

**Workshop: The Behavioural Aspects of Fairness**  
**Brussels, Tue 10<sup>th</sup> December**

This workshop is part of a series of events aimed at fostering **dialogue between policymakers and academic researchers** on increasingly relevant topics related to fairness. These include: measuring absolute poverty in the European Union, understanding the relationship between families' socio-economic circumstances and their children's school achievements and, last but not the least, exploring how insights from behavioural sciences can help us understand perceptions of fairness.

**Income inequality** has dramatically increased over the past decades. The economic long-term consequences of inequality are largely debated (Easterly, 2007; Galor et al., 2009)<sup>1</sup>, and inequality was shown to be associated to many negative social outcomes. These include violence and crime (Morenoff et al., 2001)<sup>2</sup>, poor health, poor educational performance, larger rates of incarceration, low social mobility, low trust (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2007)<sup>3</sup>, sexual promiscuity, drug and substance abuse (Room, 2005)<sup>4</sup>.

Contrasting the negative effects of inequality is a priority for policy makers, but it is also a hard task as policy interventions aimed at it are often controversial. **Redistributive policies** are very difficult to implement, and preferences for redistribution vary a lot across countries and socio-demographic groups. There is a rapidly growing literature on the determinants of preferences for redistribution, with a large variety of arguments proposed to explain differences in attitudes towards the welfare state. This goes from purely pecuniary factors to purely cultural factors, through subjective social positioning, or expectations of social mobility.

In the **first session of the workshop** we will be tackling the question of "how inequality affects people's preferences for redistributive policies". Are citizens in more unequal or diverse society more or less willing to redistribute? In the **second session** we will revert the direction of the exchange and ask colleagues in policy DGs – working in various fields (e.g., taxation, education, employment) to share information about relevant forthcoming projects and present their expectations and needs in terms of future research on fairness and inequality. The **third session of the workshop** will be devoted to citizens' perception of inequality, as we believe that the way in which inequality is perceived, might have an impact on preferences for redistribution (beyond the real level of inequality). We will try to understand what inequality means to European citizens, and what factors influence people's perception of inequality.

The workshop is an opportunity for the JRC and our colleagues in policy DGs to get updated about the last research developments on fairness and inequality, enlarge and strengthen the network around fairness within the Commission, and exchange idea with researchers.

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<sup>1</sup> Easterly, W. (2007). Inequality does cause underdevelopment: Insights from a new instrument. *Journal of Development Economics*, 84(2), 755-776.

Galor, O., Moav, O., & Vollrath, D. (2009). Inequality in landownership, the emergence of human-capital promoting institutions, and the great divergence. *The Review of economic studies*, 76(1), 143-179.

<sup>2</sup> Morenoff, J. D., Sampson, R. J., & Raudenbush, S. W. (2001). Neighborhood inequality, collective efficacy, and the spatial dynamics of urban violence. *Criminology*, 39(3), 517-558.

<sup>3</sup> Wilkinson, R. G., & Pickett, K. E. (2007). The problems of relative deprivation: why some societies do better than others. *Social science & medicine*, 65(9), 1965-1978.

<sup>4</sup> Room, R. (2005). Stigma, social inequality and alcohol and drug use. *Drug and alcohol review*, 24(2), 143-155.

# Workshop: The Behavioural Aspects of Fairness

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University Foundation (Room A), Rue d'Egmont 11, 1000 Brussels

9.20 – 9.30 **Welcome address**  
Xavier Troussard, *Acting Director of the Competences Directorate, Joint Research Centre*

9.30 – 10.30 **Keynote speech**  
Prof. Alberto Alesina, *Harvard University*

10.30 – 10.50 **Coffee break**

10.50 – 12.15 **1<sup>st</sup> session: Fairness and preferences for redistribution**

- Prof. Christoph Kogler, *Tilburg University*

*Discussant: Dr. Antonios Proestakis*

- Prof. Ingrid Almas, *Stockholm University*

*Discussant: Dr. Ginevra Marandola*

12.15 – 13.00 **2<sup>nd</sup> session: DGs' views on potential policy relevant research related to fairness**  
In this session, colleagues from policy DGs will inform researchers about policy priorities that could benefit from further research on fairness. Possible invitees include DG DEVCO, DG ECFIN, DG EMPL, DG JUST, DG REGIO and DG TAXUD.

*Chair: Dr. Guglielmo Briscese*

13.00 – 14.30 **Lunch break**

14.30 – 16.00 **3<sup>rd</sup> Session: (Mis)-perceptions of inequality**

- Prof. Bob Duffy, *King's College, London*

*Discussant: Dr. Marianna Baggio*

- Dr. Oliver P. Hauser, *University of Exeter and UK BIT*

*Discussant: Dr. François Dessart*

16.00 – 16.10 **Closing remarks**  
Dr. Ginevra Marandola, *JRC Competence Centre on Behavioural Insights*