

Call for papers
Stream #25 of the 23rd ESPAnet conference
The Politics of Education
27 – 29 August 2025, Milano, Italy

We look forward to receiving abstracts for **Stream #25 of the 23rd ESPAnet conference *The Politics of Education* to take place in Milano, Italy, 27 - 29 August 2025.**

Education systems aim to prepare citizens for the labour market and the digital age, to integrate migrant youth, and to sensitize future leaders about climate change. Education policy plays thus an important role in addressing today's pressing challenges. At the same time, education systems are also fundamentally reshaped by these challenges. Consequent conflicts about the distribution and control over skill formation, values, and educational credentials have resulted in institutional differences across countries. The determinants and mechanisms shaping these reform processes show striking similarities as well as instructional differences to the dynamics underlying welfare state development. Yet, education policy has traditionally been at the margins of welfare state research.

This stream aims to bring both together. We welcome all submissions that focus on the politics and policies of education. We are particularly interested in papers that explore:

- **Drivers of education policy reforms** (e.g. institutions; structural changes; preferences, organisation, and strategies of policy elites, parties and organised interests; ideas and discourse)
- **Trajectories of institutional change**, and associated socio-economic outcomes (e.g. social inequality and mobility; skill shortages; governance and stakeholder coordination)
- **Effects of education on political attitudes and social preferences** (political socialization / polarisation).

Contributions could examine these issues with reference to any sector of education, including primary and secondary general education, vocational education, higher education, and lifelong learning. Methodologically, we are open to a range of different contributions, including single case studies, comparative case studies or large-N designs. We would like to bring together contributions from different neighbouring disciplines (e.g. politics; political economy; social policy; education; sociology) to stimulate discussion on complementary theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of the politics of education.

Abstracts can be submitted following this link:

 [ESPANET 2025](#)

Deadline for submission of abstracts: April 24th, 2025

Notification of acceptance: May 15th, 2025

Any questions regarding the stream **The Politics of Education** can be directed to Annatina Aerne (Trinity College Dublin aernea@tcd.ie) or Milan Thies (European University Institute, milan.thies@eui.eu).