



FAIR

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Centre for Experimental
Research on Fairness,
Inequality and Rationality





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Words from the Director

Over the past year, FAIR has continued to thrive as a leading hub for cutting-edge research on fairness, inequality, and rationality. Our team of dedicated researchers, supported by an outstanding administrative staff, has made remarkable contributions to our understanding of how to address inequality in society.

This year, we celebrated numerous achievements. Our researchers have received significant academic recognition, with publications in top-tier journals and impactful contributions to national and international policy debates. We hosted over 100 events, including the EALE Conference, which brought together leading minds in labour economics, and organized PhD courses, workshops, and seminars that fostered collaboration and knowledge exchange.

A particular highlight has been the accomplishments of our PhD candidates, with several successfully defending their theses and others engaging in international exchange programs that have strengthened our global collaborations. The addition of new team members—postdocs, predocs, and PhD students—has also enriched FAIR with fresh perspectives and ideas.

Our commitment to robust and transparent research remains steadfast. This year, we marked a key milestone with the completion of significant data collection efforts, including for “The Childhood Gap Project” and global studies on the “Fairness and the Moral Mind”. These initiatives are pivotal to our mission of producing research that informs policies and creates tangible impact.

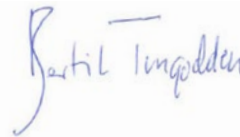
Looking ahead, we are eager to build on our successes. We will continue to foster interdisciplinary collaboration, host inspiring events, and expand our research portfolio. Our vision remains clear: to advance our understanding of inequality and its impact on society, and to contribute to a fairer and more equitable world.

This annual report offers a glimpse into the exciting activities and achievements at FAIR over the past year. None of this would be possible without the dedication of our team and the unwavering support of our partners and collaborators. Together, we can make a meaningful difference.

Enjoy the report!

Sincerely,

Bertil Tungodden



Director, Centre for Experimental Research on Fairness, Inequality and Rationality (FAIR)



Photo by Susanne Bae Lage. FAIR Aurora Borealis over Bergen. NHH

About FAIR

FAIR is the Centre for Experimental Research on Fairness, Inequality and Rationality. It has three research groups: the Labour Group - Centre for Empirical Labor Economics, the Behavioural Group - The Choice Lab and the Development Group.

FAIR has over 60 team members, including the Scientific Coordination Group, faculty, visiting professors, leading collaborators, PhD students, administrative staff, the FAIR Insight Team and many short and long-term guest researchers.

NHH Norwegian School of Economics is the host institution of FAIR and is strongly committed to this research initiative. FAIR represents a critical step for the long-term development of excellent research at NHH. The FAIR Centre is located at the Department of Economics at NHH and it was established as a Centre of Excellence (CoE) in 2017 with funding from The Research Council of Norway.



Scientific Highlights

FAIR researchers continued to make significant contributions to the academic community by publishing articles in a wide range of journals. In 2024, we published 24 articles in high-quality international journals, including the prestigious top five economics journals. These publications remain instrumental in advancing knowledge and shaping policy debates.





Designing Disability Insurance Reforms: Tightening Eligibility Rules or Reducing Benefits?

 *Econometrica*
 Andreas Haller, Stefan Staubli, Josef Zweimüller





Competition and Career Advancement

 *The Review of Economic Studies*
 Julian V. Johnsen, Hyejin Ku, Kjell G. Salvanes



Does Increasing the Riskiness of Choices Widen Gender Gaps?

 *Management Science*
 Samuel D. Hirshman, Alexander L.P. Willén



Acceptance of Inequality Between Children: Large-Scale Experimental Evidence from China and Norway

 *The Economic Journal*
 Alexander W. Cappelen, Ranveig Falch, Zhongjing Huang, Bertil Tungodden





Wealth and Charitable Giving - Evidence from an Ethiopian Lottery

 *Journal of Development Economics*
 Andreas Kotsadam, Vincent Somville



Building Bridges and Widening Gaps

 *The Review of Economics and Statistics*
 Aline Bütikofer, Katrine V. Løken, Alexander L.P. Willén





The Demand for News: Accuracy Concerns versus Belief Confirmation Motives

 *The Economic Journal*
 Felix Chopra, Ingar K. Haaland, Christopher Roth



The (Un)Importance of Inheritance

 *Journal of the European Economic Association*
 Sandra E. Black, Paul J. Devereux, Fanny Landaud, Kjell G. Salvanes

Journal of Public Economics, Journal of Political Economy Microeconomics, Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, Health Economics, European Journal of Political Economy, eClinicalMedicine, AEA Papers and Proceedings, Oxford Open Economics



Life at FAIR

FAIR strives to be a dynamic research hub where scholars connect, collaborate and innovate. In 2024, FAIR hosted over 100 guests and organised more than 110 events, including being involved in workshops, impactful conferences and captivating seminars.

Guests

This year, FAIR welcomed researchers and collaborators from across the globe. These guests not only shared cutting-edge research but also mentored our early-career scholars and contributed to expanding FAIR's reputation as a vibrant research hub based in Bergen, Norway. Their contributions continue to inspire new ideas and strengthen our global network.

FAIR events 2024

- 9 Workshops and Conferences
- 39 Breakfast Meetings
- 33 Coffee Meetings
- 28 Seminars
- 9 Pizza & Presentations
- 2 Online Seminars
- 1 Book Signing
- 1 FAIR Day
- 1 Annual End-of-Year Gathering

Events



Group picture. Photo: Susanne Bøe Løge

Spring School in Behavioural Economics 2024

 10-14 March

The 2024 Spring School in Behavioural and Experimental Economics was held at UC San Diego's Rady School of Management from 10-14 March. Organised by Professors Bertil Tungodden, Alexander W. Cappelen (FAIR) and Uri Gneezy (Rady School of Management). The Spring School offers graduate students an opportunity to engage with cutting-edge research topics such as social preferences, incentives and charitable giving, with lectures from 23 top researchers in the field.



Group picture. Photo: Kata Urban

Bergen-Berlin Behavioural Economics Workshop

 18 March

FAIR hosted the BBBE Workshop in Bergen in 2024. The workshop featured three sessions with ten presentations by young researchers, addressing topics such as social preferences, incentives and behavioural interventions. These presentations provided fresh insights into behavioural and experimental economics.



Group picture. Photo: Susanne Bøe Løge

Nordic PhD Workshop in the Economics of Education (EoE)

📅 18-19 April

FAIR hosted a workshop in April for PhD students from Nordic universities focusing on the Economics of Education. The event provided a platform for young researchers to present and receive feedback on their ongoing projects while fostering collaboration in the region. The two-day workshop included 20-minute slots for early-stage research and 45-minute slots for more in-depth presentations. PhD candidates from outside the Nordic countries were welcome, though priority was given to Nordic universities.



Presentations. Photo: Susanne Bøe Løge

FAIR/Max Planck Workshop

📅 23 April

The FAIR/Max Planck Workshop was a one-day event featuring advanced researchers, including postdocs and professors, presenting on diverse topics such as democracy, gender, environmental behaviour, economic preferences and AI in research. The workshop provided a platform for in-depth discussions and fostered collaboration, highlighting innovative research in the field.



Presentations. Photo: Susanne Bøe Løge

Development Workshop

📅 7 June

FAIR organised the annual half-day workshop on development economics, which featured presentations on cutting-edge research. This summer, the workshop was held in a hybrid format, including a keynote address by a distinguished speaker and several presentations by FAIR researchers. Open to both internal and external participants, the event provided an excellent platform for engagement and discussion in the field of development economics.



Group picture (SAB, FAIR leadership). Photo: Adriana Condarco-Quesada

Scientific Advisory Board Workshop

📅 10 June

FAIR hosted the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) Workshop on 10 June. This special event highlighted research from FAIR researchers and featured contributions from SAB members Hilary Hoynes, David Laibson, Richard Blundell and Eliana La Ferrara. The workshop provided a unique opportunity for collaboration and knowledge exchange among leading experts in the field.



Group picture with FAIR Seminar guest. Photo: Susanne Bøe Løge

Symposium on Economic Experiments in Developing Countries (SEEDEC)

12-13 June

SEEDEC 2024 took place on 12-13 June 2024 at the Norwegian School of Economics. The event brought together a global community of scholars using laboratory experimental economics methods to study issues in developing countries. The conference showcased a wide range of research, with submissions reflecting SEEDEC’s broad agenda, including lab experiments conducted in the field.



Group picture at Solstrand. Photo: Susanne Bøe Løge

Polarize Conference

19-20 June

FAIR NHH hosted a two-day conference on media bias and political polarisation from 19-20 June 2024, at Solstrand Hotel. The event, which was organised by Ingar K. Haaland and funded by the Department of Economics at NHH and the Research Council of Norway, featured leading researchers presenting cutting-edge studies on topics such as the role of social media in news consumption, editorial biases, toxic content moderation and user engagement. The conference combined insightful discussions with a scenic and collaborative setting.



Group picture on top of Stoltzekleiven. Photo: Aline Bütikofer

PhD Course in Design-Based Econometrics

📅 20-23 August

FAIR organised a PhD course in Design-Based Econometrics at NHH from 20-23 August 2024, taught by Peter Hull (Brown University). The programme included lectures on topics such as design-based IV, clustering and structural models, as well as practical labs and office hours. Highlights included a voluntary hike to Stoltzekleiven, student presentations and a group dinner in the city centre. The course offered an engaging mix of academic learning and community building.



Participants. Photo: Odd Mehus

European Association of Labour Economists Conference (EALE)

📅 5-7 September

The European Association of Labour Economists (EALE), founded in 1989, has promoted the advancement of labour economics in Europe and beyond. Welcoming all schools of economics, EALE has supported research and teaching through international conferences, workshops, and publications. FAIR and NHH had the pleasure of organizing and hosting the EALE Conference 2024, which took place 5-7 September at the Norwegian School of Economics in Bergen, Norway.



Opening remarks. Photo: Susanne Bøe Løge

HIP Edutainment Workshop

18 September

HIP Edutainment, an initiative born from Femina HIP's 25 years of youth empowerment work in Tanzania, has been collaborating with researchers from FAIR on projects focusing on education and the transition from school to work.

In the course of a visit from the HIP board, FAIR hosted a workshop emphasising the importance of collaboration between researchers, policy-makers and practitioners to promote evidence-based interventions that improve the lives of young people in low-income settings.



Group picture. Photo: Kjetil Bjorvatn

Transition from School to the World of Work Dissemination Workshop

4 December

FAIR researchers participated in a policy conference in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, partly organised by FAIR, ESRF and HIP Edutainment. Professors Vincent Somville and Kjetil Bjorvatn presented projects such as Future Yangu (audio storytelling for employment guidance) and Safe Kazini (safer work environments for youth). The event brought together government, NGOs and schools to discuss innovative solutions to youth unemployment.



Presentations. Photo: Susanne Bøe Løge

Annual End-of-Year Gathering

📅 11 December

Every December, FAIR hosts its Annual End-of-Year Gathering, a festive tradition that reflects on the year's achievements. The event features presentations from the PhD, postdoctoral and predoctoral cohorts, along with contributions from the admin team and a sneak peek into upcoming research. It's a perfect mix of celebration, collaboration and inspiration to close the year on a high note.





Welcome remarks

FAIR Day

📅 17 September

The annual FAIR Day took place once again at the House of Culture in Bergen city centre. This year, the focus was on mental health, with presentations by researchers showcasing their ongoing projects. The day also included team-building activities to foster collaboration and connections between participants.



Presentations



Speed presentations



Music by Ola Kvaloy

Guest Lecture and Book Signing with Tore Ellingsen

📅 8 March

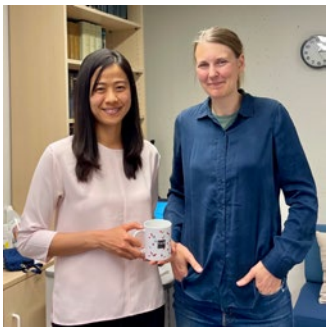
On 8 March 2024, the Department of Economics and FAIR hosted a book launch with Tore Ellingsen, who presented his book *Institutional and Organizational Economics: A Behavioral Game Theory Introduction*.

The book explored why some societies, firms and relationships thrive while others fail, highlighting the importance of cooperation, culture and other-regarding preferences. The event included a presentation and book signing.



FAIR Seminars

Every semester, FAIR organises a seminar series where top researchers from various fields present their latest research.





EALE Conference 2024

The European Association of Labour Economists (EALE), founded in 1989, has been a cornerstone for advancing labour economics in Europe and globally. By embracing diverse schools of analysis, EALE fosters research and teaching through international conferences, workshops and publications.

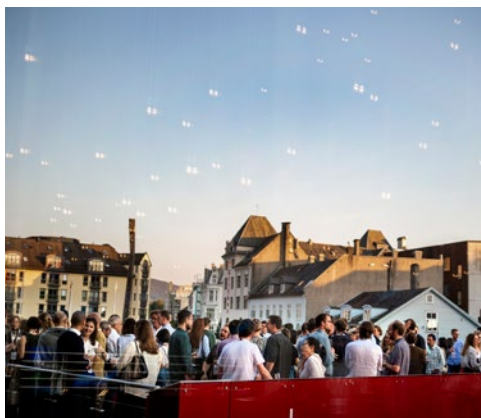
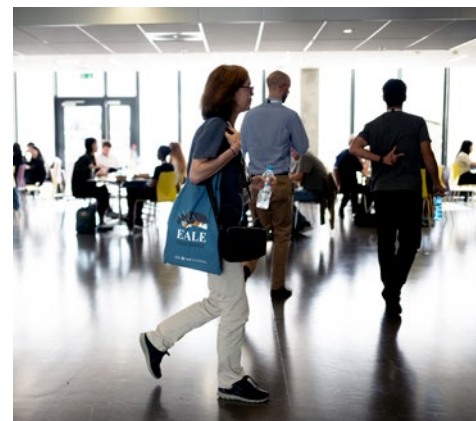


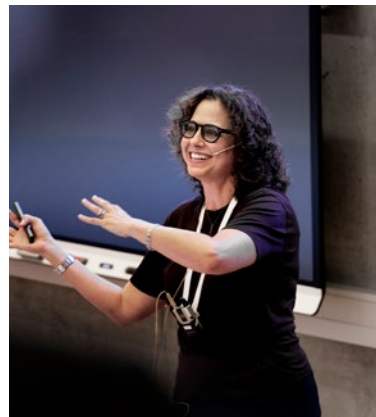
Photo: Odd Mehus

In 2024, FAIR and NHH had the honour of organising and hosting the EALE Conference, held 5-7 September at the Norwegian School of Economics. The event was sponsored by FAIR, NHH, SNF and Bergen Municipality, reflecting strong local and institutional support.

The conference brought together over 500 participants and featured a dynamic programme with 8 parallel session tracks 13 sessions, 3 poster sessions and 2 keynote speeches delivered by Attila Lindner and Sandra E. Black. Researchers and practitioners from across the globe gathered to exchange ideas, present findings and discuss critical issues in the field of labour economics.

The 2024 EALE Conference not only showcased cutting-edge research but also strengthened connections within the global labour economics community. It underscored the importance of collaboration and innovation in addressing contemporary challenges in the world of work.





Photos by Odd Mehus

Scientific Advisory Board Visit



Photos by Susanne Ege Loge & Sigríð Folkestad

WomEN at FAIR

Project Manager: Aline Bütikofer

Women in Economics Network (WomEN) is a platform designed to foster collaboration and engagement among women in economics. Anchored in FAIR, the Norwegian Research Council funded the project through the BALANSE programme. WomEN's primary mission is to advance gender equity in academic leadership roles, and it places a strong emphasis on facilitating research exchange and amplifying the visibility of female scholars' contributions.



PhD students. Photo by Susanne Bøe Løge

The project facilitated opportunities for both outgoing and incoming research exchanges. Through the WomEN travel grants, young faculty members and PhD students were able to attend 26 international workshops in 2025. A stand out moment was the project's significant representation at the European Association of Labour Economists Conference in September, at which many FAIR members showcased their research to a distinguished global audience. Additionally, the initiative hosted prominent female researchers, such as Abi Adams and Petra Persson, who, during mentoring lunches, provided valuable insights on publication strategies, effective writing and leadership development.

WomEN funded several early-career workshops that brought together emerging scholars from Nordic institutions. This effort seeks to strengthen collaboration between female researchers across Nordic academic hubs while expanding their professional networks. In addition, WomEN facilitates professional presentations and leadership training. Moreover, WomEN contributes

to the funding of visiting professors at FAIR and the Department of Economics. In 2024, Abi Adams, Pascaline Dupas and Janet Currie were funded through the project. These top researchers in labour and development bring to FAIR a wealth of knowledge and a deep commitment to empowering young women in economics.

Beyond academia, WomEN members actively engage with broader society through participation in government commissions, research presentations for organisations and companies, and a targeted social media campaign to mark International Women's Day. While 2024 marks the final year of the RCN project, the WomEN initiative will continue until 2027, thanks to financial support from FAIR.



EALE Conference 2024. Photo by Odd Mehus



Achievements

In 2024, FAIR Team members received various distinguished awards and appointments.



Alexander L.P. Willén

Elected as Editorial Board member

The Review of Economic Studies



Aline Bütikofer

Elected as At-Large member

The Management Council of the European Economic Association



Andreas Haller

Innovative Teaching Award

WU - Vienna University of Economics and Business

**Bertil Tungodden****Arrow Lecture**

Society for Social Choice and Welfare 2024

Elected as member

Strategy Committee of the European Economic Association

**Ingar Kyrkjebø Haaland****Promoted to Professor**

NHH Norwegian School of Economics

**Katrine V. Løken****Elected as member**

The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters

**Kjetil Bjorvatn****The Bronze Sponge**

NHH Extraordinary Teaching Award 2024



Sandra E. Black
2024 Carolyn Shaw Bell Award
American Economic Association: Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession



Samuel D. Hirshman
SJDM Best Paper Award 2024 - Honourable Mention
The Society for Judgment and Decision Making



Vincent Somville
Elected as Affiliated Professor
The Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL)

New Grants



Eppie Jean van Egeraat
Seed funding from ENGAGE.EU
Podcast for PhD students from PhD Students



Pallavi Prabhakar
Funding from London School of Economics
Transforming Governance: Accountability, Information and Inclusive Growth in India's Districts

PhD Defences



Arne Nasgowitz

**Essays on Poverty and
Economic Development**

10 June



Monica Beeder

**Three Essays on Conflict
and Ethnic Tensions**

22 October



Daniel Carvajal-Zuniga

**Essays on Group Identity
and Economic Behavior**

23 August



Ingvild Lindgren Skarpeid

**Understanding Stress and
Redistributive Choice: Evidence
from Three Economic Experiments**

11 November



Akshay Arun Moorthy

**Essays on the Formation and
Identification of Economic
Preferences**

26 September



Eirik Berger Abel

**Essays on Equality,
Intergenerational Mobility
and Family Formation**

29 November



Research: Behavioural Group

Universalism: A Global Perspective

By Alexander W. Cappelen, NHH | Benjamin Enke, Harvard University | Bertil Tungodden, NHH

A key feature of human societies is the extent to which people exhibit altruism beyond their immediate group. Universalism – a concept capturing how much an individual's altruism is indifferent to the identity or group membership of others – plays a pivotal role in shaping societal norms, policies and economic behaviours. But why does this matter? The challenges of our time, such as climate change, immigration and global inequality, require cooperation that transcends local or national boundaries. Understanding the roots and variations of universalism is essential for designing effective policies and fostering social cohesion in an increasingly interconnected world.

Despite its importance, empirical evidence on universalism has been limited to small-scale studies focused primarily on Western countries. This lack of comprehensive data has left unanswered questions about how universalism varies globally and what drives these differences. Our study, which was published in the *American Economic Review*, seeks to fill this gap by introducing the Global Universalism Survey (GUS), the first large-scale dataset to examine universalistic distributive preferences across 60 countries and over 64,000 respondents.

Methodology

The GUS employs hypothetical distributive scenarios in which participants allocate resources between different



Alexander W. Cappelen
NHH Norwegian School of Economics



Benjamin Enke
Harvard University



Bertil Tungodden
NHH Norwegian School of Economics

groups, such as family members and strangers. For instance, respondents were asked to divide the local currency equivalent of \$1,000 between a specific in-group member (e.g. a family member, neighbour, or co-ethnic) and a stranger, or between compatriots and non-compatriots. These scenarios were carefully pretested and translated into 70 languages to ensure cross-cultural relevance. The survey leverages the Gallup World Poll's infrastructure, ensuring representative sampling across diverse socioeconomic contexts and addressing a long-standing limitation in the study of universalism.

Key Findings

Individual-Level Variations

The GUS reveals significant individual-level heterogeneity in universalism. Around 26% of respondents consistently split resources equally between in-group members and strangers, indicating high universalism. Meanwhile, 17% allocated almost everything to in-group members, reflecting strong in-group favouritism. Younger individuals and women were generally more universalist, a pattern consistent across countries regardless of income level. Interestingly, characteristics like education and urban residency, often linked to higher universalism in Western nations, showed reversed or negligible effects in other regions.

Country-Level Patterns

The survey identifies substantial cross-country differences in universalism. For example, respondents in Ethiopia exhibited the highest average universalism, allocating more resources to strangers, while those in

China, India and Israel demonstrated stronger in-group favouritism. Contrary to common assumptions, higher national income levels were weakly associated with lower universalism, challenging the belief that wealthier nations are more universalist.

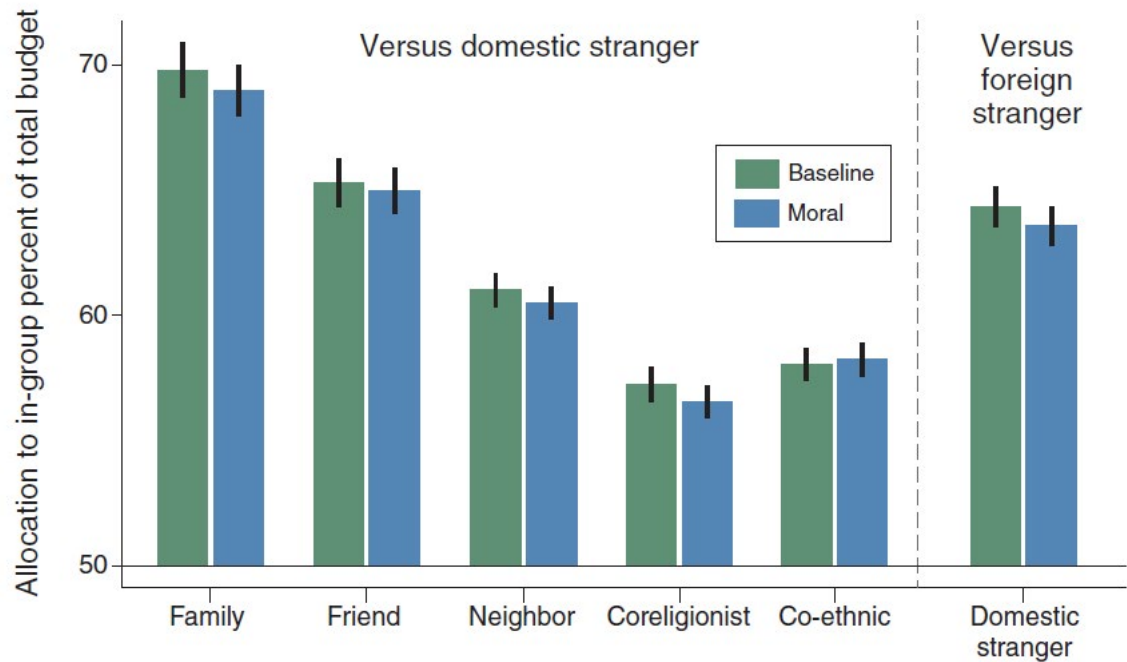
Links to Political Views and Social Capital

Universalism strongly correlates with political preferences, particularly those associated with left-wing ideologies. Universalists are more likely to support policies addressing income inequality, global poverty, climate change and immigration, while opposing military expansion. These relationships, however, are culturally specific. For instance, the influence of universalism on



Photo by Unsplash

Figure 1. Mean money allocations to the in-group by treatment



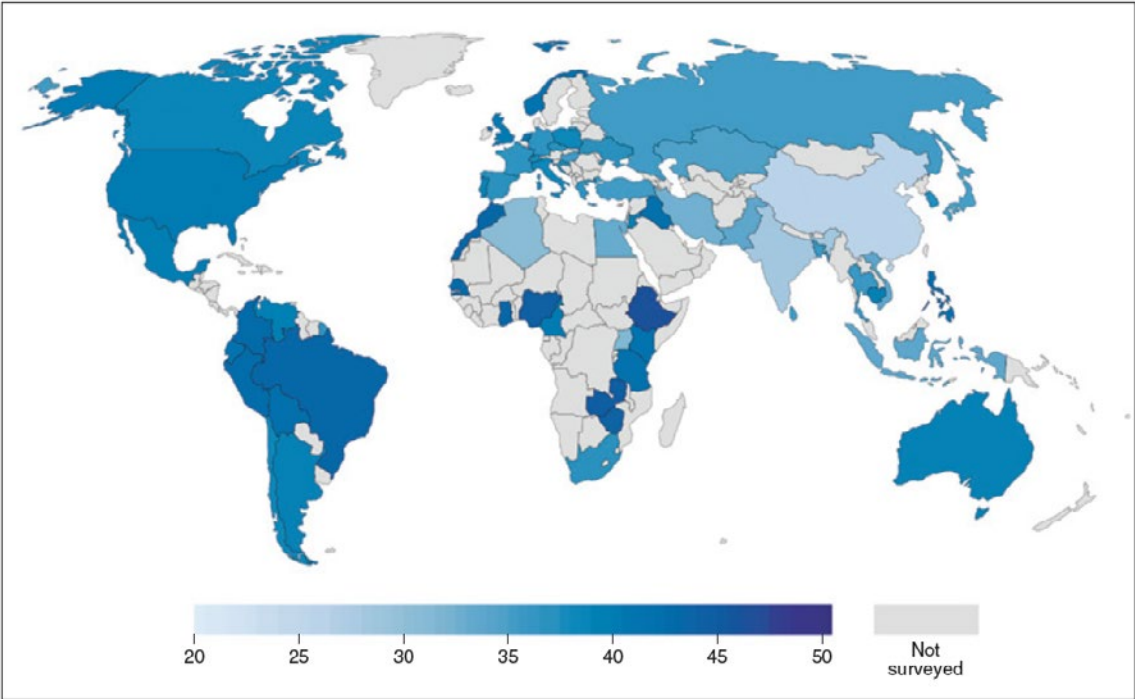
political views was more pronounced in Western nations compared to low and middle-income countries.

At a societal level, universalism aligns with the concept of social capital, defined as the radius of trust. Societies with higher average universalism exhibit broader trust networks, facilitating cooperation and inclusivity in economic and social interactions.

Origins of Universalism

Universalism is influenced by both historical and cultural contexts. In societies with strong kinship networks or an historical reliance on irrigation, which require localised cooperation, universalism tends to be lower. Conversely, democratic experiences positively correlate with universalism, suggesting that exposure to inclusive institutions fosters broader altruistic preferences. This

Figure 2. Global variation in composite universalism



finding is supported by analyses of individuals’ lifetime exposure to democracy and cross-migrant comparisons.

Implications

A key takeaway from the analysis is that universalism and politico-economic outcomes are deeply intertwined. On the one hand, our findings suggest that exposure to democracy – whether across countries, age cohorts,

or first-generation migrants – shapes universalism by fostering broader altruistic preferences. On the other hand, universalism is strongly predictive of individuals’ social and economic policy preferences, such as support for redistribution and environmental protection, as well as the structure of societal trust and cooperation. This bidirectional relationship suggests that universalism and politico-economic systems coevolve.



Research: Labour Group

First generation elite: the role of school social networks

By Sarah Cattan, Institute for Fiscal Studies | Kjell G. Salvanes, NHH | Emma Tominey, University of York

The paper examines the impact of elite peers on the educational and economic outcomes of students from different socioeconomic statuses in Norway. Despite a system in which barriers such as tuition fees and private feeder schools or legacy admissions policies are absent, there is still a large difference in entering elite education by socio economic background. Because the elite educated are disproportionately located at the top of income distribution and in leadership roles, limited access by low socioeconomic background students will hamper social mobility. The paper posits that social capital, measured by exposure to elite peers in high school, plays a crucial role. The paper examines how these peers influence application behaviours to elite degree programmes and labour market outcomes.

The background is that in the Nordic countries, and notably in Norway, although higher education is designed to be egalitarian, significant socioeconomic disparities persist in access to elite degree programmes and students from high-socioeconomic-status (SES) backgrounds are vastly overrepresented in these elite tracks. This paper explores the critical role of social capital – specifically, exposure to peers with elite-educated parents – in perpetuating these inequities. The findings reveal a multifaceted interplay of social networks, application behaviour, academic performance and labour market outcomes that both sustain and potentially mitigate these disparities.



Sarah Cattan
Institute for Fiscal Studies



Kjell G. Salvanes
HH Norwegian School of Economics



Emma Tominey
University of York

Social capital, as embodied in the exposure to elite peers during high school, emerges as a pivotal factor influencing access to elite education. The data shows that students from non-elite backgrounds are significantly less likely to have peers from elite-educated families compared to their high SES counterparts. This differential exposure has far-reaching implications.

The benefit of being exposed to elite-educated peers in high school is three times greater for high SES students than for their low SES counterparts. This inequity underscores the dual disadvantage faced by low SES students in high school: they not only lack access to elite networks but also derive less benefit from such networks when they do gain access.

The mechanisms underlying these effects are both subtle and profound. Elite peers positively influence application behaviours, providing insights into programme content, returns and strategic application choices. These interactions often include exposure to the parents of elite peers, who may serve as role models or sources of information. However, the impact of elite peers is not uniformly beneficial. High SES students,

Photo by Unsplash



already predisposed to pursue elite education, gain more from these networks than their low SES peers, whose aspirations and self-perceptions may be more constrained by their socioeconomic backgrounds. For low SES students, exposure to elite peers can increase their likelihood of applying to elite programmes but does not fully bridge the socioeconomic gap in enrolment.

Academic performance provides another lens through which to understand these dynamics. The study finds that exposure to elite peers has a paradoxical effect on high school GPA. While elite peers enhance learning and motivation, as evidenced by improved performance on externally assessed exams, they also create downward pressure on teacher-assessed grades. This phenomenon is particularly pronounced for low SES students, who experience a disproportionate decline in their teacher-assessed grades. The negative effect may arise partly from implicit teacher biases and partly from the competitive dynamics of classroom ranking. Teachers, consciously or unconsciously, may grade students relative to their peers, disadvantaging those in cohorts with a higher concentration of elite students. For low SES students, this grade deflation undermines their chances of meeting the stringent GPA thresholds required for elite programmes.

The labour market implications of these dynamics are equally revealing. Students who attend elite degree programmes experience substantial earnings premiums by their early 30s, with returns that are strikingly similar across SES backgrounds. This finding challenges assumptions that low SES students might derive lower economic benefits from elite education. However, the broader impact of exposure to elite peers extends beyond individual earnings. While such exposure promotes

economic mobility for low SES students, it also reinforces intergenerational persistence at the top of the income distribution. This dual effect highlights the complex role of elite networks in shaping social mobility.

Policy simulations suggest that greater integration of students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds in high schools could mitigate these disparities. Reassigning low SES students to schools with higher concentrations of elite peers, and vice versa, enhances overall mobility while reducing the socioeconomic gradient in elite degree enrolment. Additionally, increasing the weight of externally assessed exams in GPA calculations could alleviate some of the biases inherent in teacher assessments, providing a fairer evaluation of student potential.

The findings of this study resonate with broader debates about the role of social networks in perpetuating inequality. They underscore the need for targeted interventions that address not only access to elite education but also the structural and psychological barriers that limit the benefits of such access for disadvantaged students. By fostering environments where low SES students can interact meaningfully with elite peers, policy-makers can help level the playing field. Such measures would not only enhance individual outcomes but also contribute to a more equitable and dynamic society.

In conclusion, the persistence of socioeconomic disparities in elite education in Norway cannot be fully understood without accounting for the role of social capital. The influence of elite peers on application behaviour, academic performance and labour market

Figure 1. Intergenerational mobility: estimating the percentile rank-rank correlation across exposure to elite peers

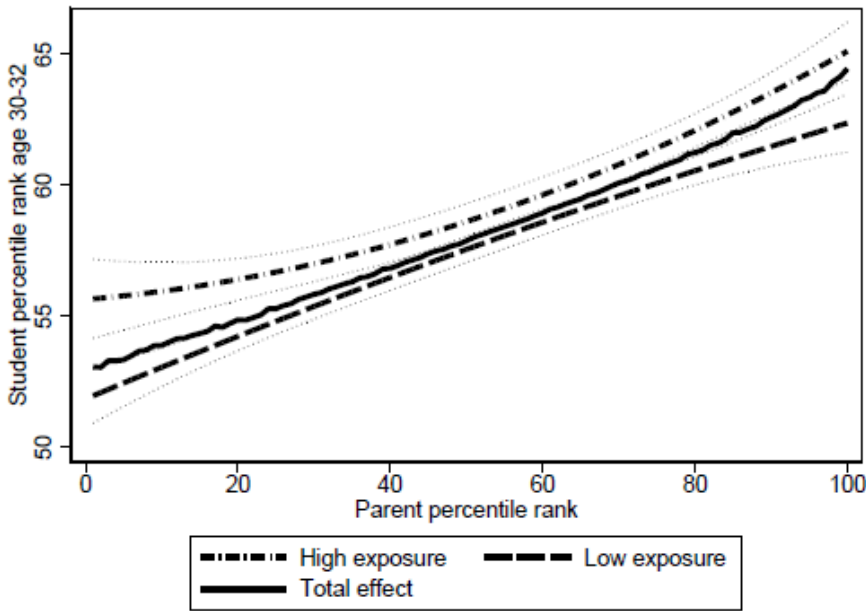


Figure 1 shows the predicted value of child's earnings rank, as a function of the parent's rank and the level of exposure to elite peers. For any value of the parent percentile rank, the child's percentile rank is higher in the high exposure group with above average proportion of elite peers than in the low exposure treatment. Importantly, as the additional uplift is highest at the bottom and the top of the parent income distribution, whilst exposure to elite peers lifts mobility at the bottom of the parental income distribution, it also increases persistence at the top of the income distribution.

Notes: This graph plots the fitted values from an intergenerational mobility rank-rank regression allowing for the interaction between exposure to elite peers and the parent percentile rank to be quadratic. High (low) exposure is defined as above (below) mean proportion of elite peers in the high school cohort. The line “Total Effect” plots the predicted outcome as a weighted average across low and high exposure to elite peers, at each parent percentile rank.

success reveals both the potential and the limitations of current educational structures. Addressing these issues requires a nuanced approach that balances opportunities for integration with reforms to assessment

and admissions processes. By doing so, Norway can move closer to fulfilling the egalitarian promise of its education system.



Research: Development Group

The impact of subsidised childcare on household income: evidence from Uganda

By Arne Nasgowitz, NHH | Denise Ferris, BRAC Uganda | Kjetil Bjorvatn, NHH | Lore Vandewalle, Geneva Graduate Institute | Selim Gulesci, Trinity College Dublin | Vincent Somville, NHH & CMI

Subsidised childcare services are at least as effective as cash grants in increasing household income.

Studying the impact of subsidised childcare on households in Uganda

Access to childcare is critical for increasing women's labour force participation in high-income countries (Baker et al. 2008, Gelbach 2002, Goldin 2021), but it is unclear if these lessons carry over to a low-income context where multiple market imperfections and social norms may limit women's labour market opportunities. In the paper we present findings from a field experiment that we designed and implemented in Uganda in order to understand the impact of free childcare on the mother's business development and labour supply. We add to existing literature by also considering the impact of childcare on the labour supply of other household members, as well as a range of outcomes related to family welfare, including child development (Evans et al. 2021).

Childcare or cash, or both?

In Uganda, as in many other low-income contexts, self-employment is the dominant source of income. Starting

up or expanding a business may be hampered by credit constraints and labour supply may be constrained by domestic duties, such as childcare. Moreover, there may be important complementarities between capital and labour. For instance, lack of capital may severely limit the returns on childcare as the marginal product of labour can be very low. Similarly, the returns on an increase in capital may be contingent on having access to childcare, allowing the entrepreneur to work more hours in the business.

To study these mechanisms, we randomly assigned the women in our sample of almost 1,500 households to one of four groups. The first group was offered free childcare for one year. While private childcare services exist in urban and peri-urban regions of Uganda, these are typically not accessible to the poor, or are limited to a programme that runs only in the morning. The childcare treatment offered was enrolment of one child aged 3-5 years of age in a nearby childcare centre of choice with all costs covered. The second group was offered an unconditional cash

grant equal to the cost of the childcare treatment. The cash grants were unconditional but labelled as a business grant and transferred directly to the women. The third group was offered both free childcare and the cash grant. A final and fourth group of women served as a control. We surveyed the participants at baseline and approximately one year later to measure the labour supply and earnings of the women and other household members. We also collected information on child development indicators of the ‘target child’ eligible for the childcare treatment.

The experimental design allows us to assess the relative importance of time and credit constraints for labour supply and business development, as well as the cost-effectiveness of subsidised childcare. A key contribution from this is the illustration of a comprehensive picture of the household dynamics resulting from the different treatments, including the labour market outcomes of the woman’s partner. In addition, we capture treatment effects across a broad range of outcomes related to family well-being, such as child development, happiness, stress and domestic violence. This is crucial in order to obtain a more thorough understanding of the potential effects of providing access to childcare.

The implementation of treatments started in February 2019 and was completed in December 2019 (one school year). A childhood development survey was conducted in December 2019, using the IDELA tool developed by Save the Children, while a full business and household follow-up survey was conducted in February 2020, right before the COVID-19 lockdown.



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NHH Norwegian School of Economics



Denise Ferris
BRAC Uganda



Kjetil Bjorvatn
HH Norwegian School of Economics



Lore Vandewalle
Geneva Graduate Institute

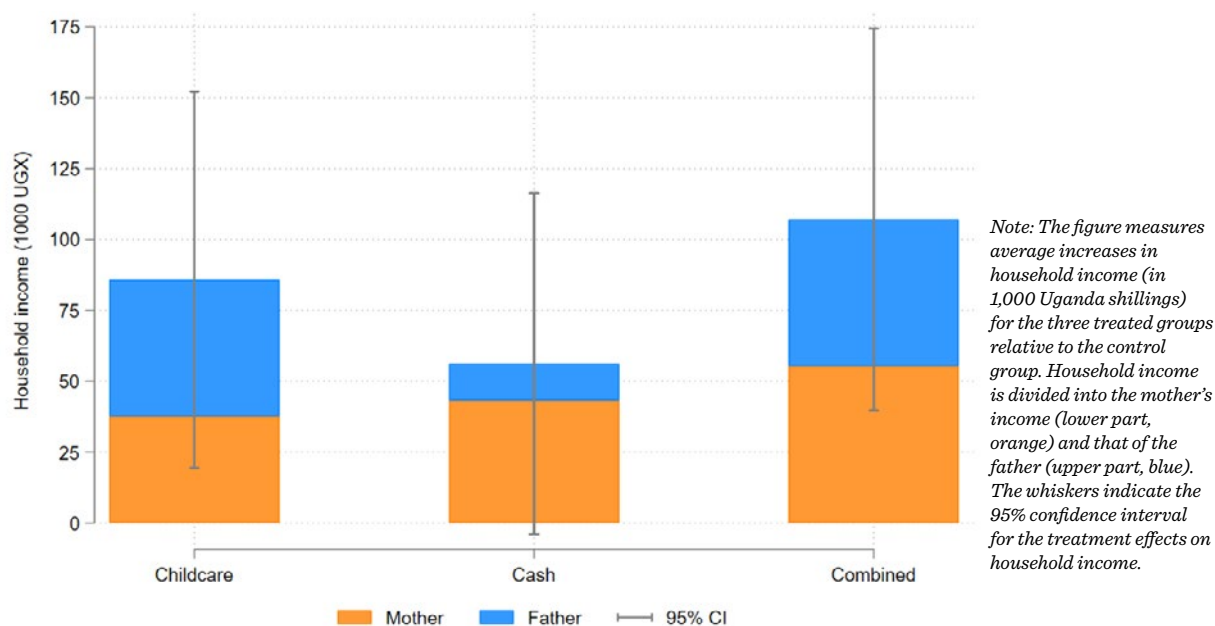


Selim Gulesci
Trinity College Dublin



Vincent Somville
NHH Norwegian School of Economics &
CMI Chr. Michelsen Institute

Figure 1. Treatment effects on the income of mothers and fathers



The positive impact of childcare on household income is similar to that of a cash grant

We measure household income by summing wages and revenues from self-employment for the mother and her partner – whom we shall refer to as the father.

We observe that the childcare intervention caused an increase in household income of UGX 86,000 (Uganda shillings equivalent to 23 USD), a 34% increase relative to the control group average. The effect is at least as large as that of a cash grant, framed as business support. We do not find any complementarity between the childcare

and cash treatments on household income. While the point estimate of the combined treatment is larger than that of the single-arm treatment, the difference is not statistically significant.

Childcare allows fathers to work more

Perhaps surprisingly, we find that childcare increases the father's labour supply and earnings from wage labour. We argue that this can take place either directly, by relieving time he would otherwise have spent with the child, or indirectly, by the mother taking over some of his domestic work. In fact, a recent national time-use survey shows that Ugandan men spend about five hours per day doing unpaid care work. Although this is less than the seven hours women spend on such tasks, it is still substantial. Given that men typically earn more than women in the labour market, from a household perspective it may be more lucrative to use the freed-up time from childcare to expand the husband's labour supply. The other treatments do not have a robust effect on the father's labour supply, and none of the treatments have an impact on the father's business assets or employees. The fact that we do not find any impact on the father's labour supply from the combined treatment is consistent with the cash transfer being invested in the mother's business and thus increasing the mother's marginal product of labour.

Stronger effects for single mothers and for those without a younger child

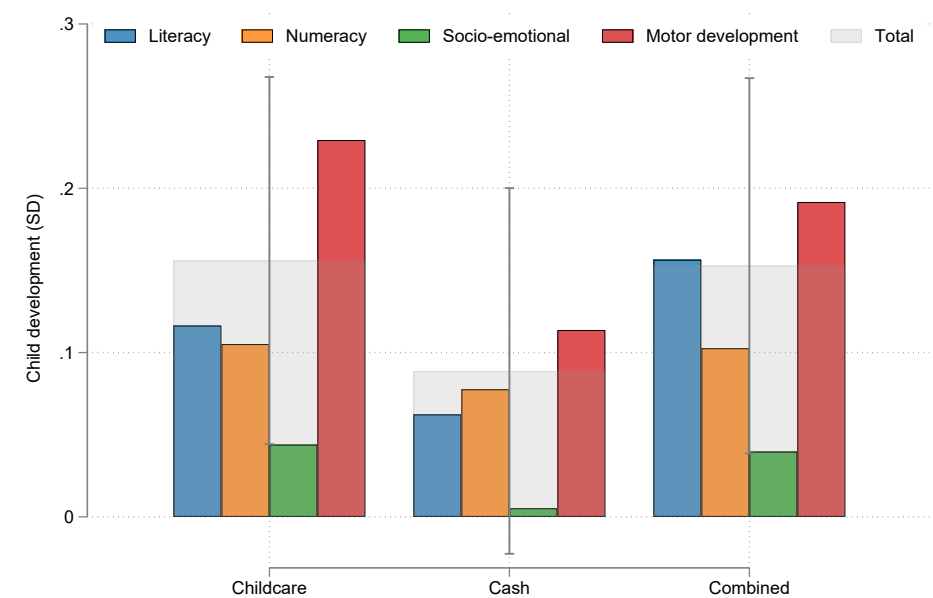
The effects of childcare for the mother's labour supply are likely to be heterogeneous. If lack of time is a binding constraint for the mother's labour supply, we expect a stronger effect of childcare for those who do not have younger children to care for. Single mothers are also expected to react differently to the childcare subsidy than mothers living with a partner. Our findings support these conjectures. Childcare leads to significantly higher business revenues for mothers without younger children than for mothers with younger children and, similarly, for single mothers than for women living with a partner.

Impact on children's development

We measure children's development using IDELA, an instrument developed by the NGO 'Save the Children'. The tool consists of a set of questions and tests aimed at measuring the level of competency that children possess across four domains: motor skills, early literacy, early numeracy and socio-emotional skills.

As shown in Figure 2, the childcare subsidy leads to an improvement in early literacy and motor skills. While the point estimates are positive (and probably driven by the fact that some households spent the cash on sending their children to childcare), the cash grants do not have a significant effect on children's development. The impact of the combined treatment is similar to that of childcare alone.

Figure 2. Treatment effects on child development



Note: The figure shows improvements in childhood development (in standard deviations) for the treated groups relative to the control group. The bars measure the different dimensions of childhood development: literacy (blue); numeracy (orange); socio-emotional development (green); and motor development (red). The grey box shows a development index consisting of all dimensions, while the whiskers indicate the 95% confidence interval for the treatment effects on this index.

Conclusion

Our findings indicate that subsidising childcare can be a cost-effective way to improve household income. The positive effect of childcare on household income is at

least as large as that of a cash grant of equivalent cost. Our results imply that evaluating the returns to childcare by studying its impact on child development and maternal labour outcomes is likely to underestimate the returns given the effects on the father’s labour supply and income.

Selected Projects



Fairness and the Moral Mind



European Research Council
Established by the European Commission

Project Manager: Bertil Tungodden
Funding: European Research Council (ERC)

The project provides a novel study of the moral mind and inequality acceptance. It explores how personal responsibility and individual freedom shape inequality acceptance, including the critical aspect of drawing the moral circle. It also conducts international studies across 60 countries to understand distributive behaviour and cultural transmission of moral preferences.



Global Challenges, Sustainability and the Welfare State - Perspectives from Labor, Behavioral and Macroeconomics



The Research Council of Norway

Project Manager: Aline Bütikofer
Funding: Norwegian Research Council

Norway's small, open, resource-based economy is sensitive to global shocks, such as oil price fluctuations and exchange rate volatility. The COVID-19 pandemic exemplified this, causing a sharp drop in oil prices, rising unemployment, and shifting attitudes toward inequality. These challenges highlight the need for economists with diverse skills to support timely policymaking.



Media Bias and Political Polarisation



The Research Council of Norway

Project Manager: Ingar K. Haaland
Funding: Norwegian Research Council

The project tries to understand how different reporting strategies by newspapers affect news demand, belief updating and political polarisation, and it encompasses four key sub-projects, each addressing distinct aspects of the topic, such as exploring the impact of slanted language on political polarisation and estimating the relative weight of accuracy concerns versus belief confirmation.



Firm power, worker power and the structure of labour markets



Project Manager: Alexander L.P. Willén

Funding: Norwegian Research Council

This project aims to provide an inclusive understanding of how the employer-employee dynamics in labour markets affect current workers, future generations and the societal goals of economic efficiency and equality. The project combines state-of-the-art research methods with unique combinations of natural experiments, population-wide register data and surveys.



Intra-household resource allocation and targeted transfers



Project Manager: Ingvald Almås

Funding: Norwegian Research Council

Many welfare programmes around the world target women with cash transfers rather than men. Examples are the many conditional cash transfer schemes around the world.

This research project aims to provide research evidence on the effect of gender targeting. The project is developing and using novel survey design and economic experiments, both in the “lab” and in the field, to study the effect of gender targeting on female empowerment and child development.



The Freedom to Choose



Project Manager: Alexander W. Cappelen

Funding: Norwegian Research Council

FREE will conduct a global study across 80 countries to shed new light on the striking differences in attitudes to inequality and paternalistic policies across the world. The project investigates how perceptions of free choice shape behaviour and political attitudes.



Work skills for life: a work readiness programme to prepare the transition from secondary school



Project Manager: Vincent Somville
Funding: Norwegian Research Council

The project investigates whether it is possible to improve the transition from school to the labour market through a specially designed programme. An important innovation in the approach lies in the combination of training and supporting teachers, while simultaneously providing them with new teaching material designed to improve the transition to the labour market.



Childhood gap, Parenting Styles and Life Time Inequality



Project Manager: Kjell G. Salvanes
Funding: Norwegian Research Council

In the past decades, most Western countries have experienced an important social phenomenon whereby economic and social inequalities have risen sharply along many dimensions, including education, employment, income, physical and mental health. The project aims to address these research challenges by making use of a set of innovative methodological approaches to study inequality by uniquely combining census-wide population register data with different types of experiments, including lab experiments, randomised control trials and natural policy experiments.

FAIR Insight Team

FAIR Insight Team (FIT) connects FAIR with key stakeholders in both society and the general public through the initiation of applied research projects and by communicating research findings. FIT is organised as a research programme at SNF – Centre for Applied Research at NHH – with the programme leadership located at the Department of Economics. FIT has 15 team members, with co-directors Kjetil Bjorvatn and Kjell G. Salvanes.

The Decline of Routine Tasks, Education Investments and Intergenerational Mobility

By: Patrick Bennett, University of Liverpool | Kai Liu, University of Cambridge | Kjell G. Salvanes, NHH

The transformation of labour markets driven by routine-biased technical change (RBTC) has profound implications for education investments and intergenerational mobility. As technological advancements diminish the demand for routine-intensive tasks, the labour market increasingly values abstract, cognitive skills. This shift is prompting young students to reassess their educational choices in order to align with emerging labour market demands. The effects of these changes are not uniform, with significant variations observed across socioeconomic groups and levels of baseline academic achievement. Understanding how these shifts influence educational pathways provides critical insights into addressing inequalities and fostering upward mobility.



Patrick Bennett
University of Liverpool

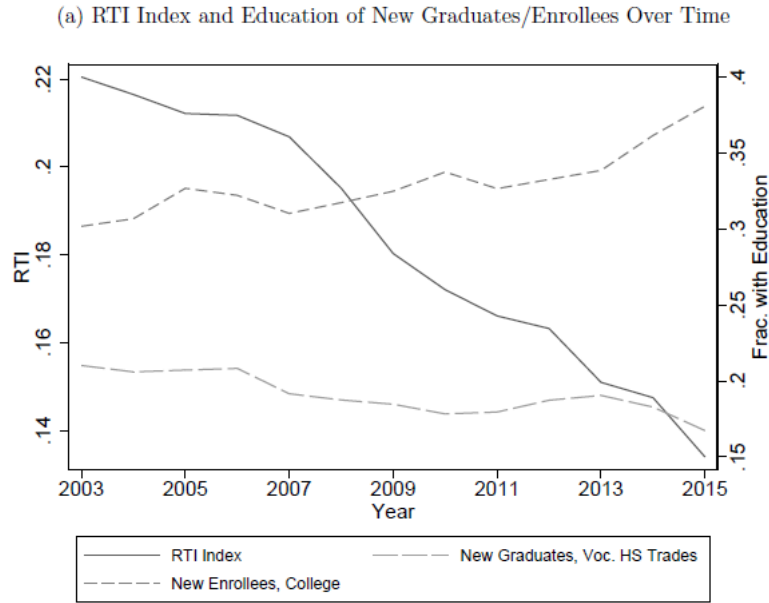


Kai Liu
University of Cambridge



Kjell G. Salvanes
NHH Norwegian School of Economics

Figure 1. The relationship between RTI Index and Education Investments



The figure plots the routine task (RTI) index and growth of new graduates across fields of study. RTI index measured for all private sector workers aged 18–54; new graduation and enrollment in vocational-trades high school and college education measured for those aged 21.

The routine task estimator measures in the relative importance of routine/math tasks within an occupation and in the figure it shows the decline in importance of routine tasks over time in Norway.

The paper is based on the decline in routine-intensive tasks having fundamentally altered the landscape of employment opportunities. Jobs in production, clerical and other routine-based occupations have been steadily replaced or restructured, while roles requiring analytical and problem-solving skills have expanded. This structural transformation has incentivised young individuals to pursue academic high school and higher education, moving away from vocational trades in high school that traditionally prepared students for more routine-intensive

jobs. Using Norwegian administrative data, with its comprehensive coverage, our analysis reveals how exposure to these labour market shifts affects students’ educational decisions, highlighting significant disparities in responses across different demographic groups.

Students from low socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds have shown remarkable responsiveness to these changes. As the demand for routine-intensive skills wanes, these students are increasingly opting for

academic pathways and college education, reducing high school dropout rates and participation in vocational education. Interestingly, low-performing students, who are less likely to pursue higher education, display notable increases in college enrolment. This trend suggests that the perceived returns on education in the evolving labour market outweigh the barriers traditionally associated with lower academic performance. Such shifts among disadvantaged groups indicate a broader adjustment to technological disruption, with education serving as a key mechanism for adaptation.

The study further highlights how these changes impact intergenerational mobility. By examining patterns of college enrolment among children from high and low-educated families, it becomes evident that RBTC fosters absolute upward mobility among children from low SES families. In areas more affected by declines in routine task intensity, the intergenerational persistence of educational attainment – where children’s education levels mirror those of their parents – diminishes significantly. This relative mobility is particularly pronounced among low SES girls, who exhibit higher rates of transition to college compared to their male counterparts. The gender disparity in responses reflects underlying differences in academic performance and decision-making, with girls more likely to pursue opportunities in higher education in response to changes in labour market conditions.

However, the positive effects of RBTC on mobility are not evenly distributed. High SES students, who are already advantaged by their family backgrounds and academic

preparedness, experience different forms of educational adjustments. For this group, the shift away from routine tasks primarily results in changes within higher education, such as a preference for STEM fields over non-STEM disciplines. This specialisation aligns with the high labour market returns associated with technical and analytical skills, further reinforcing the advantages of students from privileged backgrounds.

The study’s findings underscore the importance of educational policies that address these disparities and support adaptive responses to labour market changes. For example, improving access to academic resources and college preparatory programmes for disadvantaged students can help bridge the gaps in preparedness and outcomes. Additionally, reforms in vocational education that integrate non-routine cognitive skills could make these pathways more viable in the current economic landscape. Policy-makers must also consider targeted interventions to support boys from low SES backgrounds, who appear less likely to transition to higher education compared to their female peers.

Ultimately, the decline in routine-intensive tasks driven by technological advancements has catalysed a significant shift in education investments. While these changes have enhanced upward mobility for disadvantaged groups and restructured educational pathways, they have also created new challenges. By recognising the differential impacts of labour market shifts and implementing inclusive policies, societies can ensure that technological progress translates into equitable opportunities for all.

Data Infrastructure Unit

The FAIR Data Infrastructure Unit (DIU) is an administrative support unit with the primary objective of facilitating the collection and processing of data for our researchers. Additionally, it plays a crucial role in ensuring compliance with both local and national standards and regulations. By serving as an interface between researchers and various data providers, the DIU consolidates experiences and fosters strong relationships with key data providers, such as Statistics Norway, other public authorities and survey providers. The unit also remains up-to-date with evolving procedures and expectations on the part of data suppliers. This not only streamlines the data-collection process for researchers, but also enables the DIU to achieve economies of scope and scale, ultimately reducing the overall costs to FAIR associated with interactions with these suppliers.

The DIU provides valuable assistance to FAIR researchers in addressing personal data protection concerns. This includes ensuring the proper filing of personal data notifications, data management plans and IRB applications.

Furthermore, the DIU actively develops expertise and competence in effectively representing FAIR researchers in discussions with data protection officers and other regulatory bodies, both at NHH and externally.

The DIU is proficient in managing metadata and documentation using open standards such as Dublin Core and those of the Data Documentation Initiative. This expertise enables the unit to archive research data in both institutional and open repositories, ensuring long-term data preservation in accordance with the FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable

and Reusable). Additionally, the unit keeps a record of research assistants and balances supply and demand for research assistance.

Some very experienced research data managers left in 2024, but the unit has been able to hire substitutes and is looking forward to new challenges in 2025.



Erik Ø. Sørensen

DIU Director and FAIR Compliance Officer



Ingvild Lindgren Skarpeid

Research Data Manager



Jon Gunnar Tufta

Research Data Manager



Malte Baader

Research Data Manager



Sebastian Fest

Research Data Manager



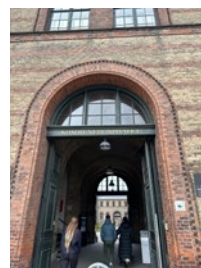
Kata Urban

Project Coordinator

Learning Exchange: FAIR Administration visits CEBI



In February, the FAIR Administration visited the Center for Economic Behavior and Inequality (CEBI) at the University of Copenhagen to share experiences managing Centres of Excellence.



Photos by Susanne Boe Loge, Theo Koppen Jørgensen-Dahl, Adriana Condarco-Quesada, Kata Urban

Policy Impact

FAIR contributes to policymaking by participating in expert groups and providing reports for various government ministries. These activities reflect FAIR's aim to use research to inform practical solutions for societal challenges.



Erik Ø. Sørensen

Expert Report for the Ministry of Climate and Environment – Assessments and Recommendations

The report provides an analysis of Norway's progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and achieving climate goals. It highlights key areas for improvement, including the need for stronger measures in transportation, energy and industry in order to meet national and international climate commitments. The committee also emphasises the importance of accurate data and consistent monitoring in guiding effective policy decisions.

They have contributed to new knowledge and methods for analyses of measures and instruments in the climate field. The committee proposed methods for calculating the climate impact of the state budget and provided advice on how existing methods for climate-related analyses of measures and instruments can be improved.



Mathias P. Ekström

Expert Report for the Ministry of Health and Care Services – Effective Dietary Measures

The expert group identified five priority measures for promoting healthier diets in Norway. These include providing free fruit and vegetables to children and young people, increasing taxes on sugary drinks, banning the marketing of unhealthy food to young people, mandating food labelling and encouraging reformulation and appropriate portion sizes. These initiatives aim to address unhealthy diets as a significant national health challenge.



Katrine V. Løken

Expert Report for the Ministry of Education - How kindergartens, schools and after-school programmes could further reduce social inequalities

The expert group presented their report to the Minister of Education, offering recommendations for reducing social inequalities through kindergartens, schools and after-school programmes. Leading the group since autumn 2022, Katrine focused on strategies for enhancing social mobility and ensuring that more students complete their education with diplomas or vocational certificates. The report outlines ways in which the education system can be improved to better support equity and long-term opportunities for all students.

Commission on Birth Rates and Welfare Schemes for Families with Children

The Norwegian government has established a commission to investigate declining birth rates and recommend measures to support families and encourage childbirth. Combining expertise from various fields, the commission will explore societal and policy factors influencing birth rates, with input from a youth advisory group. Interim findings are due in April 2025, with a final report by winter 2026.





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Samwel J. Nassary

PhD Student
*NTNU Norwegian University of
Science and Technology*



– I had an incredible experience during my time at FAIR: it is an extremely welcoming and enriching environment, with people constantly bouncing ideas off each other and celebrating each other's success. I had the opportunity to work closely with economists and learn about their ongoing research
– I was amazed with how interesting and relevant all their projects were. FAIR is truly an institute unlike any other and I hope to stay in touch with everyone there!

Isabella Barrientos, Stanford University

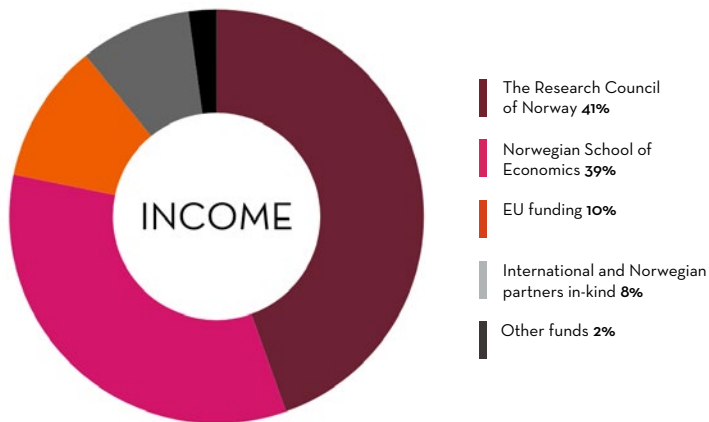


– I really enjoyed my time at FAIR and felt welcomed right from the start. It is a vibrant and inspirational research institution. I am especially going to miss the (also non-research related) discussions at the coffee-machine or at the lunch table. Most of all, I am very thankful for the amazing feedback I got on my research projects. My time at FAIR was one of the most impactful experiences during my PhD.

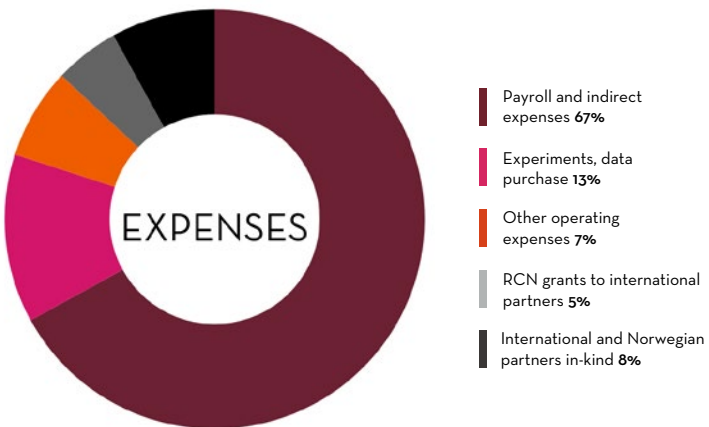
Thanks for having me!

*Matthias Holzmann,
Katholische Universität Eichstätt-Ingolstadt*

Statement of Accounts



| SFF FAIR* | 2024 |
|--|--------|
| INCOME | MNOK |
| The Research Council of Norway (RCN) | 32,643 |
| Norwegian School of Economics | 30,766 |
| EU funds | 8,277 |
| International & Norwegian partners in-kind | 6,227 |
| Other funds | 1,434 |
| Income, total | 79,347 |

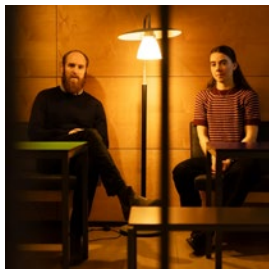


| EXPENSES | MNOK |
|--|--------|
| Payroll and indirect expenses | 53,111 |
| Experiments, data purchase | 10,452 |
| Other operating expenses | 5,450 |
| RCN grants to international partners | 4,106 |
| International & Norwegian partners in-kind | 6,227 |
| Expenses, total | 79,347 |

*Real turnover, not transfers

Outreach and Media

This year FAIR researchers have published a wide variety of articles and opinion pieces in different languages.

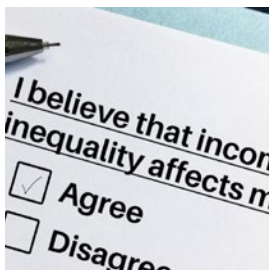


Helsingin Sanomat

Lahjakkaimmat kärsivät opettajien ennakkoluuloista/ The Most Talented Suffer from Teachers' Bias

Mikko Silliman, Ellen Sahlström by Anna-Sofia Berner HS – 03 April 2024

A recent study reveals that some teachers give lower grades to high school students with immigrant backgrounds compared to native Finnish students. The discrimination is most pronounced in rural areas, and those most affected are the most talented students.



VoxEU Column: Poverty and Inequality

The power of treating inequality as an externality

Morten Nyborg Støstad – 18 June 2024

The article challenges the traditional trade-off between equity and efficiency in economic models, framing inequality as an economic externality that affects societal outcomes like crime, mental health and political polarisation. It argues that reducing inequality benefits even those acting out of self-interest by fostering smoother societal functioning and economic growth. Treating inequality as an externality provides a broader rationale for addressing it through public policy.



Clarín: Opinion

La educación se declaró esencial. Pero, ¿es esencial?/ Education was declared essential. But is it truly essential?

David Jaume and Alexander Willén – 20 August 2024

The article discusses the recent decision by Argentina's government to declare education an "essential service," aiming to minimise the impact of teacher strikes on students and families. Strikes have led to significant educational and economic losses, including reduced learning outcomes for children and decreased employment opportunities for mothers. While the move seeks to prioritise students' right to education, it raises questions about its feasibility and whether it addresses the root causes of educational disruptions. The article argues for a more comprehensive approach to resolving underlying issues in the education system.

The Economist

The Economist: Feature

Why don't women use artificial intelligence?

Based on: Working paper by Daniel Carvajal, Catalina Franco and Siri Isaksson titled 'Will Artificial Intelligence Get in the Way of Achieving Gender Equality?'

In their working paper, Carvajal, Franco, Isaksson dive deep into the emerging world of generative AI, exploring how it might impact men and women differently in the workplace.

Their findings show generative AI could widen existing gender gaps in the labour market, though appropriate encouragement and policies can prevent this outcome.

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