

07.2.2026

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**Title**

University access and after : explaining the social composition of degree programmes and the contrasting expectations of students / Helena Troiano ; Marina Elias

**Publication year**

2014

**Source/Footnote**

In: Higher education. - 67 (2014) 5, S. 637 - 654

**Inventory number**

36294

**Keywords**

Ausland : Spanien : einzelne Hochschulen ; Ausland : Spanien : Studenten, Studium, Lehre

**Abstract**

University expansion in higher education has been hierarchically differentiated. There is some concentration of certain social profiles in some degrees of study, so social composition between degrees can vary considerably. This article describes in terms of social composition 10 degrees of four public universities in the metropolitan area of Barcelona. We analyse 857 questionnaires filled in by mid-career students. From the perspective of agent's decision on the choice of studies, we explore what were the factors that made them choose a concrete degree. We examine several variables that can indicate whether their expectations have been met or not. The results show that the factors predicted by the theory by which working-class (WC) students choose degrees?instrumental motivations and conditions that minimize the risk?are often met. In this regard, the recent structural reform related with the implementation of the European Higher Education Area that removes short-cycles degrees (3 years) could lead to a problem of access for WC students. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Troiano, Helena, E-Mail: [helena.troiano@uab.cat](mailto:helena.troiano@uab.cat)