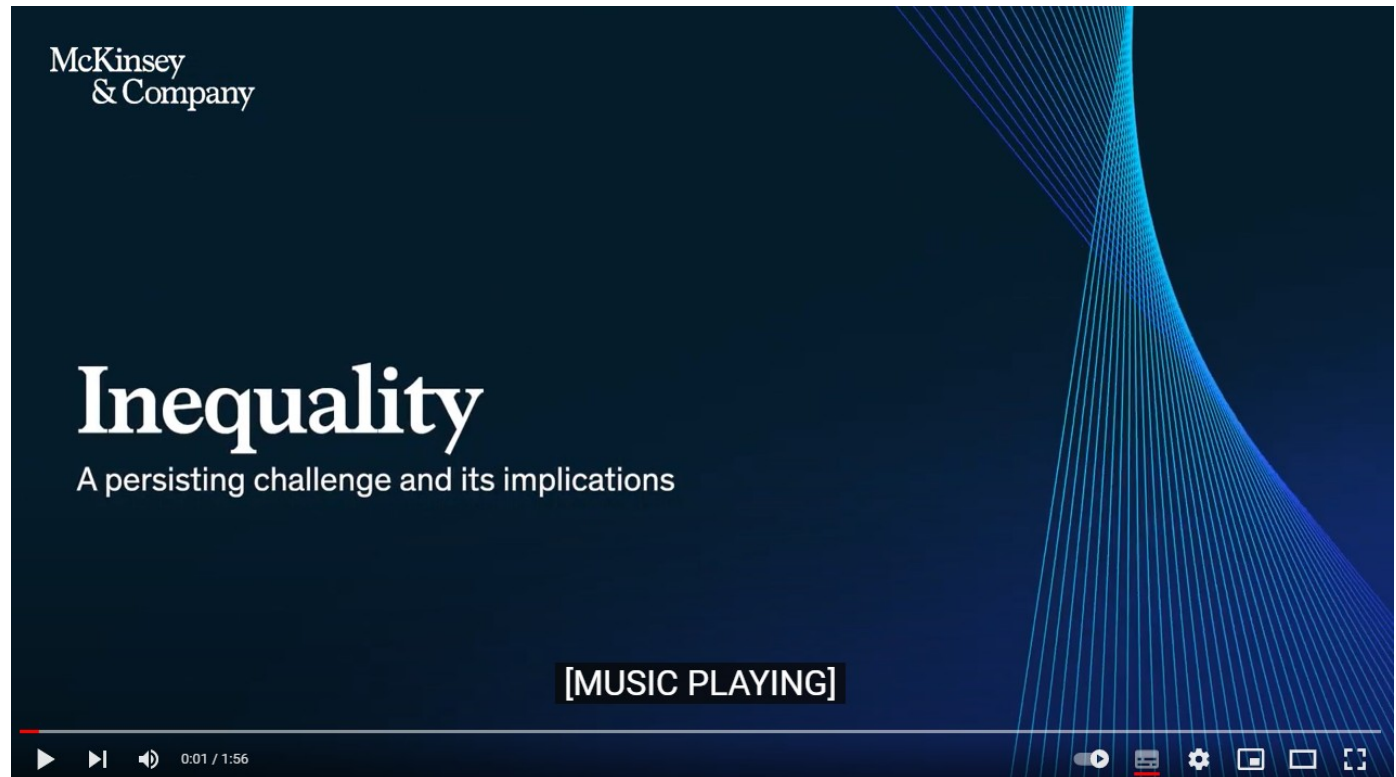


# Intro to theme

Video: Inequality: A persisting challenge and its implications

<https://youtu.be/PQlrwVTrBWc>



# Inequality and social stratification

- Connection between social stratification and inequality
- Systematic inequality between groups of people = social stratification
- Why social?
  - SS concerns the groups of people
  - Inequality is organized around groups with similar characteristic
- Criteria delimit the inequality
  - wealth, income, prestige, power, gender, education, age
- Rankings of groups change only very slowly
- All societies are stratified societies

# Three basic historical models of inequalities

- Slavery—ownership of certain people
- Caste—status for life
- Class—positions based on:
  - economics
  - employment (paid jobs)
  - labor markets
- Modern and postmodern societies

# Inequality dimensions

- Economic inequality: wealth, money (rich vs. poor people)
- Social class inequality: occupations (labour market positions)
- Social status inequality: prestige, respect
- Power inequality: influence, authority
  
- The debate is over which type of inequality is the most important?
  
- Three main dimensions of inequality:
  - economic
  - educational
  - power

# Social stratification cube

- Three main dimensions
  - *economic capital (income, salary)*
  - *education (prestige, respect)*
  - *power (authority)*
- Fourth dimension
  - *time*
- Social mobility vs. social reproduction

# Reproduction of inequality

- Reproduction of social strata
  - In European countries children from the highest social classes have about 80% higher probability to attend university compare to children from the working class
    - IEO
  - Children from highest social class have 70% probability to get married with the same social class partner
    - Homogamy
  - Inequality is reinforced by:
    - socials mechanisms (system)
    - individual based actions (actor)

# Two reasons of reproduction of inequalities

- System: social reproduction
  - glass ceiling
  - social barriers
  - everyone wants the same
- Actor: cultural reproduction
  - sticky floor
  - cultural values, attitudes
  - behavior
  - people want different things

# Two basic inequality concepts

- *Inequality of conditions*
  - unequal distribution of income to people
  - differences in wealth and material conditions
  - different incomes means different chances to get different goods
- *Inequality of opportunity*
  - unequal start positions
  - different start positions means different chances to get different levels of education, jobs and incomes



# Basic principles inequality reproduction

- Cumulative advantage
  - Matthew effect
  - Advantages have tendency to strengthen itself
  - The same can be applied to disadvantages.
- Compensatory advantage
  - Economic, cultural, social, family resources to face risks along the life course

# IEO and educational expansion

- IEO: chances to attain certain level of education by social origin (SO) - family background
- Educational expansion (EE) is seen as a social-political provision for change of IEO (*inequality of educational opportunity*)
- EE via IEO helps to increase social justice, equality and meritocracy
- The relationship between IEO and EE has higher relevance for academic research as well as for social policy and it is the source of legitimization of social systems.

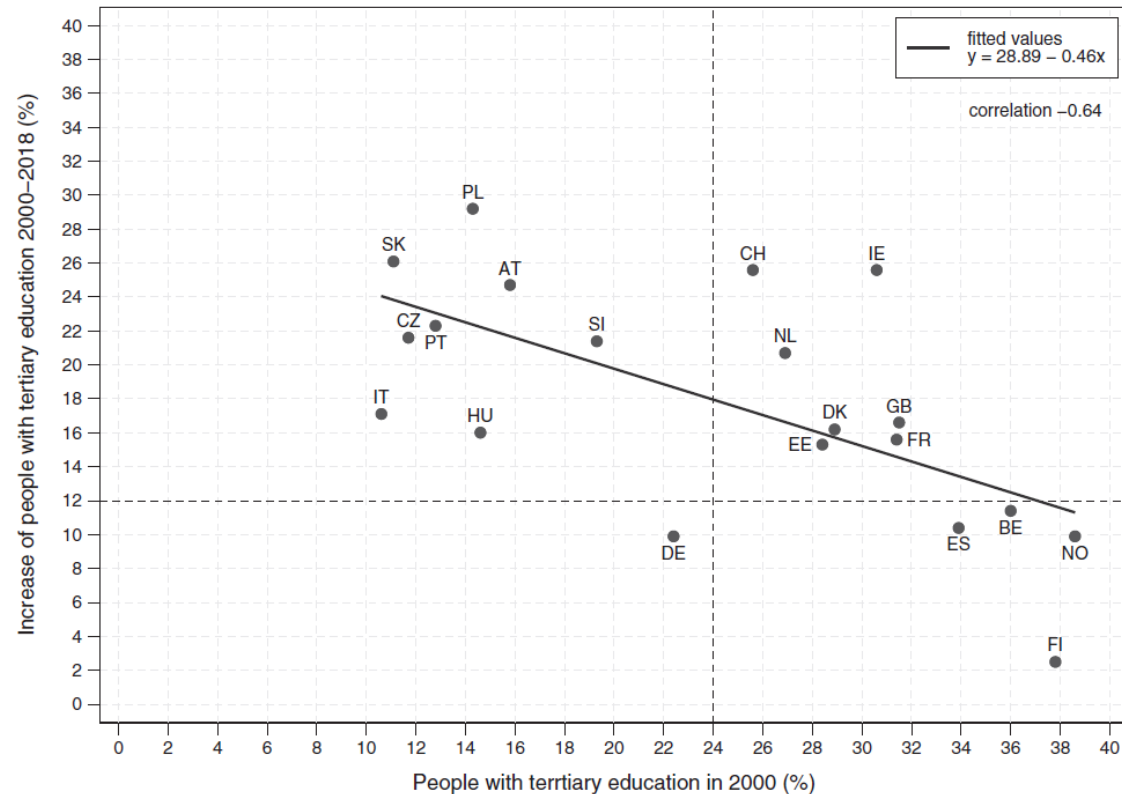


Figure 1. Educational expansion in 20 European countries between 2000 and 2018

Note: Tertiary education indicated by ISCED (levels 5–8) for the 25–34 age groups.

Source: Eurostat database (2020)

# Legitimization of inequality

- Inequality is needed (for instance in salaries) in order the talented people would be motivated for education that is necessary for different jobs (doctors, lawyers, other professionals)
- Is it true or we just believe in it?
- How large these differences in salaries should be?

# Ascription versus Achievement

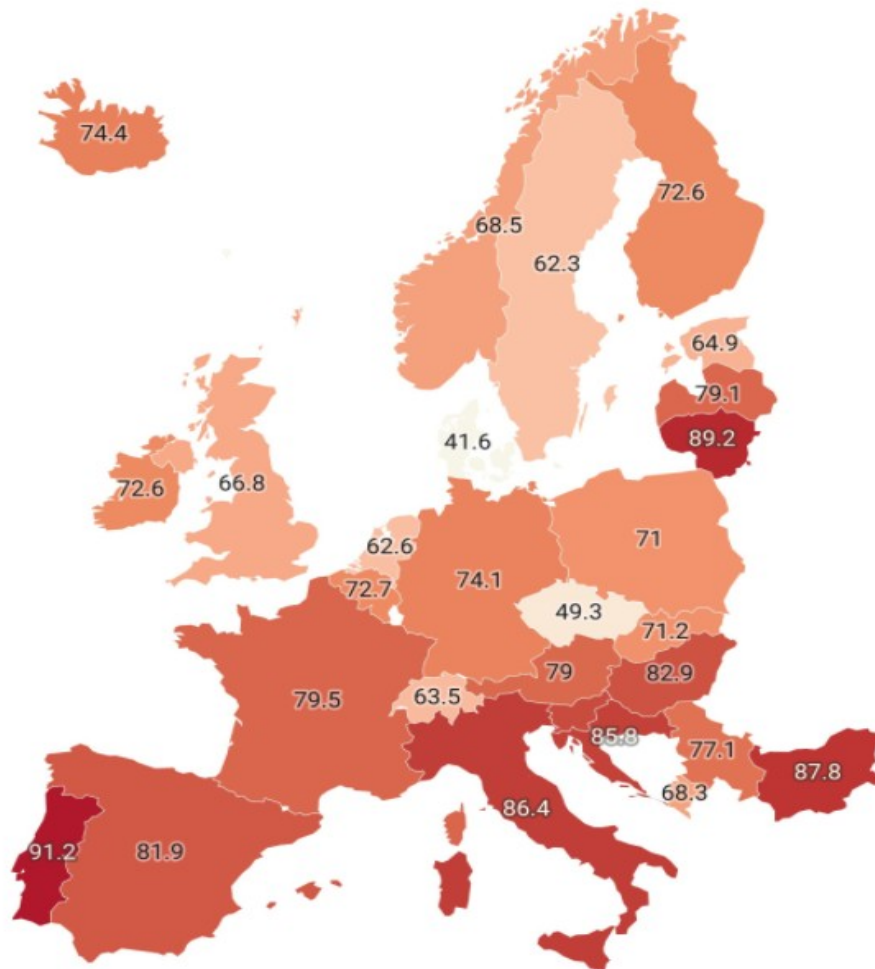
- What is *ascription*?
  - How does ascriptive society work?
- What is *achievement*?
  - How does meritocratic society work?
- Why we should strive for *meritocratic societies*?
  - Discussion

# Standards of Equality – what should be the goal?

- **Ontological equality** - everyone is created equal. Goal is equal respect and status within the culture.
- **Equality of Condition** – “level playing field,” same starting point for everyone. Goals may include increasing diversity & using affirmative action.
- **Equality of Opportunity** - inequality of condition is acceptable as long as everyone has the same opportunities for advancement and is judged by the same standards
  - Fits most closely with modern capitalist society

# Proportion of respondents agreeing with the statement "government should reduce differences in income levels", %, 2018 (European Social Survey)

## % agreeing with the statement "government should reduce differences in income levels", 2018



# Would you say the inequality of income distribution has some relation with that map?

## Inequality of income distribution, 2017

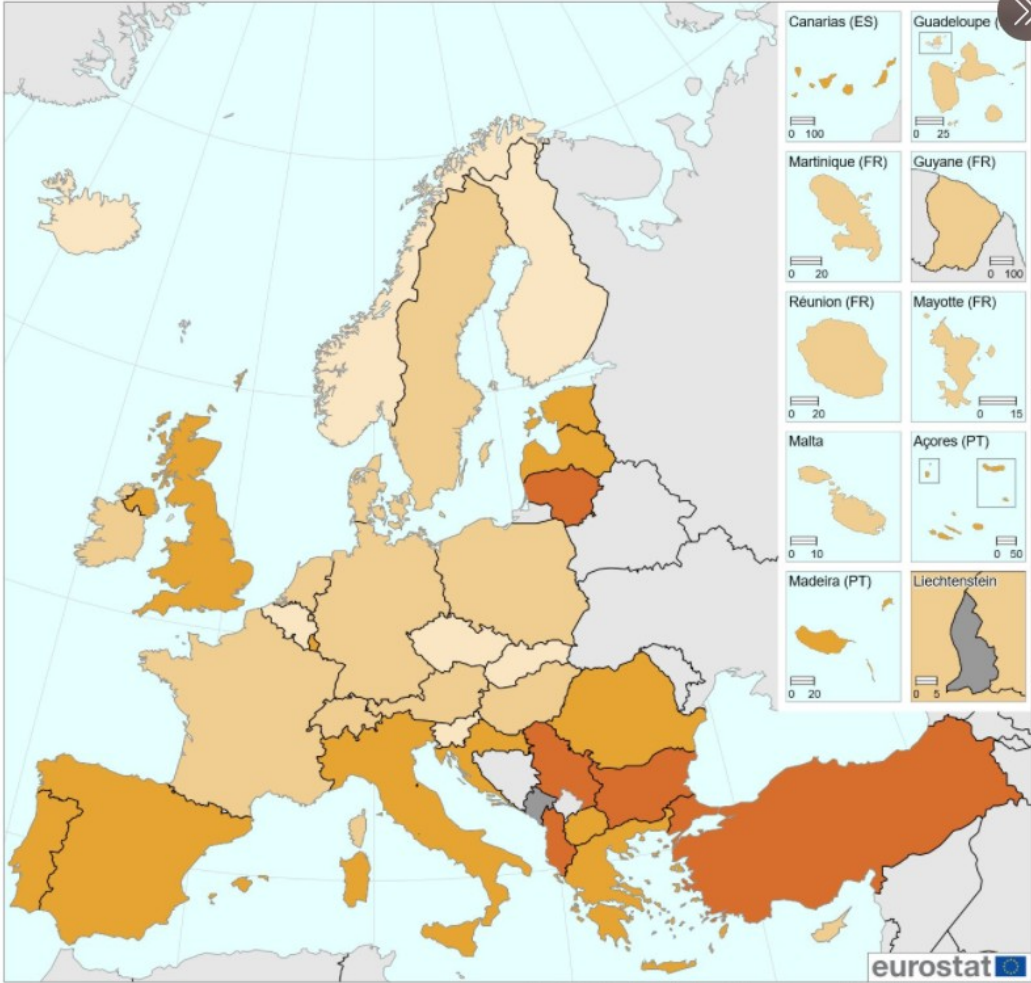
(income quintile share ratio)

EU-28 = 5.1

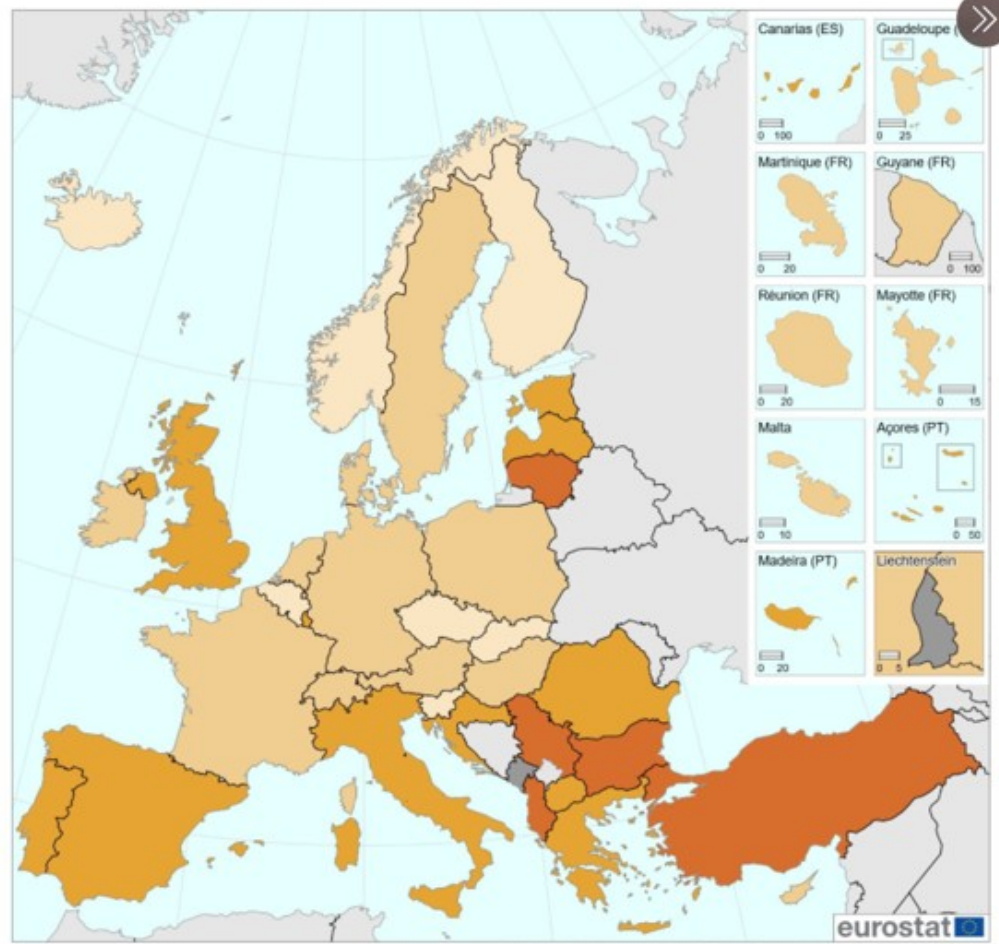
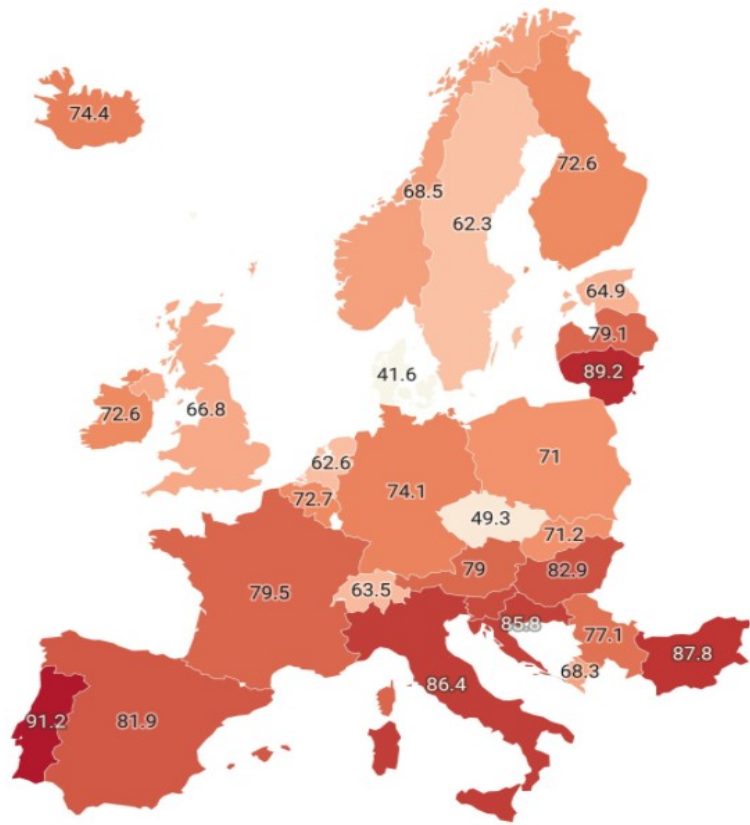
- < 4.0
- 4.0 – < 5.0
- 5.0 – < 7.0
- ≥ 7.0
- Data not available



Note: Iceland, Switzerland and Turkey, 2016  
Source: Eurostat (online data code: ilc\_di11)



# % agreeing with the statement "government should reduce differences in income levels", 2018



Map: @alexandreafonso • Source: European Social Survey, 2018 • Created with Datawrapper

Administrative boundaries: © EuroGeographics © UN-FAO © Turkstat  
Cartography: Eurostat - IMAGE, 05/2019