

Would You (or Not)? Self-Perceived Deservingness and Intentions to Claim Social Assistance in Switzerland

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ESPANET Annual Conference 2025

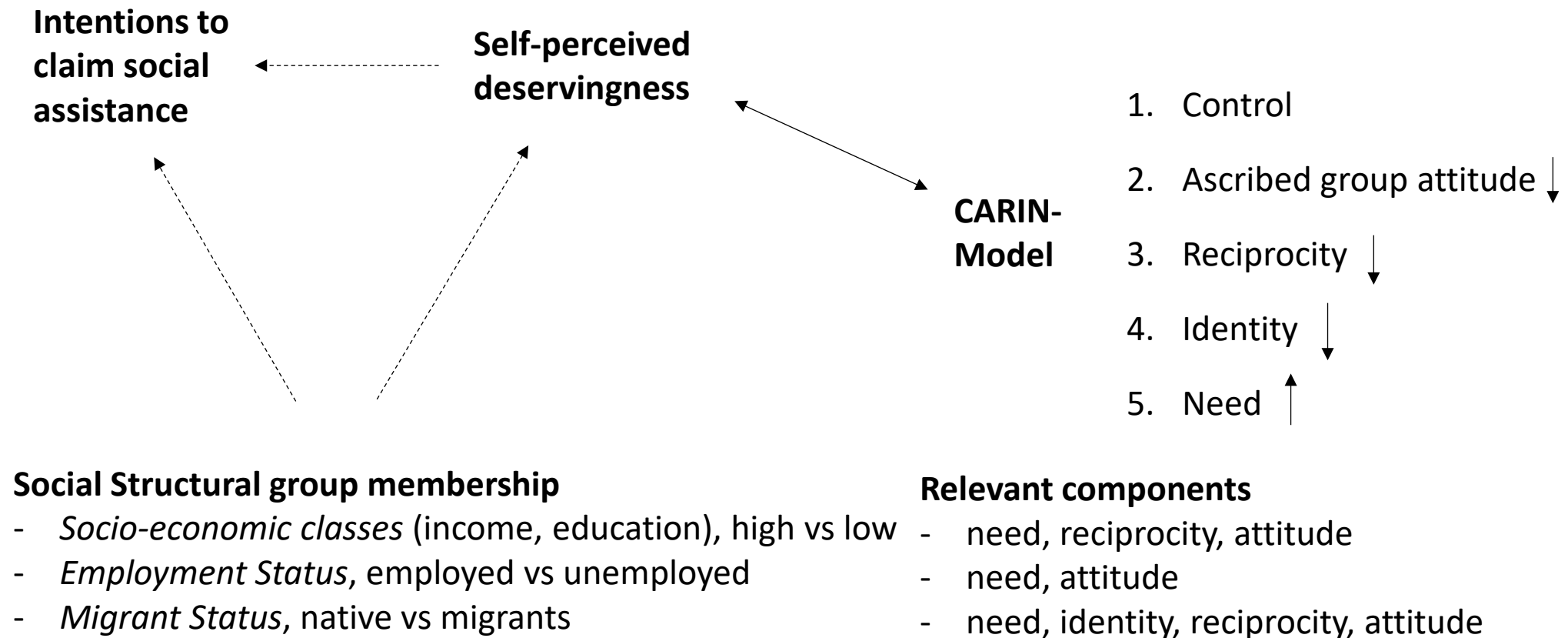
University of Milan

27th – 29th August 2025

Introduction

- **Era of austerity** (Pierson, 2001): ongoing debates about *who deserves support* (Oorschot, 2001): → increasing selectivity, ongoing delegitimising discourses (“undeserving poor”, “lazy unemployed”). In the past decade; increased welfare chauvinist agenda in Europe (Haeraets&Roosma, 2024)
- **Non-take-up of social benefits**: widespread across Europe, especially in minimum income schemes (Marc et al. 2022, Eurofond 2015) , raises critical questions about the effectiveness and inclusiveness of such policies → non-take-up not only due to knowledge and administrative hurdles but also stigma, and normative reasoning (Janssens & Van Mechelen, 2022; Lucas et al. 2021; Hümbelin, 2019)
- **Contribution** of the paper
 - Empirical evidence on claiming intentions from a unique **Swiss EU-SILC 2023 module**
 - Finding: intention not to claim social assistance is socially stratified
 - Self-perceived deservingness as a key concept to explain these differences.
 - Deservingness theory as an element that explains non-take-up

Self-perceived Deservingness, Claiming Intentions and Social Structural groups

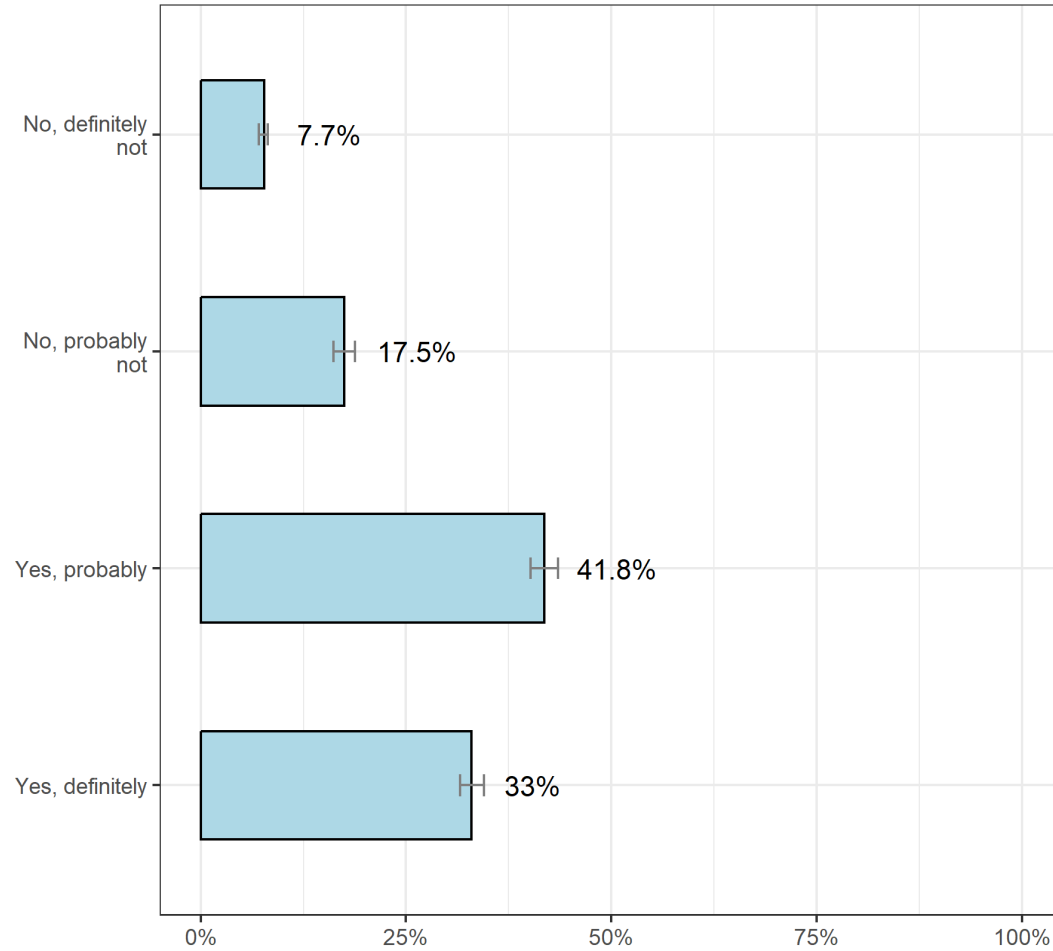


Data and Analytical Strategy

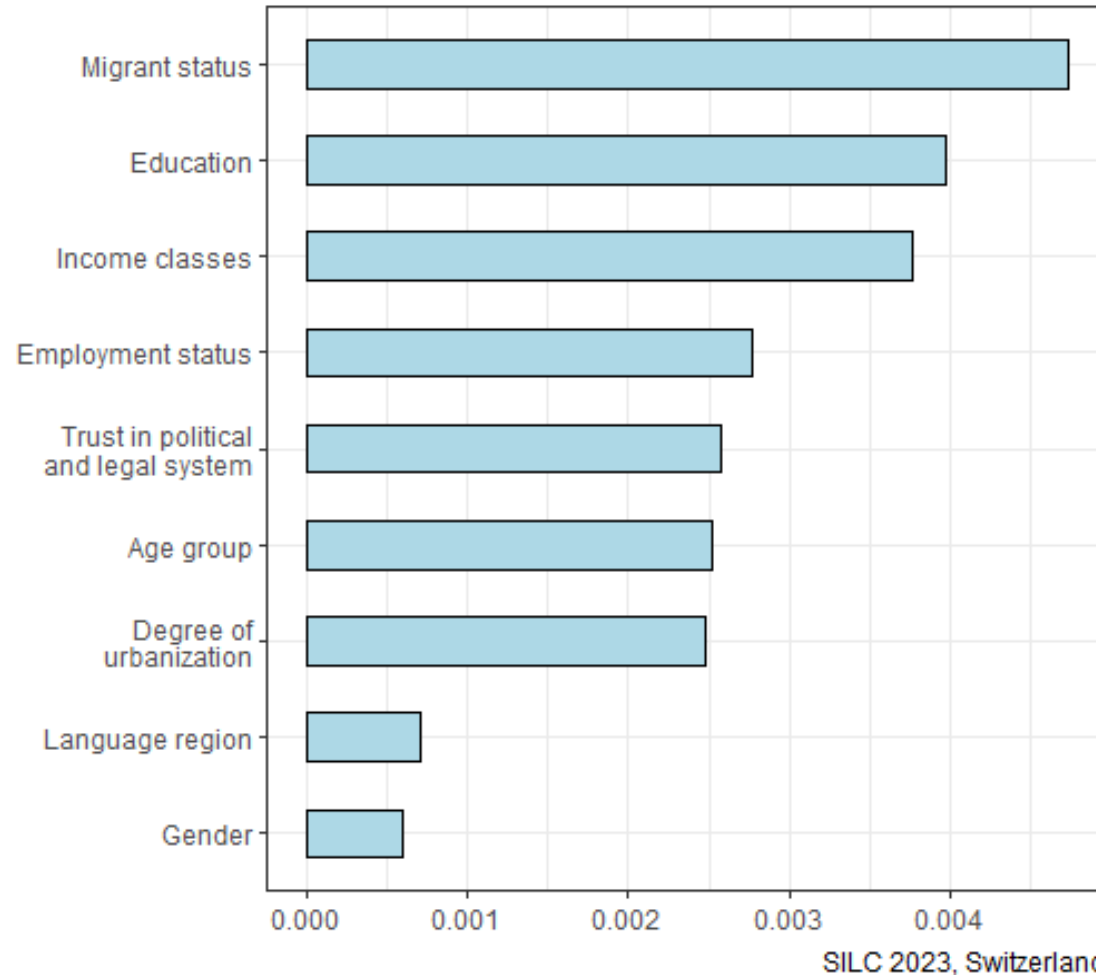
- Special module, SWISS EU-SILC 2023 measuring claiming intention: «Assuming you were entitled to social assistance due to financial difficulties, would you claim this support?»
- Restricted to individuals below 65 (n ~ 9'000)
- set of theoretically derived control variables
 1. Random-forest based variable-importance assessment
 2. Multiple regression analysis (logit), change in predicted probabilities

Claiming Intentions

Assuming you were entitled to social assistance due to financial difficulties, would you claim this support?

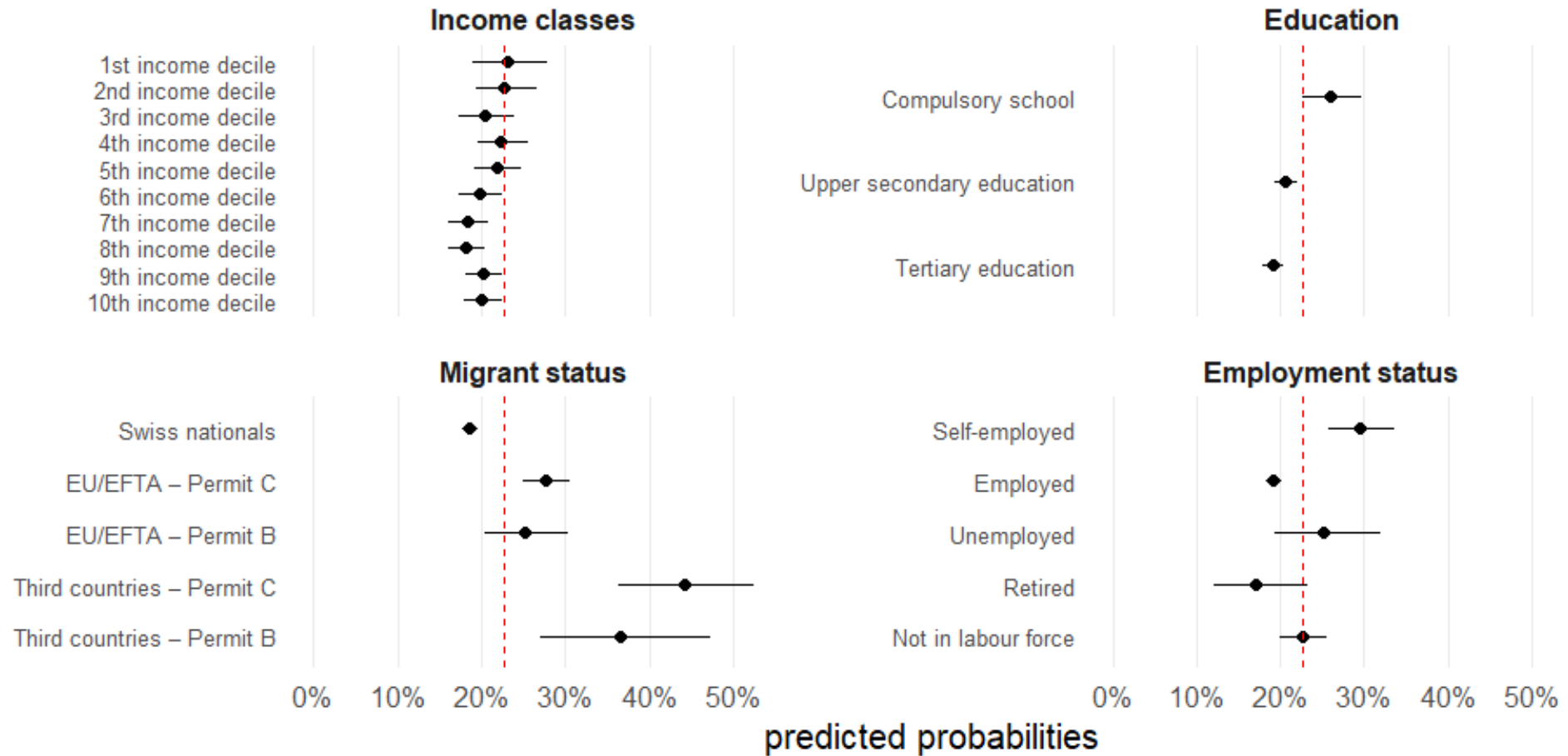


Variable Importance



Note: The diagram shows the importance of the predictors in a random forest model predicting the intentions to claim social assistance. High values indicate that the respective variable has a strong influence on the classification.

Reluctance to claim social assistance across social groups



SILC 2023, Switzerland

Note: The chart shows predicted probabilities (and 95% confidence intervals) of various characteristic according to a statistical model with the reluctance to claim social assistance as the dependent variable and the variables shown above as explanatory variables plus language region, degree of urbanisation, trust in the legal and political system, gender and age groups as control variables. The dashed line shows the model based average reluctance rate. The statistical modelling was carried out using a logit function.

Summary & Discussion

- **Results**

- Differences in claiming intentions across social groups are observed and interpreted as driven by *group-specific self-perceived deservingness* (CARIN model).
- Reflections on reciprocity, identity, and ascribed group attitudes seem more important than the need component. Likely different in actual situation of need.

- **Policy**

- The lowest claiming intentions are found among the most vulnerable: low-income, low-education, and especially among migrant groups. Relevance of mental barriers in understanding non-take-up.

- **Limitations**

- *indirect link* between group membership and self-perceived deservingness.
- Intentions \neq actual non-take-up.

Thank you for your attention!

Contact

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Additional effects

