

Seminar "Social Cohesion"

Lecturer: Prof. Christina Felfe de Ormeño, Ph.D.

Content:

"The most certain prediction that we can make about almost any modern society is that it will be more diverse a generation from now than it is today" (Robert Putnam, The 2006 Johan Skytte Prize Lecture).

The increase in ethnic and social heterogeneity, while likely to bring about significant opportunities, belongs to the most important challenges facing modern societies. Diversity tends to reduce social cohesion – people's willingness to cooperate with each other. Yet so far, our knowledge is limited when it comes to the origins of social cohesion, or better said limited social cohesion. In particular, we lack answers to the questions like "What are the causal origins of social cohesion?" or "What are the mechanisms producing in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination?".

In this seminar, we aim at teaching the skills necessary to conduct an empirical study to measure people's social behavior towards people from diverse backgrounds. We will read and discuss scientific methodological papers that allow students to acquire the necessary empirical tools to conduct such an empirical study. The recurring topic will be related to the origins of social cohesion and social preferences, the role of the family and the school in shaping children's social behavior and preferences.

Interested students will get the opportunity to collaborate within a large field study on the development of socially cohesive behavior among children over the WS 23/24 which can allow them to work at the chair as a research assistant.

Time slot: Thursdays, 1:30- 3:00 pm in G308

Required skills: No skills required.

Exam: In course presentation (50%) and seminar paper (50%)