

CALL FOR PAPERS



UNIVERSITÉ DE FRIBOURG
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Educational inequalities: Causes, consequences and policies

An international conference
hosted by the University of Fribourg (CH) in collaboration with the University of Bergen (NO)

funded by Congressi Stefano Franscini (CSF)/ETH Zurich

Date 12 July – 16 July 2027

Venue Congressi Stefano Franscini (CSF), Monte Verità, Ascona, Lago Maggiore, Switzerland
(<http://www.csf.ethz.ch/about/index>).

Theme

This conference addresses the comparative study of educational inequalities as dynamic and context-dependent processes shaped by the interplay between social structures and individual agency across the life course. It conceptualises education not only as a means for individual development but also as a central element of social policy shaping labour market outcomes, social cohesion, and equality of opportunity. The conference will explore how inequalities related to gender, social and migration background, ethnicity, disability, and geography emerge, arise, develop, and can be mitigated across formal, non-formal, and informal learning contexts.

Key themes include methodological innovations in researching educational inequalities, the role of intersectionality in shaping cumulative (dis)advantages, the relationship between education and life chances, and the policy frameworks that structure these processes. By integrating conceptual, empirical, and policy-oriented perspectives, the conference aims to strengthen the evidence base for effective interventions.

Its main objectives are to foster international and interdisciplinary collaboration, promote comparative approaches across countries and institutional contexts, and develop innovative strategies to mitigate educational disadvantage. By linking latest research to policy and practice, the conference aims to advance equality of opportunity and strengthen social cohesion within increasingly diverse societies.

Invited Speakers and Discussants

Rolf Becker (University of Bern, Switzerland), Ben Jann (University of Bern, Switzerland), Solvejg Jobst (Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway), Lindsey Macmillan (University College London, UK), Erna Nairz-Wirth (Vienna University of Economics and Business, Austria), Emer Smyth (ESRI/The Economic and Social Research Institute, Ireland), Heike Solga (WZB/Berlin Social Science Centre, Germany), Auli Toom (University of Helsinki, Finland), Susana Vázquez Cupeiro (Complutense University of Madrid, Spain) & Felix Weiss (University of Aarhus, Denmark)



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Organisers

Andreas Hadjar, Petra Sauer (University of Fribourg, Switzerland) &
Jan Skrobaneck (University of Bergen, Norway)

Format: The conference will take place over 5 days (Monday afternoon to Friday noon). Participant numbers are limited (max. 100). On Thursday afternoon, there will be an excursion around Lake Maggiore.

We invite social scientists to contribute to the conference with:

- paper presentations (approx. 15 minutes presentation plus 15 minutes of discussion),
- posters or
- round-table talks (10 minutes presentation plus discussion).

The conference language is English.

A **structured abstract of 600 words maximum** should cover *Background* (context of the study), *Purpose and Theory* (main research aims/questions, theoretical framework), *Design and methods* (study design and methods, including dates of data collection, sampling method, methods of data collection and analysis), *Results* (main findings in relation to the research aims/questions), *Conclusions* (arising from the research).

The deadline for submitting abstracts is **15 October 2026**.

Please submit your abstracts via monteverita2027@unifr.ch.

After a **double-blind peer review procedure**, you will be notified whether your paper has been accepted by **15 November 2026**.

Costs, Grants and Subsidies

We offer subsidised rates for the Hotel Monte Verità. Accommodation and breakfast/lunch/dinner from 12-16/7/2027 would then amount to approx. 625-865 CHF (according to room category), due until 1st May 2027.

Availability of single rooms at the hotel Monte Verità is limited. The chance of lodging at the Monte Verità is greater if people are willing to share a double room with another participant.

There will be also two grants for doctoral candidates covering all accommodation and breakfast/lunch/dinner costs at the Hotel Monte Verità for the conference week. **Please note that eligibility for financial support depends on attendance at the entire conference from Monday afternoon to Friday noon.**

Registration Fee

150 CHF (due until 15 March 2027)