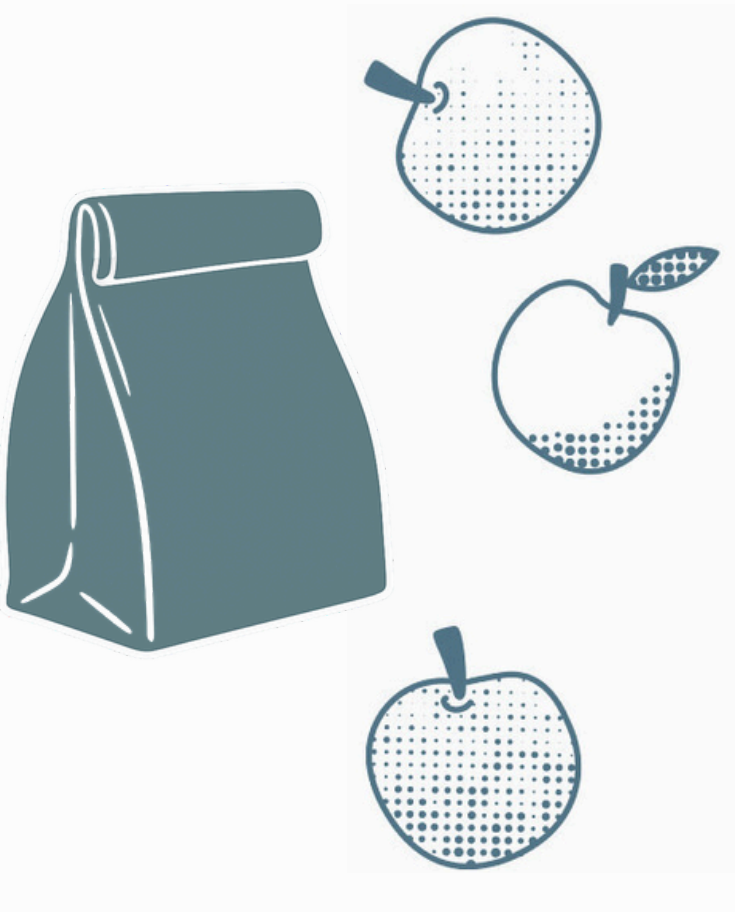
BROWN BAG SEMINARS



THURSDAY 5 NOVEMBER 2026
13:00-15:00
SALA POGGI, 1ST FLOOR

BOULEVARD OF BROKEN PROMISES: NON-VOTING AND FAR-RIGHT SUPPORT AMONG THE WORKING POOR IN GERMANY

NILS TEICHLER | UNIVERSITY OF BREMEN

CHAIR: LEO AZZOLLINI
DISCUSSANT: YUXIN ZHANG

ABSTRACT:

In-work poverty has become an increasingly salient form of labour market marginalization in advanced welfare states. When employment fails to provide economic security, it challenges the meritocratic promise that effort is fairly rewarded and may generate political discontent. This paper examines the political behaviour of the working poor, focusing on electoral abstention and far-right voting. Using longitudinal data from the German Social Cohesion Panel (SCP), we investigate whether the intersection of employment and poverty is associated with distinct patterns of political participation. Our results show that the working poor are significantly more likely both to abstain from voting and to support the far right. While abstention appears to be driven by poverty alone, the combination of employment and poverty is uniquely associated with far-right voting. This relationship remains robust when accounting for the structurally precarious labour market position of the working poor. These findings highlight the distinct consequences of in-work poverty for democratic participation and political discontent.

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