Research Project
Pathways, Aspirations, Tracking and access to Higher education (PATH)

Project funded by own resources

**Project title** Pathways, Aspirations, Tracking and access to Higher education (PATH)
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**Co-Investigator(s)** Koomen, Maarten; Meyer, Thomas; Hupka-Brunner, Sandra; Murdoch, Jake
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**Organisation / Research unit**
Departement Gesellschaftswissenschaften / Sozialforschung und Methodologie (Bergman)
Departement Gesellschaftswissenschaften / Bildungssoziologie (Imdorf)

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The project analysis if and how – through which institutional settings – higher education is accessed by immigrant group students in Switzerland, France and Canada. Do the immigrant youths have the same educational opportunities and pathways to higher education in the three countries as native youths, according to their aspirations? We are primarily interested in the possible reinforcement or reduction of educational inequalities arising from policies designed to increase the enrolment in tertiary education, particularly the flow from upper-secondary vocational educational tracks to higher tertiary ones. Despite their different educational policies and histories as countries of immigration (Crul et al., 2012), the three countries have a sizeable immigrant population, some of which do experience obstacles in their educational and professional careers.

Using panel data from France (DEPP), Switzerland (TREE) and Canada (YITS) we analyse the different pathways to higher education while taking in account the different characteristics of the students, focusing on vulnerable (immigrant and socially disadvantaged) groups in each country. Using statistical analysis (multinomial logistic regressions), we analyse the representation of those groups in educational pathways towards higher education.

First preliminary results show that across the three countries, 1st and 2nd generation Northern African youths in France, Turkish or former Yugoslavian youths in Switzerland and Latino and Caribbean youths in Canada are respectively underrepresented in higher education. These differences are greatly reduced and even disappear when the socioeconomic background and educational performance in secondary school is controlled for. This said, in France the democratisation of educational system, including the development of the vocational baccaulaureat, has enabled more youths of immigrant background to access higher education, albeit unwillingly for them, via the non-selective university sector. In Switzerland and Canada, there seems to be more “cooling down” and down-streaming of their educational aspirations towards non tertiary and more labour market oriented pathways.

**Keywords** Pathways, Aspirations, Tracking, Higher Education, France, Switzerland, Canada
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Other funds
Add publication

Published results

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