



# GOVERNMENT POLICY AND PARENTING

*Despite significant policy efforts worldwide to reduce development gaps between advantaged and disadvantaged children, these disparities persist. This international workshop explored the crucial role of culture in both shaping and implementing public policies aimed at increasing parental engagement and promoting child development. By examining the factors that affect policy effectiveness and implementation, the project brings together policymakers, practitioners, and researchers from diverse disciplines to foster cross-sectoral collaboration. The goal is to advance evidence-based strategies that are culturally sensitive and effective in supporting parents, enhancing children's skills, and ultimately reducing socioeconomic disparities through policies that are both effective and culturally acceptable.*

## Introduction & Project Context

### Government Policy and Parenting (GP&P)

The GP&P workshop, held in September 2024 in Paris, created a unique forum where cutting-edge research met practical policy implementation.

This two-day gathering addressed an urgent paradox: Despite substantial investments in child-focused policies across different national contexts, the persistence of developmental gaps between children from different socioeconomic backgrounds remains stubbornly consistent.

Rather than approaching this challenge solely through economic or educational lenses, the workshop pioneered an examination of cultural dimensions that often remain invisible in policy discussions. By bringing together experts from economics, psychology, sociology, education, and public policy alongside government officials and foundation leaders, the event created bridges between theoretical insights and real-world applications. The discussions moved beyond simply identifying effective interventions to exploring the complex ecosystem in which these interventions must operate—where social norms, cultural values, and institutional contexts critically influence outcomes. This integrative approach represents a significant evolution in how we conceptualize the relationship between government policy, parental behavior, and child development.

**Organizers:** Laudine Carbuccion (Sciences Po), Ariel Kalil (University of Chicago), Kjell Salvanes (Norwegian School of Economics), Susan Mayer (University of Chicago), Michelle Park Micheleni (University of Chicago)

## Key Themes Discussed

### Child Skills and Well-being

Comparative analysis of how school systems and educational policies affect socioeconomic skill divides, and a life-course perspective on inequalities in child well-being.

### Immigration, Culture, and Policy

Strategies for improving universal child welfare services while addressing social gaps and the importance of responsive parenting in building social cohesion.

### Adapting Programs for Cultural Diversity

Lessons from implementing home visiting programs across different cultural contexts and insights from parental engagement initiatives in low and middle-income countries.

### Gender and Household Decision-Making

Examination of how gender influences resource allocation within households and its implications for child development policies.

### Government's Role in Parenting

Analysis of sources of generational persistence in education and income, and comparative approaches to government promotion of child education and well-being.

## Highlights from Discussions

### Social Norms and Policy Effectiveness

- Policies not only shape constraints but also influence social norms around parenting
- Cultural change happens slowly; short-term policy evaluations may miss long-term impacts
- Effects of early childhood interventions can persist across generations

### The Paradox of Universal Services

- Universal welfare schemes may reproduce social gaps even while pursuing equity
- Complementary investments may disproportionately benefit already-advantaged families

### Cultural Adaptability of Interventions

- Parenting programs can be successfully transported across countries with cultural adaptations
- The "building blocks" of effective parenting appear universal but implementation requires sensitivity to local contexts
- Digital and remote interventions show promise for scaling in diverse cultural settings

## Presenters & Participants

### Universities and Research Institutions:

- Ingvild Almas (Norwegian School of Economics)
- Noam Angrist (University of Oxford)
- Ana Arellano (University of Chicago)
- Aline Bütikofer (Norwegian School of Economics)
- Laudine Carbuccion (Sciences Po)
- Miles Corak (City University of New York)
- Matthias Doepke (London School of Economics)
- Orla Doyle (University College Dublin)
- Christina Felfe (University of Konstanz)
- Paola Giuliano (University of California Los Angeles)
- Ariel Kalil (University of Chicago)
- Fanny Landaud (CY Cergy Paris University)
- Eric Maurin (Paris School of Economics)
- Susan Mayer (University of Chicago)
- Michelle Micheleni (University of Chicago)
- Lidia Panico (Sciences Po)
- Mari Rege (University of Stavanger)
- Kjell Salvanes (Norwegian School of Economics)

### International Organizations and Foundations:

- Francesco Avvisati (OECD)
- Martin Benavides (UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning)
- Daniela Bresciana (University of Chicago)
- Valérie Daher (Break Poverty Foundation)
- Gwyther Rees (Innocenti Research Centre)
- Andreas Schleicher (OECD)
- Olivier Thevanon (OECD)
- Andrea Torres (Bernard van Leer Foundation)

## Axe politiques éducatives

Laudine CARBUCCIA



Currently a fourth-year Ph.D. student at Sciences Po (CRIS - LIEPP) and at the Department of Cognitive Science of ENS/PSL, Laudine is interested in the determinants of inequalities in access to early childcare facilities.

After graduating from the ENS Master's program in cognitive science, she is doing her doctoral research under the supervision of Carlo Barone, sociologist (Sciences Po), and Coralie Chevallier, cognitive psychologist (ENS - PSL).