

SOCIAL EXPERIMENTATION IN ACTION

Brussels, May 18, 2011

The European Union's platform against poverty and social exclusion proposes encouraging innovation in social policy, in order to develop successful solutions for post-crisis Europe. To this end, the initiative will rely on social experimentation to test and empirically evaluate the programs financed within the framework of the platform. This conference will present general principles and practicalities of running this kind of evaluation, as well as discussing various challenges with the participants. This kind of experimental evaluations relies upon random assignment of a program or policy between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries to ensure rigorous estimations of program impact.

SPEAKER BIOS

Getting Parents Involved, in France



MARC GURGAND is an Associate Professor at the Paris School of Economics. His research focuses on labor market policies, schooling, and inequality in both developing and developed countries. He is currently conducting randomized evaluations of counseling schemes focused on the unemployed and welfare recipients. He also has a research program studying inequality in China. Marc Gurgand is a J-PAL Europe affiliate, and the Scientific Director of the J-PAL Europe office.



BÉNÉDICTE ROBERT, Ph.D, is head of the Research and Development department at the French Ministry of Education, and a research associate at Sciences Po. Before joining the Ministry, she worked as a school inspector in the Paris suburbs. A Fulbright scholar, she conducted a study of education policies in the United States and in France: the ZEP policy, and No Child Left Behind. She published her thesis in 2009 (*Les politiques d'éducation prioritaire: les défis de la réforme*) and is the author of several articles on education policies.

Information and Educational Decisions, in the United Kingdom



SANDRA McNALLY is a Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Economic Performance at the London School of Economics. She is Director of the Education Programme at CEP. Current research interests include economic evaluation of government policies, the effect of careers-related information on educational decisions, returns to education, the effects of 'ability tracking' within school systems, special educational needs, and education and mental health.



SARAH WESTCOTT received her Ph.D in biochemistry and worked for the MRC and Cancer Research UK for many years. She then retrained as a teacher in 2007, and is currently in her third year of teaching chemistry at Queen Elizabeth's boys' school in Barnet. She is also Head of Pupil Progression with responsibility for careers education and pastoral development. She is currently completing her MA in Leadership and Management at the school, with a focus on the impact of curriculum design on attainment.

Counseling and Monitoring of Unemployed Workers, in the Netherlands



GERARD VAN DEN BERG is the Alexander von Humboldt Professor of Econometrics and Empirical Economics at the University of Mannheim. In 2009 he won the Humboldt Professorship Prize for scientific excellence (€ 3.5 million), the first economist and social scientist to receive the award. He is a research fellow of IFAU (Uppsala) and a Program Director at IZA (Bonn), leading the field of Labor Market Policy Evaluation. His research focuses on econometrics, labor economics, and health economics, particularly the effects of conditions early in life on health later in life.



GER HOMBURG is the director of Regioplan Policy Research, an independent research organization in Amsterdam. His main fields of interest are justice and home affairs. At the time of the counseling and monitoring experiment, he was research manager at Regioplan, primarily in the fields of labor market issues, unemployment, reintegration and cost benefit analysis of social policies.

Experimental Evidence on the Nature of the Danish Employment Success



MICHAEL ROSHOLM received Ph.D in economics from the University of Aarhus, Denmark for his thesis '*Transitions in the Labor Market.*' Since 2006 he has been a professor at the Business and Social Sciences School at Aarhus University, and the Research Director of the Center for Research in Integration, Education, Qualifications and Marginalization. He is a chairman of the Danish Economic Council, and researches the effects of active labor market policies on individuals and firms, immigrants in the labor market, and health and employment.

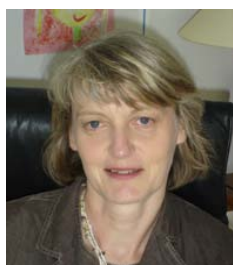


SIMON LAMECH is an economist and Head of Section at the Danish Labour Market Authority. He previously worked for Statistics Denmark, and his work focuses on randomized controlled trials and the effects of labor market policies on youth populations.

Counseling and Job Placement for Young Graduate Job Seekers, in France



BRUNO CRÉPON is a researcher at Centre de Recherche en Économie et Statistique (CREST) as well as an Associate Professor at ENSAE and École Polytechnique. His research centers on policy evaluation, with a particular focus on labor market policies. Bruno Crépon is a J-PAL Europe affiliate, and a member of J-PAL's Executive Committee.



BÉATRICE SÉDILLOT was trained as an economist at the École Normale Supérieure. She has occupied several positions at the INSEE (Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques) as well as at the French Ministry of Economy, and in 2007 she became the Assistant Director of the Department of Research and Statistics, in the French Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Health.