The Migration-Mobility Challenge to the Welfare State

Our puzzle: An ideal-typical view on welfare and solidarity

The main purpose of the welfare state is to provide assistance to its members from cradle to grave. The traditional view confined its membership to an ideally closed society of co-nationals only.

- Such an imagined society is closed in that “entry into it is only by birth and exit from it only by death” (Rawls, 1994).
- The main challenge is thus to establish mechanisms of redistribution across generational and economic cleavages.
- In a context of international migration, entry may be achieved by immigration and exit by emigration as well.
- The main challenge is thus to establish terms of inclusion and exclusion for both immigrants and emigrants.
- New mobilities blur the dichotomy between entry and exit, stayers and movers, national and aliens.
- The main challenge is thus to modify terms of inclusion and exclusion with respect to mobile populations.

MAIN QUESTION

How did migration and mobility change the boundaries of the welfare state?

APPROACH

Historical: Tracing transformations from the early 1970 to the present day. Comparative: Contrasting the Swiss case with other welfare states. Multilevel: Examining trends on the national and the European level.

QUESTION

- How did claims change in times of crisis?
  - Historical dataset of claims (N = 1624).

- How do migration policies and disability norms intersect?
  - Comparison of elite discourses in CH and UK from 1965-2018.
  - Discourses, law cases, and policies.

- How did EU welfare react to free movement?
  - Comparison of EU welfare and mobility policies from 1996-2019.
  - Comparative public policy analysis.

- How did/should welfare states adapt to mobility?
  - Comparison of welfare policies in CH and UK in the 1970s/2000s.
  - Policy responses and normative analysis.

EMPIRICS

We contribute to the nexus by examining welfare-related issues through the Migration-Mobility lens, thereby tracing the shift from migration to mobility in the areas of policy and discourse. By deploying a political philosophy perspective, we also discuss an array of normative implications.

DATA

We contribute to the HUB through the collection of original data and indicators on migration-related claims, which provides the NCCR with historical depth. We will also coordinate a Special Issue that involves other NCCR IPs as well as selected external contributors.