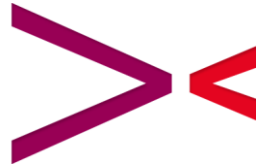




International
Inequalities Institute



Workshop call for abstracts:

“Communicating the wealth inequality challenge in hybrid media systems”

05-06 October 2023

International Inequalities Institute, London School of Economics and Political Science

Increasing wealth inequality is a core challenge for democracies, shaping the life trajectories of individual citizens as well as the cohesion of the political communities they inhabit (Savage, 2021). The growing concentration of wealth has been identified as a key factor contributing to the increasing polarization of society across the globe, giving rise to substantial societal and political problems. For instance, growing scholarly literature focuses on the super-rich as a global, transnational class with their own, distinct lifestyles and consumption habits and possibilities to avoid the tax code (Muzio, 2015; Pow, 2011). Others have documented that the high concentration of wealth and income is closely related to the ability to influence processes of democratic decision-making (Bartels, 2016; Rehm & Schnetzer, 2015). Recently, research has also pointed to the link between economic inequality and the climate crisis (Barros & Wilk, 2021; K. S. Nielsen et al., 2021).

Communication is critical to the possibility for politicising wealth inequality, not just by shaping individual-level information and attitudes, but also by enabling meso-level coordination by political organisations and structuring macro-level public sphere dynamics. There is a growing literature about the role of legacy news media in debates about wealth inequality (Grisold & Theine, 2017; Shifferes and Knowles 2022; Theine & Grisold, 2022; Waitkus & Wallaschek, 2022). Yet there is also an extensive literature on the ways in which media systems are undergoing profound transformations which disrupt the traditional centrality of legacy news, such as hybridisation, fragmentation, and the increasing role of platform intermediaries (Chadwick, 2017; Mancini, 2013; R. K. Nielsen & Ganter, 2022).

This workshop asks how contemporary media systems shape the politics of wealth inequality:

- How are contemporary transformations in media systems like hybridisation, fragmentation and digitalisation affected by and affecting the politics of wealth inequality?
- How are discourses of wealth inequality, wealthy people and their practises (lifestyles, tax evasion, etc) and associated reforms (e.g., wealth taxation) framed and communicated in different types of media?
- How do changes to media industries, such as patterns of ownership, influence communication around wealth inequality?
- What is the role of social movements and contentious politics in these changing media-inequality dynamics?
- What methodological innovations can expand our understanding of the mediated politics of wealth inequality?

Timeline:

- 27 May 2023: 300 word abstracts due
- 13 June 2023: selection notifications

Abstracts can be sent to M.K.Vaughan@lse.ac.uk and will be reviewed by the workshop organisers - Michael Vaughan (International Inequalities Institute, LSE), Hendrik Theine (Vienna University of Economics and Business), David Schieferdecker (Freie Universität Berlin) and Nora Waitkus (International Inequalities Institute, LSE and Tilburg University).

The workshop will be conducted primarily in-person with the option of hybrid participation. We welcome abstracts from researchers at any career stage including doctoral students.

This workshop is co-hosted by the “Wealth, Elites and Tax Justice” and “Politics of Inequality” programmes at the International Inequalities Institute, and co-sponsored by the Department of Media and Communications at LSE.