Foundations of Comparative Sociology

Hans-Peter Blossfeld

First term (October-December 2016)

Tuesdays 11:00 - 13:00, Seminar Room 4, Badia Fiesolana

Registration with Adele Battistini (adele.battistini@eui.eu)

Description

This seminar focuses on quantitative cross-national comparative sociology. The focus is on various key issues of inequality research in modern societies. Cross-national studies can greatly extend the scope of sociological knowledge by answering the question of whether a specific mechanism of social inequality established in one country also applies outside the particular context of this country. They also tend to deepen our understanding of cross-national differences when we are able to give a convincing explanation of the impact of institutional and socio-structural conditions on social inequalities in various nations. The seminar gives an overview of the history of theoretical approaches studying cross-national similarities and differences as well as recent methodological developments affecting the practice of cross-national research. Using several (classical) application examples advantages and limitations of cross-national comparative inequality studies will be discussed in the seminar.

Researchers are expected to come to class fully prepared and to have thoroughly completed the assigned readings before each meeting. Participants must present and discuss the key readings from one or two meetings. For this purpose they have to send a PowerPoint presentation to the course website the night before class or before. These presentations will then be discussed in class together with the readings themselves. Researchers also have the possibility to present their own cross-national research designs and findings. Advanced PhD students will report on their problems in dealing with comparative research.

Researchers can write a term paper for this class as part of their general term paper requirements. They need to make significant use of the readings and topics on the syllabus and make contributions to discussions on the theoretical and methodological issues of cross-national comparative research in inequality research. Those who wish to write a term paper should consult with me and submit both a paper copy and an email copy to me (hp.blossfeld@eui.eu with cc to Adele.Battistini@EUI.eu). The deadline for the submission of the second term papers is 30 January 2017.
Tuesday October 11th, 2016
Introduction and Overview


Tuesday October 18th, 2016
Methods of International Comparisons


Tuesday October 25th, 2016
Equivalence of Measures in Comparative Research


Goldthorpe (2012): Back to Class and Status or Why a Sociological View of Social Inequality Should be Reasserted, Reis (137) 201-216.

**Tuesday November 8th, 2016**

**Classical Studies I: Social Stratification and Mobility**


**Tuesday November 15th, 2016**

**Classical Studies II: Educational Systems and Social Inequality**


**Tuesday November 22nd, 2016**

**Classical Studies III: Welfare State Regimes**


Tuesday November 29th, 2016  
Poverty in International Comparison


Monday, December 5th, 2016 (from 15.00 to 17.00, Seminar Room 3)  
Globalization and Social Inequality in Cross-national Comparison


Tuesday December 6th, 2016  
Assortative Mating, Careers of Couples and Social Inequality in Comparative Perspective


Tuesday December 13th, 2016,
Cross-national Comparison, Life Course Research, and Path-Dependence


