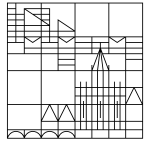


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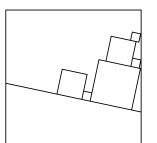
N°7

Universität
Konstanz



Inclusion & Diversity

Cluster of Excellence
The Politics of Inequality



In_equality magazine

**In_clusion
& Diversity**

*Research Magazine of the
Cluster of Excellence
“The Politics of Inequality”
at the University of Konstanz*

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Gabriele Spilker is Professor of International Politics—Global Inequality and Co-Speaker of the Cluster of Excellence.

Editorial

DEAR READERS

Inclusion and diversity—these are terms we encounter frequently in the workplace, media, and our daily lives. While they are often used interchangeably and can seem vaguely defined, there is a crucial distinction between them. *Diversity* describes structural, individual, or social differences or similarities between members of organizations, for example. Inclusion, on the other hand, refers to concrete actions to ensure that all people feel respected and included in their diverse identities within decision-making processes, environments, and activities. In the words of Justin Trudeau, the Prime Minister of Canada: "Diversity is a fact, but inclusion is a choice."

In this latest issue of our magazine, we aim to provide you with insights into our research on diversity and inclusion, as well as showcase the various measures we've implemented within our Cluster to foster these principles.

For example, the CoPE project, led by Susanne Strauss and her team, examines the different impact of containment measures during the coronavirus pandemic on men and women. Christina Felfe de Ormeño has explored whether an ethnically and culturally diverse classroom fosters greater mutual understanding among students. Some of our projects have even reached the stage where concrete *policy recommendations* can be made, such as strategies to further reduce the persistent gender pay gap, a topic of significant interest to Florian Kunze and his team.

Beyond our research on diversity and inclusion, we are committed to embodying these principles at our university and within our Cluster community. This year,

for instance, we adopted the "Guidelines for Linguistic Diversity," to which our Principal Investigator Theo Marinis contributed significantly with his expertise. In an interview with the In_equality magazine, he discusses why universities need such guidelines and how non-inclusive language can perpetuate inequality.

We are also dedicated to supporting our young female scientists through mentoring and scholarship programs. Despite advancements, there remains a negative correlation between academic degrees and the representation of women in science. We are working with the University of Konstanz to address this issue. Sophia Stutzmann, a doctoral student at the Cluster, talks about her experiences during a research stay in Oxford.

A highlight of our Cluster this year was the In_equality Conference 2024, where we awarded the first *In_equality Research Award* to Simon Jäger. In a mid-section interview, he discusses his research projects and emphasizes the importance of translating scientific findings into societal and political action.

In addition to these activities, the last few months have been characterized by work on the follow-up proposal for the second funding period of our Cluster of Excellence. We submitted the application in August and wish to thank all our internal and external colleagues for their constructive cooperation, critical comments, and helpful advice! We are confident that from 2026 onward, we will continue our research on the political causes and consequences of inequality together. /

Yours
MARIUS R. BUSEMEYER,
CLAUDIA DIEHL &
GABRIELE SPILKER

INTERVIEW

“Inclusive Communication Means: All Information Is Accessible for Everyone.”

Theo Marinis on Multilingualism

(Interview: A. Kampermann)

IN_EQUALITY MAGAZINE *For the non-linguists among us: why is it important to research multilingualism?*

THEO MARINIS Because the world is diverse. In the past, there were many monolingual countries in Europe. Today, globalization and migration mean that many more countries are de facto multilingual. However, public authorities, institutions, and organizations in these countries are often not yet set up to accommodate this multilingualism. In many countries, including Germany, everything is organized in one language. This poses challenges for institutions, but also for the population. It would therefore be important for authorities not to see multilingualism as a shortcoming, but to understand the language development of multilingual people and learn to become more inclusive as a society.

What kinds of inequalities can arise if multilingualism is not accepted and promoted?

A great many! Take our schools, for example: in Germany, the school system relies on strong communication between schools and parents. There are parents' evenings, one-on-one meetings, and the like. However, these meetings are usually only held in German, which is a problem for some parents who immigrated to Germany late in life. Consequently, these parents find it difficult to understand how the school system works. For example, the school system requires parents to help their children with homework assignments and other academic activities. Children whose parents are unaware of this or unable to provide this support due to a lack of language skills do not have the same educational opportunities. Studies show that these children do less well academically, are less likely to attend Gymnasium schools and hence less likely to pursue an academic career—despite the support they are getting from society, schools, and social programs.

What about the universities?

There are inequalities there, too. Universities depend on the international outlook of science and research. But in Germany, the official language is German. If you work at a university, have no knowledge of German, and still have to fill out all the forms, you usually need help. Many committee meetings are also held exclusively in German, which means that international researchers and staff may not be able to participate. Our membership in the European university alliances is a counterexample: here, communication is exclusively in English, which in turn excludes other people, of course. It's a challenge for individuals and institutions alike. →

→ Theodoros Marinis is a Professor of Multilingualism and PI at the Cluster of Excellence



You led an effort to develop a guideline for multilingualism at the University of Konstanz. The goal is inclusive communication. What does that mean exactly?

First of all, it means that all information should be accessible to everyone. This applies to communication from the university to its members as well as communication between university members. A university produces a lot of information, but if it fails to reach everyone, it is not inclusive. Our university already communicates in both English and German in many areas but not in all.

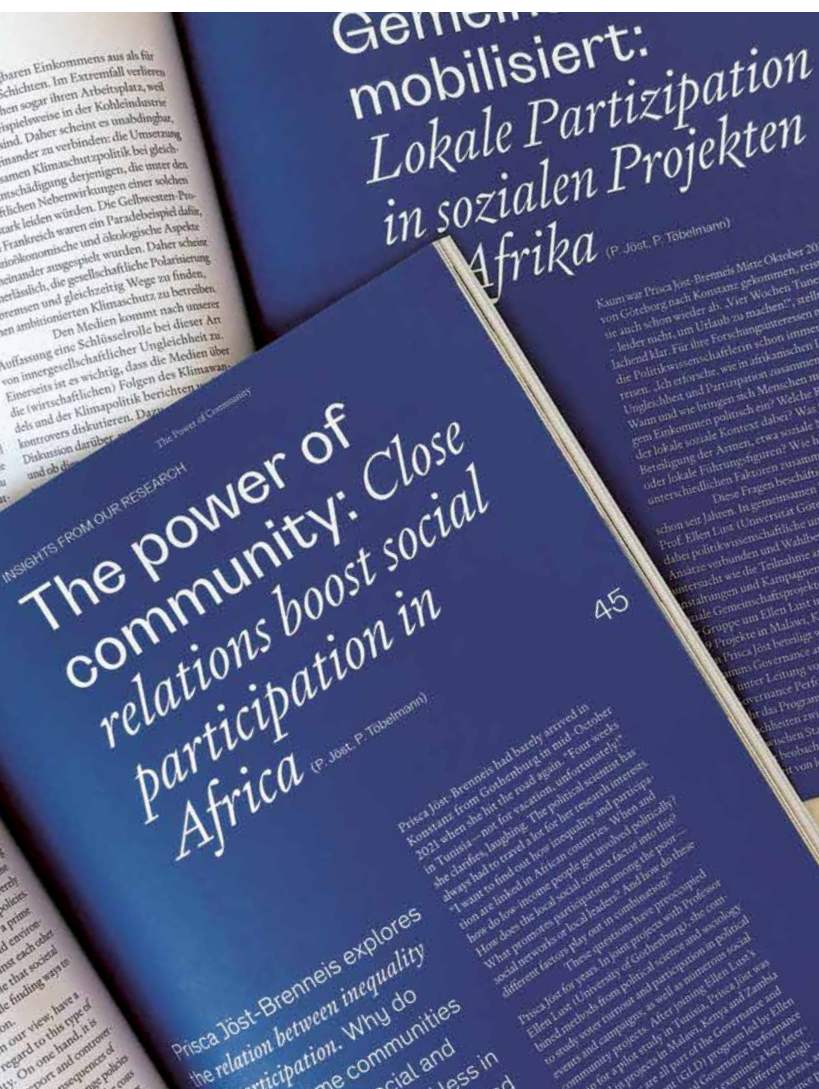
Why do we need this guideline?

On the one hand, as a University of Excellence, we host many researchers who do not speak German. On the other hand, there are many research support staff who have no academic background and who are less proficient in English. That creates conflicts. We learned about many cases in which university members were unable to express their opinions or take part in meetings because they were held exclusively in one language. That's why we formed a working group to develop the multilingualism guideline, which addresses four status groups with different needs: researchers, students, instructors, and research support staff.

Our main questions were: what are the needs of these people? Which language skills are important in each of the status groups? But also: what can the university offer? You know, we can't just ask people to upskill their language ability, we also have to offer training opportunities. Our goal is for everyone at the university to be able to communicate in different languages.

So far, we have only talked about German and English. Why is that?

In most academic disciplines today, English is the lingua franca. The most important findings are published in English and in English-only international journals. Especially for students from non-academic backgrounds, this may mean that they do not fully understand our academic publications in English.



↑ In_equality magazine bilingual

“Our goal is for everyone at the university to be able to communicate in different languages.”

What fascinates you personally about multilingualism?

How playfully easy it is for kids to learn multiple languages at the same time, to think and speak in them. If you try to learn a foreign language as an adult, it's incredibly difficult and takes a lot of time.

So there are drawbacks to the dominance of English.

Yes, and not just for individuals. If researchers from other countries write mainly in English, the vocabulary in the actual main language may no longer evolve there. As a result, a language may lose its creativity, and hence its value.

You mean that certain aspects of people and realities may no longer be represented in the research because there are no words or expressions for them in English?

Yes, exactly! Concepts are not the same in every language, and often there is no exact equivalent for a concept in another language. So we take these English concepts, translate them, and then think about them in another language. Some concepts may be very important in English, and that's why we focus our attention on them. In German, or in a German context—political, social, economic—a different concept might have been much more important—but we don't think about it anymore.

When it comes to science communication and transfer, your recommendation in the guideline is to use German. Why?

Let me ask a counter-question: who are these transfer activities for? It is crucial for us to use a language our audience understands. We want to make this transfer into the city of Konstanz, for the citizens of Konstanz. At the same time, we don't want to neglect other people, because we are a multilingual, international city. That's why it is important to also engage in transfer activities in other languages, and internationally, English is the dominant language, of course. The In_equality magazine is an excellent example, by the way, because it combines both languages. /



Annalena Kampermann is Public Relations and Science Communications Officer at the Cluster of Excellence.

INSIGHTS FROM OUR RESEARCH

The Details Count.

A Diversity Experiment

12 in Heterogeneous

School Classes

(C. Felfe de Ormeño)

Does ethnic and cultural diversity in classrooms help reduce stereotypes? Not necessarily—what matters is how the various groups are distributed. In a widely noted experiment, researchers studied the constellations that tend to create more bias among students.

↓ Classroom



Immigration has increased significantly in recent decades, making societies more diverse. In Europe, one in six people lives outside their country of origin; in the main receiving countries, including Germany, it's as many as one in four. Trends among the younger generation suggest that these figures can be expected to keep rising. Addressing the challenges and risks associated with diversity—including the alarming rise of populism—requires mutual trust and cooperation across national, religious, and ethnic boundaries.

Public education is one of the few social institutions that have the potential to foster cooperation across ethnic groups. Schools are places where young people with different backgrounds come together, providing opportunities for them to interact and collaborate. Such personal interactions, in turn, can help to challenge and reduce prejudice and stereotypes in German mainstream society, thereby preparing the next generations to thrive and make a positive impact in a diverse society.

The success of this process depends heavily on the specific composition of the student body and the specific interactions between students. To perform a systematic analysis of this phenomenon in our study, we considered two characteristic types of ethnic classroom composition at German

secondary schools: fractionalization (many different small groups) and polarization (two groups of roughly equal size). Specifically, we wanted to know whether a culturally polarized classroom promotes the attachment of native German students to their own group, fosters their prejudice toward immigrant youth, and ultimately amplifies discrimination against non-native peers. Furthermore, we investigated how cultural distance between native and immigrant students affects prejudice and stereotypes among the native group.

To learn more about the links between diversity and discrimination, we surveyed students in 57 German schools in their final compulsory school year. Their average age was 15–16 years. We →

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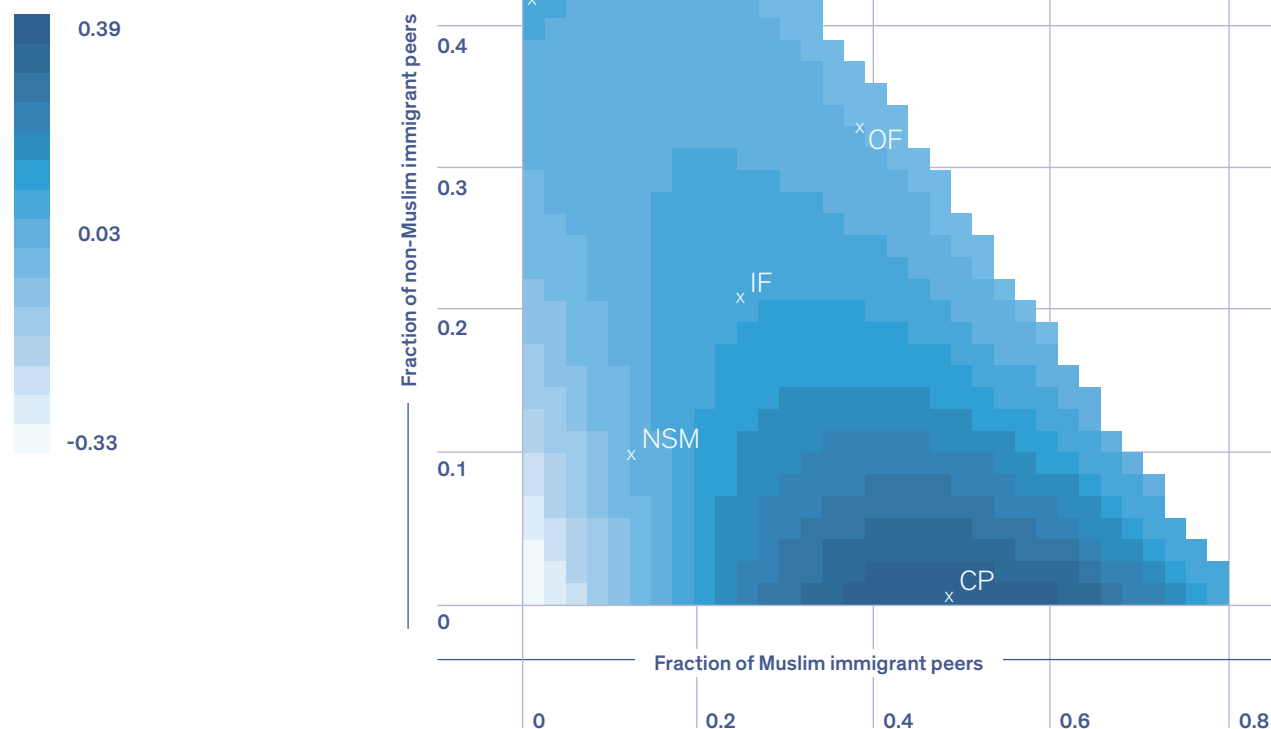
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Detailed information about the study can be found here: Anderberg, Dan et al. (2024): “Diversity and Discrimination in the Classroom” IZA Discussion Paper Series No. 16817. <https://docs.iza.org/dp16817.pdf>

combined these surveys with a lab-in-the-field experiment, also known as a “trust game.” This allowed us to measure how native German students interact with students from their own group (other natives) and from a different group (immigrants). We were interested in the difference between a native German student’s willingness to cooperate with a native student and with an immigrant student. In other words, we wanted to measure the “in-group bias” of native German students. It’s important to point out that the participants in these games interacted with students from a different school whose identity was not disclosed to them.

In our analysis, we compare the in-group bias of students assigned to different classes in the same school. Our main finding is that cultural polarization leads to more in-group bias among native students. However, this was only found in polarized classrooms featuring native German students and students with vastly different religious and language backgrounds.

Figure 1: In-group bias (Predictions in units of standard deviation)



To investigate the relevance of cultural background and the relative size of cultural subgroups, we first used religious affiliation—as a proxy for cultural distance—and distinguished between Muslim and non-Muslim students. Figure 1 shows the extent of in-group bias in the different classrooms. This refers to the difference between the level of cooperation of native students with fellow natives (in-group) versus with immigrants (out-group). Darker colors indicate greater in-group bias. An interesting pattern emerges: the strongest in-group bias is found in classrooms with a pronounced cultural distance between two large groups. It is particularly strong when there is a slight native majority and an almost equally large group of Muslim students (see also CP—cultural polarization—in Figure 1).

In a next step, we analyzed the underlying mechanisms. Our results show that in culturally polarized classrooms, native students indeed tend to keep among themselves and have little contact with immigrant classmates.

Cultural bias remains unchanged, and negative stereotypes about immigrants tend to increase. This ultimately leads to discrimination.

In summary, we find that having ethnically mixed classrooms does not automatically lead to improved social cohesion in culturally polarized environments. Further efforts are therefore needed. In schools, possible solutions might include adapting the curriculum to emphasize inclusion, thereby promoting interactions between different cultural groups. In society-at-large, policymakers and administrators should be careful not to create unnecessary polarization when distributing refugees between different regions. /



Christina Felfe de Ormeño is a Professor for Applied Microeconomics and PI at the Cluster of Excellence.



Sophie Moser is a Doctoral Researcher in the project "Integration at Work" at the Cluster of Excellence.



Florian Kunze is a Professor for Organizational Behavior and PI at the Cluster of Excellence.

VISUAL SOCIAL SCIENCE

Still a Divide. *Why the Gender Pay Gap Persists —and What to Do about It* (S. Moser, F. Kunze)

Women in Germany continue to earn an average of 18 percent less than men. Even when comparing men and women working identical jobs, this gap does not go away. On average, women earn 6 percent less than men for the same work. Why is that? And what measures might help to close the pay gap? Sophie Moser and Florian Kunze are currently investigating these questions in their research project.

1 Years of stagnation

In 2023, the gender pay gap in Germany was 18 percent. In concrete terms, this means that women currently earn an average of 4.50 euros less per hour than men, or 8,500 euros per year. Extrapolated over a working life, women therefore have an average earnings deficit of 340,000 euros compared to men.

This means that the gender pay gap in Germany has remained unchanged for the fifth year in a row, even though women have gained increased access to well-paid jobs during this period. This indicates that women and men are paid unequally for the same work. Our analyses support this hypothesis: when directly comparing full-time workers who had the same education and training, work for the same company, and are employed at the same hierarchical level, a (so-called adjusted) gender pay gap of 6 percent remains. →

Figure 1: Gross hourly pay in EUR by gender and year Men / Women

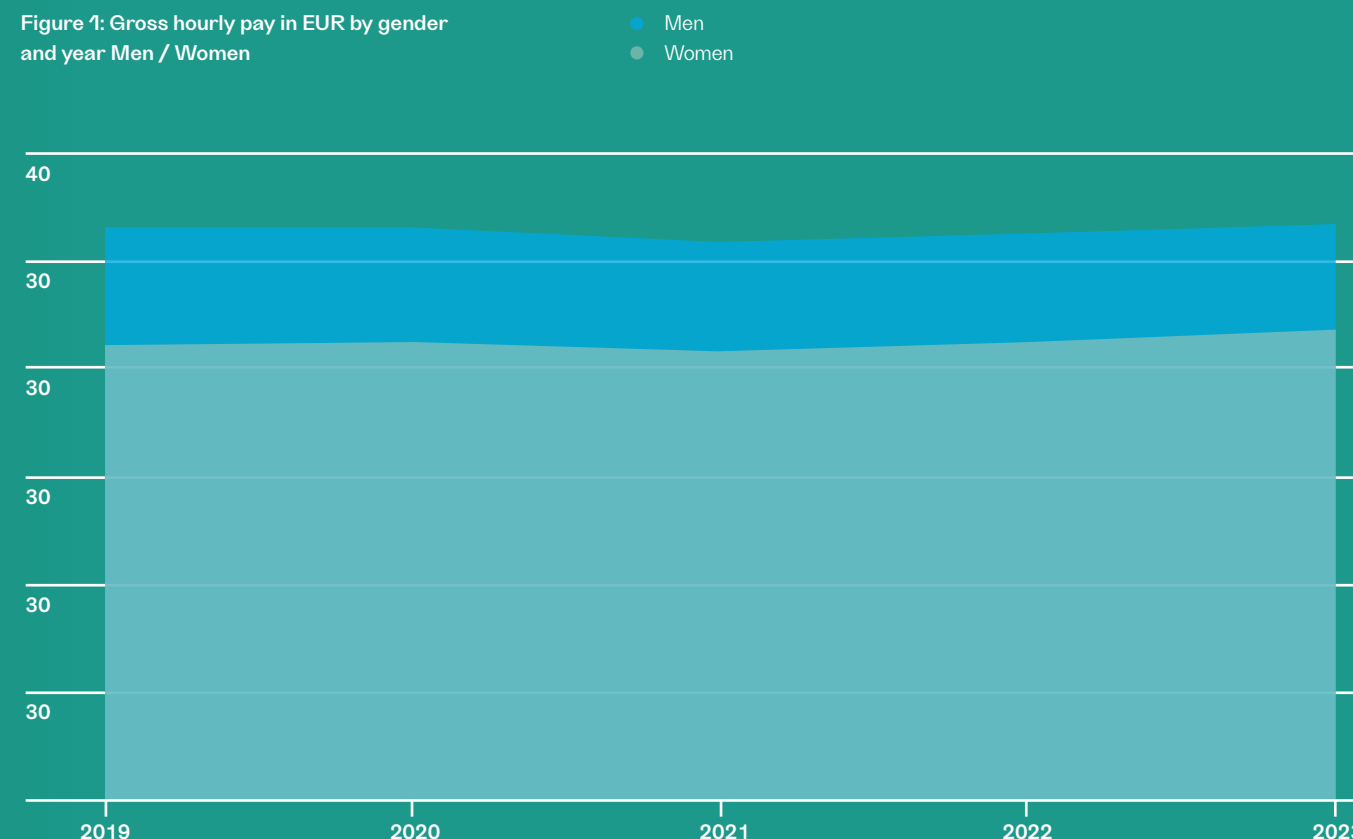
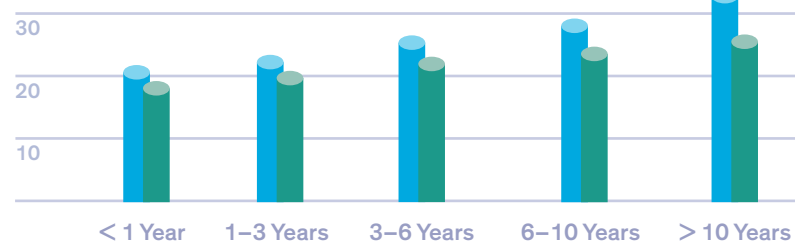


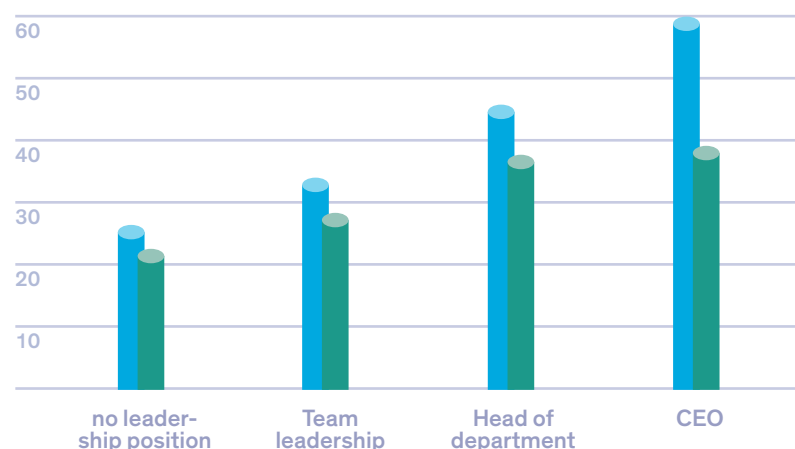
Figure 2: Gender pay gap by employees' work experience and senior position

● Men
● Women

Gross hourly pay in EUR by gender and work experience



Gross hourly pay in EUR by gender and position



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3 Women on supervisory boards

In 2016, the German government introduced a nationwide gender quota stipulating that at least 30 percent of supervisory boards of public companies must be made up of women; the same minimum quota applies to men. According to our analysis of salaries in public companies, a higher proportion of women on company boards can improve conditions for women throughout the company and bring down the gender pay gap. However, pay inequality is only reduced once 50 percent parity is achieved.

This suggests employers should work towards full gender parity on their supervisory boards—not only to increase the proportion of women in senior positions but also to reduce gender pay gaps across their entire workforce.

2 Unequal pay raises

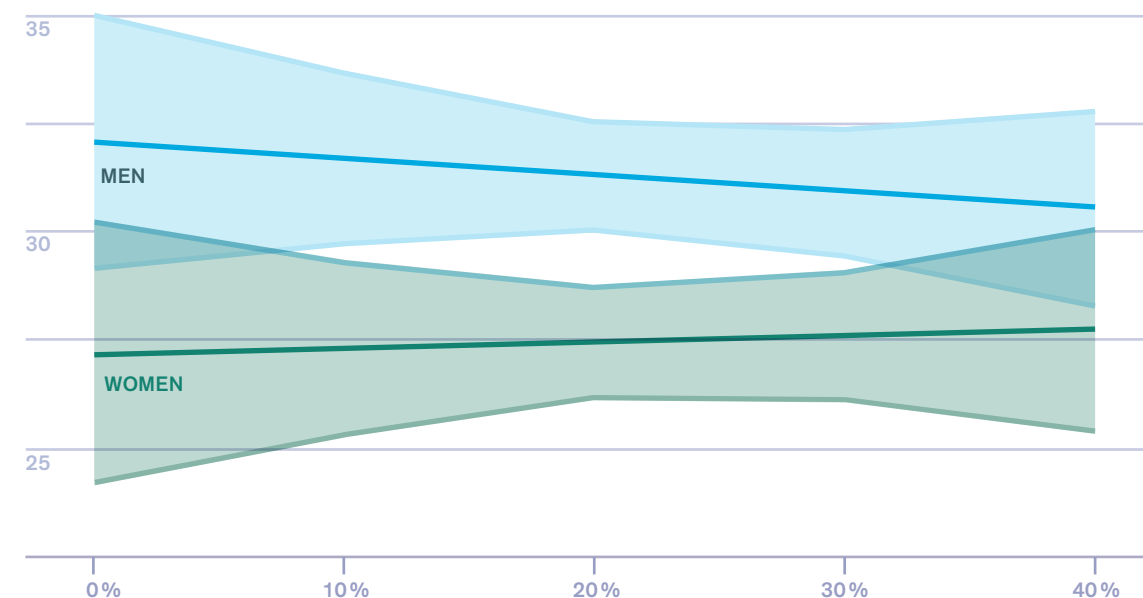
As employees gain more work experience and management responsibility, they also earn higher salaries. This is true of both men and women—but not to the same extent. The increase in earnings for accumulated work experience or taking on management responsibility is significantly higher for men than for women. As a result, the pay gap for women increases over the course of their career and as they move up the career ladder.

Binding pay policies and regulations applied equally to all employees could be a solution here. They might ensure that pay for a comparable senior role is equal for all—irrespective of negotiating skills or gender.

Figure 3: Gender pay gap among persons not in senior positions and proportion of women on supervisory boards (in percent)



Figure 4: Effect of diversity targets (target proportion of women in senior positions) on employees' gross hourly pay (in EUR)



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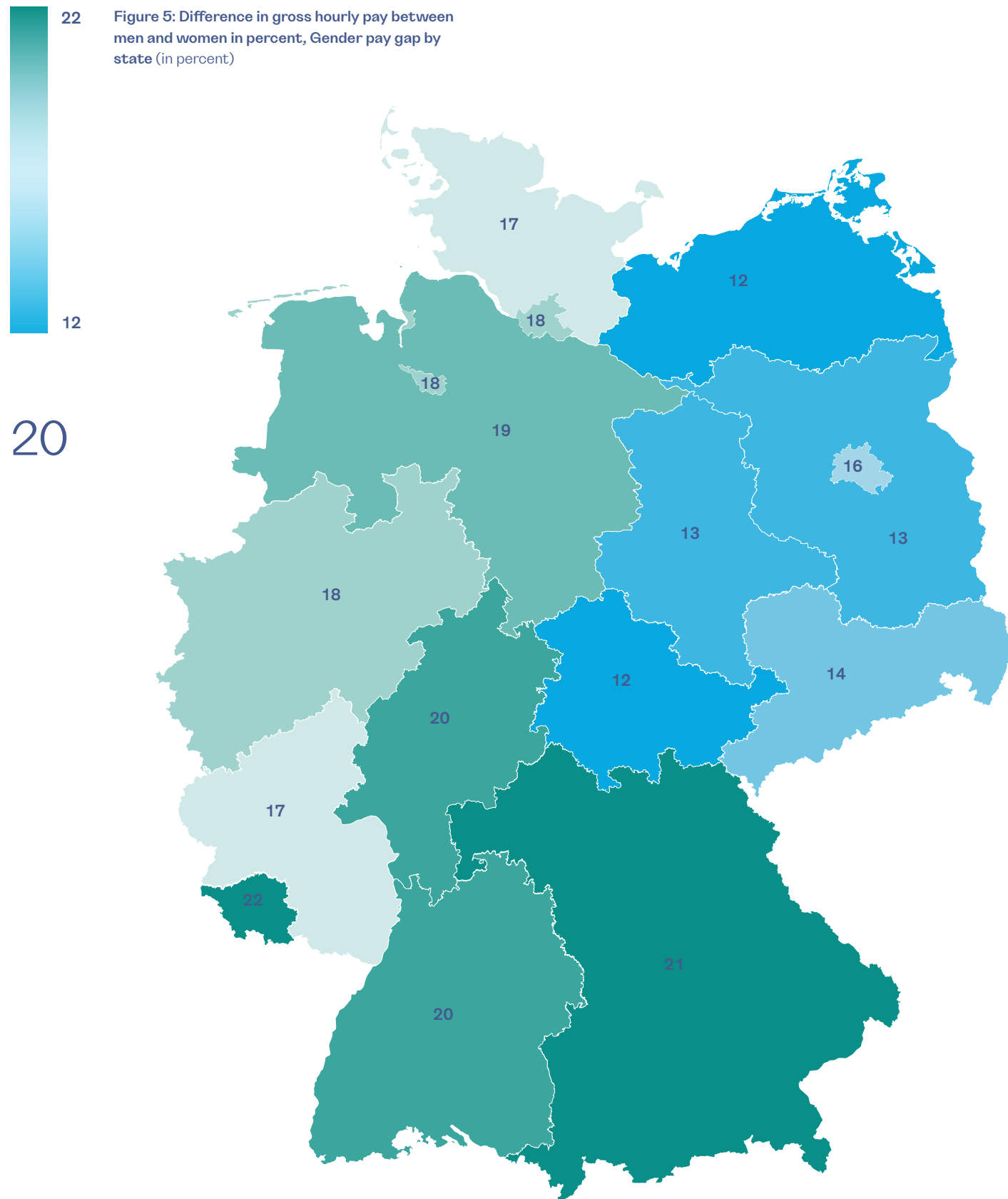
Pay inequality is only reduced once 50 percent parity is achieved.

● All-male supervisory board
● 30-50 percent women on supervisory board
● 50 percent women on supervisory board

4 Diversity-friendly company targets

More and more companies present themselves to the public as especially woman-friendly or set themselves ambitious corporate targets with respect to diversity and inclusion. For example, many employers are aiming to increase the proportion of women in senior positions. According to our analysis of all stock-listed companies in the sample, the pay gap between men and women working the same jobs is indeed reduced by such diversity-friendly targets.

Ambitious company targets in this area therefore not only lead to a higher proportion of women in management roles. They also reduce pay discrimination against women in the entire workforce, even among female employees without management responsibility. →



5 Political infrastructure

The gender pay gap varies from region to region, with a pronounced East-West divide in Germany. For example, the pay gap for women in Bavaria is 45 percent higher than in the East German states of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania or Thuringia. These regional differences can partly be explained by industry- and sector-specific structures: West Germany has more large companies in technical sectors (tradition-

ally a male domain), compared to many micro-enterprises in East Germany. However, there are also strong variations in child and family policy within Germany. For example, the average childcare rate for children under the age of three in East Germany is 53 percent, compared to only 32 percent in West Germany.

These regional differences in the gender pay gap suggest that the pay gap in West Germany might also be brought down significantly by expanding childcare services. /

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Kununu, an employer rating platform, provided us with information on the earnings of 1,780,008 individuals. On this online platform, employees enter their gross earnings as well as personal demographic and work-related information, such as age, occupation, and weekly working hours.

We also know the companies that people work for. This allows us to combine earnings data with publicly available information about each employer, such as the proportion of women on the supervisory board or a company's diversity targets. The results presented so far are limited to the binary gender categories, as the number of non-binary persons available in the data set is still too small for reliable assessments.

INSIGHTS FROM OUR RESEARCH

Special Effects in Crisis Times. *Covid-19 Containment Policies Affected Men and Women Differently*

(M. Piolatto, S. Strauss)

While the Covid pandemic hit the whole world without exception, the concrete consequences were not the same for men and women. The initial strict containment measures meant a high risk for women to return to a more traditional role. For some, however, the situation provided an opportunity to negotiate a more equitable sharing of household responsibilities.

The outbreak of the Covid-19 crisis in March 2020 marked the beginning of a societal discussion on appropriate measures to contain the pandemic. The majority of European governments adopted various forms of lockdown measures, for instance by restricting individuals' access to the workplace and public areas, as well as closing fundamental public services like childcare and schools. While effective in building a cordon sanitaire and protecting the most vulnerable people, these measures also impacted existing social inequalities in various ways, in particular inequality between women and

men. Gender inequality became a focal point of societal discussions from the start. To what extent would pandemic-related containment measures lead to more or less gender equality? The question is whether these measures led to a re-traditionalization of gender relations due to higher care needs or, to the contrary, led to more gender equality by increasing the share of remote work and greater social attention for female dominated health professions.

In the first months of the pandemic, a number of rapid response surveys were issued to study the potential gendered consequences of the containment measures. While these studies were important and yielded interesting results, the non-representative nature of much of these data meant further research was needed. Moreover, only a few studies were able to set up a comparative design that included data from different countries, allowing for comparative lesson-drawing. The "COVID-19 Policies for Gender Equality" (CoPE) project has worked to close this research gap by using representative survey data collected in (up to) four countries throughout the pandemic,

namely Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, and the UK. By doing so, the project aims to contribute to the understanding of how policies and cultural contexts shaped the impact of the containment measures on gender (in)equalities.

The project has also included an investigation of differences at the couple level, considering differing constellations of education and working arrangements within households. Here we give some brief insights into the results of the CoPE project by reporting on two papers that look at the first months of the pandemic (March to December 2020). One focuses on changes in couples' employment constellations and the other one looks at changes in household contributions in couples where one or both partners were categorized as essential workers (with or without the possibility to work remotely). →



Matteo Piolatto is a Postdoctoral Researcher in the Cluster project "COVID-19-Policies for Gender Equality (CoPE)."



Susanne Strauss is a Professor of Sociology with a focus on Gender Studies and PI at the Cluster of Excellence.

Back to the 1950s? Changes in couples' employment constellations

Did couples' breadwinning arrangements become more traditional during the pandemic? Our analyses in Germany, Finland, the Netherlands and the UK suggest an overall increase (about +14 percent) in women's likelihood of transitioning into a more traditional breadwinning arrangement between March and December 2020, compared to the pre-pandemic situation. Did this increase affect all women alike—or can we distinguish different groups of women? As we know that education is a strong predictor of labor market participation for women, we asked: were women with tertiary education more protected against the risk of shifting into more traditional breadwinning arrangements during the pandemic? Figure 1 shows, for each of the four countries, the predicted probability of a transition into a more traditional employment arrangement

relative to the division of labor before the pandemic. A distinction is made between a re-traditionalization during the lockdown (left) and a longer-term re-traditionalization after the first lockdown (right). With the exception of women without higher education in Finland during the first lockdown, the risk of re-traditionalization was 10-15 percent. However, the risk increased slightly after the first lockdown for women in the UK, regardless of their education.

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The analyses are based on heterosexual couples selected from the following longitudinal datasets representative of the general population: Finland (Varhaiskasvatus survey), Germany (pairfam), the Netherlands (LISS panel), UK (UKHLS).

Figure 1: Changes to more traditional employment constellations as compared to before the pandemic.

● Women without tertiary education
○ Women with tertiary education

Changes to more traditional employment constellations

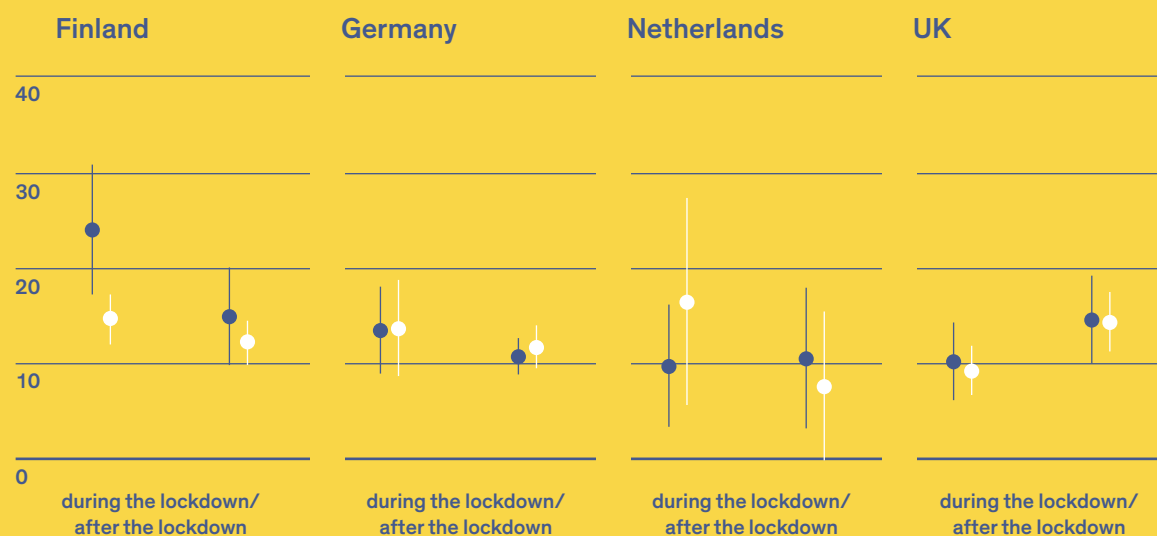
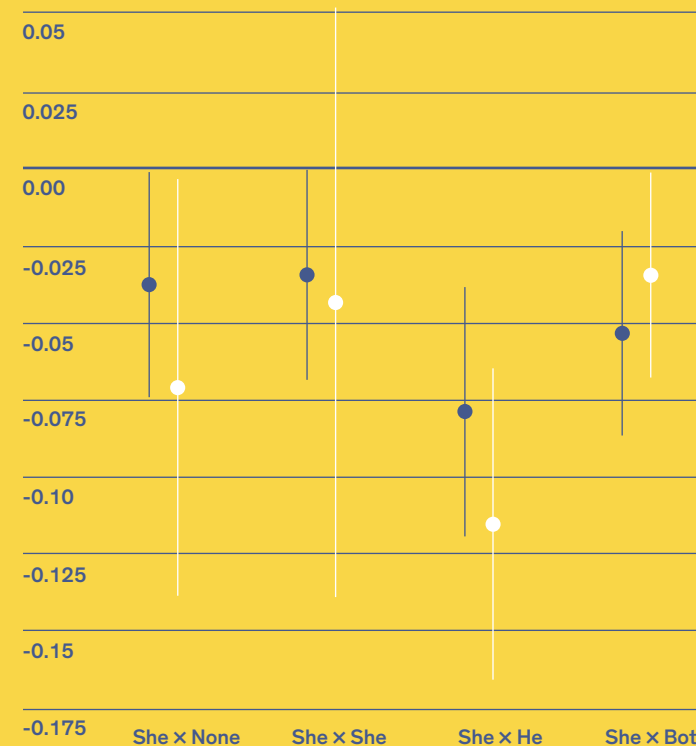


Figure 2: Change of women's share of housework by essential work status and working from home in the UK and the Netherlands. With a 95 percent confidence interval

● United Kingdoms
○ Netherlands

Essential worker × Work from home



Essential worker status as a special case in couple constellations

One policy particular to the pandemic was the identification of essential occupations. This categorization was intended to solve the challenge of keeping economy-relevant productions and services active while imposing the closure of—or limiting access to—workplaces. Given the high presence of women in many of these occupations (such as health care and food processing) and their already high share in unpaid care and housework, we asked whether essential worker status created opportunities for a shift in the division of housework. We also differentiated between essential workers who worked remotely or on site because not all employees assigned essential worker status were working on site. Previous research already highlighted that remote work is an important factor in determining participation in unpaid work. Comparatively, few countries had clear identifications of essential occupa-

tions in the data. We therefore focus on the Netherlands and the UK.

Our main results show that on average, if women were essential workers, they managed to reduce their share of unpaid work at home by about 5 percent. This result was found in both countries. A second main take-away is that the decrease in unpaid housework also depended upon the working arrangement of the partner, as reported in Figure 2. Women experienced a higher reduction in their share of housework when they were the only essential worker in the couple and their partner was the only one working from home (Figure 2—She x He; UK: -7.6 percent; NL: -11 percent). In the other couple constellations, the reduction in unpaid housework was smaller or non-existing, ranging from 0 to 5 percent.

Concluding remarks

What was the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and pandemic-based containment measures on gender inequality? Evidence developed from the CoPE project suggests that containment policies adopted in the first phase of the pandemic (from March to December 2020) impacted gender inequalities in different ways. Lockdowns generally increased the likelihood for women to shift towards more traditional, male-dominated breadwinning arrangements, independent of their educational background. At the same time, women who were able to continue working onsite as essential workers had the possibility to bargain for more equal divisions of household tasks. /

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TALES FROM THE FIELD

A Whiff of Harry Potter. *Studying on a Mentoring Scholarship in Oxford*

(S. Stutzmann)

Mentoring programs may play a crucial role in advancing the careers of young researchers through networks, workshops, or insights into a different academic culture. A mentoring program fellow reflects on her time at the University of Oxford.

Doing a PhD—and then what? Waiting until you have finished your doctorate to figure out the next steps in your career is not the best idea. Pursuing a career in academia requires long-term preparation. One key strategy in this context is creating professional networks. But how do you go about this? Mentoring is a proven tool for supporting doctoral students with developing such networks: senior researchers offer advice and share their own contacts, which may later turn out to be academically beneficial.

Many mentoring programs are specifically designed to support female early-career researchers, including the Konstanzia MEiN program (Mentoring with Experts and International Networking) at the University of Konstanz. Funding from this program and the Outgoing Fellowship of the “The Politics of Inequality” Cluster of Excellence enabled me to spend six months, from October 2023 to March 2024, at the University of Oxford to do research. Here’s how it works: you pick a faculty mentor at a university outside Germany whose research matches your field of interest—and apply for funding. If you are accepted, the mentoring program will cover your travel and accommodation costs as well as any tuition fees. The aim is to support female doctoral students in their careers by building international networks.

My mentor of choice was David Rueda, a professor of comparative politics at Nuffield College at Oxford. I interacted closely with David from the outset, especially because he included me in a weekly seminar series in which doctoral students—both internal and external—presented their research. I was also given the opportunity to present my own work there and received helpful feedback. The weekly schedule of these seminars and their friendly atmosphere quickly enabled me to make contacts with researchers working on similar topics. What’s more, in the first half of my time in Oxford, I attended one of my mentor’s classes for master’s and PhD students that was a great match for the topic of my doctoral dissertation, “The Green Transformation as a Driver of Labor Market Change and Its Effects on Political Preferences.” The manageable size of this class, with only eight young researchers in

the room, gave me an authentic insight into studying at Oxford, which involves a lot of reading and classroom discussions.

Academic life at Oxford is generally characterized by small classes and intensive support for students. Another thing that struck me was that master’s students are introduced to research at an early stage: in the research colloquia, it is common for them to make up a large proportion of the audience. When it comes to faculty, one key difference in the academic system is that there are more tenured positions, albeit with salaries somewhat lower compared to Germany. This can quickly become a problem in cities like Oxford or London, which are known for their high cost of living.

Another positive experience was that my mentor was also available for personal meetings and always willing to give me detailed feedback on my current research. Aside from speaking about my work, he also took the time to discuss my career plans in academia with me and to answer my questions about job search strategies after graduation. For example, he explained to me what’s special about applying for post-doc positions in England. Gender-specific topics played a minor role in our conversations, which may certainly be different for other mentoring pairs in the program.

Aside from the direct interactions with my mentor, the fellowship also gave me many opportunities to engage with other Oxford-based researchers. The vast range of lectures alone provides ample exposure to outstanding and experienced experts. Being part of the Nuffield College community enabled me to →

meet many other PhD students and postdocs. The colleges at Oxford are a bit like the houses at Hogwarts, where much of the students' social life takes place. Since Nuffield is one of the smaller colleges at Oxford, boasting a large dining hall to eat lunch together, you get to know almost everyone after a few months. As a visiting student, you are allowed to help yourself to the very tasty lunch buffet for free. Once a semester, you are also invited to a fancy dinner featuring long academic robes and the special "High Table" rules—again, I was reminded of Harry Potter. The Department of Political Science was home to other researchers working in my field, and I often met with them to discuss our work over a cup of coffee.

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In addition to the study abroad experience, the MEiN Fellowship includes a complementary program consisting of workshops for the participating PhD students from Konstanz. This gives you the opportunity to network with other female doctoral students going abroad in the same calendar year. As part of this program, I attended a workshop on positioning (i.e., career orientation and goal setting) and a workshop on networking. Among other things, the latter workshop involved forming so-called "support groups:" small groups of five to six PhD students discussing current work-related problems—a helpful activity for exchanging tips and support, and for encouraging each other. My support group still meets on a regular basis—an inspiring community that I appreciate.

Overall, my participation in the MEiN Mentoring Program was a positive experience. Of course, it would be better if such a program were unnecessary—that is, if the struc-



Sobia Stutzmann is an Independent Doctoral Fellow at the Cluster of Excellence and at the Graduate School of the Social and Behavioural Sciences, University of Konstanz.

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tural discrimination of women in academia, especially in the doctoral and postdoctoral phase, did not exist in the first place. But creating networks is an important strategy for empowering women in academia. In that regard, I took a lot away from my interactions with the other participants of the Konstanz mentoring program. My time in Oxford not only gave me the opportunity to grow professionally, but also to exchange ideas with other female doctoral students and to build an international network. An additional benefit: the friendships that came out of this! All in all, I felt privileged to be able to spend time in Oxford and get to know life there thanks to the program's financial support. /



PUBLISHED

*Selected publications by Cluster researchers
(Published, January—August 2024)*

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Marius R. Busemeyer, Liam Beiser-McGrath (2024)

Social Policy, Public Investment or the Environment? Exploring Variation in Individual-level Preferences on Long-term Policies. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 34(1), 36–52. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09589287231217379>

Marius R. Busemeyer (2024)
Who Cares for the Future? Exploring Public Attitudes Towards the Needs of Future Generations in Germany. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 31(3). <https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2023.2165697>

Christina Breunig, Chris Koski (2024)
Means, Motives, and Opportunities: How Executives and Interest Groups Set Public Policy. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009428583>

Claudia Diehl, Sabine Trittler (2024)
Highly Skilled and Highly Skeptical? How Education and Origin Shape Newcomers' Relationship with Their New Home. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 50(7), 1777–1802. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2024.2315356>

Majed Dodin, Sebastian Findeisen, Lukas Henkel, Dominik Sachs, Paul Schüle (2024)

Social Mobility in Germany. *Journal of Public Economics*, 232, 105074. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpube-co.2024.105074>

Steffen Eckhard, Laurin Friedrich (2024)

Linguistic Features of Public Service Encounters: How Spoken Administrative Language Affects Citizen Satisfaction. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 34(1), 122–135. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/muac052>

Charles Efferson, Helen Bernhard, Urs Fischbacher, Ernst Fehr (2024)

Super-additive Cooperation. *Nature*, 626(8001), 1034–1041. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-024-07077-w>

Susanne Garritzmann, Nadja Wehl (2024)

How Education Policies Shape Inequality: Analyzing Policy Feedback Effects in Germany. *Comparative Political Studies*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/00104140241269876>

Frederik Gremler, Nils B. Weidmann (2024)

Ethnic Politics via Digital Means: Introducing the Ethnic Organizations Online Dataset. *Journal of Peace Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00223433241231844>

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Luzia Helfer, Nathalie Giger, Christian Breunig (2024)

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Almuth Scholl (2024)

The Politics of Redistribution and Sovereign Default. *Journal of International Economics*, 148, 103876. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jinteco.2023.103876>

Nikolas Schöll, Thomas Kurer (2024)

How Technological Change Affects Regional Voting Patterns. *Political Science Research and Methods*, 12(1), 94–112. <https://doi.org/10.1017/psrm.2022.62>

Nanna Lauritz Schönhage, Theresa Wieland, Luna Bellani, Gabriele Spilker (2024)

Can the Court Bridge the Gap? Public Perception of Economic vs. Generational Inequalities in Climate Change Mitigation Policies. *Environmental Research Letters*. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/ad6916>

Judit Vári, Tamara Rathcke, Aleksandra Cichocka (2024)

Perception of Charisma in Text and Speech: The Role of Emotion Dimensions and Inclusive Deixis. *Journal of Language and Politics*. <https://doi.org/10.1075/jlp.23029.var>

Eva Thomann, Oliver James, Thibaud Deruelle (2024)

Interventions to Reduce Bureaucratic Discrimination: A Systematic Review of Empirical Behavioural Research. *Public Management Review*, online first. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2024.2322163>

HONORS

Honors, memberships, appointments, and awards for Cluster members (Selection, November 2023—August 2024)

Ann Sophie Lauterbach, doctoral student at the Cluster, received the LUKS Prize for outstanding teaching. The LUKS Prize is awarded by students at the University of Konstanz.

Dirk Leuffen, Professor of Political Science has been elected Vice Rector for Research, Innovation and Impact at the University of Konstanz.

Sophie Moser, doctoral student at the Cluster, received the William H. Newman Award from the Academy of Management for the best paper across the academy based on a dissertation.

Gabriele Spilker, Professor of Political Science, was appointed to the Honorary Scientific Advisory Board of WWF Austria.

Nils B. Weidmann, Professor of Politics and Public Administration, has been appointed to the Advisory Board of the “Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (WZB).”

Rüdiger Wilhelmi, Professor of Civil Law, was elected Vice Rector for Teaching at the University of Konstanz.

The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs appointed **Claudia Diehl**, Professor of Microsociology, to a second term in the Standing Scientific Commission on Education Policy (SWK).

Christina Felfe de Ormeño, Professor of Applied Microeconomics, received an Education Research Grant from the UniCredit Foundation (together with Lea Cassar and Maximilian Müller).

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News

— *Guests and Fellows 2024*

Ramanujan Ankam
Inclusion Economics India Centre
 Guest Researcher

Alexandra Bögner
University of Salzburg
 Guest Researcher

David Garcia
University of Konstanz
 Internal Senior Fellow

Mazen Hassan
Cairo University
 External Senior Fellow

Herbert Kitschelt
Duke University
 External Senior Fellow

Anna Manzoni
North Carolina State University
 External Senior Fellow

Steffen Schindler
University of Bamberg
 Guest Researcher

Bettina Schön
ARD
 Journalist-in-Residence

Nathanael Sumaktoyo
University of Singapore
 Guest Researcher

Meghan Sumner
Stanford University
 External Senior Fellow

Tim Vlandas
University of Oxford
 Guest Researcher

Kerem Yildirim
University of Ankara
 Guest Researcher

Barak Zur
Tel Aviv University
 Guest Researcher

— *Cluster Members*

Allegra Brunner
 Managing Office
 Assistant to the Managing Director

Alec Gallo
 Research Assistant

Felix Jäger
 Research Associate
 Cluster project “The Inequality
 Barometer”

Max Pellert
 Substitute Teacher

Fabian Thiel
 Substitute Teacher

Sebastian Tillmann
 Managing Office
 Officer Equity and Diversity

ARRIVED

Marius R. Busemeyer
 “Die Rechtspopulisten profitieren vom negativen Framing” (Cicero Podcast, 19 January 2024)

Sophie Moser & Florian Kunze
 “Equal Pay Day: Wie sich der Gender Pay Gap reduzieren ließe” (SWR, 6 March 2024)

Thomas Hinz
 “Studie beschäftigt sich mit Antisemitismus an Hochschulen: So denken Studierende” (Table.media, 14 March 2024)

Eda Keremoglu
 “Autokratische Staaten sichern den Einfluss auf das Internet, Interview” (Deutschlandfunk, 16 March 2024)

Katrin Schmelz
 “Interview mit Psychologin: Impfpflicht hätte sehr viel Widerstand ausgelöst” (Tagesschau, 27 March 2024)

Claudia Diehl
 “Wie Schüler*innen Ungleichheit wahrnehmen” (Radio 1–Die Profis, 6 April 2024)

Sebastian Koos
 “Was vom rechten Geheimtreffen bleibt” (ZDF, 10 April 2024)

Thomas Hinz & Theo Marinis
 “Digitaler Lunch Talk: Diskriminierungserfahrungen an Hochschulen” (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, 3 May 2024)

Christina Zuber
 “Was der CDU-Leitkultur fehlt” (Deutschlandfunk, 6 May 2024)

Sebastian Findeisen
 “Wem der soziale Aufstieg gelingt” (FAZ, 18 May 2024)

Thomas Kurer
 “Jung, alternativ, rechts” (Spektrum, 10 June 2024)

Daniel Thym
 “Sachverständige zweifeln an Asyl-Auslagerung” (Tagesschau, 17 June 2024)

Florian Kunze
 “Stell dir vor, es ist Büro, und keiner geht hin” (ZEIT, 27 June 2024)

Oliver Schlenker
 “Big Data und KI verstärken Ungleichheit zwischen Büroangestellten und Arbeitern” (WELT, 1 July 2024,)

Judit Vári & Tamara Rathke
 “Was, DEN wählst du?” (Spiegel, 6 August 2024)

Guido Schwerdt
 “Von Erbschaften profitieren vor allem Vermögende” (Deutschlandfunk Kultur, 6 August 2024)

HEADLINES

Media coverage of the Cluster & its members (Selection, January–August 2024)

The **Konstanzia Fellowship** is an initiative of the Equal Opportunities Office at the University of Konstanz for female postdocs. Through mentoring, networking, and co-funding, it aims to support them on their path to a professorship. The fellowship lasts two years, and the next funding period begins in April 2026.

The **Konstanzia MEiN** (Mentoring with Experts and international Networking) is aimed at female doctoral students in the 2nd or 3rd year of their doctorate. Over a funding period of one year, up to EUR 2,000 can be allocated for an international research stay with a mentor, accompanied by network meetings and workshops. The application deadline for the next funding round

is **November 15, 2024**. Two further programs within this framework are the tandem project Konstanzia Duo (for female junior professors and junior research group leaders) and Konstanzia Transition (for bridging funding between two positions). All programs are also aimed at women in transition.

↓ More information



WIDE ANGLE

Fathers Profit, Mothers Lose.

Diverging Effects of 34 Parenthood in 35 American Care Work

(A. Manzoni)

American women in the care sector continue to face significant disadvantages. While men in the same field see wage increases upon becoming fathers, mothers experience the opposite. This wage gap is even more pronounced for women of color. The gendered belief that women are particularly suited for care work is proving to be disadvantageous.



Anna Manzoni is a Professor of Sociology at North Carolina State University and was External Senior Fellow at the Cluster of Excellence.

Our society heavily relies on care work. Nurses, health care aid workers, teachers in primary and secondary education, child-care workers, religious clergy, and social workers are essential in our society. Paradoxically though, they tend to be devalued. The public debate is rife with discussion about the mommy track and the motherhood penalty. Past research has clearly shown that in professional occupations, such as doctors, lawyers or business professionals, women experience major declines in their wages after having children. Men, instead, tend to experience a wage premium after becoming a father. This is often linked to employers' "ideal worker" expectations, which typically portray a man with no outside responsibilities such as caretaking.

Women have traditionally been the ones providing care, paid and unpaid. Care work is a female-dominated field. The general expect-

tation is that working in this field needs traits typically attributed to females and especially to mothers. Appropriate labor frameworks maintain that employers evaluate whether workers are appropriate for the specific job, and reward them accordingly. So, we wondered: does this evaluation process apply to care work, a female-dominated occupation presumably valuing the same traits expected of females and mothers? Since in care work employers should value the same skills valued in mothers, may one's parental identity be linked to a wage premium? Could mothers leverage their identities to signal to employers that they are appropriate for care work and thus be paid more?

We tried to address this question by exploring care work occupations in the United States, looking at jobs such as nursing, health care aides, teachers in primary and secondary education, social workers, child-care workers, and religious clergy members. We analyzed data on over 805,786 care workers age 18 to 37 (the most common age range for giving birth and raising children), collected by the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey in the years 1980, 1990, and then yearly from 2000 through 2018.

Our findings show that the motherhood wage penalty found for professional occupations also holds for care workers. We find limited support for our initial assumptions, as being labeled as appropriate does not result in wage advantages; instead, our results highlight the permanency of gendered beliefs that motherhood is not compatible with paid work. The belief that women and mothers naturally possess caring skills in greater abundance does not lead to higher earnings; instead, it may justify lower pay. Specifically, we find that wages for mothers are more than 12 percent lower than wages for women without children, even accounting for factors like education, work experience and region of residence. We also looked at racial differences in the effect of parenthood on care workers' earnings: women of all races experience a decline in their wages after parenthood, although this penalty is strongest for white women. Mothers of color may engage in a form of code switching and try to distance themselves from feminine traits and parental identity and instead highlight fulfillment of ideal worker norms to signal greater professionalism at work. That said, women of color tend to have lower starting wages. →

“Our results highlight the permanency of gendered beliefs that motherhood is not compatible with paid work.”

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Thus, in the eyes of employers, ideal worker beliefs may be more pervasive than appropriateness beliefs, in the case of care work. As such, women and mothers continue to experience multiple forms of disadvantage, because social norms devalue their identities. Being labeled as appropriate for care work may serve as a way for employers to devalue women’s work.

Our study also shows that fathers experienced higher wages compared to men without children; however, that is not the case when accounting for work and personal variables—such as education level, marital status, and race—and actually fathers of color experience smaller premiums or, in some cases, a penalty. This may suggest that fathers of color continue to be seen as unfit or not appropriate for caring occupations, despite their fatherhood identity.

Overall, our research shows how gendered work and society are today. Women remain disadvantaged in care work and mothers of color receive fewer benefits compared to white mothers. The belief that mothers are better at caring and the fact that caring labor is devalued continue to disadvantage mothers in general

and mothers of color alike. Against identity mobilization theory, employers in care work use gendered assumptions about appropriateness, reinforcing gender inequality. In care work, being seen as appropriate often does not result in wage advantages; instead, organizational practices and culture perpetrate disadvantage for mothers and people of color. Within an evolving work context, pervaded with changes in the required expertise, employers may be more likely to emphasize and require greater technical training and expertise rather than traits they perceive as feminine.

In the end, we still lack a clear picture of what explains employers’ discrimination occurring in care work for mothers, as our data did not offer answers. Looking into job-related characteristics may help uncover how inequality remains embedded in the structures

of organizations; and looking at immigrant status could also add a layer of complexity in shaping the experiences of workers of color. And not least, investigating other occupational contexts could shed additional light on the underlying processes.

The lack of paid leave at the federal level and the high cost of childcare in the US are certainly not helping those wage differentials. What seems clear is that uplifting the value of care should be paramount to make further strides in equality between men and women, as is a cultural shift towards increasing father’s involvement. /

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The research referenced in this article refers to the paper “The Effect of Parenthood on Care Workers’ Earnings: Exploring Identity Mobilization’s Applicability,” co-authored by Alyssa Alexander and Anna Manzoni, is published in *The Sociological Quarterly*, 1–22.



Sebastian Tillmann is Coordinator for Equity and Diversity in the Managing Office of the Cluster of Excellence.

THINKING OUT LOUD

Good Diversity News —and Challenges Ahead. *A Plea for Rigorous Science-based Interventions to Advance Equality* (S. Tillmann)

Science can inform the public and offer relevant insights for policy makers—but only if we adhere to thorough methods and proceedings. It's not a single paper that should be the basis of action to reduce inequalities, but rather methodically rigorous, large-scale, and transparent research that allows replication.

Once again, we find ourselves in the second decade of a century and it seems that we are in a time loop. From pandemics to economic crises, the increased popularity of far-right parties across Europe, and the specter of war hanging over us, history seems bound to repeat itself. However, let us not forget the immense progress made in the last century.

In Germany, women's (and most men's) suffrage was established in 1918, and capital punishment was eliminated—pardon the pun—in West Germany in 1949. Thirty years ago, in 1994, the decriminalization of male homosexuality occurred, and civil unions and same-sex marriage became law in 2001 and 2017, respectively. Over four generations, life has significantly improved for many, especially the marginalized, achieving more than most could have imagined, alongside immense technological advancements.

Efforts by activists, legislators, and citizens have shaped this development, and newer studies show the results of this process of liberalization and emancipation. For example, a 2023 review by Stephen J. Ceci and colleagues found that out of six areas of academia, women are, on average, no longer disadvantaged in four (tenure-track hiring, grant funding, journal acceptances and recommendation letters), with small differences in the other two (teaching ratings and salaries). Women have been the majority of students in Western countries since the 1980s (currently at 58 percent of students at University of Konstanz), and their percentage among researchers and professors is increasing, on average, every year.

All of this is good news! The progress in gender equality and diversity is unprecedented in human history. However, there is still much work to be done, particularly concerning class, ethnicity, migration status, gender identity and more. Activists worldwide are keeping up their struggle, often against repressive regimes or against resistance based on culture, traditions, or ideology. Science can—and should!—also contribute to understanding discrimination and finding ways to overcome inequality. With the political climate shifting away from social liberalism towards less openness for freedoms, effective measures must be taken to ensure all progress achieved remains untouched.

Past efforts, though driven by good intentions, have often lacked empirical support. For example, recent analyses have questioned the validity of McKinsey & Company's diversity studies, which claimed a positive correlation between executive racial/ethnic diversity and firm performance. Jeremiah Green's and John R. M. Hand's quasi-replication efforts found no statistically significant relationship, highlighting potential reverse causation—where successful firms may adopt more diverse practices rather than diversity driving success. Other recent findings include:

- implicit bias trainings fail to reduce discriminatory behaviors (Forscher et al., 2019),
- diversity trainings don't impact individual behavior significantly (Devine & Ash, 2021),
- the concept of microaggressions lacks overall empirical support (Lilienfeld, 2017),
- trigger warnings might have the opposite of their intended effects (Bridgland et al., 2023).

Good intentions alone do not guarantee success. Without robust evidence, gender equality and diversity programs risk being ineffective, leading to wasted resources and missed opportunities. Many initiatives are based on theoretical frameworks or practices that have not been rigorously tested, resulting in ineffective interventions or unintended negative consequences. Due to publication bias, questionable research practices, and the replication crisis, many measures have failed to show promised effects.

The opportunity costs of poorly supported initiatives are significant. Resources invested in ineffective programs are unavailable for more impactful efforts. Ineffectual initiatives can lead to cynicism and disengagement among employees, reducing support from organizational members and the public. With the current political climate, errors are even more costly, risking program cancellations and a backlash that threatens hard-won progress. →

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The Cluster of Excellence “The Politics of Inequality. Perceptions, Participation and Policies”

is an interdisciplinary Cluster of Excellence at the University of Konstanz within the framework of the Excellence Strategy of the federal and state governments. The gap separating the poor from the rich, the worldwide rise of populism, the division of burdens in the fight against climate change, unfairly distributed access to education—many current debates are as much about inequality as they are about other issues. These topics pose highly complex questions, yet scientifically grounded answers are still few and far between. This is where we come in to investigate “The Politics of Inequality:” the political causes and consequences of inequality.

The Cluster of Excellence is grateful to the University of Konstanz and the German Research Foundation for their funding and support.

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- Seite 47: Stocksy
- Seite 52: David Degner (bottom right), Ines Janas

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The replication crisis is a situation where many scientific studies, especially in psychology and social sciences, cannot be reliably reproduced, undermining trust in research findings. This is exacerbated by questionable research practices, such as p-hacking and selective reporting, and publication bias that favors positive results. These issues lead to findings that

are often unreliable and difficult to replicate. To address these problems, researchers have called for replication to confirm findings, pre-registered studies to reduce post-hoc manipulation, and randomized and longitudinal studies to establish causality. Transparency in research, with open data and methods, enhances reproducibility.

What to do?

By adopting a science and evidence-based management approach, we can address these challenges more effectively. Implementing interventions grounded in robust empirical evidence is more likely to achieve the intended goals and reduce resistance by demonstrating tangible benefits and a reasonable use of public resources. When stakeholders see clear, evidence-backed results they are more likely to support and engage with gender and diversity initiatives. Science-based, however, does not mean uncritically adopting individual papers or recommendations, as often has been done before. A critical view of existing scientific literature and methods is essential, especially given the replication crisis in psychology and social sciences.

Prioritizing pre-registered, transparent, and successfully replicated studies ensures reliable evidence for interventions. To date, there are only a handful of research findings that fit these criteria. Therefore, scientists need to first conduct and afterwards reproduce large-scale pre-registered randomized controlled trials, longitudinal studies, and other rigorous methods to find effective measures and we need to be more cautious about intervening in running systems.

In these new roaring 20s, it is more important than ever to safeguard and build upon the

hard-fought gains of marginalized groups over the past century. This requires a critical reassessment of our current methods, a steadfast commitment to rigorous scientific research, and a dedication to evidence-based interventions. We owe it to society—and particularly to the groups our efforts aim to support—to ensure that our strategies are not only theoretically sound but also demonstrably effective. By prioritizing empirical evidence over superficial measures, we can create lasting, meaningful change that transcends appearances and truly benefits those who need it most. /

INSIGHTS FROM OUR RESEARCH

Education Matters.

Employees' Views on AI in the Workplace

(F. Kunze, A. S. Lauterbach)

Employees at German companies vary widely in their views of artificial intelligence (AI). Whether they fear or welcome the use of AI depends on their education and their specific job role. Interestingly, corporate strategies still tend to pay little attention to AI—contrary to what public debates suggest.

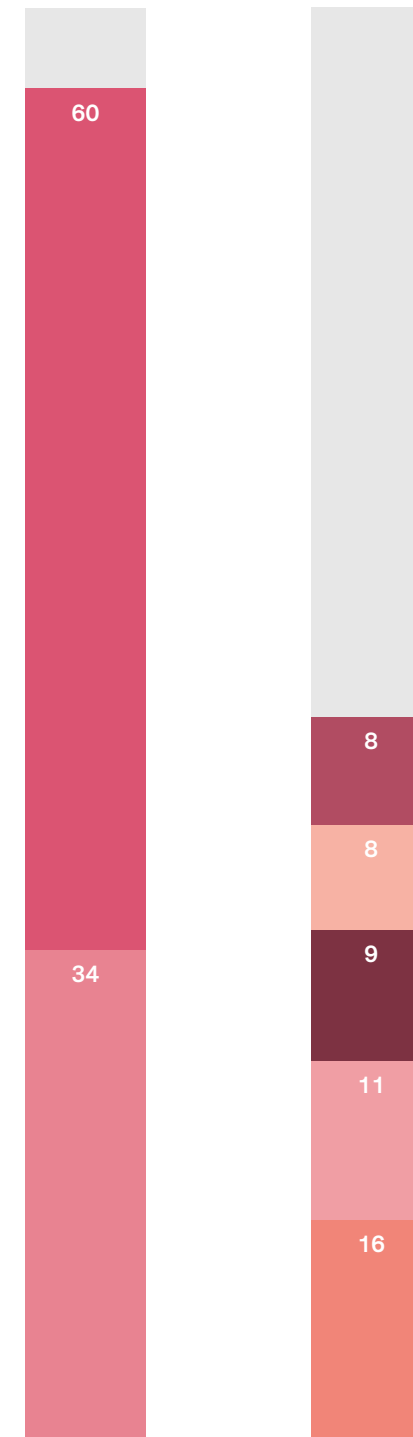
Figure 1: Sample description of the Konstanz AI Survey

(2,019 completed questionnaires)

Age: ø 44.28 Years / Years with current employer: ø 11.86 Years

Senior position: 31.3 percent in senior positions; 68.7 percent not in senior positions / Type of work: see caption / Industry out of 20 groups; largest groups: see caption

- Office or knowledge-based work
- Physical or manufacturing work
- Other
- Craft
- Sales
- Industrial sector
- Healthcare
- Public service
- Other



In November 2022, the release of the ChatGPT app suddenly made artificial intelligence (AI) available to a broad set of users. This led to debates about the impact of AI not only on our private lives but also on the future of work. According to various estimates, up to 300 million full-time jobs worldwide could soon be replaced by some form of AI.

Regardless of the actual numbers, these predictions and other technological trends (such as constant availability and more complex work routines) may cause physical and mental stress. Such responses may lead to a growing divide between individual groups of workers, for instance between tech-savvy experts on the one hand and skeptical, insecure workers on the other. That is why it is important to ask what workers think of the current changes brought about by AI. Do they tend to see opportunity, or are they gripped with fear of the future? Does their educational background influence their attitudes towards AI? And what can employers do to support their staff?

To answer these questions, we analyzed a dataset of 2,019 workers in Germany, selected to be representative of the population in terms of age, gender, and educational background (see Figure 1). →

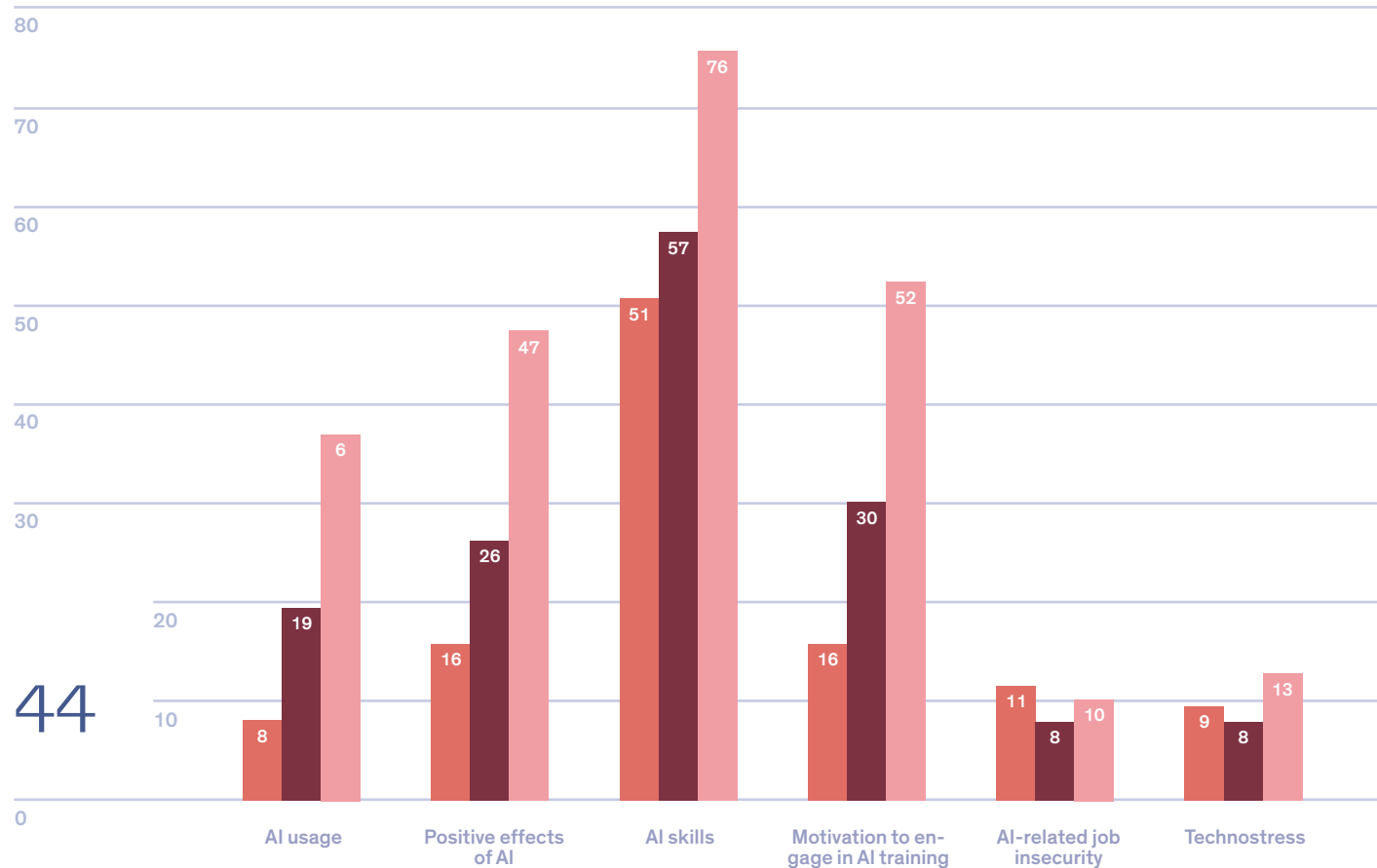


Figure 2: Difference in AI usage and attitudes by educational background (respondent agreement with prompts, in percent)

- Low educational attainment
- Medium educational attainment
- High educational attainment

Contrary to the intensity of the public debate, which suggests higher figures, only 24 percent of all surveyed workers use AI applications in their daily work. Whereas 21 percent of respondents expect artificial intelligence to affect their work in predominantly negative ways, 34 percent are currently unsure of the impact AI applications will have on their work. In respondents' use of AI and their assessment of its opportunities and risks, major differences emerge by educational background.

To measure education, we distinguish between low educational attainment (no school-leaving diploma or the most basic diploma, no vocational training), medium educational attainment (school-leaving diploma with completed vocational training or university entrance qualification), and high educational attainment (university degree). Among respondents with low educational attainment, for example, only 8 percent use AI applications at work, compared to 37 percent among those with high educational attainment (see Figure 2).

Marked differences also emerge regarding respondents' motivation to engage in continuing education and training. Many highly qualified workers report strong AI skills and

a strong motivation to engage in further training. These characteristics become less pronounced as respondents become less qualified.

When looking into the reasons for these differences, the data show that workers with higher levels of education tend to perceive more opportunities for training and more support from senior staff than workers with lower levels of education. Past transformations of the workplace, such as the introduction of robots in production, hardly eliminated any jobs because workers could be retrained. This may be the key to a successful adaptation to the AI transformation: there should be a much wider range of training opportunities in the field of AI, and employers should do more to motivate their staff to take advantage of such training programs.

In addition to asking workers for their own point of view, we also wanted to know about any AI policies in place at their companies.



Ann Sophie Lauterbach is a Doctoral Researcher in the Cluster project "Digitalization, Automation and the Future of Work in Post-Industrial Welfare States."



Florian Kunze is a Professor for Organizational Behavior and PI at the Cluster of Excellence.

Remarkably, only a minority of employers have considered AI-related issues: only 18 percent of respondents get the impression that AI is part of the company strategy, and only 17 percent report that their direct supervisors or executive management communicate on AI issues, or that AI training opportunities are available. Of course, real corporate communications and the actual range of measures may diverge from these figures, as the questionnaire asked workers for their subjective perception. The trend, however, seems reasonably clear.

When it comes to actual job loss, only a small proportion of respondents noticed any AI-related cuts at their company, whether already made (8 percent) or planned (9 percent).

Proactive communication is important to reduce fears and negative emotions related to the AI transformation, to increase workers' motivation to pursue AI training, and to generally cultivate a positive mindset towards change. Communication may also encourage workers to engage with artificial intelligence; moreover, it may help reduce existing inequalities between workers with different levels of educational attainment.

Finally, the data may also be used to derive policy recommendations. Current efforts, such as the AI Action Plan of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), should be even more strongly geared towards strengthening the AI skills of the entire workforce. This might be achieved through stronger incentives and the promotion of training programs on AI topics. Moreover, this is also a matter for education policy: after all, inequalities in workers' qualification and motivation for training do not begin at the workplace; they are mostly the outcome of what happens at school. It seems necessary, therefore, to provide students at all school types with in-depth digital training to prepare as many young people as possible for the ongoing (and future) AI transformation. /

INSIGHTS FROM OUR RESEARCH

It's the Strategy! *Gender-specific Differences in Promotion Contests*

(M. Hussien, A. Chadi, I. Wolff)

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Men and women tend to use different strategies in a promotion contest, as an experiment shows. This has gender-specific effects on the chances of winning the selection process: employers favor the strategy preferred by men.

Imagine you are the managing director of a company and are faced with the decision to promote one of two employees. As part of the selection process, you set them the task of providing a budget estimate for your next project. The candidates have two attempts to come up with a budget estimate, after which you decide which candidate to promote based on their two attempts. One employee suggests estimate A in the first attempt, but then switches to estimate B. The other employee starts with estimate C from the outset and sticks with it. You personally don't know what would be the final cost of the project, so you cannot judge which estimate is closest to the actual project cost. So, which of the two would you select?

There might be good reasons for either choice, but according to an experimental study published in 2017 by Armin Falk and Florian Zimmermann, the majority of people would prefer the more consistent candidate. At the same time, the study has shown that there are some candidates who anticipate others' tendency towards more consistent candidates—and strategically stick to their first suggestion without worrying about whether this suggestion was good or bad.

Hearing about the results, cluster researchers Adrian Chadi, Urs Fischbacher, Moath Hussien, Katrin Schmelz, and Irenaeus Wolff wondered whether these strategically acting candidates share other characteristics, such as being particularly risk-taking, particularly selfish, particularly overconfident or—the main focus of their current study—particularly male. And if this was the case, what that would mean for people's acceptance of the selection decision and the resulting composition of selectees? →

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↓ Handshake

The next step was then to conduct a lab experiment with a sufficiently large number of participants. Like Falk and Zimmermann, the researchers had participants compete in groups of two by solving an estimation task. Subjects first see a screen that shows a picture with a number of circles to be estimated, and after one minute this screen disappears and the next screen says ‘please enter your estimate.’ Participants have one minute to offer an estimate. Participants perform the estimation task twice, with no pause or feedback between the two attempts. Candidates are paid based on the accuracy of their estimates.

Based on the reported estimates, the decision-maker has to select one of the two competitors. The selected candidate gets a selection bonus and can enter a second round. Now, s/he has to solve an estimation task in one attempt. The accuracy of this estimate is rewarded with a payment. The decision-maker is paid based on the selected candidate’s accuracy in the second round.

While the decision-maker had an incentive to pick the more able of the two, the competitors were facing a trade-off. Because the decision-maker did not know the correct answer, s/he might interpret inconsistent answers as a sign of an (early) misestimation. Thus, candidates could try to either improve their performance in the second period of the task or to influence the decision-maker’s decision in their way by signaling competence, for example through consistent answers.

In order to focus on gender-related selection effects that are not due to decision-makers’ preference for either gender, the decision-maker deciding on the “promotion” had abso-

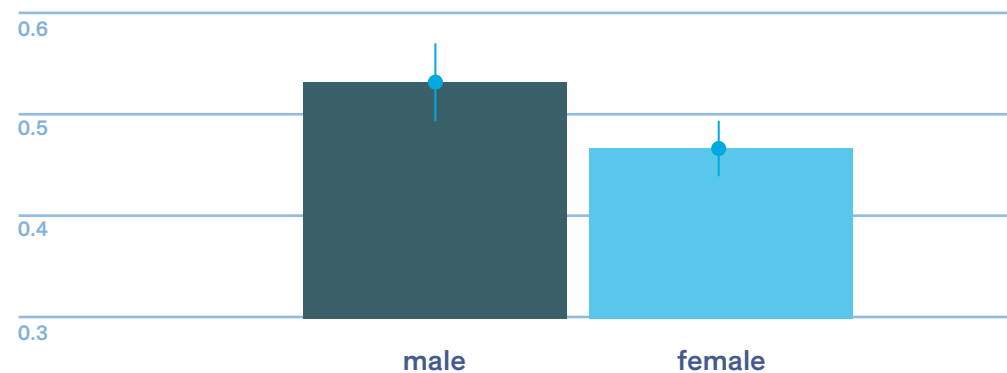
lutely no information about the gender of the candidates and therefore could not favor or disadvantage anyone on the basis of their gender. To learn even more about those who successfully use strategic behavior in the selection contest, the researchers collected multi-faceted information on all participants and their characteristics prior to the start of the actual experiment.

After running the experimental sessions with the help of their cooperation partners at the University of Hamburg’s WISO laboratory, the researchers have completed a first look into the data. What becomes apparent is that decision-makers select the consistent competitor (i.e. the competitor with a small reported difference in estimates between the two attempts) more often. More interestingly, though, there are gender differences, as males report more consistent choices compared to females. Putting the two effects together (i.e. consistent candidates are more often selected and males report more consistent choices), male competitors have a higher probability of winning the contest (see Figure 1).

Also, a further analysis revealed that this does not seem to be due to differences in intrinsic preferences between males and females, but rather due to differences

Figure 1: Gender inequality in selection outcomes (in percent)

Gender gap in selection outcomes



On a scale from 1 to 7, how fair is the selection process...

...in general?

...if it leads to gender inequality?

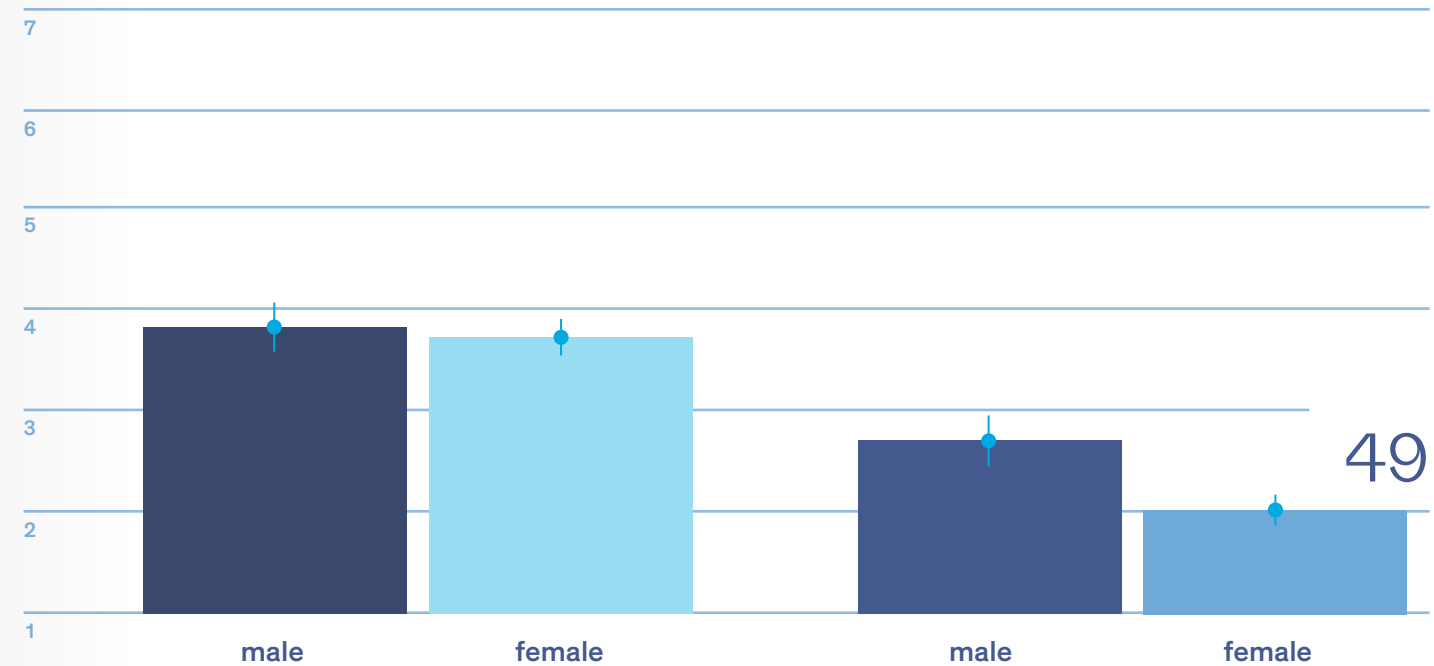


Figure 2: Perceptions of inequality in selection outcomes (in percent)

in strategic behavior. This difference in strategic behavior could explain differences in the likelihood of winning selection contests in general, as a potential source of gender inequality in society.

Finally, the researchers looked at their survey evidence on the perceptions of the inequality that could emerge from the selection process and the resulting outcomes. While participants perceive selection based on merit to be fair, selection based on strategic behavior is not perceived favorably. The results from the selection contest are reflected here: males generally tend to be more tolerant for inequality that results from strategic behavior (see Figure 2). /

IN_EQUALITY MAGAZIN *Simon, you are the first to receive our In_equality Research Award. Do you already have ideas about the research you would like to do with the prize money?*

SIMON JÄGER Yes, two things.

First, I would like to do research on labor market institutions, in particular collective wage agreements in Germany. What happens if more employers pay wages according to collective bargaining agreements? And what would be the economic effects in terms of employment rates, wages and inequality? I would like to use some of the money to bolster that research. The second thing I have in mind is a project on social mobility. Specifically, the idea is to use new statistical methods to investigate the extent to which children's (career) outcomes depend on their parents' economic position.

In your acceptance speech yesterday, you pointed out social scientist Ralf Dabrendorf, co-founder of the University of Konstanz, as one of your role models. Why Dabrendorf, of all people?

For a number of reasons. For one thing, he was a fascinating social scientist: he published on sociology but also on political science and economics, thereby making a major contribution to scholarly debates. At the same time, however, he was always actively involved in social discourse and served in various political roles. I think he managed these role shifts very well and made excellent use of the synergies between the various roles. Moreover, he had a very interesting life, not always spent in Germany, and not entirely without ups and downs. His father, a Reichstag delegate for the Social Democrats, was imprisoned, and he himself was also in a so-called labor education camp towards the end of the Second World War. Born in 1929, he didn't have an easy time as a young man growing up under those circumstances.

The In_equality Research Award is, on the one hand, an award for outstanding academic achievement. On the other hand, we want to recognize researchers with a particular commitment to the transfer of knowledge. From your perspective, why is transfer important and relevant for society?

First of all, of course, many social and political issues have a bearing on the labor market. Accordingly, there is heavy demand for economic expertise in this area. At the same time, a great deal of research is now available, and it has improved significantly in recent decades. New data sets and new methods allow us to answer many, although not all, questions in a much more compelling way. Research-based policy recommendations are much sought after and generate strong added value for society. In a way, that is what taxpayers legitimately expect from science and research, which, after all, is funded by taxpayer money. For researchers and research projects, this means they have a social mandate to contribute to public debates instead of sharing their findings exclusively with an academic audience. They need to ask themselves: who else might find this interesting?

“That’s my core motivation: to find out what conditions are needed for as many people as possible to contribute to and participate in social prosperity as broadly as possible.”

Where do you see the biggest challenge in this transfer process?

First, it is difficult to describe what research can and cannot do. After all, research findings are never absolute, they are always conditional, depend on many factors and are subject to certain assumptions. Public debate is less complex and driven by simpler messages. One major challenge, therefore, is to simplify things to the extent that complex connections are made intelligible without distorting the results themselves. The second challenge is that research, politics, and societal debates operate on different logics. The goal of research is to produce knowledge: what is the status quo? How does the world work? The logic of politics is a different one. It's about power and more concerned with normative questions: how should the world be? How do we want to shape it? Of course, the answer to one question does not imply the answer to the other. Hence a certain normative translation is required, in which one's own value judgments come into play, for example. It's important to make this transparent. What do we know from science and research? And what do we want to do with this knowledge in society?

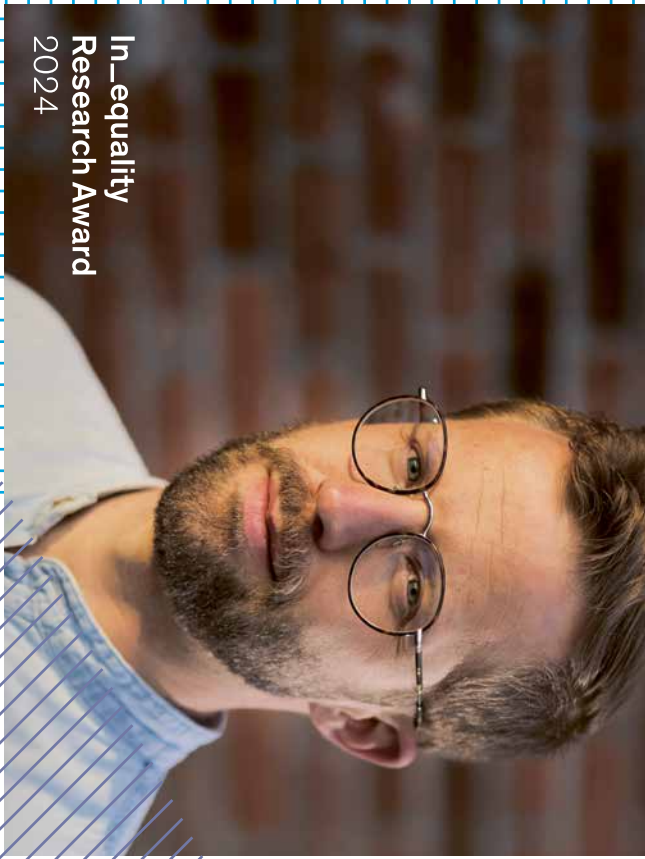
Speaking of society, the Year of Science in Germany this year is devoted to “freedom,” and the German constitution, which calls for “equality” before the law, celebrates its 75th anniversary. What do you think: are freedom and equality mutually exclusive?

Not necessarily. It depends on what we mean by freedom and equality. Economists don't have a good concept of freedom; curiously, it's not a category we often use in our thinking. To be sure, “free” markets frequently play a role in our research, but that is a very reductionist concept of freedom. For a long time, I think there was this idea that the best way to organize politics, a society, or a market is to let markets operate freely at first. Then, once market outcomes are available, they should be corrected through ex post redistribution to create more equality. There is a lot of evidence to suggest that this is not necessarily the best way to organize things. For example, minimum wages have not had the devastating effects many would have thought based on a simplified market model. Instead, fewer jobs were displaced, and minimum wages may even have helped to create more jobs. That, of course, is also a freedom trade-off: on the one hand, more economic freedom was created for those at the bottom end of the wage distribution. On the other hand, freedom was restricted for those whose business model is based on concluding employment contracts below the minimum wage level. That's why I don't think I can answer the question in such a general way.

As suggested by the name, inequality is the main theme of our cluster. What is your motivation for pursuing inequality research?

I think society can only function if as many people as possible have a direct share in the wealth and success of society and if we design institutions and frameworks in a way to make this possible. That's my core motivation: to find out what conditions are needed for as many people as possible to contribute to and participate in social prosperity as broadly as possible. /

In_equality Research
Award Winner 2024
Simon Jäger



Simon Jäger ist Professor am Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Dort hat er auch den Silverman (1968) Career Development Chair inne.

In_equality
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