

Dr. Irena Pietrzyk

born in Lublin (Poland)

Contact

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ORCID

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Research Interests

Educational inequalities, educational interventions, experimental methods

Professional Experience

Implementation of a large scale randomized controlled trial (RCT), survey development and data collection in large scale longitudinal surveys

Current Position (since 2021)

Researcher at the chair of Prof. Dr. Marita Jacob in a third-party funded project that experimentally evaluates a large scale educational intervention (*Zukunfts- und Berufspläne vor dem Abitur* [Future and career plans before high school graduation], ZuBAb)

Previous Positions

2021 – 2024	Guest Researcher at the Berlin Social Science Center (WZB) in the President's Research Group
2016 – 2020	Researcher at the Berlin Social Science Center (WZB) in the President's Research Group
2013 – 2016	Researcher at the International Center for Higher Education Research (INCHER), University of Kassel, Cooperation Project on Graduate Studies (KOAB)

Education

October 2024	Dissertation Defense: <i>Ambitionierte Bildungsentscheidungen von Personen mit Migrationshintergrund an hohen Bildungsetappen: Beschreiben, Erklären, Verändern</i> (Ambitious Educational Choices of Individuals with Migration Background at High Educational Levels: Describing, Explaining, and Altering)
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Thesis supervisors: Prof. Dr. Marita Jacob, Prof. Dr. Karsten Hank
Third reviewer: Prof. Dr. Irena Kogan

Final grade: *summa cum laude* (best possible)

2018 – 2024
2011
2014

PhD studies, University of Cologne (Sociology)
Completion of studies in Psychology at the University of Münster, degree: Diploma (equivalent to a Master's degree), final grade: 1.0 (best possible).
Completion of studies in Sociology, Political Science, and Psychology at the University of Münster, degree: Magistra Artium (equivalent to a Master's degree), final grade: 1.4

Third-party funds

~1.6 million euros
Project on the evaluation of a large scale educational intervention (2025 – 2027), funded by the Ministry for Culture and Research of North Rhine-Westphalia (Germany)

Publications

Editorship

Erdmann, Melinda/Schneider, Juliana/**Pietrzyk, Irena**/Helbig, Marcel/Jacob, Marita (2025): [Auf dem Weg zur Hochschulbildung. Beiträge aus Wissenschaft und Praxis aus NRW](#) [On the Way to Higher Education. Contributions from Science and Practice in North Rhine-Westphalia.] Münster, Germany: Waxmann Verlag.

Articles in Peer-Reviewed Journals (*SSCI-ranked, +shared first authorship)

*Erdmann, Melinda/**Pietrzyk, Irena**/Schneider, Juliana/Helbig, Marcel/Jacob, Marita (forthcoming). Same but Different: Gender, Social Origin, and University Access. Results from a Field Experiment on Guidance Counseling. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*.

***Pietrzyk, Irena**/Erdmann, Melinda/Schneider, Juliana/ Helbig, Marcel/Jacob, Marita (2025). [Guidance Counseling Can Reduce Inequality in University Enrollment in Germany: Results from a Randomized Controlled Trial](#). *Sociology of Education*.

***Pietrzyk, Irena**/Jacob, Marita/Erdmann, Melinda (2023): [Who Benefits from Guidance Counseling? Insights on Native and Immigrant Students from Low Social Origins](#). *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*.

Neumeyer, Sebastian/Pietrzyk, Irena** (2023): [Done with a Degree? Immigration-specific Disparities among Holders of Bachelor's Degrees in the Transition to Graduate Studies in Germany](#). *Frontiers in Sociology*.

Pietrzyk, Irena/Helbig, Marcel (2023): [To Benefit from an Educational Program, You Need to Participate: Participation Patterns in an Educational Intervention Promoting College Access](#). *Journal for Educational Research Online*.

*Erdmann, Melinda/Schneider, Juliana/**Pietrzyk, Irena**/Helbig, Marcel/Jacob, Marita (2023): [The Impact of Guidance Counselling on Gender Segregation: Major Choice and Persistence in Higher Education. An Experimental Study](#). *Frontiers in Sociology*.

+Erdmann, Melinda/**Pietrzyk, Irena**/Helbig, Marcel/Jacob, Marita/Stuth, Stefan (2022): [Können intensive Beratungsprogramme soziale Ungleichheit beim Übergang in die Hochschule reduzieren? Ergebnisse eines Feldexperiments](#) [Do Intensive Counseling Programs Reduce Inequality in University Access? Results from a Field Experiment]. *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 48 (1). 137-162.

***Pietrzyk, Irena**/Erdmann, Melinda (2019): [Investigating the Impact of Interventions on Educational Disparities: Estimating Average Treatment Effects \(ATEs\) is not Sufficient](#). *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*.

Neumeyer, Sebastian/Pietrzyk, Irena** (2019): [Hochschulabsolvent/innen mit Migrationshintergrund am Übergang in die Promotion](#) [Graduates with Migration Backgrounds at the Transition to PhD Programs]. *Soziale Welt*.

Work in Progress

Pietrzyk, Irena/Jacob, Marita. The Distribution of the Treatment. A Blind Spot in Experimental Research in the Social Sciences (for the Special Issue on Explanation and Causality in the Social Sciences in *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*).

Pietrzyk, Irena. It Is About More Than Status. Why Students With Migration Backgrounds Have Strong Intentions to Enroll in Higher Education.

PhD Thesis

Pietrzyk, Irena (2024): [Ambitionierte Bildungsentscheidungen von Personen mit Migrationshintergrund an hohen Bildungsetappen: Beschreiben, Erklären, Verändern](#) [Ambitious Educational Choices of Individuals with Migration Background at High Educational Levels: Describing, Explaining, and Altering].

Articles in Edited Volumes

+Schneider, Juliana/**Pietrzyk, Irena**/Erdmann, Melinda/Helbig, Marcel/Jacob, Marita (2025): [Individuelle Beratung als Schlüssel zur Chancengleichheit beim Hochschulzugang? Eine experimentelle Studie zu ihrer Wirkung auf verschiedene Ungleichheitsdimensionen](#) [Does Counseling Foster Equal Opportunities in University Access? An Experimental Study on its Effects on Various Dimensions of Inequality]. In: Melinda Erdmann et al. (Editors), *Auf dem Weg zur Hochschulbildung. Beiträge aus Wissenschaft und Praxis aus NRW* [On the Way to Higher Education. Contributions from Science and Practice in North Rhine-Westphalia]. Münster, Germany: Waxmann Verlag.

Pietrzyk, Irena/Neumeyer, Sebastian (2024): [Der bemerkenswerte Bildungsaufstieg von Studierenden mit Migrationshintergrund: ein Streben nach Statusmaximierung](#) [The Remarkable Educational Mobility of Students with a Migration Background: A Striving for Status Maximization]. In: Christina Möller, Frerk Blome and Julia Reuter (Eds.), *Sozialer Aufstieg durch Bildung? Theoretische Zugänge, empirische Einsichten* [Social Upward Mobility Through Education? Theoretical Approaches, Empirical Insights]. pp. 122 – 143. Weinheim, Germany: Beltz-Juventa.

⁺Erdmann, Melinda/Helbig, Marcel/**Pietrzyk, Irena** (2023): [Plädoyer für eine neue methodische Übereinkunft: Zum Potential von randomisiert-kontrollierten Studien in der Evaluation von Schulentwicklungsprogrammen](#) [Pleading for a New Methodological Agreement on the Potential of Randomized Controlled Trials in the Evaluation of School Development Programs]. *Die Deutsche Schule*, 115(3), 247 – 261.

Data Sets

Erdmann, Melinda/Pietrzyk, Irena/Helbig, Marcel/Jacob, Marita/Schneider, Juliana/Stuth, Stefan (2021): [Zukunfts- und Berufspläne vor dem Abitur \(ZuBAb\)](#) [Future and Career Plans before High School Graduation].

Discussion Papers and Reports

⁺Erdmann, Melinda/**Pietrzyk, Irena**/Schneider, Juliana/Helbig, Marcel/Jacob, Marita/Allmendinger, Jutta (2022): [Bildungsungleichheit nach der Hochschulreife – das lässt sich ändern. Eine Untersuchung der Wirksamkeit eines intensiven Beratungsprogramms 1,5 Jahre nach dem Abitur](#) [Educational Inequality after High School Graduation Can Be Reduced. A Study of the Effectiveness of an Intensive Counseling Program 1.5 Years After High School Graduation], *WZB Discussion Paper*, P 2022-002, Berlin, Germany: Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung.

⁺Erdmann, Melinda/**Pietrzyk, Irena**/Helbig, Marcel/Jacob, Marita/Stuth, Stefan (2022): [Do Intensive Guidance Programs Reduce Social Inequality in the Transition to Higher Education in Germany? Experimental Evidence From the ZuBAb Study 0.5 Years After High School Graduation](#), *WZB Discussion Paper*, P 2022-001, Berlin, Germany: Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung.

Pietrzyk, Irena/Allmendinger, Jutta/Erdmann, Melinda/Helbig, Marcel/Jacob, Marita/Stuth, Stefan (2019): [Future and Career Plans Before High School Graduation \(ZuBAb\): Background, Research Questions and Research Design](#). *WZB Discussion Paper*, P 2019-004. Berlin, Germany: Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung.

Transfer Publications

Pietrzyk, Irena/Neumeyer, Sebastian/Erdmann, Melinda (2024): [Unerwartete Role Models. Jugendliche mit Migrationshintergrund können zu Vorbildern in Sachen Bildung werden](#) [Unexpected Role Models. Young Persons With a Migration Background Can Be Role Models in Education], *WZB-Mitteilungen*. Berlin, Germany: Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung

⁺Erdmann, Melinda/**Pietrzyk, Irena** (2022): [NRW-Talentscouting: „Ein starkes Instrument zur Stärkung der Bildungsgerechtigkeit](#). *Campus Schulmanagement* [NRW-Talentscouting: “A Powerful Tool for Promoting Educational Equity”].

Erdmann, Melinda/Helbig, Marcel/Jacob, Marita/**Pietrzyk, Irena**/Schneider, Juliana/Allmendinger, Jutta (2022): [Soziale Ungleichheit beim Hochschulzugang verringern. Intensive Beratung fördert die Passung zwischen Potenzialen und Bildungsentscheidungen](#) [Reducing Social Inequalities in University Access. Intensive Counseling Promotes Better Match Between Students’ Potential and their Educational Choices], *WZB Brief Bildung 45*, Berlin, Germany: Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung.