

## **Social and ethnic inequalities**

Prof. Dr. Yuliya Kosyakova

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### **Information on the class**

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Block Seminar, 4 SWS, twice per month (see below)

Recommended to students of M.A. Soziologie/European Economic Studies (EES)

Time and place: twice per month (see below), Friday, F21/03.48

Office hours: by appointment per email

Envisaged number of participants: max. 20

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### **Course description:**

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The study of social and ethnic inequalities is undoubtedly one of the central pillars of social stratification research and has gained renewed relevance in recent years. This seminar focuses on the sociological exploration of the causes, mechanisms, and consequences of social inequality—particularly in the domains of education, labor market access, and career trajectories. The course aims to capture the complexity and diversity of social positions and their intersections, drawing on both theoretical and empirical perspectives.

Discussions will address, among other things, how individuals' social origin—such as parental status—shapes educational and occupational pathways, and the role of various resources (cultural, social, and economic capital) in this process. A further focus is placed on the persistence of ethnic inequalities across core societal domains, as well as on gender inequality and the intersectionality between gender and ethnicity. We will also examine how national institutional frameworks—particularly at the intersection of the education system and labor market—can either reinforce or mitigate patterns of social stratification.

The aim of the seminar is to provide participants with a solid understanding of the complex dynamics that underlie social and ethnic inequalities. To this end, we draw on sociological, economic, educational, and demographic perspectives. Students will learn to analyze and critically discuss the multiple dimensions of inequality (structural, institutional, and intersectional) using current empirical research.

By the end of the course, participants will be able to:

- Identify and critically reflect on key theories and concepts related to social and ethnic inequality,

- Understand and evaluate empirical studies, including questions of data and methodology,
- Apply research findings to current societal challenges,
- Develop their own research questions and outline a research design (e.g., in the form of a presentation, essay, or term paper).

Overall, this course offers a solid introduction to major theoretical approaches and empirical findings in the field of social and ethnic inequalities and enables students to examine the diverse facets of this complex topic in a critical and differentiated manner.

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### **Workflow, Assignment & Grading:**

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**Meetings.** The course will run as a series of meetings, in which we will discuss readings covering relevant thematic areas (see Syllabus below) and related questions. Before each session (except Meeting 1), students are required to read ALL readings assigned (except for the ones explicitly marked as optional). Moreover, students assigned for the Meeting's Presentation are expected to present a summary from the Meeting's reading.

By default, all meetings are presence meetings. However, depending on the circumstances, some of these meetings might be organized in an online format (Zoom-sessions). You will be notified in advance in case a meeting is to be held online.

Presence (either physical or online) itself will not be graded but it may be helpful to obtain a better final grade (see below). In any case, if you do not plan / cannot attend please give me advance notice (it is just polite as well as helpful to plan sessions).

**Presentation of the Meeting's reading.** These will contain *your summary and deliberations* on the Meeting's reading which I will supply in advance. We will use your Presentation of the Meeting's reading to set up discussions in the class. The presentation topic/day will be assigned to each student or group of students at the first meeting.

All Meeting's reading will be uploaded to VC at least one week in advance (I might revise the syllabus and readings slightly as the course goes). You will also use VC to upload your presentations (please do not send them to me by email!).

The slides for the Presentation of the Meeting's will be due by 16 p.m. Wednesday preceding the session. Each Presentation of the Meeting's reading will count towards individual portfolios (see Grading below).

**Discussion questions.** These includes *your discussion questions* based on the Meeting's reading. The discussion questions may include own critique, comprehension questions, discussion topics, further research and society questions. The discussion questions will be due by 16 p.m. Wednesday preceding the session.

Each will count towards individual portfolios (see Grading below). I will not accept discussion questions past the deadline!

**Essays.** In addition to the presentation of the Meeting's reading, you will also have to write an essay. An essay is a final assignment, which can be either (1) an extended response to one of the questions discussed during our meetings (and/or a question of your own), (2) a meta-

analysis testing a specific hypothesis originating from or otherwise relevant to our discussions, or (3) an elaboration of a topic/research question(s) for a master's thesis. It should be no more than 5,000 words long (incl. text, notes and references). I will announce more specific requirements and post them on VC after the Christmas break. In any case, individual essay proposals will have to be negotiated with me before the work on the essay begins (but no later than the last session!). All essays will be due by 8 a.m. on February 28<sup>th</sup> 2026. That is, you will have 5 weeks to write them up after the last session. I will not accept essays past the deadline also!

**Grading.** I will calculate the final grade according to the following formula: Final grade = 15% \* Average grade for the discussion questions + 35% \* Grade for the Presentation of the Meeting's reading + 50% \* Grade for the essay.

Discussion questions will be graded according to point system: 1 point per submission, with a maximum of 27 points. Discussion questions will be graded on the following scale: 1 – excellent; 2 – very good; 3 – good; 4 – satisfactory; 5 – non-satisfactory.

The presentations will be graded on a similar, albeit more refined, scale as discussion questions (i.e., allowing 1.3, 1.7, etc.). Everyone will get my feedback on the presentations, motivating my evaluation and grades.

The essay will be graded on a similar scale as presentations (i.e., allowing 1.3, 1.7, etc.). Everyone will get my feedback on the essays, motivating my evaluation and grades.

Please keep in mind that in-class discussions may substantially improve your final grade. At the same time, I will not (!) by any means penalize your lack of participation.

Please keep in mind that to get a grade and credits for this course, you need to register for the exam! The exam itself consists in submitting your portfolio, i.e., discussion questions, presentation and the essay.

This course, in conjunction with course "International migration" by Regine Schmidt, constitutes a module. You will be assigned a grade for each of these courses, and these grades will be combined to calculate an overall grade. This cumulative grade will subsequently be applied to the seminar for which you register under the "mit Modulprüfung / module examination" category. For the other seminar, you must register under the "ohne Modulprüfung/ without module examination" designation.

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### **Plan und literature:**

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The course will consist of the following 7 meetings:

1. 24.10.2025 (4 SWS)

***Introduction, topic assignment, theoretical and methodological overview.***

Müller, W. and Kogan, I. (2010) Education. In Immerfall, S. and G. Therborn (eds). *Handbook of European Societies. Social Transformations in the 21st Century*. New York: Springer, 252-262, 268-275.

Kalter, F., Granato, N. and C. Kristen (2007) Disentangling Recent Trends of the Second Generation's Structural Assimilation in Germany. In: Scherer, S., Pollak, R., Otte, G. and M. Gangl (eds.) *From Origin to Destination. Trends and Mechanisms in Social Stratification Research*. Frankfurt: Campus, 214 – 245.

2. 7.11.2025 (4 SWS)

***OE: Primary and secondary effects of social inequality***

Jackson, M. (2013) How is Inequality of Educational Opportunity Generated? The Case for Primary and Secondary Effects. In Jackson, M. (Ed.) *Determined to Succeed? Performance versus Choice in Educational Attainment*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1-20.

Neugebauer, M., Reimer, D., Schindler, S, and Stocke, V. (2013) Inequality in transitions to secondary school and tertiary education in Germany. In Jackson, M. (Ed.) *Determined to Succeed? Performance versus Choice in Educational Attainment*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 56-88

Neugebauer, M. (2010) Bildungsungleichheit und Grundschulempfehlung beim Übergang auf das Gymnasium: Eine Dekomposition primärer und sekundärer Herkunftseffekte, *Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 39(3): 202-214.

***OE: Primary and secondary effects of ethnic inequality***

Becker, B. und Gresch, C. (2016) Bildungsaspirationen in Familien mit Migrationshintergrund. S. 73-116 in Diehl, C., Hunkler, C. und Kristen, C. (Hrsg) *Ethnische Ungleichheiten im Bildungsverlauf: Mechanismen, Befunde, Debatten*. Springer VS.

Dollmann, J. (2017) Positive choices for all? SES-and gender-specific premia of immigrants at educational transitions. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, 49, S. 20-31.

Ichou, M. (2014) Who they were there: Immigrants' educational selectivity and their children's educational attainment. *European Sociological Review*, 30(6), 750-765.

3. 5.12.2025 (4 SWS)

***ED: Education and labor market success - general theory***

Solga, H. (2005) Ohne Abschluss in die Bildungsgesellschaft. Die Erwerbschancen gering qualifizierter Personen aus soziologischer und ökonomischer Perspektive. Opladen: Verlag Barbara Budrich, 61-93.

DiPrete, T. A., Bol, T., Ciocca, C., & Van de Werfhorst, H. G. (2017) School to Work Linkages in the United States, Germany, and France. *American Journal of Sociology*, 122(6), 1869-1938.

Gebel, M. and Noelke, C. (2011). The transition from school to work in Central and Eastern Europe: theory and methodology. In: I. Kogan, C. Noelke and M. Gebel (eds.) *Making the transition. Education and labor market entry in Central and Eastern Europe*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 29-57.

### ***ED: Education and labor market success among immigrants***

Lancee, B., & Bol, T. (2017) The transferability of skills and degrees. Why the place of education affects immigrant earnings. *Social Forces*, 96(2), 691-716.

Kogan, Irena. (2016) Arbeitsmarktintegration von Zuwanderern. S. 177-200 in Brinkmann, Heinz Ulrich und Martina Sauer (Hrsg). *Einwanderungsgesellschaft Deutschland: Entwicklung und Stand der Integration*“. Springer VS.

Hunkler, C. (2016) Ethnischen Unterschiede beim Zugang zu beruflicher Ausbildung. S. 597-642 in Diehl, C., Hunkler, C. und Kristen, C. (Hrsg) *Ethnische Ungleichheiten im Bildungsverlauf: Mechanismen, Befunde, Debatten*. Springer VS.

4. 19.12.2025 (4 SWS)

### ***OD: Theory, the role of social resources***

Pollak, Reinhard (2009) Chancengleichheit durch Bildung? Eine ländervergleichende Studie zum Einfluss der Bildung auf soziale Mobilität im Europa des 20. Jahrhunderts. Inauguraldissertation zur Erlangung des akademischen Grades eines Doktors an der Universität Mannheim. Pp. 83-91.

Lin, Nan (1999) Social Networks and Status Attainment. *Annual Review of Sociology* 25: 467-87.

Portes, A. (1998) Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology* 22:1-24.

### ***OD: Social resources among migrants***

Lancee, Bram (2012) The Economic Returns of Bonding and Bridging Social Capital for Immigrant Men in Germany. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 4, S. 664-683.

Roth, Tobias (2018) The influence of parents' social capital on their children's transition to vocational training in Germany. *Social Networks*, 55, S. 74-85.

Zuccotti, C. V., Ganzeboom, H. B., & Guveli, A. (2017) Has migration been beneficial for migrants and their children? *International Migration Review*, 51(1), 97-126.

5. 09.01.2026 (4 SWS)

**OD: Role of gender**

- Buchmann, C. and T. DiPrete (2006) The Growing Female Advantage in College Completion: The Role of Family Background and Academic Achievement. *American Sociological Review* 71(4): 515-541.
- Blossfeld, H.-P., Buchholz, S., Dämmrich, J., Kilpi-Jakonen, E., Kosyakova, Y., Skopek, J., Triventi, M., & Vono de Vilhena, D. (2015). Gender Differences at Labor Market Entry: The Effect of Changing Educational Pathways and Institutional Structures. In H.-P. Blossfeld, J. Skopek, M. Triventi, & S. Buchholz (Eds.), *Gender, Education and Employment: An International Comparison of School-To-Work Transition* (pp. 3–38). Cheltenham, UK/Northampton, MA, USA: Edward Elgar. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781784715038.00008>
- Rosenfeld, R. A., Trappe, H., & Gornick, J. C. (2004). Gender and work in Germany: before and after reunification. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 30(1), 103–124. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.30.012703.110531>

**OD: Intersectionality between gender and ethnicity**

- Dollmann, J. (2017) Positive choices for all? SES-and gender-specific premia of immigrants at educational transitions. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, 49, S. 20-31.
- Kosyakova, Y., & Salikutluk, Z. (2023). Gender gap dynamics among refugees and recent immigrants: Different start, similar patterns? *IAB Discussion Paper*, 11. <https://doi.org/10.48720/IAB.DP.2311>
- Di Stasio, V., & Larsen, E. N. (2020). The Racialized and Gendered Workplace: Applying an Intersectional Lens to a Field Experiment on Hiring Discrimination in Five European Labor Markets. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 83(3), 229–250. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0190272520902994>

6. 23.01.2026 (4 SWS)

**OD: International comparison, institutional inequality - general theory**

- Jackson, M. and Jonsson, J.O. (2013). Why does Inequality of Educational Opportunity Vary Across Countries? Primary and Secondary Effects in Comparative Context in Jackson, M. (ed.) *Determined to Succeed? Performance versus Choice in Educational Attainment*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 306-338.
- Shavit, Y., Yaish M. and E. Bar-Haim. (2007) The persistence of persistent inequality. In: Scherer, S., Pollak, R., Otte, G. and M. Gangl (eds.) *From Origin to Destination. Trends and Mechanisms in Social Stratification Research*. Frankfurt: Campus, 37-57\*.
- Pfeffer F. T. (2008) Persistent Inequality in Educational Attainment and its Institutional Context. *European Sociological Review* 24: 543-565.

***OD: International comparison, institutional inequality – consequences for immigrants***

- Kanas, A., & Steinmetz, S. (2021). Economic Outcomes of Immigrants with Different Migration Motives: The Role of Labour Market Policies. *European Sociological Review*, 37(3), 449–464. <https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcaa058>
- van Tubergen, F., Maas, I., & Flap, H. (2004). The Economic Incorporation of Immigrants in 18 Western Societies: Origin, Destination, and Community Effects. *American Sociological Review*, 69(5), 704–727. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240406900505>
- Kogan, I. (2016). Integration Policies and Immigrants' Labor Market Outcomes in Europe. *Sociological Science*, 3(August), 335–358. <https://doi.org/10.15195/v3.a16>

7. 30.01.2025 (4 SWS)

***Feedback and reflection***

***Last possibility to discuss the proposal of the essay***