



A life course approach to political preference formation across social classes

Macarena Ares & Mathilde M. van Ditmars

To cite this article: Macarena Ares & Mathilde M. van Ditmars (31 Oct 2024): A life course approach to political preference formation across social classes, West European Politics, DOI: [10.1080/01402382.2024.2415845](https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2024.2415845)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2024.2415845>



© 2024 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.



[View supplementary material](#)



Published online: 31 Oct 2024.



[Submit your article to this journal](#)



Article views: 182





[View related articles](#)



[View Crossmark data](#)

A life course approach to political preference formation across social classes

Macarena Ares^a  and Mathilde M. van Ditmars^b 


^aDepartment of Political Science, University of Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain; ^bDepartment of Social and Political Sciences, University of Milan, Milan, Italy; Department of Political Science, University of Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland


ABSTRACT

While social class has received renewed attention as a driver of political conflict in Western democracies, little is known about when political differences by classes emerge and consolidate. Are they a direct consequence of individuals' economic prospects and daily experiences on the job, or are they driven by a sorting process responding to family origin and earlier formative experiences? This study applies a life course approach to identify the impact of (future) social classes during early adulthood, in the transition to employment, and the transition to the main class of destination. These longitudinal analyses using British and Swiss panel data allow for adjudicating the stage(s) at which political preferences become more marked across social classes. The results indicate that differences by (future) class are apparent early in life, and that they consolidate during employment. This research advances current and historical debates about social class as a relevant milieu of political socialisation and public opinion formation.

KEYWORDS Class voting; workplace socialisation; political socialisation; political preference formation; panel data

While we know that social classes differ in their political preferences, less is known about when these differences start to emerge. Even though political scientists have started paying renewed attention to class voting in knowledge economies, it is still an unresolved question whether individuals with similar (political) predispositions sort into occupations that determine their class of destination, or whether class location and occupational experiences more actively shape individuals' political preferences (Kitschelt

CONTACT Mathilde M. van Ditmars  mathilde.vanditmars@unimi.it

 Supplemental data for this article can be accessed online at <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2024.2415845>.

This article has been republished with a minor change. This change does not impact the academic content of the article.

© 2024 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

and Rehm 2014). Therefore, this article addresses the formation of class-specific political preferences using an integrated life-course perspective, asking when differences in preferences grounded on social class become crystallised. We build on existing studies that indicate that at least part of the origins of political differences between classes could be traced back to earlier life stages (Langsæther *et al.* 2022), through educational socialisation and family socialisation coupled with intergenerational transmission. Our contribution consists of a more systematic approach with a broader focus, integrating different stages and sources of class political socialisation: observing individuals in their youth *and* in their later employment trajectories, while also accounting for family origin.

We trace differences between classes back to the period of the impressionable years when political attitudes start to form, and follow individuals through subsequent transitions. We focus on three life stages that address three relevant contexts of socialisation: (1) prior to entering occupation (family origins), (2) in the transition from education to employment (educational and occupational socialisation), and (3) in the main class of destination (occupational socialisation). By taking a life course approach, we are able to separate these different socialisation experiences from (parental) class of origin effects. We rely on longitudinal data from the UK and Switzerland, which provides information on individuals' educational and employment trajectories, as well as on political attitudes regarding socioeconomic and sociocultural policy issues.

The current state of the art leaves several important questions unanswered that this article addresses. Using a life course perspective, this study identifies the extent to which preferences are formed by the time citizens start their professional life, and whether later occupational trajectories result in within-individual change in preferences, allowing for the possibility that both selection and socialisation mechanisms might be at play.¹ The literature tends to attribute political class differences to two alternative processes. These attitudes are either mainly shaped during adulthood, as individuals are exposed to the conditions and experiences of their social class in the context of their jobs; or they are mainly a consequence of individuals sorting into educational and occupational pathways based on pre-existing predispositions. In our approach, we do not consider these two processes as exclusive, but suggest that they can operate complementarily.

Our findings indicate that class preferences are the result of a political development process that starts relatively early in life and consolidates over the life course, rather than of a strong socialisation in class of destination or a pure sorting process. These insights are particularly relevant in a context in which the opportunities to select different occupational pathways have increased, given the wider diversification of higher education degrees

and jobs. Moreover, our results have significant implications beyond the study of class conflict, offering insights into societal divisions and political dynamics. They highlight the role of attitudes formed in young adulthood as influential drivers of lifelong political and social perspectives, advancing current and historical debates about social class and occupation as relevant milieus of political socialisation and public opinion formation.

The origins of political class divisions in post-industrial Western societies

The field of class voting has widely studied the relation between social class and party and policy preferences, and how the class cleavage has transformed over time (Bartolini and Mair 1990; Evans 1993; Lipset 1960). It is by now an established understanding that, on top of the traditional economic conflict between the working and middle classes, the class cleavage is also characterised by a stark division between a culturally authoritarian working class, and an increasingly culturally liberal new middle class (Ares 2022; Evans and Langsæther 2021; Langsæther and Evans 2020; Oesch and Rennwald 2018). Class thus continues to be a relevant determinant of political conflict, but two key transformations have realigned the relation between class location and political preferences: the diversification of the occupational structure, and the increasing dimensionality of political conflict with social groups and parties confronted both on economic and cultural issues. The former means that modern class schemes that reflect post-industrial occupational change do not only rely on a vertical (skill level and life opportunities stemming from the labour market position), but also a horizontal (work logic, nature of the work) differentiation between classes (Oesch 2006). The horizontal division has been relevant to identify political differences *within* middle-class occupations, distinguishing professionals in managerial or technical occupations from socio-cultural professionals (Gingrich and Häusermann 2015; Güveli *et al.* 2007; Kriesi 1989).

These two transformations have led to a pattern of tri-polar competition in Western Europe, where the working, managerial, and socio-cultural professional classes occupy different poles in a bi-dimensional conflict space (Oesch and Rennwald 2018). Workers hold conservative cultural views and support economic redistribution, while socio-cultural professionals also favour redistribution while holding highly liberal cultural positions (e.g., favourable towards immigration and gender equality). Managers align with socio-cultural professionals on cultural issues, but take market-liberal stances on the economic dimension. Clerical employees typically occupy central positions on both dimensions. This placement of the different classes on the bidimensional space is consistent across

different studies (Ares 2022; Evans and Langsæther 2021; Kitschelt and Rehm 2014; Langsæther and Evans 2020; Oesch 2008).

The origins of social class differences in issue preferences have been alternatively attributed to two different mechanisms related to occupations. First, the mechanism of socialisation on the job (or the *strong* effect of class of destination) proposes that class location and occupational experiences shape political attitudes. Second, the mechanism of self-selection (or a *weak* effect of class of destination) contends that individuals choose occupations that fit their pre-existing predispositions, attitudes, and values, leading to self-selection in environments with like-minded peers (Kitschelt and Rehm 2014). In the remainder of this theoretical framework, we first discuss the mechanism underlying the strong effect of class of destination: occupational socialisation, while subsequently we address the role of socialisation during earlier life stages, through education and in the family, that predate occupational selection and therefore may account for later political class divisions.

Occupation as a context of attitude formation

Most accounts of class voting expect some socialisation on the job, and not a pure sorting process. Most people spend the largest part of their life active in the workforce, and a large part of the day is spent at work. The transition to employment is a significant life change, in which citizens often become fully self-sufficient and economically independent from their families. These changes are likely to impact political attitudes after completing education because citizens are directly confronted with their position in society and additional experiences on the job. As individuals enter employment, they are directly faced with the material interests stemming from their occupational position, which should translate in distinct socioeconomic attitudes (Lipset 1960). In fact, citizens demonstrate value change transitioning from education into the labour market, which has been explained by increasing awareness of labour market competition (Kuhn *et al.* 2021; Lancee and Sarrasin 2015). Longitudinal studies of income change to date show that attitudinal responses to (smaller) changes in economic circumstances are not immediate, but do manifest in the longer term, with increases in income leading to lower support for redistribution and welfare spending (Helgason and Rehm 2023; O'Grady 2019).

Beyond the importance of the economic labour-market position, Kitschelt and Rehm argue that the occupational experience itself – position in the occupational hierarchy, applied problem-solving techniques, and peer and/or client interaction – also nurtures political attitudes (2014: 9–10). Early work in sociology of occupations and professions devoted considerable attention to adult socialisation in the workplace, and how it shaped

personality and behaviour both within and beyond the work sphere (Kohn and Schooler 1982; Mortimer and Lorence 1979). The social networks established at work, and the nature of the tasks carried out are some of the key forces of opinion formation in this context (Ashford and Nurmohamed 2012; Frese 1982; Lindh *et al.* 2021; Mortimer and Simmons 1978).

To identify the socialisation effect of class, researchers have studied how individuals' preferences respond to changes in social class position during their employment trajectories, also called intragenerational social mobility. Two studies to date show small but significant changes over the life course in redistribution preferences and economic conservatism when individuals transition (vertically and horizontally) through different class locations (Ares 2020; Langsæther *et al.* 2022). However, the latter study does not find any change in party choice, class identity or attitudes on non-economic issues. The large cross-sectional attitudinal differences between social classes documented in existing studies and the mild responsiveness of attitudes to social mobility during the life course can be reconciled if political differentiation between classes is already prevalent before individuals have entered the labour market. According to the selection (or sorting) mechanism, previous experiences and longer-term socialisation at earlier life stages underlie the association between class, identities, and party and policy preferences (Langsæther *et al.* 2022). This differentiation should then find its origin in processes of opinion formation taking place earlier in people's lives. Two instances in particular constitute important contexts of early socialisation that can result in political class differences later in life: education and the family.

Educational socialisation

Given the role of educational attainment in driving occupational positions later in life, attitudinal differences by level and field of education could partially account for later political class divisions. Hence, we could think of education as a predecessor of both preferences and social class position. Educational choices determine to a large extent the labour market position of individuals (Oesch and Rodriguez Menes 2011; Rözer and Bol 2019), and at the same time can be important in shaping socio-cultural preferences, according to existing studies of the educational cleavage. Education could impact political attitudes through processes of peer and educational socialisation, adopting values and beliefs that are dominant in their peer groups and the area of study (Hastie 2007; Stubager 2010). In Europe, lower and higher educated citizens differ on the socio-cultural or authoritarian-libertarian political dimension, with the latter expressing more libertarian and cosmopolitan attitudes, while the former display more authoritarian and conservative leanings (Häusermann and Kriesi 2015;

Kriesi *et al.* 2008; Stubager 2010; Surridge 2016). Recent studies show that the educational cleavage also materialises in differences on economic issues, like welfare state preferences (Attewell 2022; Häusermann *et al.* 2022). Next to the level of education, also the *field of study* underlies differences in political attitudes: social science/liberal arts college students express more liberal or left-leaning attitudes, while those in economics, business and engineering express more authoritarian or right-leaning attitudes (Fischer *et al.* 2017; Stubager 2008; Van de Werfhorst and Kraaykamp 2001).

The importance of the educational experience as a context of political socialisation, and of its impact on future class position could explain why existing studies observe relatively large class differences in preferences by social class during employment, but only moderate attitudinal change as a consequence of intragenerational class mobility. Even studies focusing on attitudinal formation exclusively during educational trajectories also find support for self-selection mechanisms on top of socialisation during education (Hastie 2007; Sidanius *et al.* 2003; Stubager 2008). That is, some of the differences by level and field of education appear quite early in individuals' educational trajectories, which indicates that both education and attitudes are also driven by pre-existing factors. The few studies that have addressed the educational cleavage from a longitudinal perspective (on attitudes towards immigrants and the EU), do not find evidence of education shaping these attitudes but rather point to sorting into education, and the importance of earlier political socialisation (Kuhn *et al.* 2021; Kunst *et al.* 2020; Lancee and Sarrasin 2015).

Family socialisation and intergenerational transmission

So far, we have discussed literature that shows political alignment by social class and education, which are importantly interrelated, but have been most often studied separately. The studies that find a relative stability of attitudes at different educational or occupational trajectories tend to adjudicate this stability to earlier preference formation and crystallisation, but rarely address previous stages. Therefore, we add another important element that underlies political differences between social groups, and that acts early in life: the intergenerational transmission of social class as an important factor coupled with early political socialisation in the family context.

Parental social class of origin is an important driver of educational and occupational trajectories. Access to education is not equally distributed among citizens: social class of origin and parental resources are important factors in accessing education, leading to the intergenerational transmission of educational levels and social class (Bol *et al.* 2014; Forster and Van de Werfhorst 2019). In fact, the reproduction of inequality by the

intergenerational transmission of advantage happens for a large part through the level of education (Ballarino and Bernardi 2016). As such, parental education and resources play a key role in determining their offspring's chances over the life course, specifically their education and subsequent occupation.

Parents also transmit values and attitudes to their children. Parental political socialisation is considered a crucial part of citizens' political development (Jennings and Niemi 1974; Neundorf and Smets 2017), and early-life socialisation remains one of the key influences in the study of citizens' political attitudes over the life course (Jennings *et al.* 2009; Kuhn *et al.* 2021). Two different mechanisms are identified underlying the intergenerational transmission of political traits (Van Ditmars 2023). The first mechanism is direct and is based on social learning (Bandura 1977), through which children take over their parental political attitudes, behaviour, and values through role modelling and imitation, or even more overt intentional transmission (Jennings and Niemi 1968). The second, structural, mechanism is based on the combination of status inheritance and the alignment of class and political preferences (Dalton 1982; Glass *et al.* 1986). Socialisation in class of origin is also a relevant part of the political socialisation process, in which also class identity can be intergenerationally transmitted (Curtis 2016; Langsæther *et al.* 2022). Especially in milieus with a strong class identity and related political affiliations, such as the working class, socialisation in class of origin can remain of influence until later in life, even when individuals move to a different class location (Ares and Van Ditmars 2023).

Class divisions in political preferences over the life course

We expect that people's political attitudes are influenced by their life-course trajectories through occupational socialising experiences, but also, that sorting into different pathways – as a result of family socialisation, intergenerational transmission, and educational socialisation – stands at the starting point of such formative trajectories. Therefore, we take a life-course perspective to study selection and socialisation mechanisms as complimentary across different life stages. Having a long-term perspective over the life course allows us to study these different processes as they operate in individuals' employment trajectories and attitudinal change. We focus on three stages in respondents' lives for which we study the extent to which political differences in economic and cultural issues have materialised across social classes. These three stages address the processes of family, educational, and occupational socialisation, respectively. In the remainder of this section, we outline our expectations and how we intend to test them for each of the stages. In the analytic strategy we provide more specific details regarding the models that we estimate for these three sets of analyses.

First, a crucial question to understand the mechanisms that sustain the social class conflict, is to what extent differences between groups exist prior to entering their social class of destination (occupation). Therefore, we start by studying political differences early in life, prior to respondents entering employment, and while accounting for parental class of origin. If political attitudes are already (partially) consolidated during this life stage, and they guide later sorting into educational and occupational pathways, then we would expect political differences by future social class of destination to manifest even before individuals have entered employment. This early differentiation can be the result of family socialisation and intergenerational transmission of socio-economic status (SES) and preferences. To address this possibility, we study whether parental class of origin accounts for potential differences in attitudes by future class of destination.

Second, we study the transition from full-time education into employment, when individuals attain their first social class location.² Thereby, we study the impact of processes of educational and occupational socialisation on attitude formation and change. If social class exerts an influence on people's attitudes and preferences, we should observe that, as they transition from education into employment, their preferences shift to align with the positions that characterise the class of destination. For example, a person who leaves education and starts a job as a socio-cultural professional should experience a shift in preferences towards higher cultural liberalism. A person holding a working-class job as a first occupation should become more culturally authoritarian. This would indicate a process of socialisation in the class of destination. By contrast, if social class differences are merely a product of educational socialisation, there should be no change in attitudes when transitioning from education to the labour market. A limitation of studying first class location is that this position might be short-term. In fact, some people might even hold prospects of future social mobility. Considering first class location as potentially temporary is reasonable in a context in which atypical employment trajectories are increasingly common, with many employees (the young in particular) holding fixed-term contracts in jobs that might constitute a springboard for later class positions (Emmenegger *et al.* 2012). Hence, socialisation in one's first class constitutes a hard test of class socialisation

Third, we study the stage at which individuals enter the class location in which they stay longer over their life course, which we define as their 'main class of destination'. This avoids studying class positions that might be only temporary. In these analyses we study preferences for the duration of permanence in the main class of destination, providing a solid test of long-term socialisation in the occupation that individuals hold. We can therefore expect stronger acculturation effects of preferences aligning with the class of destination in comparison to the foregoing analysis, as

individuals spend the most time in this occupation and the corresponding social class location. Previous analyses of mobility have not introduced this distinction between first occupation and main class of destination, and this could be behind some of the moderate attitudinal effects identified around social mobility.

Research design

Data and variables

We test our expectations using two of the main panel datasets in Western Europe that allow to follow individuals' political attitudes over the life course, from the United Kingdom, the British Household Panel Study (BHPS) 1991–2009 (University of Essex *et al.* 2020), and from Switzerland, the Swiss Household Panel (SHP) 1999–2019 (SHP Group 2021).

The main dependent variables are socioeconomic and sociocultural attitudes, measured by issue positions on social expenses and state intervention in the economy, gender equality, and immigration (in Switzerland only). The question wording and response scales of the items are described in detail in the [Online Appendix, Section 1](#). In the SHP, we use three items that measure attitudes regarding social spending, equal opportunities for foreigners, and gender equality measures, respectively. In the BHPS, we take the average of multiple items to capture support for economic intervention and redistribution by the state (six items), and attitudes concerning gender roles (five items).³ In the SHP the outcome variables are binary where value 1 indicates opposition to social expenses, to equal chances for foreigners, and to further measures for the promotion of women.⁴ In the BHPS the outcome is continuous between 0 and 1 where higher values indicate opposition to state intervention, and more conservative positions on gender roles.

Our main independent variable is social class, which we study at different stages of respondents' employment trajectories (i.e., their first class-position after leaving education, the social class in which they remain longer), but also in relation to their family background (i.e., the parental class of origin). We measure social class using a simplified version of Oesch's eight-class scheme, which adequately depicts the occupational structure in post-industrial knowledge economies (Oesch 2006). We distinguish the following five (groups of) social classes in our analysis, presented in [Table 1](#): socio-cultural professionals (SCP), technical professionals (TCP), the old middle class (OMC), workers, and clerks. We opt for these groups because they represent the core classes identified in contemporary patterns of class voting (Ares and Van Ditmars 2023; Oesch and Rennwald 2018).⁵

Table 1. Simplified 8-class Oesch class scheme with representative professions.

	Interpersonal work logic	Technical work logic	Organizational work logic	Entrepreneurial work logic
Middle class	Socio-cultural (semi-) professionals (university) teachers, journalists, social workers, medical doctors	Technical (semi-) professionals engineers, architects, safety inspectors, computing professionals	(Associate) Managers public/business administrators, financial managers, tax officials	Large employers and self-employed professionals firm owners, lawyers, accountants
	SCP	TCP	OLD MIDDLE CLASS (OMC)	
Working class	Service workers children's nurses, cooks, shop assistants	Production workers carpenters, assemblers, machinists, gardeners	Office Clerks secretaries, call centre employees, stock clerks	Small business owners (≤ 9 empl.) shop-owners, hairdressers, farmers
	WORKERS		CLERKS	Not included

Source: Authors' adaptation from Oesch (2006).

Note: Shaded cells indicate authors' categories of (aggregated) classes used in the analyses.

Analytic strategy

We track how the class conflict in political attitudes crystallises throughout individuals' life trajectories by focusing on three specific stages that allow us to capture the respective influence of family, educational, and occupational socialisation. While the Youth Analysis provides a strong test of sorting and socialisation in class of origin by tracking early life differences along retroactively imputed future class location, Transition Analyses I and II track changes in individuals' attitudes while undergoing occupational transitions.

First, in the Youth Analysis, we compare attitudinal differences by future main class of destination at an early age (15–20 years old) and before individuals have entered employment as their main activity. At that age, most respondents are still in education, and future higher educated respondents have not yet finished their highest educational degree. Therefore, if we find any patterns in attitudes at this early life stage by the future social classes these individuals will occupy, these are most likely the results from early political socialisation in the family (class of origin) and intergenerational transmission processes. We retroactively assign main class of destination to all person-years. This main class of destination is defined as the mode class location of respondents throughout all the waves in the panel in which we observe them, i.e., the class they hold most frequently during the panel. We then apply random effects (RE) panel models estimated by generalised least squares (Bell and Jones 2015) to estimate differences by future main class of destination during this early-life stage. We opt for RE panel models because our key

independent variable (main class of destination) is time-invariant. The RE model weighs the within- and between-individuals variance and allows for variables to vary either only between individuals (e.g., future class of destination), or over time and within individuals (e.g., age), including a random effect by individual. We include control variables for age and gender. We use workers as the reference category in our independent variable and, hence, the coefficients indicate differences with respect to this class. Importantly, the models are estimated with and without a control variable for parental social class, allowing us to understand to what extent any early-life political differences by future social class can be attributed to socialisation effects in the class of origin.

The other two analyses that address the subsequent two life stages, are estimated using individual fixed effects (FE) models that explicitly model transitions. Fixed-effects models (Allison 2009) measure how change *within* individuals over time in the independent variables of interest affects their political attitudes. Their advantage is that they exclude all time-constant heterogeneity (also unobserved), and each observed person serves as their own control group (Halaby 2004). We explicitly specify the origin and destination state (following Lancee and Radl 2014) to adequately compare the means in political attitudes per respondent before and after experiencing a certain transition (e.g., before and after they have held their first occupation as workers). For these analyses, we specify a dummy variable for each transition of interest, separately for each class of destination. These dummies take the value 0 for all person-years prior to the specific transition, and take the value 1 for all person-years from the specific transition onwards.

We estimate this type of analysis for two different transitions, corresponding with two different life stages. The analyses compare the average attitudes of respondents observed in all available waves *prior* to the transition, to the average attitudes observed in all available waves *after* the transition (and while individuals remain in that class).

Transition analysis I estimates how the transition of entry into employment (and hence, first class location) results in a shift in political attitudes. As described previously, we may expect some moderate acculturation effects to the new occupational context. This is a hard test of occupational socialisation effects – because this job may be held only temporarily for some respondents – and a falsification of potential educational socialisation effects – because if political class divisions are merely a result of educational differences, there should be no effect when transitioning out of education and into the first job.

Finally, transition analysis II estimates the effect of the transition into the main class of destination, as indicated by respondent's class mode. If class differences consolidate in the class of destination, there should be an additional effect of transitioning to this class. Moreover, since it is the

class location in which we observe individuals for the longest duration during the panel, this is the main test of long-term occupational socialisation effects.

All analyses restrict the sample to country nationals and implement linear probability models (Angrist and Pischke 2008) for the SHP analyses and regular OLS for the BHPS analyses.

Results

In Figure 1, results from the Youth Analysis allow us to assess to what extent individuals already differ in their issue preferences by future social class at an early age, before they have entered the labour market. The coefficients in the graph present average differences in preferences with respect to individuals who will hold a working-class occupation in the future (the reference category). Large attitudinal differences by future class would be a sign of individuals sorting into occupations in line with pre-existing preferences, which could result from earlier formative experiences. Overall, across the two countries, we find some evidence in line with sorting into class of destination as well as with early socialisation in the parental class of origin. This evidence is stronger in the case of

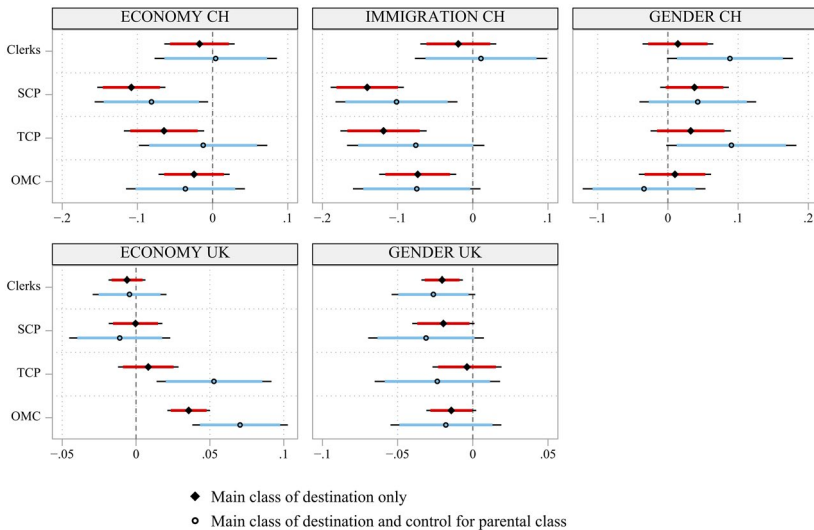


Figure 1. Youth Analysis (age 15–20 years): average marginal effects of future main class of destination on issue positions. *Note:* Average marginal effects of class location with respect to the reference category (working class). 95 and 90 percent confidence intervals. Full models are presented in Tables A.1 and A.2. in the Online Appendix. Regression models include controls for gender, age and wave-FE. Data: BHPS 1991–2009; SHP 1999–2019.

Switzerland, where we find consistent differences between classes along the issues of social expenditure and immigration, than for the UK where class differences are smaller.

We first discuss the results of the models without controlling for parental origin (diamond-shaped). In both the Swiss and UK data, patterns are in line with respondents' class of destination being partially determined by a process of selection. Some differences in economic, gender and immigration attitudes by future class of destination are already apparent before individuals have come to hold that class position. In Switzerland, young respondents who will be SCP are 10.7% more likely than future workers to support increases in social spending and 13.9% more likely to favour social opportunities for immigrants. The progressive profile of SCP is already apparent at a young age. A similar pattern is found for TCP who differ from workers in the same direction by 6.5 and 11.9%, respectively. Future OMC respondents also appear more liberal than workers on the question of immigration by 7.1%. These are substantive differences by main class of destination on both the economic and immigration issue. On the gender equality item, differences are not statistically significant at conventional levels.

Differences by future class of destination are smaller in the UK than they are in Switzerland. On the economic dimension, only future OMC respondents differ from future workers, by being less supportive of social expenditure and redistribution by 0.036 points (on the 0–1 scale). On gender equality, future office clerks are more gender-egalitarian than workers by 0.020 points. Future SCP and OMC respondents are also more liberal on this issue, but differences are only statistically significant at 0.10 level.

These differences in early adulthood by future main class of destination, indicate that pre-existing values and attitudes are likely guiding later occupational choices. We expect that some of these differences in attitudes are the consequence of family socialisation and intergenerational transmission, driving both attitudes early in life and later occupational trajectories. Therefore, the second set of coefficients (hollow circles) in [Figure 1](#) summarises average differences in preferences by future main class of destination, when controlling for parental class of origin. Once we introduce this control most of the previously found differences weaken, showing that indeed some of these early political differences by future class are driven by parental class of origin. In Switzerland, the difference between future SCP and workers on the economic and immigration topics is reduced by about 25 and 27%, respectively. With respect to TCP these differences are reduced by 20% on the economy and 36% on immigration. In the UK, differences by future class of destination were smaller to start with, and accounting for parental class of origin does not generally reduce these moderate differences. In fact, for future

TCP and OMC the difference in economic preferences with respect to workers actually becomes greater, with future professionals holding more conservative preferences.⁶

In Transition Analysis I, presented in [Figure 2](#), we address the transition from education into the first job, providing a hard test of occupational socialisation effects. Identifying these transitions within individuals allows us to estimate fixed-effects models, which control for all constant individual-level heterogeneity and allows us to account for some potential sorting mechanisms (e.g. associated to respondents' values or personality).

The coefficients in [Figure 2](#) summarise average attitudinal differences before and after individuals have made the transition from being in full-time education into first employment, for each of the classes. The estimation uses all available observations for each respondent prior to the transition and after the transition (while the respondent remains in the respective class). Once we control for constant individual-level heterogeneity, the changes in issue preferences in the transition from education to first class location are modest. The occupational socialisation effect in the first employment is only mild, according to these analyses. This could be because the first class of destination might only be temporary and a jumping board towards a more stable class position later in life. Previously,

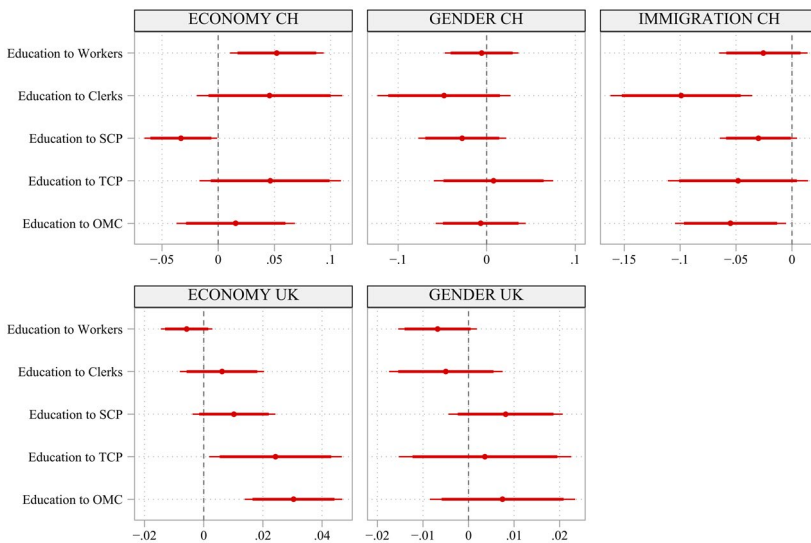


Figure 2. Transition Analysis I: change in issue positions in the transition from education to first class of destination. *Note:* Average differences in predicted preferences by transition. 95 and 90 percent confidence intervals. Full models are presented in [Tables A.5 and A.6 in the Online Appendix](#). Regression models include controls for gender, age, civil status, and wave-FE. Data: BHPS 1991–2009; SHP 1999–2019.

we also presented this analysis as a potential falsification of the educational socialisation mechanism. The modest changes associated with this transition indicate that any differences between the social classes at this stage could indeed be the result of earlier socialisation during education, or in the context of the family.

Even if differences are modest, attitudes do vary by first class position. In Switzerland, individuals who transition from being in education to becoming workers are about 5% more likely to oppose increasing social expenditure, while those who enter the SCP class become more supportive of social expenditure by 3.3%. On the cultural issues we find statistically significant shifts in attitudes associated to the transition from education to office clerks, which increases support for equal opportunities for Swiss nationals and migrants by almost 10%, as well as for the transition to SCP who are almost 3% more favourable to migrants after entering this class (significant at 0.10). In the UK we find differences before and after they have entered employment for TCP and the OMC. These two transitions increase opposition to state intervention in the economy and redistribution by 0.024 points for TCP and 0.030 points for the OMC. On the topic of gender roles, we do not see any systematic shifts in preferences.

In Transition Analysis II, we address transitions into the main social class of destination, i.e. the social class which individuals hold the longest during the panel. We estimate fixed-effects models which allow us to compare attitudes along two states: before and after individuals have entered their main class of destination (and while remaining in this class). The coefficients in [Figure 3](#) report how attitudes change, on average, after individuals have transitioned into their main class of destination, while controlling for all constant individual-level heterogeneity.

In Switzerland we observe statistically significant differences in preferences for three classes: clerks, TCP and the OMC. On economic issues, individuals who have these three classes as their destination are more likely to disagree with increasing social expenditure (by 4% for clerks, 3 for TCP and 1.5 for the OMC). On the topic of gender equality, respondents who become clerks are more likely to support measures to ensure the promotion of women (by 3.3%), in contrast, TCP are 2.5% less likely to support measures for gender equality after having reached this class. The latter goes against the expectation that the professional classes should be socialised into more culturally liberal preferences.

In the UK we find changes in preferences associated to three transitions into main class of destination. Respondents who spend most of their employment trajectories in the OMC are less supportive of state intervention and redistribution after they have entered this class (by 0.01 points), and also have slightly more egalitarian perceptions of gender roles (by

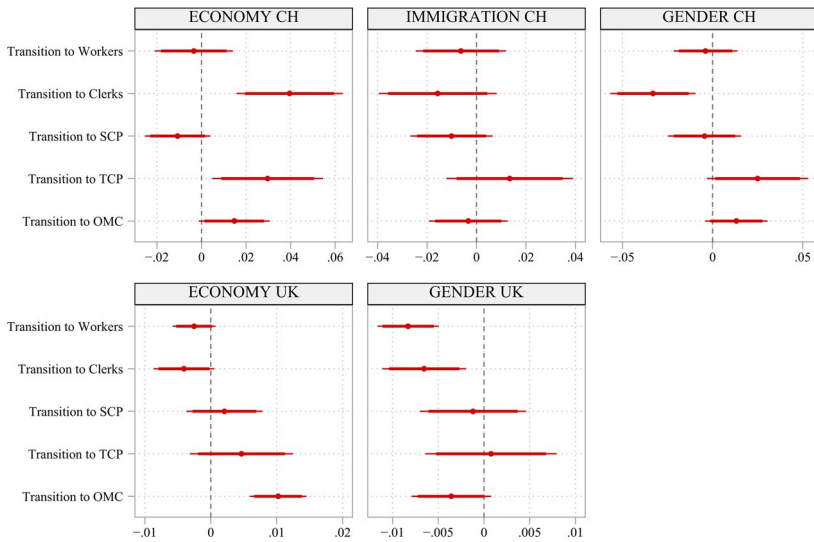


Figure 3. Transition Analysis II: change in issue positions in the transition to main class of destination. *Note:* Average differences in predicted preferences by transition. 95 and 90 percent confidence intervals. Full models are presented in [Table A.7 and A.8 in the Online Appendix](#). Regression models include controls for gender, age, civil status, and wave-FE. Data: BHP5 1991–2009; SHP 1999–2019.

0.004 points). Differences are also apparent for clerks, who are also less supportive of state intervention (by 0.004 points) and more egalitarian in their views of men and women (by 0.007 points) after they have reached their class of destination. Lastly, workers also become more gender egalitarian when they reach their class position (by 0.008 points), which runs against previous trends identifying this class as more authoritarian on cultural issues. Overall, these results indicate moderate differences when respondents have reached their classes of destination (and remain in that class) in comparison to the preceding time, and while accounting for constant individual-level heterogeneity.

Robustness tests

In order to test socialisation in main class of destination transition Analysis II ([Figure 3](#)) computes average differences in preferences within individuals before and after they have reached this class, while controlling for all time-constant heterogeneity. This comparison averages preferences over the whole period in which individuals remain in that class of destination, including observations recently after this transition and more temporally distant ones. However, socialisation in class of destination could require some time for class-based attitudes to consolidate through a process of acculturation ([Van Ditmars 2020](#)). Therefore, including observations

immediately after the transition could weaken our estimates of these socialisation effects, especially considering that not all individuals remain in the panel for long time periods or are observed later in their lives. In [Online Appendix Tables A.9 and A.10](#), we restrict the analyses to periods after the transition for which we expect attitudes to have crystallised, specifically, we exclude the observations in the three years following the transition, and we focus exclusively on observations for respondents who are 30 years or older. The results from these additional analyses are very comparable to those discussed above. Very few differences emerge once we restrict the comparison to periods in which class position is more consolidated. Some differences are marginally larger, for example, the economic preferences of clerks and TCP in Switzerland, or clerks in the UK. Confidence intervals are also larger in these alternative estimations due to the reduction in the number of observations considered. Including early observations in the class of destination is not substantively driving down the moderate socialisation effects found in Transition Analysis II.

In this same set of analyses, computing average differences in preferences while controlling for constant characteristics of individuals could be masking some heterogeneity in socialisation in class of destination depending on the class of origin. We address this concern by estimating in [Online Appendix Figure A.11](#) separate analyses for respondents for whom the transition into main class of destination entails experiencing intergenerational mobility (with respect to parental class of origin), and those who do not, and thus enter a class that is concordant with parental class. We could expect the strength of class socialisation effects to vary between these two groups. On the one hand, respondents who enter a class concordant with their family class of origin could experience stronger socialisation effects, because attitudinal updating tends to be weaker when people are exposed to discordant inputs (due, mostly, to processes of motivated reasoning (Kunda 1990)). On the other hand, intergenerationally immobile respondents could demonstrate some ceiling effects. If their class of destination is concordant with the class of early socialisation it is unlikely that their attitudes will experience a major shift after this transition, but rather further consolidate. The results of these additional analyses, however, do not align with either of these expectations, since the attitudinal shifts that we observe are very similar among the intergenerationally mobile and immobile, in line with previous research (Van Ditmars 2020).⁷ Moreover, uncertainty around the estimates for the immobile is greater since the number of intergenerationally immobile respondents is lower due to the general process of occupational upgrading taking place in the second half of the twentieth century.

Additionally, we study effect heterogeneity by respondents' gender to take into account that transitions into certain classes might entail different consequences for the gender equality preferences of men and women,

particularly when we consider the strongly gendered composition of certain classes (for example, in Switzerland, 80% of clerks are female). In [Online Appendix Tables A.12–A.15](#), we estimate separate models for men and women of Transition Analysis I and II for the outcome gender attitudes. While there are some differences in the shift in gender attitudes observed for men and women who transition into the same class, most of these differences are minor and do not represent substantive deviations from the main models presented earlier. Moreover, there are no systematic patterns indicating that the impact of these transitions depends on the gender composition of the class. While entering a heavily female class (like office clerks) is associated with more gender progressive attitudes among women (but not men) in Switzerland and the UK (in the analyses of main class of destination), we also see such a shift for women who enter a heavily male class (like TCP) immediately after education. Future research could conduct a thorough analysis of how class socialisation (and sorting) might operate differently among men and women.

Finally, given that the two panels do not perfectly overlap temporally, some of the differences we find between countries in the Youth Analysis could be a consequence of considering different cohorts (since the analyses are restricted by age at the time of the interview). While we do control for wave fixed-effects to account for potential period effects, and also control for age, in [Online Appendix Tables A.16 and A.17](#) we re-estimate the analyses on one specific cohort – respondents born between 1975 and 1995 – for which we have sufficient observations (at a young age) in the two panels. These results are very similar to those presented in the main text, with larger uncertainty around the estimates due to the reduction in the number of cases. The larger differences by class of destination observed in Switzerland are replicated in these analyses, hence indicating that these differences are rooted in the case considered rather than in different cohort composition due to the timing of the panels.

Conclusion

This study aims to answer the question of whether and when in people's life courses political differences based on social class arise, providing a better understanding of the origins of political class divisions. Because occupational socialisation and sorting have been typically presented as alternative mechanisms, the mild to moderate shifts in preferences associated to social mobility (Ares 2020; Kohn and Schooler 1982; Langsæther *et al.* 2022) are often attributed to differences already arising earlier in life, frequently in the context of higher education (Van de Werfhorst and Kraaykamp 2001) and socialisation in parental class of origin (Ares and Van Ditmars 2024). Yet, no studies addressed these different stages in

people's lives jointly. The comprehensive approach taken in this study has allowed us to identify evidence in line with sorting, with political differences varying by future class of destination even before individuals have entered employment. Part of this sorting is likely to start early in life, as it can be linked back to parental class of origin. Yet, this selection process does not fully rule out later changes. The analyses also indicate that throughout employment trajectories, political preferences consolidate in line with the class position held by respondents. Combining these different results, we argue that class differences in political preferences emerge as a process of reinforcement, where pre-existing attitudes and characteristics – that are the result of cumulative life experiences, including family and educational socialisation – partly determine class location, but also socialisation in current class location continues to shape attitudes throughout people's employment trajectories.

Our youth analyses have shown that attitudinal differences by young respondents' future main class of destination are quite marked even before people have entered employment, also on economic issues. Importantly, we find evidence that these early differences are partially accounted for by parental class of origin, which is in line with the mechanism of family socialisation and intergenerational transmission. Moreover, finding these differences so early in life is particularly interesting since we might have expected economic attitudes to be more closely linked to experiences in the labour market. The results for cultural attitudes are less strong, because we only find clear evidence of sorting for immigration attitudes in Switzerland. It is surprising to not find any clear signs of potential attitudinal sorting on the topic of gender equality, particularly for SCP, who are typically characterised by their marked liberal stances on cultural issues. This lack of differences could be specific to the question of gender equality, on which class differences tend to be weaker. Future research could provide a more complete picture by looking at additional cultural items.

The youth analyses also return smaller differences by class of destination in the UK than in Switzerland. This can appear surprising given that British society is usually depicted as being more class-based. Greater differences by class of destination in Switzerland could be the consequence of the early-tracking educational system, which typically reinforces inequalities and the intergenerational transmission of advantage. Seeing that these differences are reduced after controlling for parental class is in line with this explanation, although studying only two countries does not allow us to explore heterogeneity in these processes across different educational systems.

Our analyses of attitudinal changes associated with the transition into first and main social class reveal moderate occupational socialisation effects. These, however, are hard tests of socialisation since they control

for all constant individual-level heterogeneity, and Transition Analyses I consider only the first occupation after full-time education. Thus, the subtle shifts in preferences upon entering one's initial class location could be attributed to its potentially transient nature. This is why in Transition Analysis II we focused on transitions into the social class where respondents remain longest during their employment trajectory. Comparing attitudes before and after achieving their primary class of destination shows only modest attitudinal differences. While effects are consistent with a closer attitudinal alignment with the class of destination in the UK and Switzerland, they are rather modest in size.

What can explain these moderate attitudinal differences once individuals hold their main class of destination? By controlling for all constant individual-level heterogeneity (through the FE-estimation) we account for any (observed and unobserved) constant characteristics of individuals, like their values, personality, or social background. Cross-sectional analyses tend to identify greater class differences because they cannot completely account for this heterogeneity. Other research comparing between- and within-individual variation finds similarly large differences between models (Kuhn *et al.* 2021; Langsæther *et al.* 2022; Van Ditmars and Shorrocks 2024). While our results are in line with studies of intragenerational social mobility, which also find mild attitudinal change following mobility, we anticipated larger effects since we are not solely focusing on the episode of mobility but also considering permanence in that class, especially in the main class of destination. Experiences and interactions in the workplace are a prominent part of people's lives, and we would have expected this to play a greater role for opinion formation. Our study also provides an advantage with respect to previous analyses of intragenerational mobility, while these analyses can only estimate the effects of changing classes among those who experience mobility throughout their life, our analyses comprise all individuals as they transition from education into occupation and corresponding class location, even those who remain in the same class over their lifetime.

As stated earlier, combined with the evidence of sorting, mild attitudinal change during employment trajectories can indicate a process of reinforcement of political class divisions that starts early in life, but continues to be shaped over the life courses. The larger size of attitudinal differences by class of destination already at a young age – which is partly driven by parental class of origin – can explain why we find weaker effects of reaching main class of destination later in life. If attained social class is in line with pre-existing preferences, individuals will most likely not be exposed to substantively different experiences and opinions in the context of their jobs. Hence, instead of strong shifts in attitudes in line with one's class position, we find evidence of a reinforcement and consolidation of previously held preferences.

These results hold significant relevance not only for the study of class conflict but also for understanding various societal cleavages and political divisions. On the one hand, the role of parental class in driving later links between class and preferences would indicate substantive continuity of political conflict across generations. Strong effects of family origin could sustain the transmission of preferences and social class across generations, leading to an intergenerational replication of the conflicts salient in the parental generation. On the other hand, not all political differences by future class location are accounted for by parental class of origin, and attitudes still respond to changes later in life. Observing some sorting by preferences arising at a young age, net of class of origin, shows that socialisation experienced early in life, probably in the context of education, can sustain later trajectories. This means that specific events and contexts experienced at a young age can reinforce themselves later in life, which means that political differences across generations could be maintained over the life course, resulting in crystallised generational disparities. In essence, this research contributes valuable insights not only to the understanding of class dynamics but also to the broader study of how early-life attitudes can shape long-term political and social perspectives.

Notes

1. While previous studies have tended to present selection and socialization mechanisms as alternative explanations, their results indicate that the two probably act complementarily across different life stages, and that adjudicating between them might be a fruitless effort: what constitutes selection at one stage, might be the result of socialization in an earlier stage.
2. While individuals might have held jobs while they were in full-time education, we define first social class based on their occupational position after they have left education as their main activity.
3. Unfortunately, the BHPS does not include items that allow us to track attitudes towards migrants over time.
4. The original response categories (recoded to a binary outcome) are agree, neither agree or disagree, and disagree for the economic and immigration item.
5. We exclude small business owners as their composition shows considerable variation across countries.
6. Additional models in the [Online appendix, Tables A.3 and A.4](#), restrict the age range of analyses in Figure 1 to 15–18 years. The results are comparable in this alternative estimation, with some of the differences by class of destination becoming weaker due to the reduction in sample size.
7. Only on the economic issue in the UK and for clerks we observe that entering this class is associated to more conservative attitudes among the inter-generationally immobile, but not the mobile.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Tarik Abou-Chadi, Wouter van der Brug, Silja Häusermann, Anne-Marie Jeannet, Paul Marx, Sylvia Kritzing, Geoffrey Evans, and the editors and two anonymous reviewers of *West European Politics* for their helpful comments and suggestions on earlier versions of this article, as well as the participants of the Politics & Society Workshops 2022 at the University of Milan and at the University of Duisburg-Essen, the 2023 conference of the Swiss Political Science Association, the 2023 conference of the European Political Science Association, the ECPR Joint Sessions 2023 Workshop on Generations and Political Change, and the Political Science Seminar at Nuffield College.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

This research has received funding by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation [project PID2022-137516NA-I00 COMPROMISE].

Notes on contributors

Macarena Ares is Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Barcelona. Her research addresses the transformation of the social class cleavage in postindustrial economies, distributive conflict over welfare policies, and citizens' responses to institutional performance. Her work on these themes has appeared in the *British Journal of Political Science*, the *Journal of Politics*, and the *European Journal of Political Research*, among others. Personal homepage: www.macarenaares.com. [macarena.ares@ub.edu]

Mathilde M. van Ditmars is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Social and Political Sciences of the University of Milan and Associated Researcher at the Department of Political Science of the University of Zurich. Her research focuses on political sociology regarding questions of political socialisation, class voting, and gender and political behaviour. Her work has appeared in the *British Journal of Political Science*, *Comparative Political Studies*, and the *European Journal of Political Research*, among others. Personal homepage: www.mathildevanditmars.eu. [mathilde.vanditmars@unimi.it]

ORCID

Macarena Ares  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-8156-9498>

Mathilde M. van Ditmars  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-3615-9887>

Data availability statement

The datasets used in this study are available for the academic community through user agreements and accessed through the following hyperlinks. The BHPS is

published by the Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Essex, doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-6614-14. The SHP is based at the Swiss Centre of Expertise in the Social Sciences (FORS), and the project is financed by the Swiss National Science Foundation, doi.org/10.23662/FORS-DS-932-6.

References

- Allison, Paul (2009). *Fixed Effects Regression Models: Quantitative Applications in the Social Sciences*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Angrist, Joshua D., and Jörn-Steffen Pischke (2008). *Mostly Harmless Econometrics: An Empiricist's Companion*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Ares, Macarena (2020). 'Changing Classes, Changing Preferences: How Social Class Mobility Affects Economic Preferences', *West European Politics*, 43:6, 1211–37.
- Ares, Macarena (2022). 'Issue Politicization and Social Class: How the Electoral Supply Activates Class Divides in Political Preferences', *European Journal of Political Research*, 61:2, 503–23.
- Ares, Macarena, and Mathilde M. van Ditmars (2023). 'Intergenerational Social Mobility, Political Socialization and Support for the Left under Post-Industrial Realignment', *British Journal of Political Science*, 53:2, 536–54.
- Ares, Macarena, and Mathilde M. van Ditmars (2024). 'Who Continues to Vote for the Left? Social Class of Origin, Intergenerational Mobility, and Party Choice in Western Europe', in H. Kitschelt and S. Häusermann (eds.), *Beyond Social Democracy: The Transformation of the Left in Emerging Knowledge Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 120–40.
- Ashford, Sue, and Samir Nurmohamed (2012). 'From Past to Present and Into the Future: A Hitchhiker's Guide to the Socialization Literature', in Connie R. Wanberg (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Organizational Socialization*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Attewell, David (2022). 'Redistribution Attitudes and Vote Choice across The Educational Divide', *European Journal of Political Research*, 61:4, 1080–101.
- Ballarino, Gabriele, and Fabrizio Bernardi (2016). 'The Intergenerational Transmission of Inequality and Education in Fourteen Countries: A Comparison', in Fabrizio Bernardi and Gabrielle Ballarino (eds.), *Education, Occupation and Social Origin*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 255–82.
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social Learning Theory*. Prentice Hall: Englewood Cliffs.
- Bartolini, Stefano, and Peter Mair (1990). *Identity, Competition, and Electoral Availability: The Stabilization of European Electorates, 1885-1985*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bell, Andrew, and Kelyvn Jones (2015). 'Explaining Fixed Effects: Random Effects Modeling of Time-Series Cross-Sectional and Panel Data', *Political Science Research and Methods*, 3:1, 133–53.
- Bol, T., J. Witschge, H. G. Van de Werfhorst, and J. Dronkers (2014). 'Curricular Tracking and Central Examinations: Counterbalancing the Impact of Social Background on Student Achievement in 36 Countries', *Social Forces*, 92:4, 1545–72.
- Curtis, Josh (2016). 'Social Mobility and Class Identity: The Role of Economic Conditions in 33 Societies, 1999–2009', *European Sociological Review*, 32:1, 108–21.
- Dalton, Russell J. (1982). 'The Pathways of Parental Socialization', *American Politics Quarterly*, 10:2, 139–57.
- Emmenegger, Patrick, Silja Häusermann, Bruno Palier, and Martin Seeleib-Kaiser, eds. (2012). *The Age of Dualization: The Changing Face of Inequality in Deindustrializing Societies*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Evans, Geoffrey (1993). 'Class, Prospects and the Life-Cycle: Explaining the Association between Class Position and Political Preferences', *Acta Sociologica*, 36:3, 263–76.
- Evans, Geoffrey, and Peter Egge Langsæther (2021). 'The Realignment of Class Politics and Class Voting', *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, available at <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.1976> (accessed 16 October 2024).
- Fischer, Mira, Björn Kauder, Niklas Potrafke, and Heinrich W. Ursprung (2017). 'Support For Free-Market Policies and Reforms: Does The Field of Study Influence Students' Political Attitudes?', *European Journal of Political Economy*, 48, 180–97.
- Forster, Andrea G., and Herman G. van de Werfhorst (2019). 'Navigating Institutions: Parents' Knowledge of the Educational System and Students' Success in Education', *European Sociological Review*, 36:1, 48–64.
- Frese, Michael (1982). 'Occupational Socialization and Psychological Development: An Underemphasized Research Perspective in Industrial Psychology', *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 55:3, 209–24.
- Gingrich, Jane, and Silja Häusermann (2015). 'The Decline of the Working-Class Vote, the Reconfiguration of the Welfare Support Coalition and Consequences for the Welfare State', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 25:1, 50–75.
- Glass, Jennifer, Vern L. Bengtson, and Charlotte Chorn Dunham (1986). 'Attitude Similarity in Three-Generation Families: Socialization, Status Inheritance, or Reciprocal Influence?', *American Sociological Review*, 51:5, 685–98.
- Güveli, Ayse, Ariana Need, and Nan Dirk de Graaf (2007). 'Socio-Political, Cultural and Economic Preferences and Behaviour of the Social and Cultural Specialists and the Technocrats. Social Class or Education?', *Social Indicators Research*, 81:3, 597–631.
- Halaby, Charles N. (2004). 'Panel Models in Sociological Research: Theory into Practice', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 30:1, 507–44.
- Hastie, Brianne (2007). 'Higher Education and Sociopolitical Orientation: The Role of Social Influence in the Liberalisation of Students', *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, 22:3, 259–74.
- Häusermann, Silja, and Hanspeter Kriesi (2015). 'What Do Voters Want? Dimensions and Configurations in Individual-Level Preferences and Party Choice', in Pablo Beramendi, Silja Häusermann, Herbert Kitschelt, and Hanspeter Kriesi (eds.), *The Politics of Advanced Capitalism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 202–30.
- Häusermann, Silja, Michael Pinggera, Macarena Ares, and Matthias Enggist (2022). 'Class and Social Policy in the Knowledge Economy', *European Journal of Political Research*, 61:2, 462–84.
- Helgason, Agnar Freyr, and Philipp Rehm (2023). 'Long-Term Income Trajectories and The Evolution Of Political Attitudes', *European Journal of Political Research*, 62:1, 264–84.
- Jennings, M. Kent, and Richard G. Niemi (1968). 'The Transmission of Political Values from Parent to Child', *American Political Science Review*, 62:1, 169–84.
- Jennings, M. Kent, and Richard G. Niemi (1974). *The Political Character of Adolescence: The Influence of Family and Schools*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Jennings, M. Kent, Laura Stoker, and Jake Bowers (2009). 'Politics across Generations: Family Transmission Reexamined', *The Journal of Politics*, 71:3, 782–99.

- Kitschelt, Herbert, and Philipp Rehm (2014). 'Occupations as a Site of Political Preference Formation', *Comparative Political Studies*, 47:12, 1670–706.
- Kohn, Melvin L., and Carmi Schooler (1982). 'Job Conditions and Personality: A Longitudinal Assessment of Their Reciprocal Effects', *American Journal of Sociology*, 87:6, 1257–86.
- Kriesi, Hanspeter (1989). 'New Social Movements and The New Class In The Netherlands', *American Journal of Sociology*, 94:5, 1078–116.
- Kriesi, Hanspeter, Edgar Grande, Romain Lachat, Martin Dolezal, Simon Bornschier, and Timotheos Frey (2008). *West European Politics in the Age of Globalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kuhn, Theresa, Bram Lancee, and Oriane Sarrasin (2021). 'Growing Up as a European? Parental Socialization and the Educational Divide in Euroscepticism', *Political Psychology*, 42:6, 957–75.
- Kunda, Ziva (1990). 'The Case for Motivated Reasoning', *Psychological Bulletin*, 108:3, 480–98.
- Kunst, Sander, Theresa Kuhn, and Herman G. van de Werfhorst (2020). 'Does Education Decrease Euroscepticism? A Regression Discontinuity Design Using Compulsory Schooling Reforms in Four European Countries', *European Union Politics*, 21:1, 24–42.
- Lancee, Bram, and Jonas Radl (2014). 'Volunteering over the Life Course', *Social Forces*, 93:2, 833–862.
- Lancee, Bram, and Oriane Sarrasin (2015). 'Educated Preferences or Selection Effects? A Longitudinal Analysis of the Impact of Educational Attainment on Attitudes Towards Immigrants', *European Sociological Review*, 31:4, 490–501.
- Langsæther, Peter Egge, and Geoffrey Evans (2020). 'More Than Self-Interest: Why Different Classes Have Different Attitudes to Income Inequality', *The British Journal of Sociology*, 71:4, 594–607.
- Langsæther, Peter Egge, Geoffrey Evans, and Tom O'Grady (2022). 'Explaining the Relationship Between Class Position and Political Preferences: A Long-Term Panel Analysis of Intra-Generational Class Mobility', *British Journal of Political Science*, 52:2, 958–67.
- Lindh, Arvid, Anton B. Andersson, and Beate Volker (2021). 'The Missing Link: Network Influences on Class Divides in Political Attitudes', *European Sociological Review*, 37:5, 695–712.
- Lipset, Seymour M. (1960). *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics*. London: William Heinemann Ltd.
- Mortimer, Jeylan T., and Jon Lorence (1979). 'Work Experience and Occupational Value Socialization: A Longitudinal Study', *American Journal of Sociology*, 84:6, 1361–85.
- Mortimer, Jeylan T., and Roberta G. Simmons (1978). 'Adult Socialization', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 4:1, 421–54.
- Neundorf, Anja, and Kaat Smets (2017). *Political Socialization and the Making of Citizens*. Oxford: Oxford Handbooks Online.
- Oesch, Daniel (2006). *Redrawing the Class Map: Stratification and Institutions in Britain, Germany, Sweden and Switzerland*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Oesch, Daniel (2008). 'The Changing Shape of Class Voting. An Individual-Level Analysis of Party Support in Britain, Germany and Switzerland', *European Societies*, 10:3, 329–55.
- Oesch, Daniel, and Line Rennwald (2018). 'Electoral Competition In Europe's New Tripolar Political Space: Class Voting For The Left, Centre-Right And Radical Right', *European Journal of Political Research*, 57:4, 783–807.

- Oesch, Daniel, and J. Rodriguez Menes (2011). 'Upgrading or Polarization? Occupational Change in Britain, Germany, Spain and Switzerland, 1990–2008', *Socio-Economic Review*, 9:3, 503–31.
- O'Grady, Tom (2019). 'How do Economic Circumstances Determine Preferences? Evidence from Long-Run Panel Data', *British Journal of Political Science*, 49:4, 1381–406.
- Rözer, Jesper J., and Thijs Bol (2019). 'Labour Market Effects of General and Vocational Education over the Life-Cycle and across Time: Accounting for Age, Period, and Cohort Effects', *European Sociological Review*, 35:5, 701–17.
- SHP Group (2021). Living in Switzerland Waves 1-21 + Covid 19 Data [Dataset]. Lausanne: FORS - Centre de Compétences Suisse En Sciences Sociales. Financed by the Swiss National Science Foundation, Distributed by FORS.
- Sidanius, Jim, Colette van Laar, Shana Levin, and Stacey Sinclair (2003). 'Social Hierarchy Maintenance and Assortment into Social Roles: A Social Dominance Perspective', *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 6:4, 333–52.
- Stubager, Rune (2008). 'Education Effects on Authoritarian–Libertarian Values: A Question of Socialization', *The British Journal of Sociology*, 59:2, 327–50.
- Stubager, Rune (2010). 'The Development of the Education Cleavage: Denmark as a Critical Case', *West European Politics*, 33:3, 505–33.
- SurrIDGE, Paula (2016). 'Education and Liberalism: Pursuing the Link', *Oxford Review of Education*, 42:2, 146–64.
- University of Essex, Institute for Social and Economic Research, NatCen Social Research, and Kantar Public (2020). *Understanding Society: Waves 1-10, 2009-2019 and Harmonised BHPS: Waves 1-18, 1991-2009* [Data Collection]. 13th Edition. UK Data Service. SN: 6614.
- Van de Werfhorst, H. G., and Gerbert Kraaykamp (2001). 'Four Field-Related Educational Resources and Their Impact on Labor, Consumption, and Sociopolitical Orientation', *Sociology of Education*, 74:4, 296–317.
- Van Ditmars, Mathilde M. (2020). 'Opposing Forces? Intergenerational Social Mobility and the Transmission of Political Ideology', *Swiss Journal of Sociology*, 46:3, 369–95.
- Van Ditmars, Mathilde M. (2023). 'Political Socialization, Political Gender Gaps and the Intergenerational Transmission of Left-Right Ideology', *European Journal of Political Research*, 62:1, 3–24.
- Van Ditmars, Mathilde M., and Rosalind Shorrocks (2024). 'Social Change and Women's Left Vote: The Role of Employment, Education, and Marriage in the Gender Vote Gap', *Comparative Political Studies*, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00104140241271123>.