

# What Is Social Policy: Understanding The Welfare State



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Article

## From welfare states to welfare sectors: Explaining sectoral differences in occupational pensions with economic and political power of employees

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### Abstract

Studies analysing welfare have previously focused on countries as units. In the course of pension cuts and the increasing importance of occupational welfare, our traditional understanding of a homogeneous welfare state is being challenged. In this article, I distinguish between both economic individual power (employee skills) and political collective power (trade unions), and their relation with different occupational pensions. A combined analysis by both factors is not common, where employee skills and power resources are traditionally treated as separate, rival explanations of public welfare. Combining the 'method of difference' with the 'method of agreement', the article first presents the within-country variety of occupational pensions in Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom and Denmark. Occupational pensions in the same economic sectors across countries are then used as the units of analysis in order to illustrate the plausible determinants of economic individual power and political collective power.

### Keywords

Occupational pensions, power resources, skills, social policy, trade unions, welfare state

Many European countries have seen a retrenchment in public social policies over recent decades due to fiscal restrictions and demographic changes. Welfare states are in flux and non-state social policy is promoted in a large number of countries in order to cope with these challenges. In changing welfare states, occupational welfare represents a very important potential compensation for retrenchment (Trampusch, 2009). Although the comparative welfare state literature has improved

our understanding of retrenchment processes (Obinger et al., 2010; Schludi, 2005; Seelieb-Kaiser, 2008), these studies have focused on public pensions and countries

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Provocative and engaging, it offers insight into a wide range of social policy issues such as: welfare regimes, welfare state development, the politics of. Understanding the Welfare State. Cambridge: Polity Press. ?, pp. , pbk. Article in Journal of Social Policy 40(03) July with 15 Reads. Understanding the Welfare State explains in clear language how social range of social policy issues such as: welfare regimes, welfare state development, the. Provides a concise political and sociological introduction to social policy. Helps readers to grasp the nature of social programs and the political struggles. Available in the National Library of Australia collection. Author: Beland, Daniel; Format: Book; viii, p. ; 21 cm. Social Policy is the study of the welfare state, and responses to social need. These pages outline the main issues. Social Policy is the study of the causes of social problems and what governments attempt to do about them. Understanding Social Policy when the rapid expansion of key public services prompted interest in the emerging 'welfare state' . Social policy is often hard to define, as it has many aspects to consider. It takes into .. What is Social Policy: Understanding the Welfare State, Policy Press. Social policy aims to improve people's well-being, and is especially policy areas and to broader institutional arrangements, often referred to as the welfare state. .. government policies to understanding how new social issues, needs and. Global social policy (GSP) takes different forms from those of national welfare states, since it depends on the activities of an array of international organisations . KEYWORDS: Social policy, welfare, poverty, inequality, India, Brazil, .. approaches to understanding the politics of welfare state expansion in. fare state, including the important roles played by conservatism and liberalism ( and their variations) in shaping welfare policy. An understanding of social welfare . While social policy scholars have showed that welfare states treat the family interpreting and understanding society and begin to study such. Synopsis. From housing and pensions to health care and unemployment insurance, social policy is a key aspect of our lives. But social programs are contested.

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