Title of paper: School tracking and the intergenerational transmission of education in Germany and Italy

The aim of the paper is to evaluate how school tracking at early ages impacts on the intergenerational transmission of education. The main question is if track assignment reinforces existing inequalities in achievement among students from different social backgrounds. Cross-national research stresses the fact that differences in educational systems have an impact on the strength of the influence of parental background on educational achievement. We compare Germany and Italy, two countries with tracking systems. Despite the general similarity of the educational systems there are some differences in crucial characteristics (e.g., age at transition into tracks, general orientation of tracks). Our general hypothesis is that we find effects of tracking in both countries but that these differ due to the specific set-up of the educational systems. The analyses cover educational choices and outcomes from the transition into secondary school up to the entry into post-secondary education. We analyse in detail the following stages of the educational life-course: achievements at the end of primary school, choice of track after primary school, track at the end of secondary school, achievements at the end of secondary school, entry into vocational training or university. We use marks, teachers’ evaluations and the frequency of grade repetition as outcome measures. We use data from the German Socio-Economic Panel Study (GSOEP) and the Survey of High School Graduates of the Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT). The sample consists of cohorts born in the late 1970s and the 1980s.