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**Educational Inequality in International Comparisons –**  
**How data aggregation produces artefacts.**

The International Standard Classification (ISCED) is a widely used instrument for international comparisons of the European populations’ educational attainment. Most European scientific use databases provide educational data only in aggregated versions of ISCED. Based on data from the German Microcensus and the European Social Survey the paper investigates the implications of these aggregations for international comparisons. It demonstrates the loss of explanatory power and distortions in substantive conclusion resulting from various aggregations of the ISCED classification and makes suggestions for improvements of European Scientific Use Files.