



Presenting_ **NORFACE**

**Dynamics of
Inequality Across
the Lifecourse**



NORFACE
NETWORK



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Dynamics of Inequality Across the Lifecourse:

a NORFACE research programme

New Opportunities for Research Funding Agency Cooperation in Europe (NORFACE) is a partnership of national research funding agencies in Europe, and is dedicated to leading and developing opportunities for scientists in the social and behavioural sciences.

NORFACE plays a key role in resolving major societal challenges by promoting research of the highest quality, sharing best practices among research funders and especially by making international collaboration between social scientists in Europe possible. From challenges brought on by migration and inequality to preparing for the impact of an aging society, researchers in the social sciences in Europe look at the behaviour of individuals and groups and at the dynamics of Europe's institutions and societies to understand and address these societal challenges.

NORFACE offers distinctive opportunities for researchers by developing common research funding instruments, and so opening up new avenues for facilitating and building high-quality transnational networks of research collaboration in the social and behavioural sciences. Launched in January 2004, the NORFACE network is the product of a successful bid for funding under the European Commission's 6th Framework Programme within the ERA-NET scheme.

Dynamics of Inequality Across the Lifecourse

Existing and escalating inequalities pose fundamental challenges to European societies and economies. The increasing gulf between rich and poor is a key concern, and one that has been exacerbated by the recent financial and economic crises. The sources of inequalities in contemporary societies are complex and highly intertwined, and they and their consequences can only be understood through comprehensive and innovative research activities.

Given the relatively mature understanding of lifecourse inequalities, it is important to focus on the dynamics of inequalities – across different life stages, across different dimensions of inequality and across different dimensions of identity – and to identify possibilities to reduce them. The issue is to move beyond description, to understanding the underlying mechanisms and processes in order to identify the possibilities for intervention.

This brochure explains the objectives, impact, organisation and research projects of the NORFACE research programme Dynamics of Inequality Across the Lifecourse: structures and processes (acronym: DIAL).

1. Objectives and outline

This programme emphasises four main themes: early life influences and outcomes; early adult transitions into tertiary education, vocational training and economic activity; labour market and family trajectories and the growth of inequality; and labour market participation in later life and retirement.

The Dynamics of Inequality Across the Lifecourse programme has three major objectives:

- to advance globally excellent theoretical and methodological research into the dynamics of inequality across the life course, which may be multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and comparative, and which draws on synergies to build on a pan-European basis;
- to motivate and support excellence and capacity building for research into the dynamics of inequality across the life course on a transnational basis throughout the NORFACE countries;
- to improve understanding and promote research-based knowledge of and insight into the dynamics of inequality across the lifecourse for issues of societal, practical and policy relevance, with theoretical foundations but developed jointly with relevant users and experts.

After a two-stage assessment procedure of 170 outline proposals and 49 full proposals, 13 projects were selected for funding. These projects started their work in 2018. The maximum budget per project is €1.5 million.

2. Impact

The aim of the transnational and interdisciplinary projects is to produce theoretically and methodologically innovative research into the dynamics of inequality across the lifecourse. The results should have an outreach to practitioners and policymakers and an impact across Europe on policy development targeted at reducing inequalities.

The projects research topics ranging from inequality and its consequences in education, child development, health, populism and LBTQI+ citizens, to inequality in employment and working life. In these projects, researchers from a wide variety of disciplines work together across Europe, from Portugal to Finland and from the Czech Republic to Ireland, and will look beyond Europe too.

3. Scientific Programme Coordinator

Dr Elina Kilpi-Jakonen of Turku University (Finland) has been appointed as Scientific Programme Coordinator for the programme. The task of a NORFACE Programme Coordinator is to bring together researchers from within and outside the programme and to increase the networking, capacity building and impact of the programme.





4. Knowledge exchange

The Dynamics of Inequality Across the Lifecourse knowledge exchange strategy has been designed to ensure reliable coordination of activities, cooperation across research projects and collaboration on issues of knowledge exchange. Engagement with stakeholders outside the network and the broader public is essential to the programme's success. The knowledge generated through academic research in the DIAL programme will be made available to audiences beyond the immediate academic community.

The strategy focuses on different networking, communication and capacity-building aspects. A series of thematic workshops and conferences is organized to bring together members of different projects and engage them with professional communities. In addition, the programme is assured of a strong online presence through its website and the publication of working papers, policy briefs and newsletters, in order to reach out to academic and stakeholder audiences. The programme website is geared towards a variety of different audiences, and as such reflects the informational needs of both the funded projects and the wider public. The website provides access to documentation and knowledge emerging from the programme and facilitates interaction with social media.

5. Funding

The programme is funded by fourteen NORFACE partners and the European Union:

- Academy of Finland (AKA)
- Czech Academy of Sciences (CAS), Czech Republic
- Estonian Research Council (ETAg), Estonia
- Dutch Research Council (NWO), the Netherlands
- Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT), Portugal
- French National Research Agency (ANR), France
- German Research Foundation (DFG), Germany
- Independent Research Fund Denmark (IRFD), Denmark
- Irish Research Council (IRC), Ireland
- Luxembourg National Research Fund (FNR), Luxembourg
- Research Council of Norway (RCN), Norway
- Swedish Research Council (VR), Sweden
- Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF), Switzerland
- UK Research and Innovation - Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), United Kingdom

The Swedish Research Council for Health, Working Life, and Welfare (FORTE) has made an additional contribution to the programme.



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 724363

6. Overview of the research projects

Thirteen national research projects were funded in the NORFACE research programme Dynamics of Inequality Across the Life-course.

- 1. CILIA – LGBTQI+: Comparing Intersectional Life Course Inequalities amongst LGBTQI+ Citizens in Four European Counties**
Dr. A.D.H. King, University of Surrey (United Kingdom)
- 2. CRITEVENTS: Critical Life Events and the Dynamics of Inequality: Risk, Vulnerability, and Cumulative Disadvantage**
Dr. T. Leopold, University of Amsterdam (the Netherlands)
- 3. DAISIE: Dynamics of Accumulated Inequalities for Seniors in Employment**
Prof. N. Le Feuvre, University of Lausanne (Switzerland)
- 4. EQUALLIVES: Inequality, early adult life courses and economic outcomes at mid-life in comparative context**
Prof. S. Harkness, University of Essex (United Kingdom)
- 5. GEIGHEI: Gene-Environment Interplay in the Generation of Health and Education Inequalities**
Dr. J.L.W. van Kippersluis, Erasmus University Rotterdam (the Netherlands)
- 6. GUODLCCI: Growing up Unequal? The Origins, Dynamics and Lifecycle Consequences of Childhood Inequalities**
Prof. K.G. Salvanes, Norwegian School of Economics (Norway)
- 7. HuCIAW: Human capital and inequality during adolescence and working life**
Prof. Sir R. Blundell, Institute for Fiscal Studies (United Kingdom)
- 8. IMCHILD: The impact of childhood circumstances on individual outcomes over the life-course**
Prof. A. Peichl, University of Munich (Germany)
- 9. LIFETRACK: Life Course Dynamics of Educational Tracking**
Prof. S. Schindler, University of Bamberg (Germany)
- 10. PII: Populism, Inequality and Institutions**
Prof. D.W. Soskice, London School of Economics (United Kingdom)
- 11. PremLife: Life Course Dynamics after Preterm Birth – Protective Factors for Social and Educational Transitions, Health, and Prosperity**
Dr. S. Lemola, University of Warwick (United Kingdom)
- 12. SEED: Social Inequality and its Effects on child Development: A study of birth cohorts in the UK, Germany and the Netherlands**
Prof. J.C. Law, Newcastle University (United Kingdom)
- 13. TRISP: Trends in Inequality: Sources and Policy**
Prof. A. Ludwig, Goethe University Frankfurt (Germany)



1. CILIA – LGBTQI+: Comparing Intersectional Life Course Inequalities amongst LGBTQI+ Citizens in Four European Counties

Bringing together an international and multi-disciplinary team of researchers, this project investigates potential inequalities experienced by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex and ‘+’ people (LGBTQI+) at three ‘transition’ points in the life course: education to work transitions; employment progression in mid-life; and the transition into retirement and its implications for later life. The key objective is to provide cross-cultural evidence, concerning life course inequalities experienced by LGBTQI+ people, comparing and contrasting these across four European countries with different, yet interrelated, social, historical, economic and political backgrounds: England, Germany, Portugal and Scotland. Additionally, the project examines how inequalities related to gender identity, sexuality and intersex status vary and intersect with others, such as social class, ethnicity, citizenship status, health status, dis/ability, religion and geographical location across the life course.

Work-packages, led by research team members, will be conducted in each of the four countries to gather data from existing national and international surveys, new qualitative research and legal, policy and organisational documents. The accumulated data will also be used to develop an agent-based model (ABM) to inform theoretical development in relation to the LGBTQI+ intersectional life course and explore future policy and research agendas. The findings will be disseminated to academics and relevant stakeholders (e.g. organisations/service providers/community members) through reports, social media, presentations and knowledge exchange activities in each applicant country.

Project leader: Dr. A.D.H. King, University of Surrey (United Kingdom)

Principal investigators: Dr. A.C. Santos, University of Coimbra (Portugal), Prof. M.D.M. Castro Varela, Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences (Germany), Prof. Y. Taylor, University of Strathclyde (United Kingdom)

2. CRITEVENTS: Critical Life Events and the Dynamics of Inequality: Risk, Vulnerability, and Cumulative Disadvantage

This project studies the impact of two critical life events – job loss and union dissolution – on the life trajectories of adults and their children. The project distinguishes between two pathways through which these events may produce an accumulation of inequality over the life course: risk and vulnerability. Risk refers to social gradients in the likelihood of experiencing these events, whereas vulnerability refers to social gradients in the impact of these events on economic and noneconomic outcomes.

Our main objectives are to understand (1) how job loss and union dissolution contribute to the accumulation of (dis)advantage over the life course; (2) what mechanisms explain the (unequal) impact of these events; and (3) which work and family policies are effective in targeting these mechanisms in order to reduce inequality.

Consistent with the aims of the DIAL call, the proposed research will shed light on the causal links between critical life events and the dynamics of inequality. It will also inform policies that promote the life chances and well-being of disadvantaged groups in society.

Work will be conducted within five research groups, all of which will apply comparable designs to the analysis of survey data and register data in five countries: Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. Our data will link adults to their children.

Academic and policy impact will be created by ongoing dissemination through journal articles, a special issue, conference presentations, and outreach activities to national and European policymakers and other stakeholders.

Project leader: Dr. T. Leopold, University of Amsterdam (the Netherlands)

Principal investigators: Dr. C. Monden, University of Oxford (United Kingdom), Dr. J. Härkönen, European University Institute (Italy), Prof. D. Oesch, University of Lausanne (Switzerland)

3. DAISIE: Dynamics of Accumulated Inequalities for Seniors in Employment

The aim of the DAISIE project is to investigate the gendered impacts of policies and practices aimed at extending working life (EWL) in contrasting national settings (Czech Republic, Ireland, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK), using a mixed methods research design, inspired by insights from life-course and gender studies. The project addresses two subthemes of the DIAL programme: labour market participation in later life and retirement and the integrated analysis of labour market and family trajectories.

More specifically, the project proposes: 1) to trace intra-national continuities and change in gendered employment and family-formation patterns, using panel data and sequence analysis techniques; 2) to assess changes to the working conditions of the 50+ group, across countries and qualification levels; 3) to analyse EWL issues from a gender-sensitive perspective, assessing potential tensions between “active aging” and gender equality goals, at the European, national and organisational level; 4) to explore the wellbeing and health issues faced by male and female 50+ workers in 3 contrasting occupations (health, transport, financial services), using innovative case-study methods to illustrate the combined effect of employment histories, family events and the provision of intergenerational care on the dynamics of inequality in later life; 5) to disseminate our main findings to stakeholders and policy makers, via gender-sensitive policy toolkits.

Project leader: Prof. N. Le Feuvre, University of Lausanne (Switzerland)

Principal investigators: Prof. W. Loretto, University of Edinburgh (United Kingdom), Prof. S.A. Vickerstaff, University of Kent (United Kingdom), Dr. Alena Krizkova, Czech Academy of Sciences (Czech Republic), Prof. C. Krekula, University of Karlstad (Sweden), Dr. A. Ni Léime, National University of Ireland, Galway (Ireland)

4. EQUALLIVES: Inequality, early adult life courses and economic outcomes at mid-life in comparative context

This innovative project adopts a holistic approach to understanding the dynamics of inequality across the life-course. The project analyzes how education, labor market and family choices interact to structure accumulated advantage and disadvantage over the life course. Using panel data from five EU countries for over 20 years and cutting-edge statistical methods, including multichannel sequence analysis, the project takes a comparative approach to exploring how cross-country economic and institutional differences affect inequality outcomes and life courses.

Early adulthood is a crucial period of transition where people face multiple choices - about education, jobs, partnerships and childbearing – determining future life. The project focuses on key turning points, examine their interrelation and explore the cumulative impact on individual and group inequalities. Focusing on transitions during early adulthood, into education, jobs and family formation, the project addresses the following project call themes: “Labor market and family trajectories and the growth of inequality,” “Early adult transitions into tertiary education, vocational training and economic activity” and “Early life influence and outcomes.”

The research team of the PI, four CIs, postdoctoral fellows and PGR students will meet regularly and provides appropriate leadership, skills, and capacity building.

Academic impact will be achieved by going beyond the state-of-the-art, the research producing new empirical findings and contributing to theory building. Potential for policy impact is high. The consortium will establish early contact with key national and EU stakeholders and engage through meetings, the media, research briefings and social media.

Project leader: Prof. S. Harkness, University of Essex (United Kingdom)

Principal investigators: Prof. J.P. Erola, University of Turku (Finland), Prof. A.E. Fasang, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (Germany), Dr. T. Leopold, University of Amsterdam (the Netherlands), Prof. M.M. Jaeger, University of Copenhagen (Denmark)

5. GEIGHEI: Gene-Environment Interplay in the Generation of Health and Education Inequalities

This project will examine how Genes and the Environment (GxE) interact to generate inequalities in education and health over the life course. The project will go beyond the old nature versus nurture debate by testing two novel hypotheses: (i) children born into advantaged environments are better able to reach their genetically conditioned education potential, and (ii) a privileged environment protects against genetic susceptibility to risky health behaviour. Both hypotheses propose a GxE interplay that influences the transition from early childhood (theme 1) to adulthood (theme 2, 3) in periods that are critical to the generation of inequalities.

The project innovates by combining methods from genetics and social science. Building on the discovery of genetic variants that exhibit robust associations with behavioural outcomes and the recent availability of large datasets with information on both environments and genes, the project will grasp unprecedented opportunities to fill the gap in knowledge about the combined role of genes and environments in causing inequality. By taking account of the endogenous, multifaceted and dynamic nature of the environment, the research promises a sustained impact by identifying policy interventions that ameliorate inequalities. For example, the project will test whether high-quality child care can overcome genetic disadvantage in educational attainment.

Four young core researchers with emerging track records in advancing understanding of inequalities in education and health will supervise junior researchers, and benefit from the committed support of world-leading experts in (i) the genetics of education, (ii) genetic epidemiology, (iii) (neuro-)biological psychology, (iv) socioeconomic health inequalities and (v) econometrics.

Project leader: Dr. J.L.W. van Kippersluis, Erasmus University Rotterdam (the Netherlands)

Principal investigators: Dr. P. Biroli, Universität Zürich (Switzerland), Dr. S. Von Hinke, University of Bristol (United Kingdom)

The University of Tartu is Cooperation Partner to this project.





6. GUODLCCI: Growing up Unequal? The Origins, Dynamics and Lifecycle Consequences of Childhood Inequalities

Over the last decades, economic and social inequalities in Europe have risen sharply along many dimensions. The project proposes a four-strand research programme aimed at understanding these phenomena by focusing on the origins, dynamics and consequences of early inequalities in human capital accumulation in France, Norway and the UK. First, the project examines the impacts of early shocks on inequalities in human capital and socio-economic outcomes at different stages of the lifecycle. Second, the project assesses the performance of targeted vs universal policies at reducing inequalities by socioeconomic status and gender across the three countries. Third, the role of parents in compensating and/or reinforcing children's human capital endowments and the implications for the intergenerational transmission of inequalities are analyzed. Fourth, the project studies the role of peers and assess the potential of simple interventions influencing social interactions between students in reducing inequalities.

All four strands directly relate to the aims of the NORFACE DIAL research programme. Our research will benefit policy-makers and European citizens by informing the design of early life policies that can reduce social, economic and health inequalities. Additionally, it will contribute to the academic literature on the process of human capital formation and its role in shaping inequalities. The research teams forming this bid will take a multi-disciplinary, cross-country comparative perspective, and will use state-of-the-art econometric methods and rich administrative, longitudinal survey and experimental data from all three countries. The main applicant, Kjell Salvanes, has extensive experience managing large research grants with international collaborators.

Project leader: Prof. K.G. Salvanes, Norwegian School of Economics (Norway)

Principal investigators: Prof. M. Gurgand, Paris School of Economics (France), Dr. G. Conti, Institute for Fiscal Studies (United Kingdom)

7. HuCIAW: Human capital and inequality during adolescence and working life

This project investigates the role of human capital in shaping inequalities over the life course in three quite different country contexts. It aims to shed new light on the process of human capital formation during adolescence and adulthood. The research plan addresses directly the theme of the DIAL call by relating different dimensions of inequality (on education opportunities and outcomes, human capital, employment and earnings), how they relate to individual circumstances (such as socio-economic background, gender and family arrangements), how they develop over the life course and how they are influenced by the education and welfare systems.

Our research will be organised under three inter-related themes, spanning themes 2-3 and branching to theme 1 of the DIAL programme: sorting of young people across education pathways; interactions between different investments in human capital; and, the insurance role of human capital. These questions will be studied across three European countries representative of three distinct policy paradigms: the UK (with a comparatively low employment protection and low social insurance), France (respectively high, high) and Norway (low, high). The differences in the extent of inequality and policy context across the three countries will enable rich cross country comparisons.

The research team will be led by Professor Sir Richard Blundell from the IFS, with Professor Kjell Salvanes from NHH leading the Norway team and Professor Eric Maurin from PSE leading the France team. The significant and varied experience of the project leads and wider research team will allow the consortium to producing academic papers that will be submitted to the top tier of economics journals and achieve significant impact on public policy.

Project leader: Prof. Sir R. Blundell, Institute for Fiscal Studies (United Kingdom)

Principal investigators: Prof. A. Vignoles, University of Cambridge (United Kingdom), Prof. K.G.

Salvanes, Norwegian School of Economics (Norway), Prof. E. Maurin, Paris School of Economics (France)

8. IMCHILD: The impact of childhood circumstances on individual outcomes over the life-course

The impact of childhood circumstances on outcomes in adulthood has been widely studied in the literature. Although much is known about the relationship between parental background and children's performance at certain stages of their adulthood, little has been done to analyse how childhood circumstances influence educational and labour market outcomes of individuals over the entire lifecourse and under certain institutional designs and policies.

Rather than focusing on a specific stage of adulthood as most studies do, this project aims to employ a life-course perspective and analyse (1) how circumstances in childhood affect influential decisions which mark individuals' transition to adulthood (educational and occupational choices, family formation etc.), and (2) how these decisions translate into social and economic outcomes (e.g. labour market performance, well-being, (early) retirement decisions) at later stages in life. We will simultaneously address these questions from intergenerational mobility and equality of opportunity perspectives and involve cross-country comparisons, in order to identify causal mechanisms via which social and economic advantages are transmitted from one generation to another, reproducing and reinforcing inequalities in the society.

The international team of researchers from France, Germany, Luxembourg, Sweden, and the US will be working in close co-operation to build extensive knowledge on the topic and equip policy-makers with potential options for policy interventions. The results of the project will be summarized in several PhD dissertations, published in academic and non-academic outlets, and disseminated via presentations at relevant events.

Project leader: Prof. A. Peichl, University of Munich (Germany)

Principal investigators: Prof. A. Trannoy, School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (France),

Prof. D. Waldenström, Uppsala University (Sweden), Prof. A. Lefranc, Université de Cergy-Pontoise

(France) The Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research and the University of Luxembourg are Cooperation Partners to this project.

9. LIFETRACK: Life Course Dynamics of Educational Tracking

LIFETRACK is a country-comparative research project on the relationship between educational institutions and the formation of social inequality. The project will run from 2018 to 2020 and analyse in which way different institutional arrangements of secondary educational systems influence the formation of social inequality over the life course. A particular focus will be on the long-term consequences of different approaches to sorting students in the course of secondary education. With this, the project follows up on recent research, which showed that not only those school systems with formal between-school tracking, but also comprehensive school systems tend to sort their students in a socially selective way.

The LIFETRACK project will analyse, first, which consequences these sorting processes have for social inequality at later stages of the educational and employment career, and second, through which particular ways and mechanisms the sorting of students in secondary education influences the formation of inequality. The project shall deliver new insights how the design of educational institutions either fosters or attenuates the formation of social inequality.

In LIFETRACK, these questions will be for the first time systematically tackled in a closely coordinated country-comparative framework that draws on national longitudinal datasets on educational and employment trajectories. The project covers the education systems of six European countries: Denmark, Germany, England, Finland, France, and Italy. Sixteen researchers from eight European universities and research institutes are involved in LIFETRACK.

Project leader: Prof. S. Schindler, University of Bamberg (Germany)

Principal investigators: Prof. J.P. Erola, University of Turku (Finland), Prof. C. Kleinert, Leibniz-Institut für Bildungsverläufe (Germany), Prof. K.B. Karlson, University of Copenhagen (Denmark), Prof. C. Barone, Sciences Po (France), Dr. V. Boliver, University of Durham (United Kingdom), Prof. D. Reimer, Aarhus University (Denmark)

10. PII: Populism, Inequality and Institutions

By contrast to the politically-dominant view that populism is primarily a consequence of immigration, PII investigates the argument that the underlying driver is lifetime shifts in economic inequality, caused by on-going economic transformation through technological change and import competition. Our fundamental hypotheses are that the underlying dynamics of long-term economic structural transformation display similar patterns of change across advanced European countries. However, the pattern of populist attitudes may differ across countries, depending on how such long-term change can be mediated through institutions, education, retraining and upgrading; and how the effect of populist attitudes on politics is magnified via the configuration of electoral and party institutions. We address these hypotheses in comparative analysis combining theory with unique administrative and life-course data, combining insights from economics and political science. Research examining these hypotheses should have a major impact on rethinking education and training strategies and on how labour markets work.

Organised in three thematic sections, PII contributes to Theme 2 of the call by studying early adult transitions into upper secondary or tertiary education, re-training and vocational training and how these help counteracting on-going economic shocks; to 3 by analysing the precise (and separate) consequences of technological change and globalisation on labour market and long-term career trajectories of workers, retraining frameworks, and changing economic status; to 4 by linking institutionally-mediated lifetime inequality dynamics resulting from technological change and globalisation with populist attitudes.

Project leader: Prof. D.W. Soskice, London School of Economics (United Kingdom)

Principal investigators: Prof. A.C.T. Björklund, Stockholm University (Sweden), Prof. U. Schoenberg, University College London (United Kingdom), Dr. H. Finseraas, Institute for Social Research (Germany)

11. PremLife: Life Course Dynamics after Preterm Birth – Protective Factors for Social and Educational Transitions, Health, and Prosperity

Preterm birth is an increasingly important cause of inequality in Europe. Incidence rates and survival after preterm birth have increased over the last decades while rates of adverse outcomes regarding education, health, quality of life, partnering, employment chances, and prosperity across the lifespan remain. This project will investigate what factors provide protection and increase resilience for preterm children's life course outcomes. It will consider protective/resiliency factors at the individual (such as specific educational skills), micro-system (including parental socio-economic status, quality of parenting, and peer relations) and macro-system level (including differences regarding the countries' educational systems, welfare systems, and income inequality). By studying transitions at all stages of the life cycle up to old age, the project is crosscutting the themes of the call.

The collaborative group consists of leading researchers on preterm children's development in Europe and will work on existing data from specific preterm cohorts and population longitudinal and panel studies (from Finland, Germany, Switzerland, and the UK) and the National Social and Health registers from Finland. The collaborative study brings together four research groups based in the UK, Finland, and Germany across the disciplines of Psychology, Economics, and Public Health covering complementary strengths. The results will inform the future design of interventions to promote the health, prosperity, and wellbeing of those born preterm at all stages of their lifecycle. Close exchange and collaboration with various stakeholder groups has already been established.

Project leader: Dr. S. Lemola, University of Warwick (United Kingdom)

Principal investigators: Prof. K. Räikkönen, University of Helsinki (Finland), Prof. D.D. Schnitzlein, Leibniz University Hannover (Germany), Dr. E. Kajantie, National Institute for Health and Welfare (Finland)

12. SEED: Social InEquality and its Effects on child Development: A study of birth cohorts in the UK, Germany and the Netherlands

Marked differences in early child development (specifically oral language skills and socio-emotional development) have opened up before compulsory schooling begins. These manifest as social inequalities which, for many, persist through childhood and into work. SEED explores the mechanisms by which this happens by drawing on the best data from a range of different countries.

SEED is in "Early Life Influences and Outcomes", linking into "Early adult transitions into tertiary education, vocational training and economic activity", and will feed into European policy and OECD translational projects.

SEED has two principal objectives:

- To identify the mechanisms through which changing social inequalities impact on children's oral language and socio-emotional development;
- To identify the implications that these evolving social disparities have for patterns of performance at school age and beyond into adolescence and adulthood.

Nationally representative cohort data in the three applicant countries (UK, the Netherlands & Germany) are utilized. Such a pan European programme has never been attempted before, and is extended by complementary co-operation partner country analyses (US, Canada and Australia).

Led by PI James Law, the programme team is made up of senior, mid and early career researchers, from the the partner countries. It will be organised in 6 Work Packages. The team will meet at six monthly intervals, and will facilitate several researcher exchanges throughout the project lifecycle.

Project leader: Prof. J.C. Law, Newcastle University (United Kingdom)

Principal investigators: Dr. M. Franken, Erasmus University Rotterdam (the Netherlands), Dr. J. von Maurice, Leibniz Institute for Educational Trajectories (Germany), Prof. S. Weinert, Universität Bamberg (Germany)

13. TRISP: Trends in Inequality: Sources and Policy

This project develops structural household life-cycle models in macroeconomic environments to evaluate the effects of inequality in income, wealth, hours worked and consumption on welfare, and to quantitatively decompose the trends in inequality into their various sources. We then use these models to evaluate the impact of fiscal and monetary policies on inequality and to characterize welfare improving policies. The approach will account for the interdependencies of all stages of a household's life-cycle and the threeway interaction between inequality, the macroeconomy, and policy. The structural interpretation of the data will provide key information for predicting future trends of inequalities and for the design of policy, thereby providing important information to policy makers.

The project is organized according to two main overarching themes, sources and policies, which are described in two work packages. Each work package contains several subprojects (12 in total) that build on each other. The subprojects emphasize different stages of the life-cycle, use different datasets and analyse different sets of policy instruments. Joining forces in one project has the substantial methodological advantage that team members can borrow from each other's expertise with respective datasets and in modelling different crucial life cycle stages and policy decisions affecting inequality. Findings will be communicated internally and externally through several smaller internal workshops, a medium sized international conference, scientific papers, policy briefs, and a joint website.

Project leader: Prof. A. Ludwig, Goethe University Frankfurt (Germany)

Principal investigators: Prof. M. De Nardi, University College London (United Kingdom), Prof. P. Krusell, Stockholm University (Sweden), Dr. G. Fella, University of London (United Kingdom)

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