

Session 9 – Education

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53882 (Monday, 3.30 – 5.30 p.m.)

53883 (Monday, 5.40 – 7.40 p.m.)

21/01/2023 – 24/04/2023

Overview of the session

- 1) Presentation of a classical excerpt in sociology (20 min)
- 2) Discussion by the designated discussants (10-15 min)
- 3) Opening of the discussion to the whole class (15 min)
- 4) Short break (10 min)
- 4) Overview of the second mandatory excerpt (30min)
- 5) Short activity (20 min)



Allocation of presentations and discussions

Date	Session	Text excerpt
24/01	Sociological approaches	
31/01	The individual in social context	Douglas (Mary). Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo. 2003.
07/02	Norms and deviance	Becker (Howard). Outsiders. 1963.
14/02	Stratification and inequality	Marx (Karl) and Engels (Friedrich). The Communist Manifesto. 1848.
21/02	Identity and identification	Brubaker (Rogers). Trans. Gender and Race in an Age of Unsettled Identities. 2016.
07/03	Urban sociology	Venkatesh (Sudhir) and Levitt (Steven). History and disjuncture in the urban American street gang. 2000.

Allocation of presentations and discussions

Date	Session	Text excerpt
14/03	The family	Edin (Kathryn) and Kefalas (Maria). Promises I Can Keep: Why poor women put motherhood before marriage. 2005.
21/03	Religion	Snow (David) and Machalek (Richard). "The convert as a social type". 1976.
28/03	Education	Khan (Shamus). Privilege: The Making of an Adolescent Elite at St Paul's School. 2001.
04/04	Economic sociology	Esping-Andersen (Gøsta). 'Hybrid or Unique?: The Japanese welfare state between Europe and America'. 1997
11/04	Society and the state	Dubois (Vincent). The bureaucrat and the poor. Encounters in French Welfare Offices. 1999.
18/04	Movements and revolutions	McAdam (Douglas). The Biographical Consequences of Activism. 1989.

Presentation of a classical excerpt in sociology

Today's presentation is on:

Khan, S.R., 2001. Privilege: The Making of an Adolescent Elite at St Paul's School. Princeton, Princeton University Press, p. 77-101.



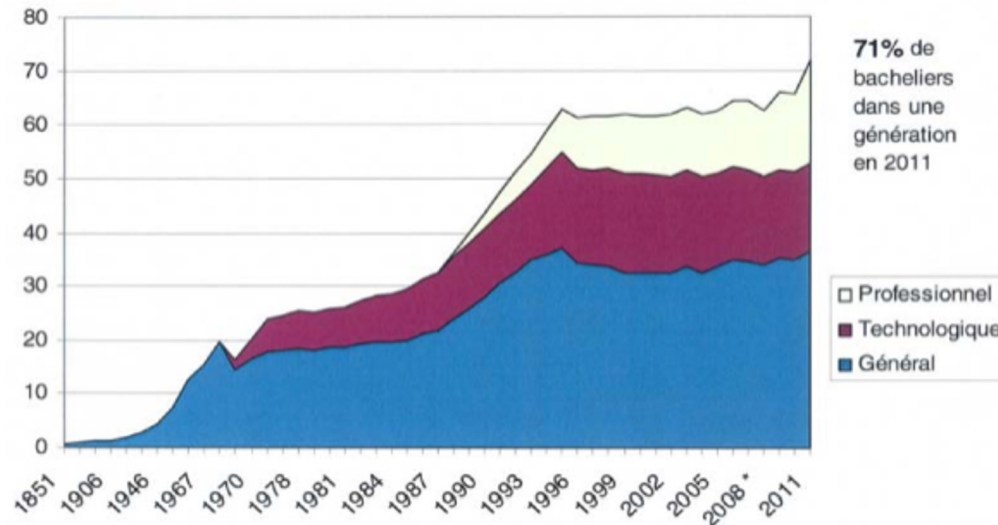




Introduction

The massification of schooling and secondary studies

Proportion of Baccalaureate graduates within a generation (1851–2011)



Source : French Ministry of National Education and Youth (2011)

What can you say from this graph?

The massification of schooling and secondary studies

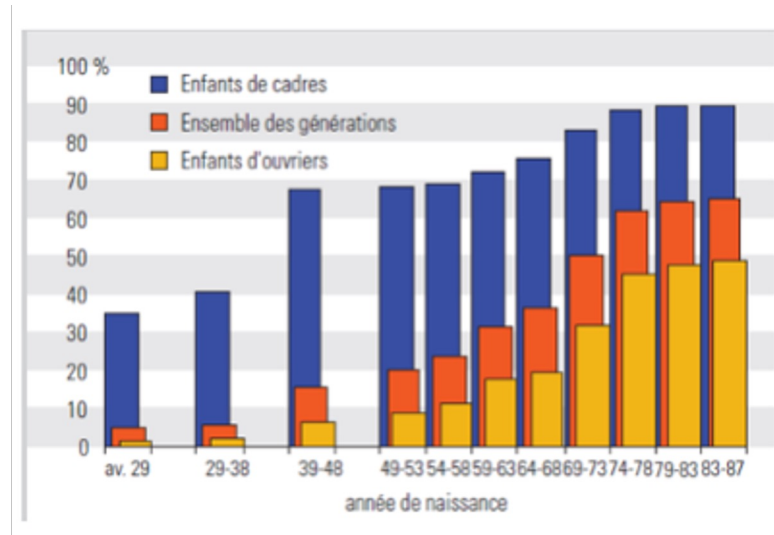
The massification of schooling and secondary studies to a quantitative increase in school access through successive reforms.

One potent example of this is that the access rate to the French Baccalaurate jumped from 38% of an age group in 1986 to 68% in 1994 (Chauvel, 2014).

Does massification necessarily imply democratisation?

Massification and democratisation

Proportion of Baccalaureate graduates within a generation depending on social class (2011)



Source : French Ministry of National Education and Youth (2011)

What can you say from this graph?

Massification and democratisation

The massification of access to the French Baccalaureate does not necessarily imply a democratisation of schooling nor access to secondary studies.

One typically distinguishes vertical and horizontal inequalities:

- **vertical inequalities** mean that access to the French Baccalaureate remains unequal across different social classes
- **horizontal inequalities** mean that access to the French Baccalaureate is differentiated depending on the social class – in particular, there is a differentiation between different types of Baccalaureates in France, and these are not equally accessed by different social classes

Different, but complimentary schools of thought

Different, but complimentary schools of thought

Handbooks in sociology typically distinguish two approaches:

- Bourdieu (Pierre) and Passeron (Jean-Claude), *The Inheritors* (1964)
- Bourdieu (Pierre) and Passeron (Jean-Claude), *Reproduction* (1970)
- Boudon (Raymond), *Education, Opportunity, and Social Inequality* (1973)

One important idea of Raymond Boudon is that lower classes perform a self-selection. As rational actor, agents will check the cost-benefit of each orientation decision. These calculations differ amongst social categories, and eventually lead to large differences in education and access to the job market.

Different, but complimentary schools of thought

The two approaches should however not be opposed.

One simplistic comparison of the two books would be to say that Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron advocate for the fact that school plays the main part in the reproduction of social inequalities, while Raymond Boudon says that it is rather individual choices that play the main part.

In reality all of these authors highlight the important roles played by the two, it is rather their methodological approaches which differ.

Elements of context

There is a historical construction of the school as an equalising and democratic institution in France. The myth of the meritocracy is still very much alive.

In short, it revolves around the idea that the educational system hierarchizes and orients students according to their objective achievements (especially through the system of the concours i.e., through competitive exam).

Elements of context

Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron deconstruct two analytical trends:

- first, inequalities in educational achievement exist and they cannot be considered as consequences of randomly spread « gifts »;
- secondly, previous research (from the 1950s) tends to explain them as the mere result of wealth inequalities, omitting the role culture plays.

Bourdieu (Pierre), Passeron (Jean-Claude). *The Inheritors*. 1964

The Inheritors (1974) aims at showing the existence of different subgroups in society in relation to culture. The school is analysed as an institution that reproduces inequalities, with the requirements and criteria of the educational system working to the detriment of the disadvantaged classes.

Most of the book consists in a collection of statistics and sociological surveys on students, highlighting trends with regards to education, culture, wealth and inequalities.

Bourdieu (Pierre), Passeron (Jean-Claude). The Inheritors. 1964

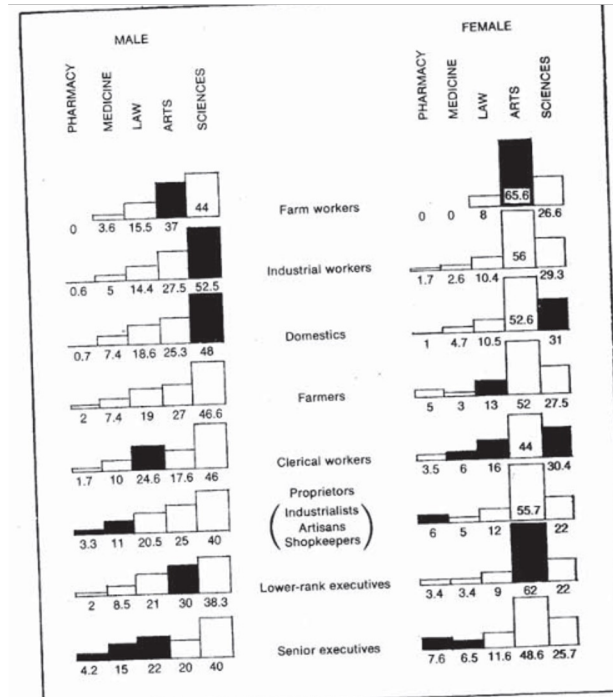
Following the first chapter, we'll see that:

- there are economical barriers to education;
- cultural capital matters as well;
- there are conversion processes of social and cultural capital.

Economical barriers to education

Parents' Occupational Category		Objective Chances (probability of access)
Farm workers	M	0.8
	F	0.6
	Both	0.7
Farmers*	M	4.0
	F	3.1
	Both	3.6
Domestic servants	M	2.7
	F	1.9
	Both	2.4
Industrial workers	M	1.6
	F	1.2
	Both	1.4
Clerical workers	M	10.9
	F	8.1
	Both	9.5
Industrial and commercial proprietors*	M	17.3
	F	15.4
	Both	16.4
Lower-rank executives	M	29.1
	F	29.9
	Both	29.6
Professions and senior executives	M	58.8
	F	57.9
	Both	58.5

Economical barriers to education



Economical barriers to education

“How can one speak, even by way of a simplification, of a common “student situation” to designate a world in which their families ensure the subsistence of only 14 percent of those students who are the children of peasants, industrial workers, office workers and lower management and of more than 57 percent of the children of senior executives or professionals, while 36 percent of the former, and only 11 percent of the latter, are forced to take jobs while studying?”

Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron (1964)

Economical barriers to education

“Depending on their area of study, between 10 and 20 percent of the sons and daughters of peasants and manual workers live at home, whereas the figure is 50 and sometimes 60 percent for students (especially girls) from the upper classes.”

Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron (1964)

Economical barriers to education

“The educational system objectively effects an elimination of which is steadily more thorough, the less privileged the social class.

But other, more hidden forms of educational inequality are less often noticed, such as the relegation of working-class or lower-middle-class students to certain disciplines, or the fact that they fall behind and mark time in their progress through school.”

Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron (1964)

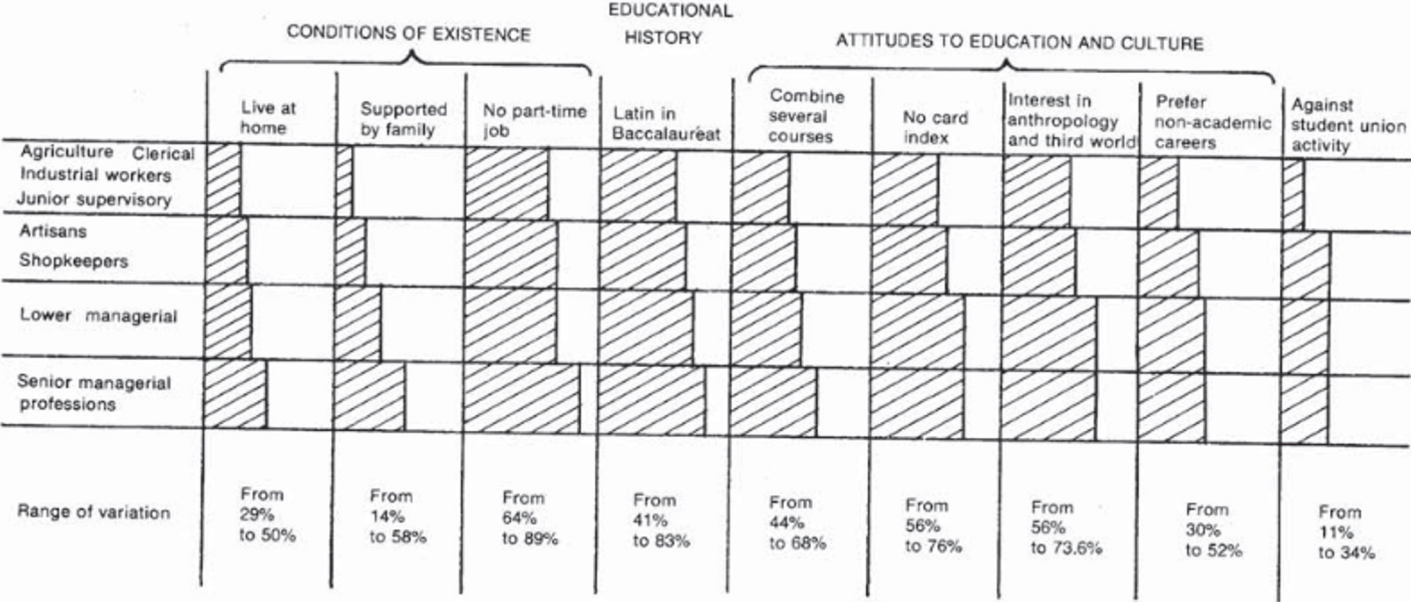
Economical barriers to education

“Economic obstacles are not sufficient to explain how ‘educational death rates’ can differ so widely between one social class and another.”

“[...] one still finds differences in attitude and ability that are significantly related to social origin [...].”

Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron (1964)

Cultural capital matters



Cultural capital matters

“For students from the lower classes who have survived elimination, the initial disadvantages have evolved: their social past has been transformed into an educational handicap through relay mechanisms such as early, often ill-informed decisions, forced choices, or lost time.”

Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron (1964)

Cultural capital matters

Attitudes with regard to education differ across social classes.

“If dilettantism in the pursuit of their studies is more especially a feature of students of bourgeois origin, this is because, being more assured of preserving a place for themselves, albeit a fictitious one, at least in a “refuge” discipline, they are able, without any real risk, to manifest a detachment which precisely presupposes a greater security.”

Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron (1964)

Cultural capital matters

The different attitudes provide different academical advantages.

“[...] this greater self-assurance wins them a considerable advantage in many situations—orals, for example.”

“Not only do the most privileged students derive from their background of origin habits, skills, and attitudes which serve them directly in their scholastic tasks.”

Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron (1964)

Cultural capital matters

School is a direct actor in the deepening of the cultural gap.

“[...] it has to be concluded that cultural inequalities are never more pronounced than in the area in which, in the absence of organized instruction, cultural behaviours obey social determinisms more than the logic of individual tastes and enthusiasms.”

Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron (1964)

Cultural capital matters

A *too scholar* type of education is also devalued.

“The school system itself exalts a “general culture” diametrically opposed to what it denounces as the “scholastic” approach to culture in those whose social origins condemn them to have no other culture than the one they have acquired at school.”

Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron (1964)

Cultural capital matters

School judges depending on socialisation.

“It cannot be ruled out that the teacher who contrasts the ‘brilliant’ or ‘gifted’ pupil with the ‘earnest’ or ‘hard working’ pupil is, in a good many cases, judging nothing other than the relation to culture to which each is socially assigned by birth.”

Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron (1964)

How is the transmission of capital done?

“It is perhaps in the most cultivated backgrounds that there is least need to preach devotion to culture or deliberately to undertake initiation into cultural practices. In contrast to the petit-bourgeois milieu where most parents [...] can only transmit cultural good intentions, the cultivated classes contrive diffuse incitements.”

Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron (1964)

How is the transmission of capital done?

“A whole treasury of first-degree experiences - books found in the family library, ‘choices’ entertainments chosen by others, holidays organized as cultural pilgrimage, allusive conversations which only enlighten those already enlightened.”

Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron (1964)

How is the transmission of capital done?

“There is a need for more detailed study of the causes or reasons which govern these exceptional destinies, but everything suggests that they would be found in some special feature of family background.”

“The presence in the family circle of a relative who is or has been in higher education is evidence that these families are in an unusual cultural situation, if only in that they offer a greater subjective expectation of university entrance.”

Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron (1964)

How is the transmission of capital done?

“In short, the potency of the social factors of inequality is such that even if the equalization of economic resources could be achieved, the university system would not cease to consecrate inequalities by transforming social privilege into individual gifts or merits.”

Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron (1964)

Short activity – Social backgrounds of Sciences Po students

We will comment tables and graphs from a recent article.

Oberti (Marco) et Pavie (Alice), Les paradoxes d'un programme d'ouverture sociale : les Conventions Éducation prioritaire à Sciences Po (2020)

Short activity – Social backgrounds of Sciences Po students

Tableau 1. – Profil social des élèves admis à Sciences Po (1^{re} année, 2014–2018)
(en %)

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Procédure par examen					
Classes supérieures	84,7	85	85,4	84,4	83,8
<i>dont classes moyennes supérieures</i>	<i>(21,2)</i>	<i>(21,3)</i>	<i>(24,4)</i>	<i>(24)</i>	<i>(18,9)</i>
Classes moyennes	8,4	9	8,7	7,4	9,6
Classes populaires	4,8	3,8	4,1	4,6	3,4
Artisans, commerçants, agriculteurs	2,2	2,2	1,7	3,6	3,2
Procédure internationale					
Classes supérieures	72,3	78,6	72,7	76,8	74,4
<i>dont classes moyennes supérieures</i>	<i>(19)</i>	<i>(17)</i>	<i>(19)</i>	<i>(21)</i>	<i>(15,3)</i>
Classes moyennes	16	14	17,5	13,8	15,1
Classes populaires	8,8	5,7	7,1	6,4	7,8
Artisans, commerçants, agriculteurs	2,9	1,7	2,7	3	2,7
CEP					
Classes supérieures	46,4	41,3	39,9	41,8	36,6
<i>dont classes moyennes supérieures</i>	<i>(14,4)</i>	<i>(13,7)</i>	<i>(15,9)</i>	<i>(17,1)</i>	<i>(16,8)</i>
Classes moyennes	17,2	27,5	23,3	22,2	25,2
Classes populaires	33,1	27	30,1	26,6	31,3
Artisans, commerçants, agriculteurs	3,3	5	6,7	9,5	6,9

Sources : Service de la scolarité de Sciences Po.

Short activity – Social backgrounds of Sciences Po students

Table 1. - Social profile of students admitted to Sciences Po (1st year, 2014-2018)

(in %)

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Procedure by examination					
Upper classes	84,7	85	85,4	84,4	83,8
of which upper middle classes	(21,2)	(21,3)	(24,4)	(24)	(18,9)
Middle classes	8,4	9	8,7	7,4	9,6
Popular classes	4,8	3,8	4,1	4,6	3,4
Craftsmen, merchants, farmers	2,2	2,2	1,7	3,6	3,2
International procedure					
Upper classes	72,3	78,6	72,7	76,8	74,4
of which upper middle classes	(19)	(17)	(19)	(21)	(15,3)
Middle classes	16	14	17,5	13,8	15,1
Popular classes	8,8	5,7	7,1	6,4	7,8
Craftsmen, merchants, farmers	2,9	1,7	2,7	3	2,7
POCKET					
Upper classes	46,4	41,3	39,9	41,8	36,6
of which upper middle classes	(14,4)	(13,7)	(15,9)	(17,1)	(16,8)
Middle classes	17,2	27,5	23,3	22,2	25,2
Popular classes	33,1	27	30,1	26,6	31,3
Craftsmen, merchants, farmers	3,3	5	6,7	9,5	6,9

Sources Sciences Po Education Department.

Short activity – Social backgrounds of Sciences Po students

Tableau 3. – Phrases les plus caractéristiques pour la modalité « classes populaires »

N°	Appréciations
1	Beaucoup de silences , conséquence d'une incapacité à échanger avec les organisateurs. Les connaissances sont très fragiles et n'ont pas permis de construire une réflexion de manière rigoureuse et autonome.
2	Candidat vif et astucieux qui sait utiliser au mieux des connaissances parfois incomplètes.
3	Bien qu'à l'aise, l'étudiant a des connaissances faibles , et notamment sur les sujets qu'il aborde, et ses réponses sont assez superficielles et manquent de construction.
4	Une conversation agréable mais une expression mal aisée et une réflexion superficielle assise sur des connaissances elles aussi trop superficielles. Des idées un peu naïves.
5	L'entretien n'a pas permis de mettre en valeur les connaissances d'ordre général et l'analyse requise pour l'entrée en première année du collège. Malgré une discussion nourrie, la candidate n'a pas su répondre avec justesse aux questions de la commission. Les motivations devraient être plus argumentées.

Short activity – Social backgrounds of Sciences Po students

Table 3. - Most characteristic sentences for the
modality "< popular classes"

N°	Appreciations
1	Many silences, consequence of an incapacity to exchange with the organizers. The knowledge is very fragile and did not allow to build a reflection in a rigorous and autonomous way.
2	Lively and clever candidate who knows how to make the best use of sometimes incomplete knowledge.
3	Although at ease, the student has little knowledge, particularly on the subjects he is dealing with, and his answers are quite superficial and lack construction.
4	A pleasant conversation but an awkward expression and a superficial reflection based on knowledge that is also too superficial. Naive ideas.
5	The interview did not highlight the general knowledge and analysis required for entry into the first year of college. Despite a lively discussion, the candidate was unable to answer the committee's questions accurately. The motivations should be more argued.

Short activity – Social backgrounds of Sciences Po students

Tableau 6. – Phrases les plus caractéristiques pour la modalité « classes supérieures »

N°	Appréciation
1	Constituera une recrue solide , avec un projet cohérent et une réelle détermination .
2	Excellent profil ! candidate volontaire, réfléchie, (très) engagée, structurée .
3	Un excellent candidat, motivé, dynamique, ouvert et curieux . Son projet est cohérent et convaincant .
4	Candidat engagé faisant montre d'une très grande curiosité intellectuelle et d'une vraie capacité à raisonner . Très bon profil !
5	Un candidat solide et volontaire , au très bon dossier . Son projet est cohérent et convaincant . Des qualités intellectuelles indéniables .

Short activity – Social backgrounds of Sciences Po students

Table 6. - Most characteristic sentences for
the “upper class” modality

N°	Appreciation
1	Will constitute a solid recruit, with a coherent project and a real determination.
2	Great profile! Voluntary, thoughtful, (very) committed, structured candidate.
3	An excellent candidate, motivated, dynamic, open and curious. His project is coherent and convincing.
4	Committed candidate showing great intellectual curiosity and a real ability to reason. Very good profile!
5	A solid and determined candidate, with a very good record. His project is coherent and convincing. Undeniable intellectual qualities.

Short activity – Social backgrounds of Sciences Po students

Tableau 7. – Profil social et scolaire des élèves selon la localisation du lycée d'origine
(admissibles et admis CEP, 2014-2018)
(en %)

	IDF		Autres régions		DOM-TOM		Ensemble	
	Admissibles	Admis	Admissibles	Admis	Admissibles	Admis	Admissibles	Admis
Origine sociale								
Classes sup.	25	26	24	25	16	14	23	24
Classes moy. sup.	11	13	20	20	21	23	16	17
Classes moyennes	20	20	20	26	21	24	20	23
Classes populaires	38	35	29	25	34	27	34	30
Art., com., agr.	7	6	6	5	8	12	7	6
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>
Notes								
[0; 12]	25	6	10	2	12	0	18	4
]12; 14]	31	25	25	11	24	9	28	18
]14; 16]	30	39	35	39	32	31	32	38
]16; 20]	15	30	30	47	33	59	23	40
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>

Lecture : Admissibles : *Origine sociale* : Khi2 = 0,000 / V de Kramer = 0,108 ; *Notes* : Khi2 = 0,000 / V de Kramer = 0,177.
Admis : *Origine sociale* : Khi2 = 0,001 / V de Kramer = 0,130 ; *Notes* : Khi2 = 0,007 / V de Kramer = 0,106.
Sources : Service de la scolarité de Sciences Po, 2014-2018.

Short activity – Social backgrounds of Sciences Po students

Table 7. – Social and academic profile of students according to the location of the high school of origin (eligible and admitted CEP, 2014-2018)
(in %)

	IDF		Other regions		DOM-TOM		Ensemble	
	Eligible	accepted	Eligible	accepted	Eligible	accepted	Eligible	accepted
Social origin								
Classes sup.	25	26	24	25	16	14	23	24
Classes moy. sup.	11	13	20	20	21	23	16	17
Middle classes	20	20	20	26	21	24	20	23
Popular classes	38	35	29	25	34	27	34	30
Art., com., agr.	7	6	6	5	8	12	7	6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Notes								
[0; 12]	25	6	10	2	12	0	18	4
]12; 14]	31	25	25	11	24	9	28	18
]14; 16]	30	39	35	39	32	31	32	38
]16; 20]	15	30	30	47	33	59	23	40
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

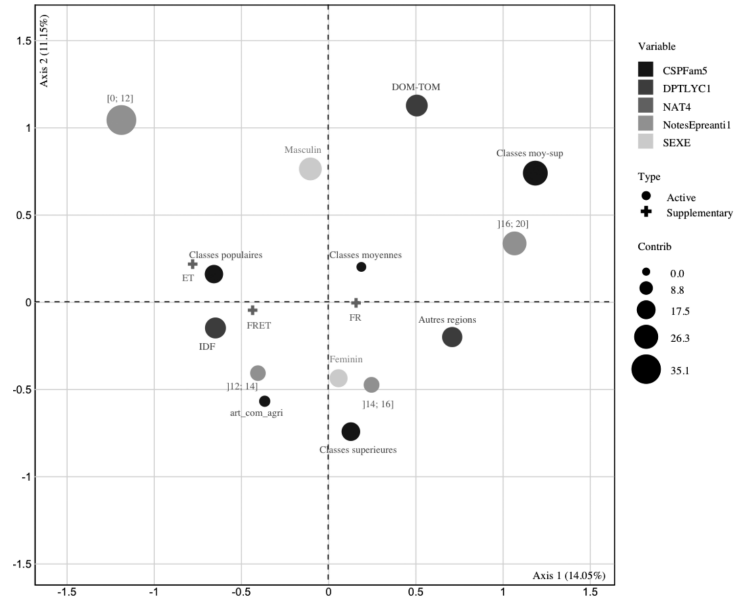
Reading: Admissible: Social origin: Chi2 = 0.000 / Kramer's V = 0.108; Notes: Chi2 = 0.000 / V of Kramer = 0.177.

Admis Origine sociale: Chi2 = 0.001 / V de Kramer = 0.130; Notes: Chi2 = 0.007 / V de Kramer = 0.106.

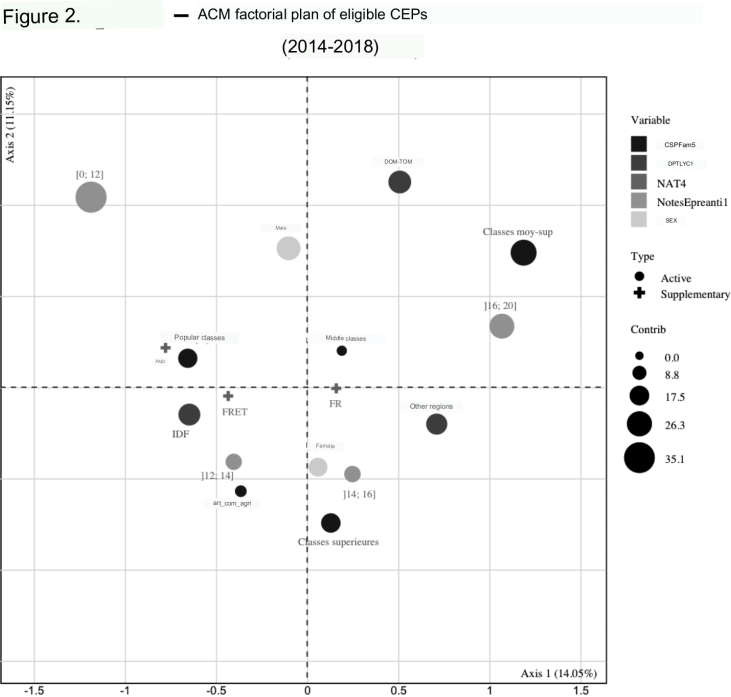
Sources Sciences Po Education Department, 2014-2018.

Short activity – Social backgrounds of Sciences Po students

Graphique 2. – Plan factoriel ACM des admissibles CEP (2014-2018)



Short activity – Social backgrounds of Sciences Po students



For next time...

- Read Granovetter, M., 1995. Chapters 1 and 2. Getting a Job: A Study of Contacts and Careers. University of Chicago Press.
- Read Esping-Andersen, G. 1997. 'Hybrid or Unique?: The Japanese welfare state between Europe and America', Journal of European Social Policy, 7(3), pp.179-89.
- When reading, remember to note the important elements of the text: question asked by the author(s), (hypo)theses of the author(s), methods used, references, writing style, argumentative construction, etc.
- Prepare the presentation and discussion (if concerned)