

Assessing Inequality in Access to Health Services in Milan

Alessandra Michelangeli[§]

Umut Türk[×]

November, 2023

Abstract

This paper investigates inequality in infrastructure for health across neighborhoods in the city of Milan. Neighborhoods provide the immediate environment where people live, work and play, and for many more vulnerable groups, such as older people and those with low income, most of their lives are spent in the neighbourhood. The aim is to assess whether some categories of the population, such as the elderly, have a difficult access to health care because of distance.

We utilize data from open map services to gather information on the locations of residential buildings and health amenities within city. Employing geographical information systems, we generate an accessibility index for health amenities, including hospitals, pharmacies, and doctors, based on the data from each residential building. Subsequently, for each neighbourhood, we compute the inequality in accessibility to health services.

Our findings reveal that inequalities in access to healthcare contributes substantially to magnify socioeconomic disparities. In some neighborhoods, social segregation coexists with a poor endowment of health infrastructures.

Key Words: health inequality; neighbourhood; accessibility; residential segregation.

JEL Codes: J62; R11; R12.

[§] Department of Economics, Management and Statistics, University of Milan-Bicocca, Milan, Italy; Center for European Studies (CefES); Center for Interdisciplinary Studies in Economics, Psychology and Social Sciences (CISEPS); Rimini Center for Economic Analysis (RCEA)
Email address: alessandra.michelangeli@unimib.it

[×]Department of Economics, Abdullah Gül University, Sumer Campus, Kayseri (Turkey). E-mail address: umut.turk@agu.edu.tr