



The LEAD Graduate School at the University of Tübingen invites you to attend the lecture by

Prof. Dr. Herman van de Werfhorst
(University of Amsterdam)

Early tracking and educational inequality: policy reforms and social mechanisms

Time: Tuesday, March 22nd, 2016, 10.15 hrs
Venue: Room 204, Europastraße 6, 72072 Tübingen

Abstract: While many studies have demonstrated a relationship between the age of tracking and inequality of educational opportunity by social background, three issues need further attention. First, while most of the internationally comparative literature is cross-sectional, we study policy reforms to see whether reforms towards comprehensive secondary education reduce inequalities. Second, while most of the empirical studies have looked at inequality in student achievement during high school, we examine inequality in both achievement and final educational attainment. Third, existing studies are rather theory-poor with regard to the social mechanisms that are 'set in motion' depending on the educational institutional structure. We study mechanisms with regard to parental information about the complex Dutch educational system, and with regard to teacher expectations that are affected by the educational structure within which teachers work. Drawing on different empirical studies, the presentation highlights some contributions in these three areas.

Biography: Herman van de Werfhorst is professor of Sociology at the University of Amsterdam, and director of the Amsterdam Centre for Inequality Studies (AMCIS). He studies various inequalities related to educational systems, in particular from a comparative perspective. Previously he held positions at Nuffield College, University of Oxford, and the Radboud University Nijmegen. His publications appeared in various sociology, economics and education journals, including the *Annual Review of Sociology*, *Sociology of Education*, the *European Sociological Review*, *Comparative Education Review*, the *British Journal of Sociology*, the *British Educational Research Journal*, the *Journal of Cultural Economics*, *Acta Sociologica*, *Social Science Research and Social Forces*. He was one of the coordinators of the "Growing Inequalities Impacts" (GINI) project funded by the EU Seventh Framework Programme, which resulted in two edited volumes published at Oxford University Press in 2014. Previously he was member of the coordination team of EQUALSOC, a Network of Excellence funded by the EU Sixth Framework Programme (2005-2010). He currently leads a large research programme on linking educational systems to social mechanisms, funded by a Vici-scholarship of the Netherlands' Organization for Scientific Research (NWO).

Important Publications:

- Bol, T., Witschge, J., **Van de Werfhorst, H. G.**, & Dronkers, J. (2014). [Curricular Tracking and Central Examinations: Counterbalancing the Impact of Social Background on Student Achievement in 36 Countries](#). *Social Forces*, 92(4): 1545-1572.
- **Van de Werfhorst, H. G.** & Mijs. Jonathan J.B. (2010). [Achievement inequality and the institutional structure of educational systems: A comparative perspective](#). *Annual Review of Sociology*, 36, 407-428.
- Breen, R., **Van de Werfhorst, H. G.**, Jaeger, M. M. (2014). [Deciding under Doubt: A Theory of Risk Aversion, Time Discounting Preferences and Educational Decision Making](#). *European Sociological Review*, 30(2): 258–270.

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