methodology) that can help students interested in these topics to advance in their own research.

Program of the course

1. Introduction and general overview (1/4/2025)
2. Family policies (8/4/2025)
3. The education system (15/4/2025)
4. Labour market policies (29/4/2025)
5. Health care and LTC systems (6/5/2025)
6. Overall discussion of the contents of the course (13/5/2025)

Course schedule and required readings

1. Introduction and general overview

- Pierson, C. and Mares, I. (2021), “Macroeconomic Outcomes,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Welfare State (2021) Second Edition* Edited by Béland, D., Morgan, K.J., Obinger, H. and Pierson, C.
- Parolin, Z., Pintro-Schmitt, R., Esping-Andersen, G. & Fallesen, P. (2024), “Intergenerational persistence of poverty in five high-income countries,” in *Nature Human Behaviour*, 9. 254-267. 10.1038/s41562-024-02029-w.

2. Family policies

- Scherer, S. & Pavolini, E. (2023), “Equalizing or not? Public childcare and women’s labour market participation,” in *Journal of European Social Policy*, 33.
- Pavolini, E. & van Lancker, W. (2018), “The Matthew effect in childcare use: a matter of policies or preferences?,” in *Journal of European Public Policy*, 25(6), 801-809.
- van Lancker, W. & Pavolini, E. (2022), “Understanding the immigrant-native gap in childcare use: An empirical exploration for 21 European countries,” in *Acta Sociologica*, 1-22.
- Bergsvik, J., Fauske, A., & Hart, R. K. (2021), “Can policies stall the fertility fall? A systematic review of the (Quasi-) experimental literature,” in *Population and Development Review*, 47(4), 913–964.
- Scherer, S., Pavolini, E. & Brini, E. (2023), “Formal childcare services and fertility: the case of Italy,” in *Genus*, 79/29.

3. *The Education system*

- Schmutz, R. (2023), “Is Universal Early Childhood Education and Care an Equalizer? A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Evidence,” in *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, 89. 100859. 10.1016/j.rssm.2023.100859.
- Pavolini, E. & Argentin, G. (2020), “How Schools Directly Contribute to the Reproduction of Social Inequalities. Evidence of Tertiary Effects, Taken from Italian Research,” in *Politiche Sociali/Social Policies*, 1/2020, pp. 149-176.
- Triventi, M. & Passaretta, G. (2024), “7. The role of education for social mobility”, in Kilpi-Jakonen, E., Blanden, J., Erola, J. and Macmillan, L. (eds.) *Research Handbook on Intergenerational Inequality*, Edward Elgar.
- Kröger, K., et al. (2024), “8. School interventions to reduce intergenerational inequality”, in Kilpi-Jakonen, E., Blanden, J., Erola, J. and Macmillan, L. (eds.) *Research Handbook on Intergenerational Inequality*, Edward Elgar.

4. *Labour market policies*

- Biegert, T. (2023) “33. Labour market policies and social inequality in labour market outcomes,” in Clegg, D. and Durazzi, N. (eds.) *Handbook of Labour Market Policy in Advanced Democracies*, Edward Elgar.
- Hick, R. and Marx, I. (2023), “34. Poor workers in advanced democracies: on the nature of in-work poverty and its relationship to labour market policies,” in Clegg, D. and Durazzi, N. (eds.) *Handbook of Labour Market Policy in Advanced Democracies*, Edward Elgar.
- Kosyakova, Y. & Bills, D. (2021), “Formal adult education and socioeconomic inequality: Second chances or Matthew Effects?,” in *Sociology Compass*, 15. 10.1111/soc4.12920.
- Bonoli, G. & Liechti, F. (2018), “Good intentions and Matthew Effects: access biases in participation in active labour market policies,” in *Journal of European Public Policy*, 25:6, 894-911.

5. *The Health care and Long-term Care systems*

- Turner, A. et al. (2022), “Socioeconomic inequality in access to timely and appropriate care in emergency departments,” in *Journal of Health Economics*, Volume 85.
- Kaminska, M.E. & Wulfgramm, M. (2018), “Universal or commodified healthcare? Linking out-of-pocket payments to income-related inequalities in unmet health needs in Europe,” in *Journal of European Social Policy*, 29.

- Aronsson, A. et al (2023), “24. The role of Social Protection Policies in reducing health inequalities,” in Hoffmann, R. (ed.) *Handbook of Health Inequalities Across the Life Course*, Edward Elgar.
- Albertini, M. & Pavolini, E. (2017), “Unequal Inequalities: The Stratification of the Use of Formal Care Among Older Europeans,” in *J Gerontol B Psychol Sci Soc Sci*, May 1;72(3): 510-521.

Requirements and examination information

Basic knowledge on welfare state studies and social inequality research. The examination will require a short essay on one of the topics discussed in the course.