

reallocated with relative ease, whereas real estate often anchors wealth in place, both economically and socially.

BEHAVIOR AND THE AMPLIFICATION OF INEQUALITY

What heirs do with inherited wealth is another critical dimension. Some will consume it, using it to improve their standard of living or reduce financial stress.

Others will invest it, potentially amplifying returns over time. These behavioral differences tend to correlate with prior wealth, education and financial literacy.

As a result, inheritance may amplify existing inequalities. Family structure further complicates the picture.

In larger families, inheritances are typically divided among several siblings, which can dilute their individual impact. Since larger families are, on average, more common among lower-income groups, this dynamic can reinforce inequality across socio-economic strata.

THE ROLE OF PUBLIC SYSTEMS

Finally, there is the broader context. Public systems (pensions, healthcare, long-term care) are already under strain due to ageing populations. Private wealth transfers may partially offset these pressures for some individuals, but not for all. If access to inherited resources becomes a key determinant of wellbeing in old age, we risk deepening divides between those who can rely on family wealth and those who depend entirely on public provision.

The City That Divides

Urban centers concentrate opportunities, but they do not distribute them evenly. Major disparities exist in income, access to services, healthcare and culture, and perceptions of inclusion. Regeneration significantly improves the urban space, but is also likely to expel the most vulnerable residents, adding to inequality

by **Alessandra Casarico**



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Wealth Cities are often portrayed as places of opportunity. However, access to these opportunities is anything but uniform. It's this consideration that gave rise to GECO (Gentrification and inequality in the City of Opportunities), a research project supported by the Cariplo Foundation that I coordinate (and in which Marco Percoco is also involved), which studies how urban regeneration processes are transforming Milan and its inequalities.

IT'S NOT JUST INCOME

Within the same city, profoundly different living conditions coexist. Neighborhoods with very high average incomes coexist with areas where resources are significantly more limited. But

WITHIN THE SAME CITY, DIFFERENT LIVING CONDITIONS COEXIST. NEIGHBORHOODS WITH HIGH AVERAGE INCOMES COEXIST WITH AREAS WHERE RESOURCES ARE SIGNIFICANTLY SMALLER

income alone is not enough to describe these differences. To truly understand urban inequalities, it is also necessary to consider access to services — from healthcare to education, from job opportunities to cultural spaces — as well as their distribution across the territory. The GECO project adopts precisely this multidimensional perspective. On the one hand, it analyzes “objective” inequalities related to income, housing prices and access to services. On the other, we study an often overlooked but crucial dimension: citizens’ perceptions of opportunities and the degree of social inclusion. We know that people’s perceptions of economic and social reality influence their choices, behaviors and even support for public policies.

THE ROLE OF GENTRIFICATION

A central element of our research

is the role of gentrification. Urban regeneration processes can improve infrastructure and services, but they often lead to an increase in housing prices and the displacement of the most vulnerable population strata towards less expensive neighborhoods. This phenomenon redefines the social composition of urban territories and can generate new forms of inequality, both in access to opportunities and in the experience of inclusion. To analyze these processes, GECO integrates various data sources. We use administrative and territorial data to map services, mobility and socioeconomic characteristics at the neighborhood level. We complement these with the Milan Social Survey, an original survey that collects information on citizens’ perceptions, including aspects such as sense of belonging, social

relationships and trust. This combination allows us to observe how material conditions and subjective experiences influence each other.

GECO’S OBJECTIVES

The project’s objective is twofold. On the one hand, we want to contribute to the scientific debate by providing new evidence on the link between urban renewal and multidimensional inequality. On the other, we want to provide actual tools to public policymakers. We intend to develop indicators and monitoring tools enabling them to evaluate the effects of urban transformations and design more equitable and effective public policies.

Cities are changing rapidly. Understanding the nature and dynamics of urban inequality is a necessary condition for managing such processes and designing truly inclusive cities.

When School Divides

Italian schools are facing an increase in dropout rates and growing malaise of students. The falling out of the educational system reflects entrenched social and regional divides, adversely affecting the psychological wellbeing, cultural attainment and employment opportunities of students

by Maria Cucciniello

One of the most pressing problems facing the Italian education system is the high dropout rate of students. This is not just an educational issue, but something that reflects and amplifies deep-seated social, economic and cultural inequalities. In Italy, early school leaving remains higher than the EU average, with significant regional and social differences.

THE PROJECT

With the project named RISE-

WELL (Robustness In Schools for Student Wellbeing), which I coordinate and is funded by Cariplo Foundation, we start from the hypothesis that to understand

and combat early withdrawal from education, it is necessary to focus on students’ wellbeing and the role of schools as organizations capable of actively

IN RECENT YEARS, SOCIOECONOMIC AND CULTURAL INEQUALITIES HAVE DEEPENED, CONTRIBUTING TO AN INCREASE IN BOTH EXPLICIT AND IMPLICIT DROPOUT RATE