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Who is more equal?

Access to European Tertiary Education During Last Fifty Years

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Conference Education, Equity & Social Justice
Prague, 16th to 18th June 2008

Education Policy Centre

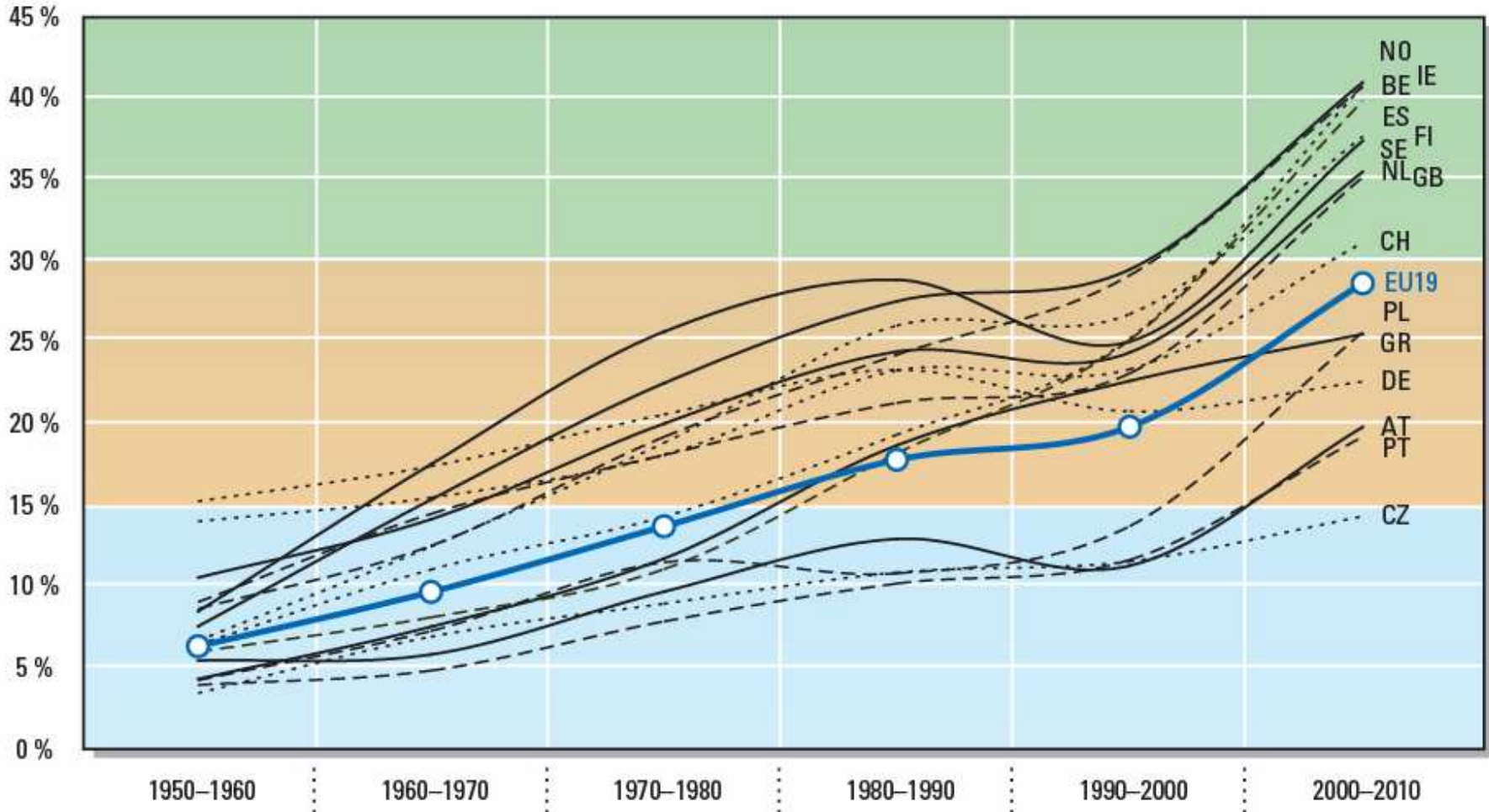
- The EPC focuses on the role of education and the relation between education systems and the economy and society, covering diverse themes such as social cohesion, equity, employability and the position of graduates on the labour market, or the change in skill needs.
- The EPC approach is based on analysing and interpreting information and data in an international comparison.
- The main aim of the EPC is to contribute to the development of the education system, stressing the links between its various sectors and areas.

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Expansion of tertiary education in European countries

Proportion of graduates in a population of 25–34 years of age



Who is more equal?

- To answering questions about equity, about the change in the level and the character of inequality, and about its relation to the expansion is the aim of a two-year project of the EPC. Its first stage was concluded in June 2007.
- The final comparative report of the second stage 2 will be published in summer 2008.
- The third stage (to the end of 2008) will cover Czech TE, extending the analyses to new and deeper dimensions (e.g. socio-psychological).

The aims of the presentation

- This presentation is limited in scope to the comparative stage of the project.
- It aims at
 - exploring the course of inequality in access to TE during the last fifty years,
 - relating the change in inequality to the change in size, i.e. to the expansion of TE,
 - analysing the impact of different parents' characteristics on chances of their children to attain TE.

European Social Survey (ESS)

The EPC study uses the data of 3 ESS rounds:

- ESS-1 2002/2003 (38 653 respondents in 20 countries)
- ESS-2 2004/2005 (45 102 respondents in 23 countries)
- ESS-3 2006/2007 (38 168 respondents in 20 countries)

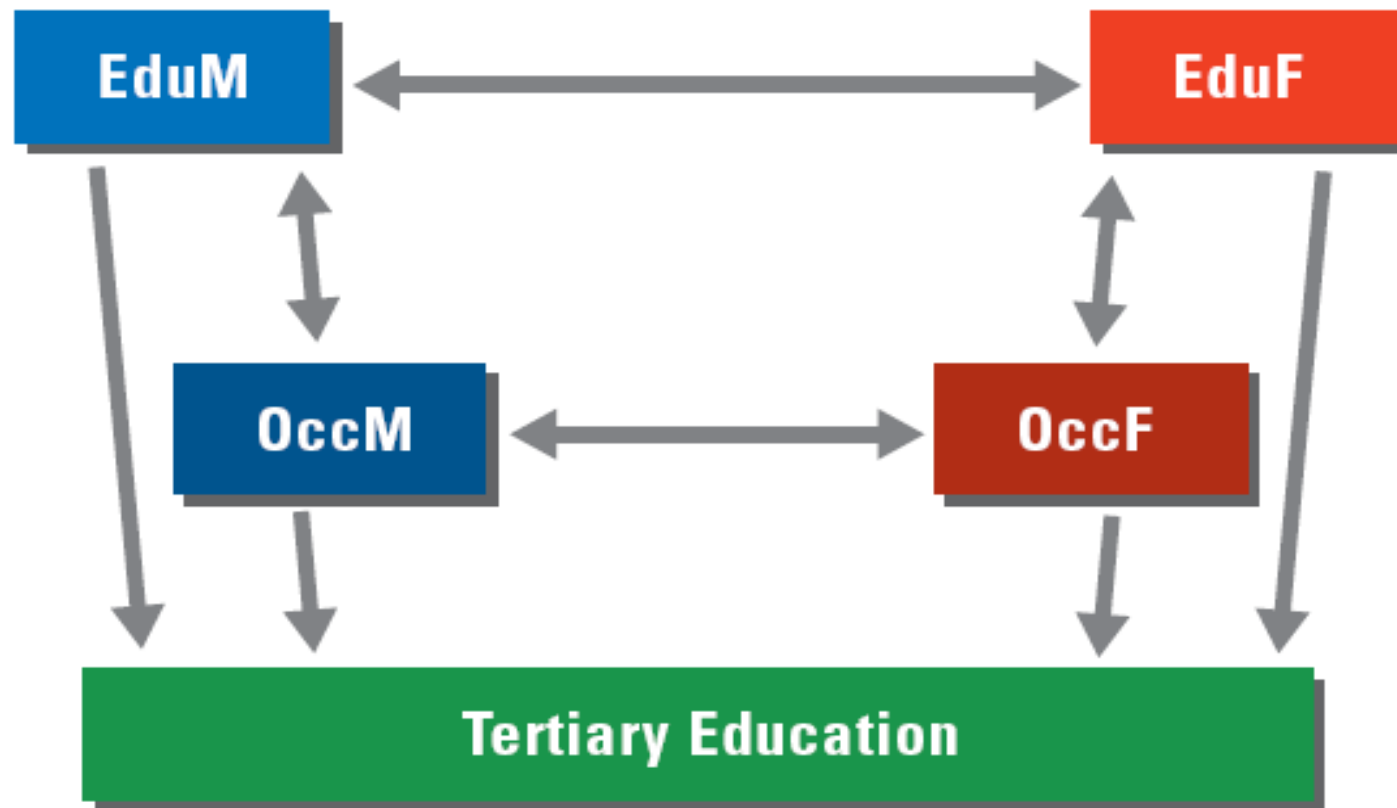
+ a supplementary survey in the Czech Republic
2007/2008 (5853 respondents)

Total 127 776 respondents in 23 countries



Analysis of Inequality

Conceptual Model



Logistic regression model

Explained variable

- TERTIARY EDUCATION (the attainment of TE)

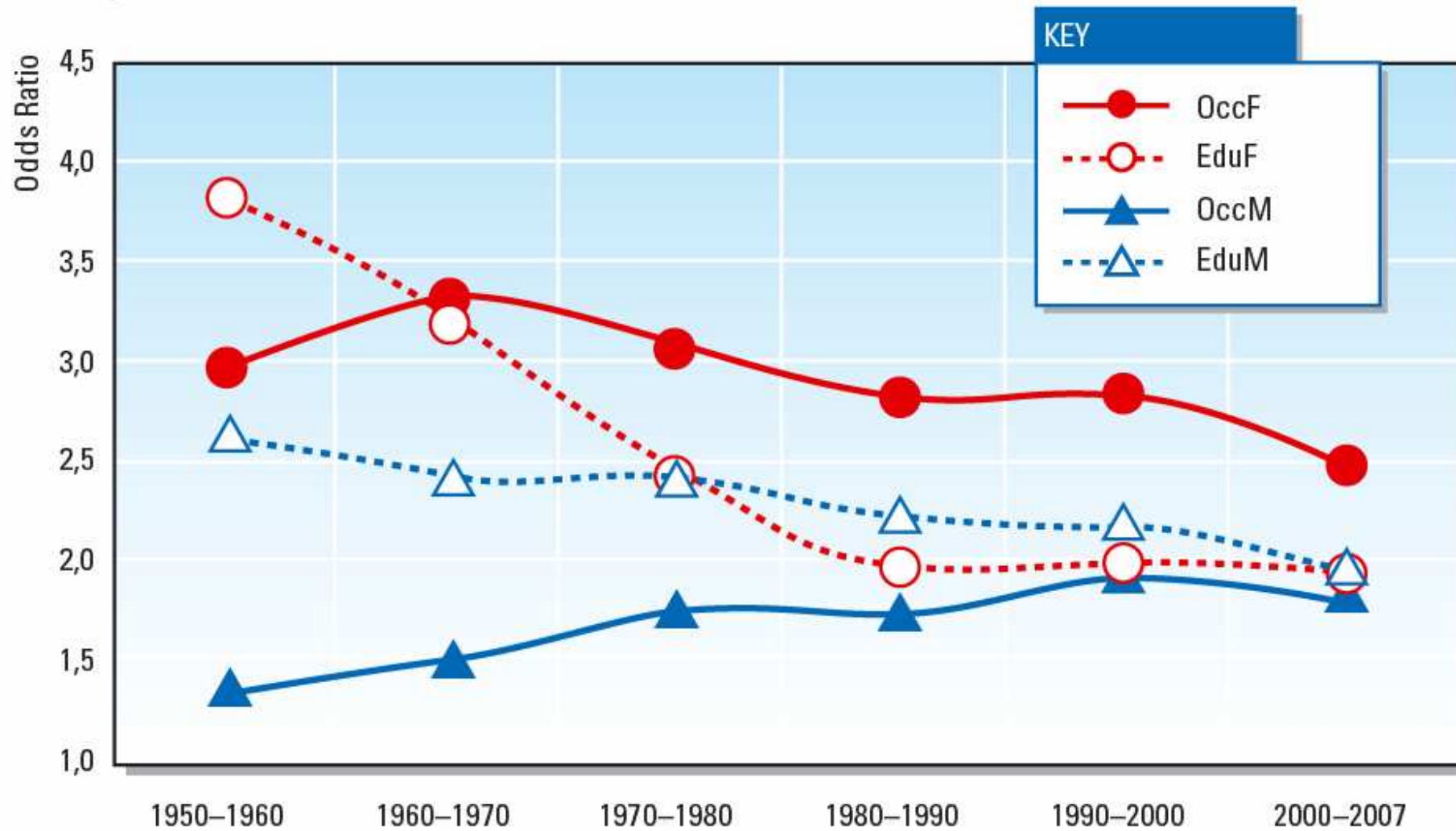
Explaining variables

- EduF - Father's education (the highest level attained)
- EduM - Mother's education (the highest level attained)
- OccF - Father's occupation (at the respondent's age 14)
- OccM - Mother's occupation (at the respondent's age 14)

6 age cohorts (defined by the decade when they concluded tertiary education: 1950-1960; 1960-1970; 1970-1980; 1980-1990; 1990-2000; 2000-2007)

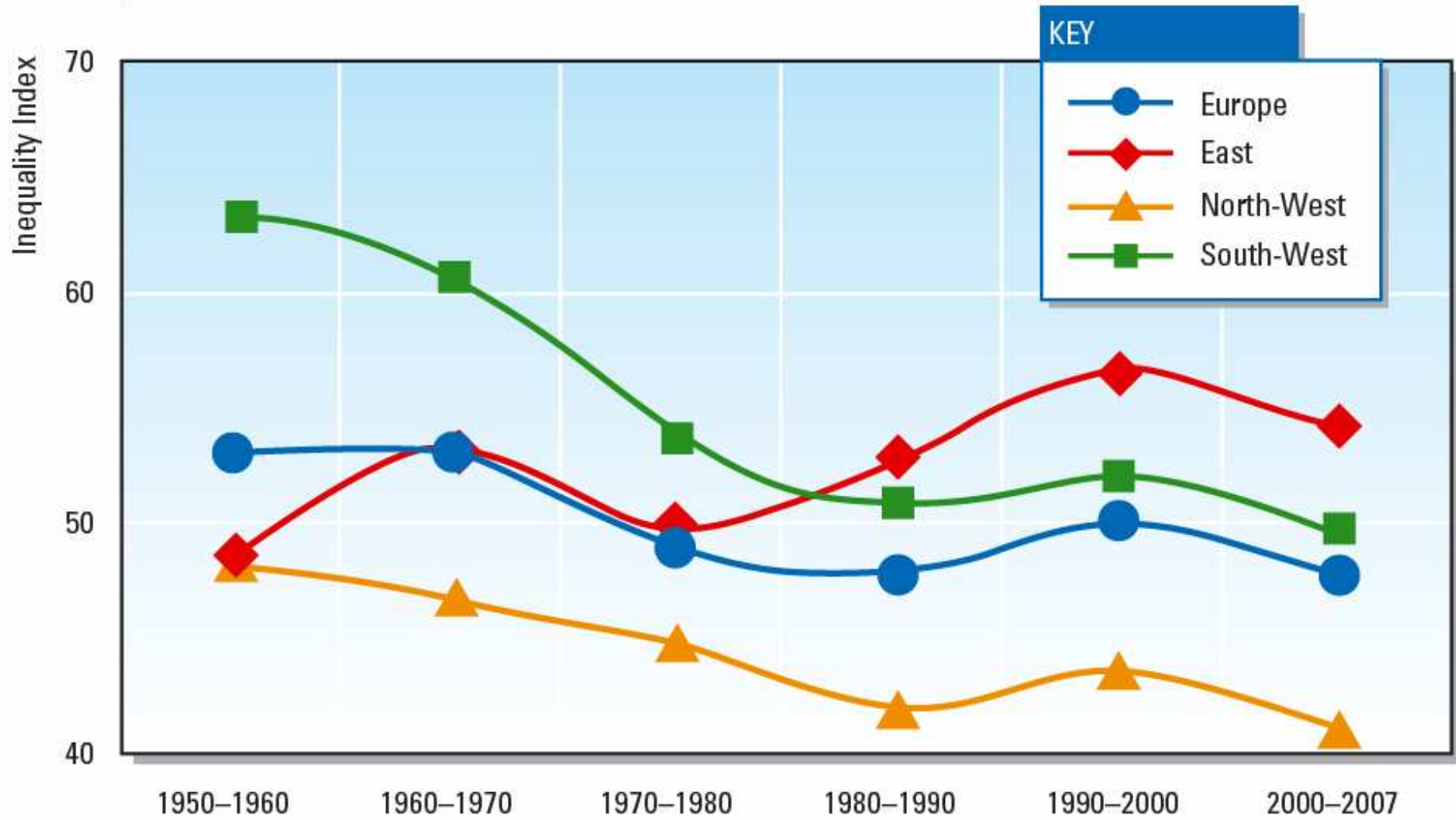
Impact of Parents' Characteristics

European countries 1950–2007



Inequality Index

European countries 1950–2007



Inequality Index

= one comprehensive index, describing the overall level of inequality of access to TE

The Index assumes values within $\langle 0; 100 \rangle$ interval
– the higher the index, the higher the inequality.

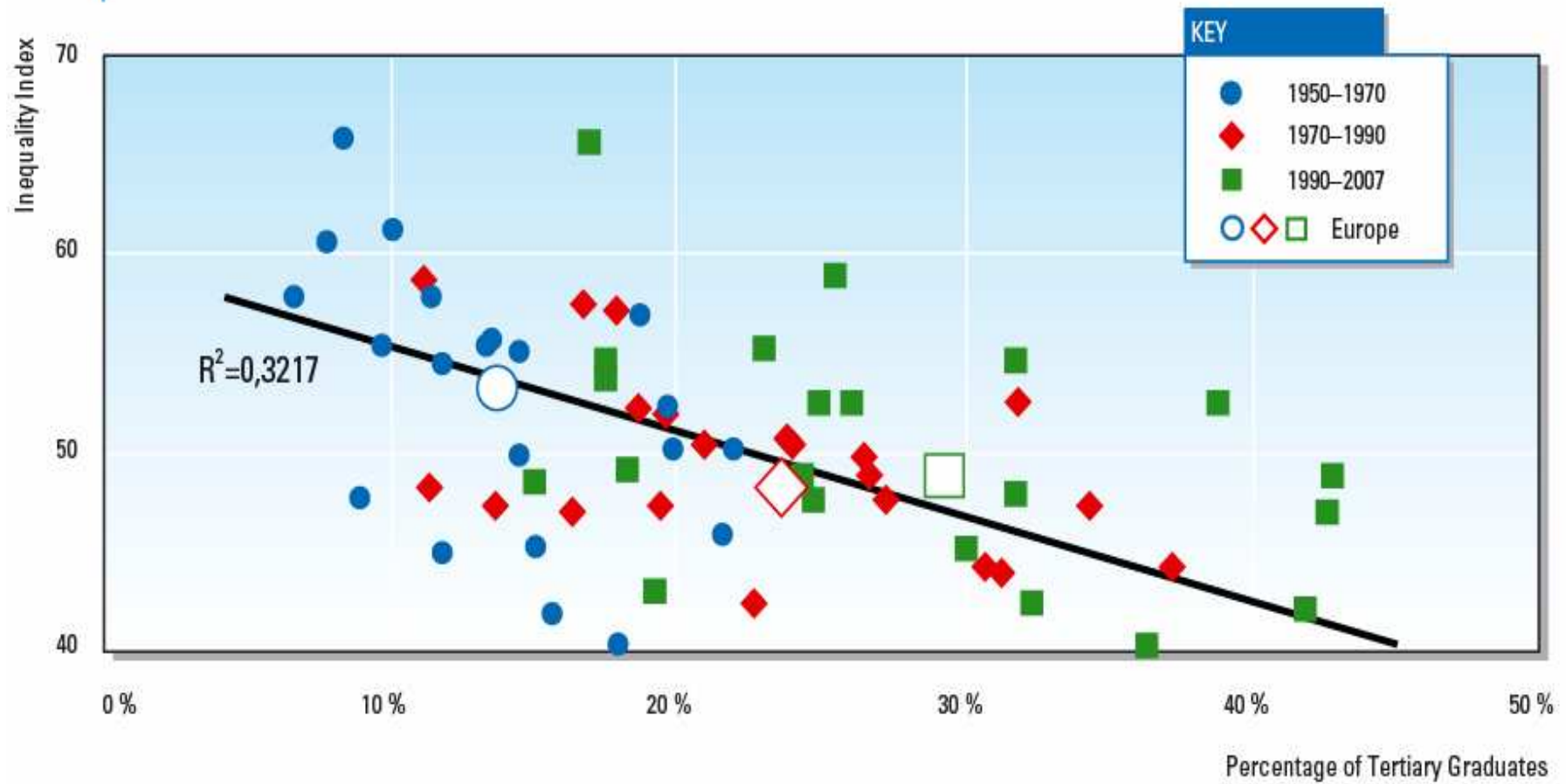
Curves indicated in the period 2000-2007 are only provisional, as data relating to long studies are still not available.



Groups of countries

- **EAST** = the Czech Republic (**CZ**), Estonia (**EE**), Hungary (**HU**), Poland (**PL**), Slovakia (**SK**), Slovenia (**SI**), Ukraine (**UA**);
- **NORTH-WEST** = Austria (**AT**), Denmark (**DK**), Finland (**FI**), Germany (**DE**), Ireland (**IE**), the Netherlands (**NL**), Norway (**NO**), Sweden (**SE**), the United Kingdom (**GB**);
- **SOUTH-WEST** = Belgium (**BE**), France (**FR**), Greece (**GR**), Luxembourg (**LU**), Portugal (**PT**), Spain (**ES**), Switzerland (**CH**)

Expansion and Inequality Index European countries 1950–2007



In conclusion

- The EPC model and the ESS data have allowed us to construct the Inequality Index and to measure the level of inequality in access to TE
- We have found that it changes over time, falling down till the 80s, then raising slightly again in the 90s. In current decade it is falling again but the course is not quite clear, as the data are not complete. The level of inequality changes considerably also across countries
- Considering the impact of SES, it is necessary to take into account both education and occupation of both parents.



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Thank You very much for your attention!

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