

Day 1

SESSION 1 – Non-standard and atypical employment – Chair: Peter Saunders

13.20 – Jane Millar – Peter Whiteford – Timing it right or timing it wrong, How should means-tested benefits deal with varying work patterns?

Abstract:

One of the central design challenges of any means-tested welfare system is how to assess needs against income in a timely way. This involves a series of decisions, including ‘what is taken into account as income, whose income in a family unit is counted, over what time period income is measured, how long awards should last, and how responsive the system should be to changes in income and circumstances during the period of the award ...’ (Whiteford, Mendelson and Millar, 2003). These questions have grown in policy importance over time as changing patterns of work and changing employer demands on workers exemplified in the “gig economy” have become more salient for systems of social protection. This paper discusses these policy challenges through a comparative analysis of the treatment of timing issues in the working-age welfare systems of the United Kingdom and Australia. Australia has long been recognised as having the most targeted social security system of any high-income country (Korpi and Palme, 1998); the United Kingdom is currently undertaking a fundamental reform of its benefits system that will provide stronger incentives for part-time and short-term employment. The paper discusses the details of how these different but similar systems deal with the timing of income receipt and benefit adjustment and draws out broader lessons for social protection design.

*Peter Whiteford, Professor Crawford School of Public policy, Australian National university and Visiting Fellow, University of Bath, Email: peter.whiteford@anu.edu.au

** Jane Millar, Professor, [Department of Social & Policy Sciences](#), [Institute for Policy Research \(IPR\)](#), [Centre for Analysis of Social Policy \(CASP\)](#), University of Bath, Email: J.I.Millar@bath.ac.uk

13.45 - Katy Jones - Lisa Scullion - Sharon Wright - ‘Just about managing’? Exploring the experiences of welfare users at the margins of the UK labour market

Abstract:

There is increasing concern about high levels of ‘non-standard employment’ (NSE) in the UK labour market, including variable- and short-hour contracts, and marginal self-employment (Green and Livanos, 2015; May, 2016). Against this backdrop, an increasingly ‘conditional’ welfare system aims to incentivise work, tackle ‘dependency’, and cut welfare expenditure. This has involved the recent introduction of ‘in-work conditionality’ to welfare claimants, requiring individuals to increase their earnings or face financial sanctions (Wright et al, 2016).

The value of NSE is contested. Those in NSE are at greater risk of ‘in-work poverty’, and can have limited opportunities for progression (Ray et al, 2014). However, where individuals are unable to access full-time permanent positions, part-time or temporary jobs may be more favourable than

remaining unemployed. These jobs, some argue, may work as a 'stepping stone', facilitating access to better quality labour market opportunities (Booth et al 2002; Gash, 2008).

This presentation will draw on data from three waves of a major ESRC-funded qualitative longitudinal research project investigating the experiences of people in receipt of conditional welfare. It will examine the lived experiences of a diverse sample of 'welfare service users' working in 'non-standard employment'. It will consider whether these jobs provides a 'stepping stone' towards a more secure labour market position or merely 'traps' workers at the margins. A particular focus will be given to exploring individual's experiences in the labour market over a two year period, and the key factors which led to any observed changes in their employment situation by the time of a third research interview.

14.10 – Marius Olivier – Expanding the boundaries of social security protection for informal economy workers in developing countries

Abstract:

Globally, informal employment represents a significant share of non-agricultural employment in developing regions. However, workers in the informal economy experience extremely low levels of social security coverage, both quantitatively and qualitatively. This flows from a variety of reasons, including restricted conceptual frameworks, absent or deficient institutional structures and instruments, inappropriate eligibility criteria, lack of or non-involvement of representative institutions, exclusionary contributory and benefit regimes, and limited administrative capacity and enforcement ability. Also, social insurance laws and systems and social assistance arrangements rarely cover workers in the informal economy. Finally, with some exceptions, international standards have limited impact on these workers.

Especially in the last few decades, pronounced and unprecedented steps have been taken to extend social security coverage to workers in the informal economy – as illustrated by innovative developments in developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The paper critically reflects on the rationale for and nature of these extension modalities. These developments have largely been informed by economic considerations and shifting social, cultural and conceptual perceptions; a new appreciation of the human rights debate in the provisioning of social security; and the social contract between the state/government and its citizens. Conceptual adjustments in areas affecting the very notion and purpose of social security, the so-called contingencies covered by (traditional) social security, and some of the actors involved (e.g., a redefined understanding of "workers" and "employers") have been paramount. Also, there has been a dedicated construction of appropriate institutional frameworks, while new forms of representative structures have been operative in this domain.

These adjustments and developments challenge the traditional boundaries of the social security notion, aims, structures and mechanisms. The paper adds to the developing scientific discourse on these matters, also by reflecting on the foundational values informing social security and alternative perspectives on social security.

SESSION 2 – Child Poverty – Chair: Bea Cantillon

13.20 – Sebastian Sirén – Timing it right or timing it wrong, How should means-tested benefits deal with varying work patterns?

Abstract:

During the last decades, child-centred cash transfer programs have been introduced or expanded across many middle-income countries, often linking financial benefits targeted at the most vulnerable families to investments in human capital. However, the effectiveness of low-income targeting for poverty reduction has been questioned on the basis of previous research, but comparative evidence from middle-income countries is still scarce (Ferrarini, Nelson, and Palme 2016). Moreover, the importance of variations across countries regarding specific features of these programs, such as benefit levels, coverage, targeting mechanisms and conditionalities, are not yet fully understood (White 2017). Neither are the varying ways that these programs might affect women's employment, and thus indirectly to raising incomes of the most vulnerable families (Molyneux and Thomson 2011). Against this backdrop, this study contributes to the literature by analysing how social protection matter for child poverty in other contexts than those commonly explored in comparative studies of family benefits. The study constructs quantitative indicators on the size and distribution of cash transfers, as well as on the incidence and depth of child poverty, based on household level data from the LIS database, and combine these with institutional information of the characteristics of these programs, in order to assess how variations in program design and redistributive profiles might matter for poverty reduction. Data from 20 non-western countries, observed at several points in time, is analysed using multilevel logistic regression models, in order to assess how cash transfer systems impact on poverty risks among households with children, while simultaneously controlling for potential household and country level confounders. In doing so, the paper also seeks to bridge two research traditions that too often have been separated; comparative research on family benefits in longstanding welfare states and research on social assistance and poverty reduction in middle-income countries.

13.45 – Julie Vinck – The poverty gap of children with a disability in Belgium: how much and why do they differ from non-disabled children?

Abstract:

Policy responses to the pressing issue of child poverty refer to the currently dominant social investment paradigm and focus on integrating parents into the labour market. For families with disabled children, these strategies might be problematic as they need to provide more care which jeopardises the parents' engagement in the labour market. Additionally, these families face higher direct costs due to the child's medical and care needs, which pushes them (further) below the poverty line. However, families with disabled children often have a lower socioeconomic status than families without disabled children, increasing their poverty risk independent of having a disabled child. In this paper, I disentangle the extent and determinants of the poverty risk of disabled children by means of a case study on Belgium. The aim of this paper is to investigate the association between childhood disability, child poverty and the explanatory factors proven important in the state of the

art child poverty research. To do so, I draw on a unique and large-scale administrative dataset which links information of the Belgian Crossroads Bank for Social Security with the latest Belgian census. First, the household's net disposable income and accompanying poverty status is estimated making use of the microsimulation model EUROMOD. Second, I examine the level and explanatory factors of the disabled children's poverty risk. The impact of the determinants will be gauged vis-à-vis typically developed children by means of a multivariate logistic regression. This will allow to map the prevalence of poverty among disabled children in Belgium and to answer (1) whether childhood disabilities are related to an increased poverty risk; (2) whether explanatory factors identified in the state of the art are able to (partially) explain the poverty risk among disabled children; and (3) how the population of disabled children overlaps with the population of poor children.

14.10 – Bruce Bradbury – Markus Jäntti – Low wages and child poverty in rich nations

Abstract:

In recent years, growing wage inequality and wage stagnation has returned wage policy to the fore of the social protection debate in many countries. Nonetheless, research which has assessed the impact of minimum wage increases has generally found little impact on poverty. From a targeting perspective, this is because many minimum wage workers are living in households already above the poverty line (eg because of the earnings of others), and because a large share of the income of these households comes from social protection rather than wages. These issues are relevant even if there are no employment changes due to decreased labour demand (or increased labour supply). In this paper we assess these targeting issues using cross-national data from the Luxembourg Income Study. We decompose the household incomes of the poorest one-fifth of children into that due to net social transfers and earnings. The latter are decomposed into full and part-time wage earnings of mothers and fathers, self-employment and other earnings. These are further disaggregated by family type. We describe the contributions of the different components to the mean disposable incomes of the poorest fifth (and incomes relative to national medians – akin to relative poverty). Using this decomposition, we examine the extent to which countries can ameliorate low wages by using in-work transfers. We then calculate the impact of countries adopting alternative wage distributions (holding social protection, family composition and employment patterns constant). These counter-factual alternatives come from examples of high and low wage inequality countries (the US and Nordic countries) as well as historic wage distributions. This is a broader counter-factual than just increasing minimum wages, but one that is more indicative of the poverty outcomes that could be obtained if countries were to move in the direction of alternative wage-setting institutions.

SESSION 3 – Intergeneration Dynamics – Chair: Rense Nieuwenhuis

14.50 – Lore Van Herreweghe – Wim Van Lancker – The accumulation of (dis)advantage: an empirical investigation into parent-child financial transfers across European countries

Abstract:

Population ageing has major consequences for the financial sustainability of the welfare system across all European countries. In this context, the link between public and private streams of intergenerational support becomes increasingly important. The present paper examines the flow of financial transfers, from parents to their adult children (downward) and from adult children to their parents (upward), and how such transfers contribute to the accumulation of social and economic (dis)advantages. It is important to realize that people from different social classes or with different socio-economic backgrounds vary in their ability to provide financial support. Subsequently, this variability can lead to the accumulation of both financial advantages and disadvantages through higher or lower probabilities of giving or receiving financial support. What is missing in the current literature on intergenerational financial transfers is an in-depth examination of what the generations exchange, and how this potentially affects inequality between and across generations. Therefore, we will look at financial support measured as relatively large money transactions or gifts between parents and their adult children. First, by looking at parent-child dyads, we will evaluate the impact of the socio-economic characteristics of the parent and the child on the likelihood of receiving a downward financial transfer on the one hand, and an upward financial transfer on the other. Recent research shows that patterns of financial exchange between generations within the family varies substantially across countries and welfare state regimes. Therefore, in our second step, we will analyze whether the set-up of the welfare state influences the linkage between socioeconomic characteristics of the family and the likelihood of giving and/or receiving financial support. Results will lead to greater understanding in the potential mechanisms through which socioeconomic advantages and disadvantages are transmitted across generations, and evaluate the role of the welfare state in within-family exchanges.

15.15 – Gwyther Rees – Persistence and dynamics of family poverty and children’s well-being

Abstract:

The link between family poverty and child well-being and longer-term outcomes is well-established. However there is still a need for more exploration of the effects on children of persistent poverty, or of changes in household poverty status over time. Debates about the impact of poverty on child well-being are also sometimes held at a broad level of generality that does not allow for the possibility of variable impacts across different aspects of well-being.

This paper will present two linked pieces of analysis addressing these issues, making use of recent longitudinal UK data. The first piece (already published in brief form) analyses the potential incremental impact of persistent poverty (across multiple dimensions) across early- and mid-childhood on four different aspects (cognitive, behavioural, emotional and subjective) of adolescent well-being. It entails linear regression analysis of data from the *Millennium Cohort Study* involving

over 18,000 children born in the early 2000s. The second piece of analysis (unpublished) builds on the first, by exploring the link between changes in family poverty status and adolescent well-being. This analysis includes latent growth curve modelling of data from *Understanding Society*, a large-scale household panel study.

The findings will highlight a number of important messages. First, studying the persistence and dynamics of poverty can provide important additional insights into the impact of poverty on children's lives. Second, a multi-dimensional approach to poverty can also offer richer insights. Third, the associations between poverty and child well-being vary quite substantially depending on the indicator of well-being used. There are also different relative associations of poverty on different aspects of well-being at key points in children's lives. It is vital that researchers communicate this clearly and that policymakers become more aware of this issue in order to develop effective strategies to tackle the impacts of poverty.

15.40 – Agnieszka Chlon-Dominczak – Iga Magda – Pawel Strezelecki – Mothers' life-course work and career choices and inter-generational ties at older age

Abstract:

Level of income, well-being and socio-economic situation of older people depend on their life course choices of work and career. Patterns of employment and earnings differ significantly within and between countries, in particular from a gender perspective. Women have usually shorter and more interrupted careers compared to men, mainly because they decide to work part-time or withdraw from the labour market. These decisions depend on many factors, the presence of children at home being the crucial one. The heterogeneity of decisions can be explained by individual factors that lead to more childcare oriented behaviour. Such choices also frequently reflect limitations of institutional childcare and necessity to provide care at home. Individual choices reflect not only individual and household preferences, but also the policies and societal norms that are frequently path-dependent.

In the paper, we focus on identifying patterns of full and interrupted careers of women in 13 European countries,. Using the retrospective SHARE survey results we distinguish women that have had full or interrupted labour market careers. We analyse differences in the patterns of women's interrupted careers within and among countries.

We assess whether there is a link between the pattern of labour market career, family situation and intergenerational transfers in later life. In particular, we investigate, if women who decided to reduce their labour market participation or withdraw from the labour market experience closer intergenerational ties, including transfers of time and money between generations. We analyse to what extent these experience relates to social norms and family values societies share. The results of the should shed some light on the possible trade-off between the more work-oriented life course arrangements of mothers and the intensity of the care they receive from their children in the later life.

SESSION 4 – Households' Budgetting and Economicis – Chair: Kenneth Nelson

14.50 – Silvia Avram – Mike Brewer – Nick Buck – Paul Fisher – Laura Fumagalli – Household Income Volatility in the UK, 2009-2016

Abstract:

The economic insecurity faced by individuals is an important determinant of their well-being. We study one indicator of economic insecurity-the volatility of individual- and household-level income- in the UK between 2009 and 2016 using data from a large longitudinal household panel survey. During this time, the UK government has introduced significant cuts to working age benefits and tax credits in the context of relatively strong employment but stagnant wages. We find that the volatility of earnings for the working-age has fallen in this period, largely due to a fall in the prevalence of large negative earnings shocks. For older aged individuals, we also find a large fall in the volatility of private income, mainly as a result of a fall in large positive income shocks. The tax-benefit system significantly reduces volatility, especially for household containing older age individuals. We find evidence that the tax-benefit system has become less well equipped to counteract swings in labour income but changes in disposable income volatility are driven by changes in employment.

15.15 – Tess Penne – Tim Goedemé – Can low income households afford a healthy diet? A comparison of the cost of 24 cross-nationally comparable food baskets in Europe

Abstract:

Globally, food insecurity is one of the most important reasons for inadequate food intake, causing a range of prevalent diseases. Also across European welfare states, problems of access to nutritious food keep on undermining health and wellbeing, particularly for vulnerable socio-economic groups in society. In this paper we present new evidence which shows that accessibility of adequate diets should remain an issue of concern for policy makers. More in particular, on the basis of a large-scale international EU pilot project with country teams in 24 EU Member States we have calculated the minimum cost of a healthy food basket in a cross-national comparable way. The baskets have been priced in the capital city of each country during the Spring of 2015. In a cross-national analysis the paper 1) estimates the proportion and profile of people in densely populated areas with insufficient income to access a healthy diet (based on EU-SILC), and, 2) uses hypothetical household simulations to focus more closely on the accessibility of a healthy diet for people living on minimum income schemes. The paper aims, firstly, to contribute to our knowledge of the cost and accessibility of a healthy diet, and secondly, to which extent people living on a low income have sufficient resources to obtain adequate food intake across Europe.

15.40 – Peter Saunders – Yuvisthi Naidoo – Explaining the Low Overlap between Income Poverty and Material Deprivation: Evidence for Australia

Abstract:

The consensual deprivation approach is now widely used to complement the conventional income-based poverty approach in many OECD countries. However, although many studies indicate a relatively low overlap between (income) poverty and (material) deprivation in aggregate and for specific demographic groups, there have been few attempts to understand why this is the case and what factors are contributing to it. This paper draws on findings derived from wave 14 (2014) of the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey to investigate three potential explanations for the low deprivation/income poverty overlap results. The first examines the role of housing costs by comparing the overlaps produced when poverty is estimated using income after housing costs (AHC) rather than before housing costs (BHC). The AHC measure may better capture the (in)ability to purchase the necessary items that defines deprivation status under the consensual approach. The second explanation examines the role of overall net wealth in providing access to resources that potentially mitigate the incidence of deprivation which are not captured in either the BHC or AHC income measures. The third explanation investigates whether the low overlaps are a consequence of timing lags between income fluctuations and ownership of the items used to identify deprivation. All three explanations are examined in aggregate and for specific demographic groups, and the findings provide further evidence of the unique contribution of the deprivation approach to poverty analysis.

SESSION 5 – Spatial Dimension of Welfare – Chair: Bjorn Hvinden

16.30 – Cassandra Engeman – Breaking the Liberal-Market Mold? Family Policy Variation across U.S. States and Why it Matters

Abstract:

In cross-national policy analysis, the United States is understood as the ideal-typical liberal regime that offers market-based solutions to social problems, including work-life reconciliation. Fittingly, the country lags behind most others in the world with respect to paid maternity and parental leave and other family policy provisions. However, there is considerable subnational variation that cross-national comparative research often overlooks. This paper examines how workplace leave policies – including but not limited to parental and family caregiving leave – have developed sub-nationally in the U.S. over time. Drawing on state legislative documents, I identify 72 state-level leave laws adopted by 25 states between 1942 and 2017 and describe the dimensions on which provisions typically vary. I then show how state policies generally shift over time from unpaid maternity leave to unpaid, gender-neutral family caregiving leave to paid leave schemes, characterizing some states as more innovative than others. Starting with the adoption of unpaid leave at the federal level, leave advocates have approached family policy as an incremental project. My research suggests that state lawmakers have chosen a path of least resistance with these incremental changes, more often expanding leave to cover care of additional family members rather than creating wage

replacement benefits or lowering or eliminating restrictive eligibility requirements. Yet, there are some innovative aspects of leave policy in the U.S.; for instance, all leave provisions are granted as individual entitlements, and inclusive family caregiving leave is a common type of leave policy. Ultimately, this research shows that subnational variation in social policy is a rich area for future research and cross-national comparative research on family policy outcomes should consider subnational variation when including federal systems, such as the United States, in analysis.

16.55 – Stefano Filauro – Income inequality in the eu: do taxes mitigate inequality more than benefits?

Abstract:

This study analyses inequality in gross and disposable incomes in the EU in the period 2007-2016. In the light of the current academic and policy discussion on the drivers of inequality, it aims at identifying to what extent the different income sources, be them market or tax-and-transfer sources, contribute to determine overall income inequality. The project seeks to address the following questions: i) To which extent do the market income sources determine current inequality levels in the EU and to what extent do taxes and benefits mitigate, if any, these inequality levels? ii) In turn, within market incomes, which source is more disequalising between wages and income from self-employment? iii) Similarly, which sources between taxes and benefits contribute more to inequality reduction? iv) Finally, how have these dynamics evolved over the last decade?

In order to address these questions the article will first illustrate the income concepts used (gross and, when available, disposable income), by presenting the shares of each source (e.g. wages, income from self-employment, capital income, private and public pensions, taxes and benefits). It will then present evidence on the contribution of different income sources to determine income inequality using a decomposition technique à la Shorrocks. The analysis, carried out with EU-SILC data, will shed light on the different market and welfare mechanisms driving income inequality at play in different EU countries. The final aim is to test the hypothesis that the inequality-reducing effect of the welfare state has diminished and that the market mechanisms are those responsible for the increase in inequality experienced in many EU countries after the crisis as recently contended by the OECD.

17.20 – Linus Siöland – Ill fares the hinterland? Investigating urban-rural differences in socio-economic outcomes in Europe

Abstract:

The challenges faced by households vary widely depending on where in a country the household is located, with urban areas facing higher housing costs and competition for work, but rural areas seeing e.g. higher transport costs, fewer economic opportunities, and in many cases an exodus of younger people with higher education. Beyond the distributional effects and personal impacts, geographic discrepancies in life outcomes affect the political arena as well, with a recent report from the European Commission identifying the centre-periphery dimension as a core explanatory variable of increased voting patterns for Eurosceptic and otherwise anti-establishment or populist parties.

Studying and understanding the different challenges and lived experiences in different geographic contexts becomes an important dimension in maintaining support for welfare states and existing political institutions. This paper will use the EU-SILC dataset to investigate inequality and poverty in urban and rural regions, focusing on whether a gap in socio-economic outcomes exists. It will consider (i) whether recovery in terms of unemployment and poverty outcomes after the Great Recession have benefitted urban and rural areas equally, or whether recovery disproportionately favours urban areas; (ii) the extent to which these differences can be explained by demographic factors such as the proportions of people with higher education, recent levels of immigration, or the proportion of ageing population; and (iii) to what extent this complicates cross-national investigations and comparisons of inequality, poverty and other socio-economic outcomes. It will recommend future research to further investigate the differences in and patterns of poverty between different sub-national regions of Europe, and to consider which states are most successful in ensuring equitable outcomes for their population regardless of where they reside.

SESSION 6 – Social Assistance – Chair: Wim Van Lancker

16.30 – Kate Summers – David Young – Universal simplicity? The alleged simplicity of Universal Credit and the lived experience of means-tested social security benefit claimants

Abstract:

Universal Credit is a new means-tested benefit in the UK, that brings together six working-age social security benefits for claimants with a diverse range of needs into one single monthly payment. In the 2010 Government white paper entitled 'Universal Credit, welfare that works', simplicity is put forward as intrinsic to achieving several policy goals including improving the claiming process, reducing fraud and error and making work pay and be seen to pay (DWP 2010). While these changes have the potential to bring about some forms of administrative simplicity, they risk shifting (responsibility for) complexity onto claimants themselves.

Within this paper, we distinguish between types of administrative complexity, and types of claimant complexity, and consider to what extent claims of simplicity can be sustained. In particular we focus on features of alleged claimant simplicity by setting out the experiences of participants in two empirical studies of working-age means-tested benefit claimants. One involved interviewing 43 legacy benefit claimants about how they understood and organised their money, and a second consists of interviews with 15 means-tested benefit claimants over time, the majority of whom claimed Universal Credit, about their experience of income change and insecurity.

Together, these studies found short-term processes of money management that included the earmarking of money for specific purposes. These processes can be understood as astute responses to living on a low-income. The paper argues that claimants' lives, including changing incomes and circumstances, are complex. Aiming to simplify the social security system that interacts with these complex lives has intuitive appeal, but risks *hiding* instead of *reducing* complexity, and therefore further imposing the onus of coping with complexity on claimants themselves. The paper concludes by reflecting more broadly on how 'simplicity' should be considered as a feature of social security design.

16.55 – Cagacan Deger – Elif Erer – Social Transfers and Female Labour Force Participation

Abstract:

When social security finances are discussed, one of the proposed solutions is to expand the population coverage of the system. One of the important demographics considered in this debate is women. Increased participation of women as actives in social security systems could have a positive impact on social security finances. Thus, among other reasons, labour force participation of women is an important issue for social security system balances. The issue becomes more complicated given that for a number of countries, women are entitled to specific transfers. Existence of these transfers could have an adverse impact on labour force participation decision of women, encouraging them to stay out of the labour force.

For the case of Turkey, widows and female children of deceased insured individuals are entitled to receive the pension of the deceased one. In some cases, this pension approaches the minimum wage. The impact of these transfers on labour force participation of women has been discussed in policy circles, but a quantitative analysis has not been held.

As a first step of an international study, this paper investigates the impact of transfers on female labour force participation in Turkey. The study employs the 2016 Household Budget Survey conducted by the Turkish Statistical Institute. Firstly, the sample is divided in to experiment and control groups. The transfers are treated as an experiment and a regression discontinuity analysis is held. The initial findings show that the transfers have a negative and statistically significant impact on the labour force participation decision of women.

17.20 – Paula Saikkonen – Sanna Bloemgren – Equality in social assistance and basic services, case Finland

Abstract:

The Finnish social assistance (SA) reform was implemented at the beginning of 2017. In practice it meant that the basic social assistance was centralized from the municipalities for one national actor, the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (aka Kela). SA is a small part of the whole welfare system. The system aims at to give those with welfare needs, not only the access to a minimum standard of income or social services, but support the less privileged closer to the general standard of the society. In the Nordics, the means-tested financial aid typically has a minor role in the welfare system. In Finland, there used to be a high degree of discretion in the granting process of SA that was strongly linked to social work and services. In a new system, one national authority decides the granting of basic SA. It has been argued that the current system is more equal than previous as the applications will be handled similarly by Kela and the differing practices of the municipalities do not influence in outcomes. The paper scrutinizes equality in the social assistance system and services for the disadvantaged groups. Primary research material consists of data based on surveys targeted to municipal social workers (n= 369) and the management of municipal social services (n=111). The paper discusses the winners and losers of the reform and ends by discussing the ability of the welfare

system to fulfil needs of the disadvantaged groups. Furthermore, it ponders the equality and inequality of the SA recipients in a new system.

Day 2

SESSION 7 – Poverty – Chair: Nathalie Morel

10.00 – Laure-Lise Robben – Wim Van Lancker – On the brink of poverty: the lower middle class in Belgium, the Netherlands and France

Abstract:

While welfare states all across the world are struggling with rising income inequality and an erosion of middle class stability, three European countries seem to withstand these pressures pretty well: France, Belgium and the Netherlands. Prima facie these countries share similar welfare state characteristics, display low and stable levels of income inequality, and a sizeable middle class. A closer look reveals important differences, however. While the share of the middle class remained stable in Belgium and France, it declined in the Netherlands. At the same time, Belgium reports relatively high poverty rates while Dutch and French poverty rates are lower. This begs the question whether the artificial division between the poor and the middle class obfuscates different realities in these countries. To shed light on this we focus in this paper on the living standards of the ‘lower middle class’, a group of people on the brink of poverty, and how this evolved over time. Do the lower poverty rates of France and the Netherlands disguise that many people who are near-poor? Does the high poverty rate of Belgium mean that mobility in and out of poverty is low? Drawing on EU-SILC- and LIS- data, we use both cross-sectional and panel data to capture *first* the changing composition of the lower middle class compared with the poor and core middle class, and *second* how mobility in and out the lower middle class varies across these three countries. By zooming in on what happens in the lower middle class, the results are expected to lead to a greater understanding of what happens at the bottom end of the income distribution.

10.25 – Lovisa Broström – Brigitta Jansson – Measuring In-Work Poverty in Sweden: Problems and Opportunities that comes with detailed Microdata

Abstract:

Sweden is often described as a country that lacks in-work poverty. Through collective agreement, extensive union affiliation and generally considered to be a high wage-level country, in-work poverty is often supposed to be non-existent. The gap between rich and poor has, however, grown the fastest in Sweden in the last decade, compared to any other country in the OECD. And at the same time, we can see that while absolute poverty is decreasing in Sweden, relative poverty is increasing; non-standardize jobs, “gigs” and temporary employment has been growing. All these factors indicate that the composition of the relatively poor has changed and there might be a growing proportion of in-work poor in Sweden.

Previous research on in-work poverty have mainly used samples and have had access to less detailed data from e.g. EUROSTAT, Labor Bureau of Statics, ILO. Since we use microdata derived from Statistic

Sweden including data for all individuals living in Sweden, stretching over thirty years (1987-2017) we face new methodological opportunities and new problems. By elaborating with different in-work poverty lines, both on household and individual level, we are discussing what is an appropriate way of measuring in-work poverty, for both this one and future studies that have access to more comprehensive data. In this study, we also show the first results of the development of in-work poverty in Sweden and how it has changed according to age, gender and origin during the last three decades. Results show that although the proportion of individuals in in-work poverty is quite low the trend is sharply upward, especially for men.

SESSION 8 – Take-Up – Chair: Julie Janssens

10.00 – Ylva Moberg – Speedy Responses - Effects of Higher Benefits on Take-up and Division of Parental Leave

Abstract:

Most countries in the world have some period of paid parental leave. Government-sponsored leave gives families more financial security and flexibility. However, the leave is taken mostly by women which could potentially cement a traditional division of labor and negatively affect women's labor market outcomes in later periods. Just like in other government-funded transfer systems, we would expect the reimbursement level to affect participation and take-up rates. To the best of my knowledge, this paper is the first to investigate the effect of the level of benefits on the utilization of parental leave, using population wide register data in a multi-year panel. To identify the effect of the benefit level, I exploit the "speed premium" rule in the Swedish parental leave system to estimate the causal effect of a change in the level of benefits per day for mothers on their use of parental leave. The results show that a 1% (5 SEK \approx \$0.54) increase in the mother's benefit level per day increases her length of leave by 2.6 days (\approx 1%), a large effect. This leads in an estimate of the elasticity of take-up duration (length of spell) with respect to the parental leave benefit level that is equal to 1 for mothers. The paper also investigates cross-spousal effects on fathers, who respond to the change in mothers' benefits by reducing their own time on leave by 1.9 days, i.e. about 75% of the mother's increase. This suggests that changes in the benefit level effects not only the recipient's time on leave, but also the division of leave between parents.

10.25 – Idunn Brekke – Speedy Responses - Effects of Higher Benefits on Take-up and Division of Parental Leave

Abstract:

A substantial number of children live with chronic illnesses and/or disabilities. In the Norwegian welfare system, there is a variety of health and care-related benefits available to families with children with chronic illnesses and/or disabilities. These families may apply for public income support (i.e. attendance benefits) that compensates for the costs incurred by the children's chronic illnesses

and/or disabilities¹. In the present study we examine take up of attendance benefit for children with a chronic illness or disability in Norway using administrative register data. The innovation in this paper is that we examine whether take up of attendance benefit differs by socioeconomic status and immigrant background using the whole sample of children born in Norway between 2000 and 2005 (n=335.414.). From the same sample, we also operate with a subsample of all children born with downs syndrome (n=467). The analyses of uptake on attendance benefit were performed using multiple logistic regression analyses to obtain odds ratios (ORs) and 95% confidence intervals (CIs). In addition we run a linear probability model (LPN). The results show that immigrants have lower take up of attendance benefit for children with a chronic illness or disability in Norway compared to the majority population. Moreover, being outside labour market and having low income increase the probability of take up attendance benefit.

SESSION 9 – Open Stream – Chair: Olli Kangas

11.05 – Bjorn Hvinden – Mi Ah Schoyen – Promoting Just Transitions to Carbon-Neutral Societies: The Role of Social Security

Abstract:

An important frame of reference for the proposed paper is the emerging literature that has advanced concepts such as ‘sustainable welfare’ and ‘just transition’ (e.g., Gough, 2017; Koch et al., 2016; Koch and Mont, 2016; Swilling & Annecke, 2012). We take on board the main argument of this literature; that we need to incorporate consideration of the future of climate, environment and planetary wellbeing in any definition of sustainable welfare states.

Drawing on a recently concluded cross-national research project, the paper aims to take stock of where we stand in the development of an eco-social (i.e., a combined ecological and social) agenda in Europe, at the national as well as supranational level. Our interest has been to assess what latent or actual scope there is for implementing the transition to low-emission and sustainable welfare states. We base our assessment on analyses of primary and secondary qualitative and quantitative data, considering the interplay between macro-level structural factors (e.g. environmental, social and economic challenges) and the political micro-level foundations of advanced democracies. The latter include the values, assumptions and perceptions held by political actors ranging from single individuals to collective organisations like national governments, political parties and civil society organisations. We analyse how European governments, mainstream political parties in government and opposition, civil society and ‘ordinary’ people perceive the linkages between climate change and welfare policies and what attention they give to the reconciliation of policies across the two areas, based on coordinated case studies in Germany, Italy, Norway and the United Kingdom. This allows us to make a comparative assessment of current and potential efforts to promote climate and social objectives in a systematic and holistic way. We seek to identify the main political opportunities for

¹ The benefit is paid at four different rates, reflecting mild to severe care needs and ranging from €128 up to €770 per month (NAV, 2018).

and obstacles against achieving sustainable European welfare states. Given the prominence of the European Union in influencing the direction and scope of national public policy in Europe, we also consider current efforts to achieve an ‘eco-social’ integration of the policies of the European Union.

Our conclusion is that it is possible to link the notion of a just transition to a carbon neutral society to the basic principles of social citizenship (solidarity, autonomy and participation). We make a case for a stronger attention to social citizenship and its expressions through social security and social rights when thinking about how to approach the transition to carbon-neutral societies. Adaptation of social security and social rights to this new context is necessary both for considerations of social justice and for the need to protect the transition against political backlash and the kind of climate change denial we see from the leaders of some large countries. To this end, we outline how the adjustment and redirectioning of some key welfare policies might enable a just transition. These include regional policies to prevent new territorial divergences in living standards, active labour market policies (‘social investments’) to enhance the development of new skills and stimulate a green restructuring of economic activity, and provision of basic income security for all to ensure that “nobody is left behind” in the transition.

11.30 – Bea Cantillon – Johanna Greiss – Sarah Marchal – Tess Penne – Europe as agent that fills the gaps? The case of FEAD

Abstract:

Given the inadequacy of minimum incomes and growing poverty in most European welfare states, this paper originates from the overarching questions *whether* and *how* the EU could counter these trends. The ‘Fund for European Aid for the Most Deprived’ (FEAD), launched in 2014, appears to be a concrete case of a united anti-poverty programme with redistributive mechanisms. The fund aims to help people take their first steps out of poverty. It supports local programmes and initiatives providing nonfinancial assistance and social reintegration measures. According to the European Commission FEAD functions as an effective instrument to reduce poverty in Europe and, furthermore, to contribute to the implementation of the ‘European Pillar of Social Rights’. Regarding these big objectives being linked to FEAD, this paper seeks to shed light on the fund in general and its financial impact compared to its goals in particular. Our findings suggest a relatively high impact of FEAD in poorer countries and an at least noteworthy impact in some wealthier countries. However, the FEAD case raises questions about the balance between delivering on social rights and the role of place-based philanthropy and the role of Europe herein.

11.55 – Joy Schols – Transparency in tax expenditure measurements. An analysis based on the Belgian case of occupational pensions

Abstract:

More than half a century ago, Richard M. Titmuss drew attention to the fact that, next to the well-known direct cash benefits, welfare benefits can also be received through fiscal incentives. He argued for the inclusion of fiscal welfare in academic research to fully uncover the workings of the welfare state. As a result of this plea, the importance of studying these ‘social tax expenditures’ is now

generally accepted by scholars and international organisations alike. However, regardless of the increase in (academic) studies, limited actual progress has been made to reveal this 'hidden welfare state'. In this paper we argue that the most prominent reason for this limited progress has to do with a lack of critical investigation and documentation of the few data sources available. Most studies make use of widespread data from the OECD, EU-SILC or from data provided by national authorities. Based on the Belgian case of occupational pensions, we will illustrate that by using this data, faulty tax expenditure estimates are produced and that calculations using alternative data sources result in manifestly different outcomes. Building on these findings, we argue that real progress to reveal the 'hidden welfare state' will not be made unless available data sources are more critically evaluated and existing data gaps are closed using new data sources.

SESSION 10 – Family Policy and Lone Parents – Chair: Agnieszka Nelson

11.05 – Wim Van Lancker – Hannah Zagel – Family policies and poverty of single mother families: A comparative life course perspective

Abstract:

This paper investigates the links between family policies and poverty of single mother families through a life course lens. Research increasingly recognizes that single motherhood is not usually a permanent state, but implications of life course timing for poverty risks and the role of policy have yet to be evaluated. This paper maps the distribution of single mother families across life stages in European countries, and quantifies the associated poverty risks. Further, we examine whether generous government spending on family policies early in the child's life course attenuates poverty risks equally across single mother families in different life stages. We apply multilevel logistic regressions using EU-SILC data (2012 and 2013) on single mother families in 25 countries (N=16,620), and OECD social expenditure data on cash benefits, childcare services and parental leave. We find that, first, poverty risks vary among single mother families in different life stages (youngest child age 0-5, 6-10, 11-17), and that life stage-poverty patterns differ strongly across countries. Second, generosity in family policy spending at the beginning of the child's life is not uniformly associated with lower poverty for single mother families. On the contrary, while generosity in spending for child benefits is associated with lower poverty risks of single mother families in all life stages, generosity in childcare expenditure reduces poverty of single mother families with school-age children more than that of those with small children. Generosity in spending for parental leave shows no association with life stage specific poverty. Our findings reveal that the life stage of single mother families matters for their likelihood to be poor, and that early years' policies intervene in this relationship to different degree. The research supports the view that governments should disperse their spending across different family policy instruments to benefit single mother families in all life stages.

11.30 – Sue Regan – David Stanton – The Ministerial Taskforce on Child Support: An Evidence-Informed Inquiry

Abstract:

Public inquiries into social security in Australia have occurred with regular frequency over recent decades. As temporary advisory instruments appointed at the discretion of executive government, public inquiries seek out evidence, consult publicly and provide policy advice. Typically, public inquiries involve research activities of various forms. This article unpacks the role of research in public inquiries into social security. By drawing on several case-studies of social security inquiries since the 1970s, the authors find that inquiries typically draw in multiple sources of research evidence and that this evidence informs inquiry recommendations. Some specific examples of social security research are highlighted and the role they played in the process of inquiry explored. In light of these findings, the authors argue that public inquiries create supply and demand for research evidence: increasing ‘supply’ through processes of inquiry-related research creation and ‘demand’ through executive government needing to respond to the inquiry findings and its associated evidence base. This suggests that the establishment of a public inquiry can provide a more direct way of influencing public policy, not usually open to external researchers. Particular attributes of social security inquiries are then explored which might make it more likely that research influences inquiry outcomes and subsequent policy reform.

11.55 – Rense Nieuwenhuis – Hannah Zagel – Squeezed in tight – the burden of single mothers’ housing costs in comparative perspective

Abstract:

This paper investigates the role of the housing system for single mothers’ housing costs burden. Research has extensively demonstrated single mothers’ disadvantaged socio-economic position across European countries, but has paid little attention to housing costs. This is striking because low-income households are particularly likely to be overburdened with housing costs. Comparative housing studies, on the other hand, show the strong influence of housing systems on wellbeing, but do not consider effects on single mothers. This literature shows that the high quality of social housing in integrated housing systems protects disadvantaged households more than dual housing systems. Dual systems have housing markets dominated by home ownership and small segments of free or reduced priced housing. Following this research, we expect that single mothers are better protected in integrated rental systems and face a lower housing cost burden here compared to in dual systems. We examine these expectations using EU-SILC data (2009-2015) on mothers living with an own child (<25 years) in the household (N=338,841). We estimate 3-level random effects regression to investigate the links. Individuals were living in 25 countries at the time of the survey, which we divide into dual rental systems (Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, United Kingdom) and integrated rental systems (Austria, Denmark, France, Greece, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland). Our findings confirm single mothers’ disadvantaged position, but run counter to our expectation about the role of rental systems. We find that single mother households generally face a

stronger risk of housing cost overburden than couple households, but that this difference is particularly pronounced in integrated rental systems. The analyses show that this difference is to a large part explained by their lower likelihood to live in free housing in these housing systems. Results further indicate that there may be a trade-off between quality and costs in integrated rental systems for single mothers.

SESSION 11 – Redistribution – Chair: Peter Saunders

14.20 – Tijs Laenen – Dimitri Gugushvili – Family policies and poverty of single mother families: A comparative life course perspective

Abstract:

Some 20 years ago, Korpi and Palme (1998) published one of the most influential papers in the history of social policy discipline, in which they put forward a ‘paradox of redistribution’: the more countries target welfare resources at the poor only, the less redistribution is actually achieved and the less income inequality and poverty are reduced. This paper provides a state-of-the-art review of empirical research on that paradox. More specifically, we break down the paradox into seven core assumptions that, together, form a causal chain running from institutional design to redistributive outcomes. For each causal assumption, we offer a comprehensive and critical review of the relevant empirical literature, including also a broader range of studies that did not aim to address K&P’s paradox per se, but are informative about it nonetheless. Our main contribution is that we move beyond a simple test of the ‘end product’ (i.e. Are universal systems more effective in reducing poverty and income inequality?) to a much more sophisticated examination of the in-between mechanisms underlying the paradox of redistribution.

Our review shows that the only assumption which is unequivocally supported is that higher welfare spending is associated with lower levels of poverty and inequality, but even in this case there is some indication that countries can compensate for lower spending with more accurate targeting of low-income families. There is also ample evidence that the first stages of the causal chain – institutional structures of the welfare state influencing the formation of class coalitions and the latter affecting the size of the redistributive budget – is simply not correct as class coalitions do not seem to differ between welfare regimes. Perhaps one of the main drawbacks of K&P’s paradox of redistribution is thus that its very foundation was taken for granted based on theoretical reasoning instead of empirical material.

14.45 – Xabier Garcia Fuente – The Paradox of Redistribution in time. Social spending in 48 countries, 1967-2016

Abstract:

Korpi and Palme (1998) famously suggested the existence of a Paradox of Redistribution: although targeted programs may be more redistributive per unit of expenditure, universalism reduces distributive conflicts and leads to bigger, more egalitarian welfare states. However, recent works have updated their study and show that low-income targeting is uncorrelated with redistribution (Brady and Bostic 2015; Marx et al. 2016). My paper provides a different view on the impact of

welfare state design. The Paradox of Redistribution is an argument about political developments at country level. Therefore, contrasting it requires exploring the link between policy design and redistribution within countries over time. With this aim, I conduct a panel analysis of the redistributive impact of social transfers in 48 countries, using survey micro-data provided by LIS. My results can be summarized as follows: the trade-off between progressivity and size is contingent on progressivity levels. In pro-poor welfare states, progressivity reductions correlate with increases in social expenditure that outweigh their effect. In pro-rich countries, conversely, progressivity and size are not correlated. These patterns generate distinct redistributive outcomes. Pro-poor welfare states like Ireland, Canada and Poland have increased redistribution while becoming less progressive. In contrast, elitist welfare systems in Latin America remain small, and the little redistribution they achieve is the result of sluggish increases in progressivity. This fits with elite-centered approaches to redistribution (Ansell and Samuels 2014; Albertus 2015). As marginal beneficiaries overlap with taxpayers in higher deciles, low-income targeting does not preclude support for spending in the less needy. In elitist welfare states, as marginal beneficiaries are among the non-taxpaying poor, distributive politics becomes zero-sum.

15.10 – Young-Hwan Byun – Government redistribution and public opinion: A matter of contention or consensus?

Abstract:

Previous comparative research has been guided by the idea that the level of government redistribution accords with the degree of consensus on redistribution among citizens. By extending the scope of analysis to non-Western rich democracies, I offer an alternative account on the condition that associates public opinion with actual redistribution. I argue that it is not a broad consensus but a clearly formed contention among citizens that concurs with more redistributive governments. Using the ISSP 2016 data, this study compares social cleavages in redistributive preferences in 23 OECD countries. Countries with the least egalitarian governments, such as Korea, Taiwan, Chile, and Israel, have a broadly consented high-level of support for redistribution. What distinguishes them from more redistributive countries is that those common redistributive cleavages, such as income, education, and gender, are either nonexistent or weak, indicating that the economically disadvantaged do not prefer redistribution significantly more than the advantaged. The statistical results support an explanation of the association between redistributive preferences and the size of redistribution based on “cleavage” rather than “consensus”.

SESSION 12 – Research & Measurement – Chair: Bea Cantillon

14.20 – Anna Willems – Wim Van Lancker – An experimental approach to reducing non-take up of benefits and services at the local level: set-up, results, and lessons learned

Abstract:

Welfare states are plagued by high levels of non-take up (NTU) of benefits and services. NTU represent a failure of welfare states in granting each and every one the social rights one is entitled to. In this research project we seek to assess the impact of the MISSION program, an outreach program towards disadvantaged families at the local level in the Belgian city of Kortrijk. The objective of the program is to increase the take-up of local social services and benefits, with a particular focus on employment and income protection. The study is designed as a randomized controlled trial (RCT) which enables us to test whether close counselling by multi-disciplinary outreaching case handlers is effective to increase take-up rates. The experiment lasts until the end of 2019. In addition we aim to 1) further our understanding of the underlying mechanisms of NTU; and 2) examine other possible outcomes of the intervention. Therefore the RCT is complemented by a mixed method approach in which participants to the experiment are surveyed before and after the treatment, in order to shed light on determinants of NTU and examine as well other outcomes including well-being, social network, trust in institutions, satisfaction with social services and objective measures of living conditions. In this presentation we focus on the first results of non-take up of benefits and services within our research population. We present the NTU rate of certain benefits and services, which are self-reported (after control of the interviewer) and administrative objective data. Also we discuss the possible determinants of NTU in our research population, such as thresholds and trigger events. The results will enable us to draw lessons that are applicable beyond the particular local context in Belgium.

14.45 – Paul Dourgnon – Florence Jusot – Jérôme Wittwer – Access to health care and insurance of undocumented immigrants in France. First results from an innovative survey

Abstract:

The recent so called “refugee crisis” encompasses both legal and illegal migration to Europe. While the experience of migration and dire living conditions in host country are likely be detrimental to health, the literature is scarce about health and access to healthcare of undocumented immigrants (UI), a population difficult to reach through standard statistical surveys.

In France, UIs have been entitled since 2000 to a state-funded health insurance (“A.M.E”) on a means tested basis, which by and large covers the same basket as public health insurance.

Evidence shows that managing UIs outside the health care system by only allowing access to emergency care is inefficient and inequitable. Besides, A.M.E expenditure represents less than 0.5% of total public health expenditure. It has nevertheless come under strong political pressure from mid-right to right nationalists’ parties, who point sustainability issues and view it as a strong magnet for illegal migration to France.

While it is of utmost importance to provide solid evidence to public debate and policymaking, no study had ever assessed A.M.E's actual efficiency on UIs' access care. This study aims at shedding first light on UIs' access to insurance and healthcare in France from an innovative survey, designed by the authors.

The "First Steps" survey collected data in 14 languages, among a representative sample of 1200 UIs, from February to April 2019 in NGOs and public entities providing assistance to migrants.

This survey enables to study who access A.M.E, who doesn't, and why, and on access to care. It also collects data on physical and mental health and how they evolved along migration process and since arrival to France.

First results show that all eligible migrants do not benefit from A.M.E and that their health needs remain largely uncovered. Better coverage should help reduce decline in health status observed after arrival.

15.10 – Sue Regan – David Stanton – Public Inquiries into Social Security in Australia and the role of research

Abstract:

The Ministerial Taskforce on Child Support was established to review the child support scheme in Australia and paved the way for the major reforms to child support that were implemented during 2006-08. The Ministerial Taskforce undertook extensive research during the inquiry and their recommendations were almost universally accepted by government. This article explores the activities and roles of the Ministerial Taskforce, drawing on inquiry documentation and interviews with members of the Taskforce and other policy actors directly involved. The authors ask: in what ways was the inquiry influential and what were the characteristics of the inquiry that contributed to its influence? The authors argue that the strength of the Ministerial Taskforce emanated from three core characteristics: the emphasis on improving the research evidence; the development of explicit principles to provide a normative guide for the inquiry; and the ongoing dialogue between the Taskforce and an associated Reference Group. The authors highlight tensions and challenges of the inquiry process, but conclude that it represents an effective 'evidence-informed' inquiry. In the context of much literature that laments the lack of evidence being used in policymaking, this study of the Ministerial Taskforce on Child Support provides a rare empirical example of how evidence and policy interact in practice.

SESSION 13 – Housing – Chair: Wim Van Lancker

15.50 – Michihito Ando – Kunio Urakawa – Income and housing poverty: Multidimensionality, heterogeneity and nonlinearity

Abstract:

This paper examines relationships between income and housing poverty, using large-sized individual datasets of Housing and Land Survey (2003, 2008, 2013) in Japan. Our analysis consists of the following two components. First, we construct multidimensional housing poverty indices based on Alkire and Foster (2011), using eight variables of housing quality and neighborhood environment. Second, we investigate heterogeneous and nonlinear relationships between household income levels and the multi-dimensional housing poverty indices, using graphical analyses and regressions.

Our results show that there are robust negative associations between income and housing poverty, but these negative associations are quite heterogeneous, depending on how a poverty index is constructed and how household types and geographic regions are selected for an analysis. One important finding is that some physical dwelling indices such as "rot and corruption", "overcrowding", and "no bathroom" have strongly negative correlation with income levels regardless of household types, while the indices of broader housing environment such as "old houses", "small space outside the house" and "long commuting time" have weaker or no negative correlations with income levels.

In addition, the negative relationships between income and housing poverty are in many cases nonlinear. Both our graphical analyses and regressions show that the propensity to become a "housing poorer" sharply increases when the household annual incomes are 2 or 3 million yen (i.e. around 20 or 30 thousand U.S. dollars) or less regardless of household types.

16.15 – Siu Ming Chan – Housing as social security for anti-poverty: The case of Hong Kong

Abstract:

Under the influence of neo-liberalism and globalization, Hong Kong, like other world global cities, facing long-lasting and worsening poverty and housing situation. To cope with the poverty problem, the Hong Kong government set up the official poverty line in 2013, purposing at analyzing the poverty situation and enhancing anti-poverty policies. However, the income approach of poverty measurement ignores the housing perspective. The housing factors, which highly affecting family well-being, were overlook by the government in setting social security and poverty alleviation policies. Using data from the Hong Kong population census, the impact of housing on the poverty situation was examined. The housing poverty situation of families is compared by using different methods in measuring housing affordability. The analysis aims at identifying those living under poverty with the impact of housing problems and the risk factors of being housing poverty. The result showed that the poverty situation of families was different with varied housing situation, such as housing type, location and living floor area. Besides, the impact of housing policy for anti-poverty, such as public housing and subsidized housing policy, will be discussed in the political-economic

context of Hong Kong. This paper highlights the importance of housing perspective in social security for protecting families from being poverty, especially for the world cities under a substantial influx of capital with increasing housing price and rent. It urges the government to implement more progressive and targeting social security policy with consideration of housing perspective.

SESSION 14 – Migration – Chair: Kenneth Nelson

15.50 – Moa Martenson – Joakim Plame – Martin Ruhs – Marcus Österman – Reciprocity in welfare institutions and attitudes to free movement in EU immigration countries

Abstract:

This paper analyses the determinants of public attitudes to ‘free movement’ of workers, i.e. intra-EU labour mobility and migrants’ access to national welfare states. The focus is on the role of the degree of reciprocity in national systems of social protection (institutional reciprocity) for explaining variations these attitudes across 12 EU immigration Member States. Under the current rules for ‘free movement’, EU citizens can move and take up employment in any other EU country and – as long as they are ‘workers’ – enjoy full and equal access to the host country’s welfare state. The political leaderships in a number of Member States – most notably in the [UK](#) but also in [Denmark](#), [Netherlands](#) and [Austria](#) – have in recent years called for more restricted access for EU workers to welfare benefits. The political leaderships in most other EU countries appear to have been opposed to fundamental and permanent reform of the current rules concerning free movement, hence supporting that the current policy of unrestricted access to labour markets and full and equal access to welfare states for EU workers should continue. We analyse the position of the populations in 12 countries. The results indicate no general effect of the institutional reciprocity of the social protection systems on attitudes to free movement, or migrants’ access to the welfare state for that matter. However, we identify an interaction effect suggesting that the degree institutional reciprocity of a country’s social protection system lowers the resistance of unemployed persons to free movement.

16.15 – Marius Olivier – Reciprocity in welfare institutions and attitudes to free movement in EU immigration countries

Abstract:

In accordance with international standards, destination countries are supposed to extend social (security) protection – at least in the area of contributory benefits – to migrant workers on the basis of equal treatment with national workers. Yet, migrant workers often experience inadequate social protection provisioning in destination countries. This is the result of among others nationality discrimination in both social security and related laws and the practice of several destination countries; the lack of bilateral social security coordination arrangements; and inadequate development of multilateral social security agreements in several regions of the world. These unilateral extensions take several main forms:

- The adoption of constitutional guarantees and statutory frameworks facilitating the protection of migrant workers abroad, for example, in India, Pakistan, Philippines, Viet Nam, Ecuador and Mexico;
- Provisions in bilateral social security treaties providing for continued coverage of certain categories of migrant workers in the social security system of the labour-exporting country;
- Establishing special overseas workers' welfare funds that extend protection to workers and (at times) also their families;
- Voluntary affiliation in national social insurance schemes;
- Measures and schemes aimed at supporting the flow of remittances and social insurance contributions to the sending country; and
- Exportability of social security benefits and the provision of related services (e.g., medical care) abroad.

International standards and instruments do not regulate this particular phenomenon.

Unilateral arrangements emanating from countries of origin are of relatively recent origin, but seem to be growing in extent and popularity. They cover sizeable numbers of migrant workers. Yet, it is argued that they can never replace what should be the primary source of the protection of migrant workers' social security rights, i.e. coverage under the laws of the destination country. In fact, the effectiveness of unilateral measures is often constrained by the weakly developed social security systems of less-developed countries of origin.