

Doing research in the social sciences. A comparison of Italy and the UK
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The UK university system and the research possibilities that it offers to social researchers are often considered by many as a model to which Italian academia should aspire. Despite such claims, very few studies have looked at the differences that exist between these two university systems. The aims of the talk are twofold: to contrast and compare the way the two academic institutions work and to discuss the lessons that can be learnt by this comparison.

The talk is in four main parts. First I compare the career processes in place in Italy and the ones in place in one of the best universities in the UK according to the last Research Assessment Exercise, the University of Essex. I then compare other important aspects of the academic career, such as getting research funding, training and getting published. In the third part of the talk I focus on a particular case study - the Institute for Social and Economic Research at Essex. Finally I discuss recent important developments in an academic discipline that is still not very well known in Italy: the survey methodology.