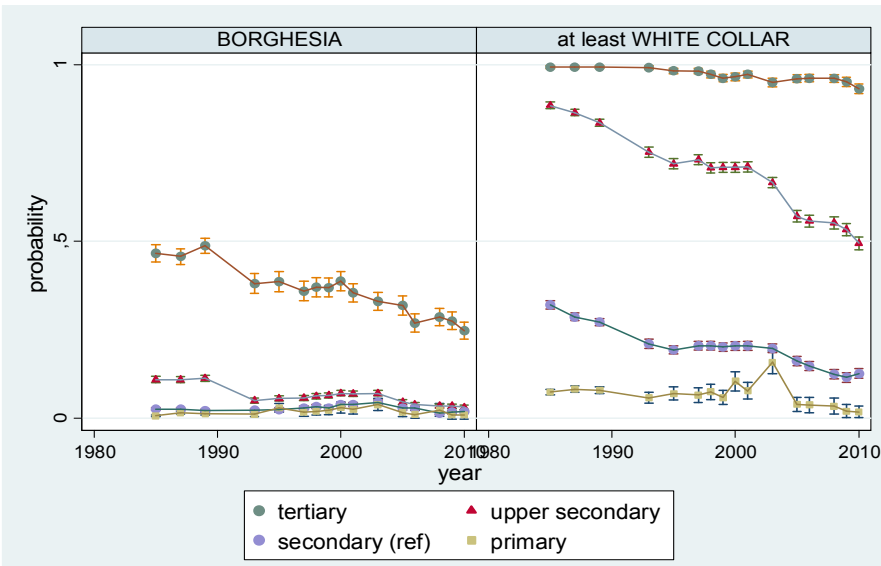
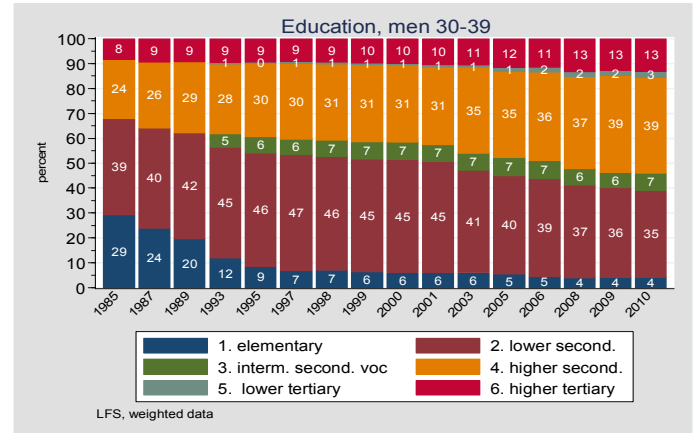


More Investment – Less Returns?

Educational expansion and the access to labor market positions

Stefani Scherer & Gabriele Ballarino

Recent decades have witnessed a considerable **educational expansion** also in **Italy**. For those cohorts who already reached the labor market, this upgrading in the educational attainment mainly regards the *upper secondary level* (istituti tecnici e licei), while the huge expansion on the tertiary level did not yet complete studies and arrive in the market.



Predicted Probabilities based on a generalized ordered logit model. Region and age at means. LFS 1985-2010, men age 30-39.

In this article we show that this upgrading came with a considerable **decline in the** (absolute and relative) **chances** to access more favorable social class positions – white collar jobs or better, in specific, especially for persons with upper secondary education.

For university degree holders we observe a moderate reduction in the chances to access the bourgeoisie.

For the time being, it remains an empirical question what will happen when the large expansion of university graduates arrives in the labor market.

Parts of these declining returns can be attributed to the lacking upgrading in the occupational structure of the Italian labor market which would – as happened in other countries – allow to absorb more highly educated younger cohorts still in educationally adequate positions.

The empirical analysis are based on labor force survey data, covering **25 years** from 1985 to 2010. Results shown refer to men, but are very similar for women.



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