



UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM  
Institute for Information Law

**IViR LECTURE SERIES**

# **AI and poverty: should socio-economic status be a protected ground in non-discrimination law?**

by Prof. Frederik Zuiderveen Borgesius  
(Radboud University)

8 May 2026  
REC A5.24



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Many people worry about inequality in Europe. Artificial intelligence (AI) adds new dimensions to inequality, especially when AI systems are used to make decisions about people. Indeed, AI can have discriminatory effects towards persons with low socio-economic status (SES). For instance, AI-enhanced price differentiation can lead to higher prices for poor people. States that use AI to detect fraud may focus on poor people and welfare fraud, rather than on high-SES people who avoid taxes.

Meanwhile, many non-discrimination statutes protect people against discrimination concerning identity-based protected grounds, such as ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, age, and sexual orientation. But most non-discrimination statutes do not protect against discrimination based on poverty or SES.

This paper explores how non-discrimination law could react to AI-enhanced stratification. Prompted by AI scenarios, our findings more generally apply to non-discrimination law. We explore two policy options: inclusion of SES as a protected category in EU non-discrimination law, and specific accommodation measures going beyond mere non-discrimination rules.

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## Speaker

Frederik Zuiderveen Borgesius is professor of ICT and law. He works at the iHub the interdisciplinary research hub on digitalization and society. The iHub is an institute of the Radboud University in The Netherlands. His research mostly concerns fundamental rights, such as privacy and non-discrimination rights, in the context of new technologies. He regularly advises policymakers.

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## Practical details

**Date:** 8 May 2026

**Time:** 15:30 - 16:45 CET (Amsterdam)

**Place:** REC A5.24, Nieuwe Achtergracht 166, 1018 WV Amsterdam & online via Zoom

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