

*Detailed overview of the thirteen projects funded by NORFACE within the research programme
"Dynamics of Inequality Across the Life-course"*

CILIA – LGBTQ: Comparing Intersectional Life Course Inequalities amongst LGBTQ Citizens in Four European Counties

Dr. A.D.H. King, University of Surrey
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Prof. Y. Taylor, University of Strathclyde

Bringing together an international and multi-disciplinary team of researchers, this project investigates potential inequalities experienced by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) people at three 'transition' points in life highlighted in the call for application themes: school to work transitions; employment progression in mid-life; and the transition into retirement and its implications for end of life. The key objective is to provide cross-cultural evidence, for the first time ever, concerning life course inequalities experienced by LGBTQ people, comparing and contrasting these across four European countries with different yet interrelated social, historical, economic and political backgrounds: England, Scotland, Portugal and Germany. Additionally, the project examines how inequalities related to gender identity and/or sexuality 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, organisational and practitioner documents. The accumulated data will also be used to develop a multi-agent based simulation model to inform theoretical development in relation to the LGBTQ 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) through reports, social media, presentations and knowledge exchange activities in each applicant country.

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

Dr T. Leopold, University of Amsterdam
Dr C. Monden, University of Oxford
Dr J. Härkönen, Stockholm University
Prof. D. Oesch, University of Lausanne

This project studies the impact of two critical life events – job loss and union dissolution – on the life trajectories of adults and their children. We distinguish 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.

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

DAISIE: Dynamics of Accumulated Inequalities for *Seniors* in Employment

Prof. N. Le Feuvre, University of Lausanne
Prof. W. Loretto, University of Edinburgh
Prof. S.A. Vickerstaff, University of Kent
Dr. Alena Krizkova, Czech Academy of Sciences
Prof. C. Krekula, University of Karlstad
Dr A. Ni Léime, National University of Ireland, Galway

This proposal is directly relevant to DIAL call theme 4 (labour market participation in later life and retirement), as analysed from the perspective of DIAL call theme 3 (labour market and family trajectories and the growth of inequalities). The aim is to investigate the gendered impacts of policies aimed at extending working life (EWL) in the Czech Republic, Ireland, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK, using a mixed methods research design, based on insights from life-course and gender studies. The project has 5 objectives, each addressed through a dedicated work package: 1) to analyse EWL policies from a gender-sensitive perspective, assessing tensions between “active aging” and gender equality goals, at the national and international level; 2) to trace intra-national continuities and change in gendered employment and family formation patterns over time, using existing panel data sets and sequence analysis techniques; 3) to assess the current working conditions of the 50+ group, across countries and occupations; 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 life events and intergenerational care services on the dynamics of inequality in later life; 5) to consult stakeholders and disseminate findings to policy makers, via gender-sensitive policy toolkits. All co-applicants will contribute equally to each work package. Expected outcomes include: innovative analytical framework; new research instruments; working papers and referred journal articles; dedicated databank; innovative policy toolkit.

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

Prof. S. Harkness, University of Bath
Prof. J.P. Erola, University of Turku
Prof. A.E. Fasang, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
Dr T. Leopold, University of Amsterdam
Prof. M.M. Jaeger, University of Copenhagen

This innovative project adopts a holistic approach to understanding the dynamics of inequality across the life-course. We analyze 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, we take 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. We focus 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, we address 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. We will establish early contact with key national and EU stakeholders and engage through meetings, the media, research briefings and social media.

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

Dr J.L.W. van Kippersluis, Erasmus University Rotterdam

Dr P. Biroli, Universität Zürich

Dr S. Von Hinke, University of Bristol

We will examine how Genes and the Environment (GxE) interact to generate inequalities in education and health over the life course. We 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.

We innovate 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, we 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, we 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.

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

Prof. K.G. Salvanes, Norwegian School of Economics

Prof. M. Gurgand, Paris School of Economics

Dr G. Conti, Institute for Fiscal Studies

Over the last decades, economic and social inequalities in Europe have risen sharply along many dimensions. We propose 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, we examine the impacts of early shocks on inequalities in human capital and socio-economic outcomes at different stages of the lifecycle. Second, we assess the performance of targeted vs universal policies at reducing inequalities by socioeconomic status and gender across the three countries. Third, we analyse the role of parents in compensating and/or reinforcing children's human capital endowments and the implications for the intergenerational transmission of inequalities. Fourth, we study 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.

HuCIAW: Human capital and inequality during adolescence and working life

Prof. Sir R. Blundell, Institute for Fiscal Studies
Prof. A. Vignoles, University of Cambridge
Prof. K.G. Salvanes, Norwegian School of Economics
Prof. E. Maurin, Paris School of Economics

In this project, we will investigate the role of human capital in shaping inequalities over the life course in three quite different country contexts. We aim to shed new light on the process of human capital formation during adolescence and adulthood. Our research plan addresses directly the theme of the 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. We will study these questions 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 us to producing academic papers that will be submitted to the top tier of economics journals and achieve significant impact on public policy.

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

Prof. A. Peichl, The Centre for European Economic Research

Prof. A. Trannoy, School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences

Prof. D. Waldenström, Uppsala University

Prof. A. Lefranc, Université de Cergy-Pontoise

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.

LIFETRACK: Life-Course Dynamics of Educational Tracking

Prof. S. Schindler, University of Bamberg

Prof. J.P. Erola, University of Turku

Prof. C. Kleinert, Leibniz-Institut für Bildungsverläufe

Prof. K.B. Karlson, University of Copenhagen

Prof. C. Barone, Sciences Po

Dr V. Boliver, University of Durham

Prof. D. Reimer, Aarhus University

This project aims to answer the following question: how and why do different educational systems, and in particular their various modes of educational tracking and sorting, influence the formation and reproduction of social inequalities over the life course? While previous comparative research has identified effects of tracking on educational inequality, this project goes beyond the state of the art by exploring the underlying mechanisms from a dynamic life-course perspective, and by considering long-term consequences of tracking for final educational attainment and labour market outcomes. The project will focus on both inequality formation in general and inequality dynamics with respect to socioeconomic origin, gender and ethnicity in particular. This will be accomplished in a comparative research framework, comprising six European countries, which represent the prototypes of different tracked and comprehensive educational systems: Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, and the UK. Through a unique effort to harmonize high-quality life-course datasets from each of these countries, the project allows for an identification of differences in the dynamics of inequality formation in different institutional settings. The project will be organised as an international research network. It assembles experts in the field from each participating country, who will pursue an integrated research programme based on innovative methodology. By its novel approach of linking institutional characteristics of educational

systems to dynamic processes in inequality formation, the project will make a significant contribution to the state of research and provide highly policy-relevant knowledge.

PII: Populism, Inequality and Institutions

Prof. D.W. Soskice, London School of Economics

Prof. A.C.T. Björklund, Stockholm University

Prof. U. Schoenberg, University College London

Dr H. Finseraas, Institute for Social Research

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.

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

Dr S. Lemola, University of Warwick

Prof. K. Räikkönen, University of Helsinki

Prof. D.D. Schnitzlein, Arbeitsökonomik

Dr E. Kajantie National Institute for Health and Welfare

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.

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

Dr M. Franken, Erasmus University Rotterdam

Dr J. von Maurice, Leibniz Institute for Educational Trajectories

Prof. S. Weinert, Universität Bamberg

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.

We utilise nationally representative cohort data in the three applicant countries (UK, Netherlands & Germany). 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.

TRISP: Trends in Inequality: Sources and Policy

Prof. A. Ludwig, Goethe University Frankfurt

Prof. M. De Nardi, University College London

Prof. P. Krusell, Stockholm University

Dr G. Fella, University of London

We develop 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. Our 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. Our 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.

We organize our project according to two main overarching themes, sources and policies, which we describe 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 analyze different sets of policy instruments. Joining forces in one project has the substantial methodological advantage that we can borrow from each other's expertise with respective datasets and in modeling different crucial life cycle stages and policy decisions affecting inequality. We will communicate our findings internally and externally through several smaller internal workshops, a medium sized international conference, scientific papers, policy briefs, and our joint website.