

RC19 Newsletter – December 2015

RC19 Presidential Letter 2015

Dear RC19 Members:

The year is almost over and the time has come to look back at our 2015 annual conference and reflect at the current state of RC19, before thinking about its future, as an organization. I must say that I am excited about the future, in part because our Bath annual conference went so well. The theme of the conference, “Frontiers of Inequality, Social Policy, and Welfare,” allowed us to explore issues like sustainable cities, climate change, and developing countries, in part through outstanding keynote lectures by Ian Gough and Diana Mitlin, who both shared their provocative thoughts and triggered lively discussions. Simultaneously, many of our members presented their more recent work, across the various subfields of social policy. Once again, the RC19 board and I would like to thank Professor Lynn Cooke and her team at the University of Bath for their tremendous work.

As reported by RC19 secretary Timo Fleckenstein at the Bath meeting, the RC is in a sound financial position, and currently counts about 350 members. The only reason for concern is a dropping share of RC19 members who are also International Sociological Association (ISA) members. Having a good number of ISA members in the RC is important as this number is used by the ISA to allocate slots at world congresses and forums. Therefore, the board and I strongly encourages all RC19 members (who have not yet done so) to consider joining ISA (http://www.isa-sociology.org/memb_i/index.htm).

Discussions at the general assembly in Bath also concerned the questions of appropriate presentation and members from different countries and regions in the world. While we certainly can be proud of the increasingly global spread of the network (we currently have members from 57 countries!), high-income countries, especially Western European ones, remain considerably more represented than low- and middle-income countries (most of our members hail from Europe and their proportion of the membership has remained stable over time). We can only strongly encourage all RC19 members to invite scholars from low- and middle-income countries to join us and take part in our conferences. RC19 conference organizers and board members are doing their best to facilitate their participation by providing financial support (conference fees, travel and accommodation) and help with visa applications (unfortunately that has not always been successful, though).

To make our conference more accessible to people from different regions of the world, our meetings now take place in different parts of the world as well. Upcoming RC19 events include our next annual meeting (25-27 August 2016) in Costa Rica (organized by Juliana Franzoni - juliana.martinez@ucr.ac.cr), and the 2017 annual meeting in Chapel Hill (23-25 June 2017; organized by Evelyne Huber - ehuber@email.unc.edu - and John Stephens - jdsteph@unc.edu). We are currently exploring the possibility for a smaller RC19 conference in 2018, the year of the next ISA congress (15-21 July), which will be held in Toronto. If you are interested in organizing an RC19 conference or workshop, in 2018 or beyond, please contact me (daniel.beland@usask.ca).

The next chance for members to meet up and present their work is the 2016 ISA Forum in Vienna (10-14 July 2016). RC19 has been allocated 15 sessions at the Forum, 11 based on thematic proposals from members and 4 that are open. If you have questions regarding the ISA Forum, please get in touch with the program coordinators, Bjorn Hvinden (Bjorn.Hvinden@nova.hioa.no) and Hildegard Theobald (hildegard.theobald@uni-vechta.de).

In order to rejuvenate RC19, we strongly encourage our members to mention these forthcoming activities to suitable PhD students and younger colleagues. Please make them aware of the special mechanism of mentoring support we offer at our conferences, as well as resources to financially support the participation of junior scholars. In this context, please note that the general assembly discussed the value of integrating the “mentored papers” into the common sessions, instead of scheduling extra-mentoring sessions (that are typically poorly attended and may be interpreted as “segregation”). With the support of board member Nathalie Morel, we are currently working on a new, more integrated mentorship model, to be implemented at the 2016 RC19 annual conference in Costa Rica.

Finally, let me remind you about our new RC19 website, which is now online at www.rc19.org. Please feel free to take a look and get in touch with Alexandra Kaasch (alexandra.kaasch@uni-bielefeld.de) with any suggestions for improvements or updates. Any information about new publications, calls for papers, calls for applications will now first be posted on the website, before it appears in our digests and annual newsletter. Please send all relevant information about such material to Alexandra.

I hope to see many of you in Vienna and/or in Costa Rica next year! In the meantime, feel free to send me your suggestions about future activities and initiatives.

Best wishes,

Daniel Béland (President of RC19), with the support of Alexandra Kaasch (RC19 Secretary)

RC19 Announcements

PREPARING FOR THE 2016 ISA FORUM, VIENNA

As many members are aware, the assessment (grading) of abstracts is completed. The ISA electronic system has informed authors of submitted abstracts about the outcome on *30 November*.

RC19 has 16 sessions at the Forum, based on our number of paying members. Eleven sessions have a thematic focus and separate session organizers, four sessions will be thematically open (within the RC19 area of research), while the final session will be the Business meeting. The organizers received a much larger number of interesting and high-quality paper proposals than the organizers were able to accept. This is an unfortunate situation but there is very little we can do, expect to encourage our colleagues to become paying members (with regard to future Congresses and Forums).

Some members have asked when they have to submit full papers and how papers will be made available to other members before we meet in Vienna. As far as we understand, the ISA secretariat has no provisions for this in the case of Congresses and Forums. The organizer is therefore considering whether we should set up a Dropbox (like the one for the 2015 Bath conference) where authors can upload their papers, let us say by 15 June, and other members can be invited to download papers.

Before we start setting up a Dropbox for this purpose, we are interested to receive the views of authors and other members by 1 January 2016 (Unless a majority of authors are committed to upload full papers before we meet, it makes little sense to have a Dropbox).

Recent Publications by RC19 Members

Béland, Daniel/ Daigneault, Pierre-Marc (eds.) (2015): *Welfare Reform in Canada: Provincial Social Assistance in Comparative Perspective*. Toronto: [University of Toronto Press](#).

Carbonnier, Clément/ Morel, Nathalie (eds.) (2015): *The Political Economy of Household Services in Europe*. [Palgrave Macmillan](#).

Fenwick, Tray Beck (2015): *Avoiding Governors. Federalism, Democracy, and Poverty Alleviation in Brazil and Argentina*. [University of Notre Dame Press](#).

Kaasch, Alexandra/ Martens, Kerstin (eds.) (2015): *Actors and Agency in Global Social Governance*. Oxford: [Oxford University Press](#).

Kaasch, Alexandra (2015): *Shaping Global Health Policy*. [Palgrave Macmillan](#).

Klenk, Tanja/ Pavolini, Emmanuele (eds.) (2015): *Restructuring Welfare Governance. Marketisation, Managerialism and Welfare State Professionalism*. [Edward Elgar](#).

Kuhlmann, E./ Batenburg, R./ Dussault, G. (eds.) (forthcoming): *Guest Editorial. Health workforce governance in Europe: Where are we going?* [Health Policy](#), 119 (12).

Lin, Ka/ Zhang, Jiahua (2015): *Social Policy and the Society-building Process. The Experience from the Nordic Countries*. China Renmin University Press. (In Chinese)

Meagher, Gabrielle/ Lundström, Tommy/ Sallnäs, Marie/ Wiklund, Stefan (2015): *Big business in a thin market: Understanding the privatization of residential care for children and youth in Sweden*. In: [Social Policy & Administration](#). DOI: 10.1111/spol.12172

Ringen, Stein (2016): *The Perfect Dictatorship: China in the 21st Century*. Hong Kong University Press.

The second expert group for evaluation of the adequacy of basic social security (2015): *Adequacy of basic social security in Finland 2011–2015*. Kela Research Department. [Working papers 80/2015](#). 143 pages. Helsinki 2015. ISSN 2323-9239. (For more information contact Jussi Tervola jussi.tervola@kela.fi)

Torbenfeldt, Tea/ Frederiksen, Morten/ Larsen, Jørgen Elm (eds.) (2015): *The Danish Welfare State. A Sociological Investigation*. [Palgrave Macmillan](#).

Global Social Policy

Call for Papers

Editors: Daniel Béland, Alexandra Kaasch, Huck-Ju Kwon, Rianne Mahon

Editorial Manager: Amanda Schimunek (gsp@uni-bielefeld.de)

Published by SAGE, *Global Social Policy* is a fully peer-reviewed journal that advances understandings of social policy, social development, social and health governance, gender and poverty, social welfare, education, employment, and food, and the advantages and disadvantages of globalization, from transnational and global perspectives. The journal publishes scholarly and policy-oriented articles that address global social policy discourse and practice, as well as transnational flows of capital, people and policies, including the diffusion of ideas.

As the incoming editors of *Global Social Policy*, we invite scholars and practitioners to consider submitting their new papers to our journal. We welcome contributions dealing with issues such as globalization, multilevel governance, transnational diffusion, and the social policy engagement of international organizations and international non-governmental organizations. Studies focusing on particular countries as well as comparative papers are welcome, as long as they explicitly deal with global issues and processes. We also are open to all types of epistemologies, research methods, and theoretical perspectives.

For more information about the journal and the submission process, please visit the journal's page on the SAGE website: <http://gsp.sagepub.com>. If you have any questions about the journal or the suitability of your work for it, please contact one of us and we will ensure timely feedback. We are looking forward to receiving your submissions in the near future!

Sincerely yours,

Daniel Béland, Alexandra Kaasch, Huck-Ju Kwon, and Rianne Mahon

Calls for Applications

BGHS Start-up Scholarships

Supported by the Excellence Initiative, the Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology (BGHS) has been established as a joint institution of the Department of History and the Faculty of Sociology at Bielefeld University, Germany.

The Graduate School is offering 6 Start-up Scholarships for international MA graduates.

During their four-month stay at the Graduate School, recipients will have the opportunity to prepare a persuasive proposal for a dissertation project. Subsequently they may apply for the doctoral degree program at the BGHS and/or for scholarships, doctoral positions and funding programs in Germany or worldwide.

The scholarships will be awarded for Summer Term 2016 (1 April until 31 July 2016) and include a stipend of 1,200 euros per month. Upon application, travel costs can also be covered by the Graduate School. If applicable, an allowance for children will be added.

Requirements: We welcome applications from international MA graduates who intend to pursue a doctoral degree in history, sociology, political science or social anthropology at the BGHS. Further information on the application process can be found at:

[http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/\(en\)/bghs/Ausschreibungen/startup_scholarships.html](http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/(en)/bghs/Ausschreibungen/startup_scholarships.html)

Applications should be submitted via the online application portal no later than *15 January 2016*. If you have any questions, please contact us at: application-bghs@uni-bielefeld.de.

BGHS Visiting Fellowships

Supported by the Excellence Initiative, the Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology (BGHS) has been established as a joint institution of the Department of History and the Faculty of Sociology at Bielefeld University, Germany.

The Graduate School is offering 2 Visiting Fellowships for international doctoral researchers to fund four-month fellowships at the Graduate School.

The fellowships will be awarded for the Summer Term 2016 (1 April until 31 July 2016) and include a stipend of 1,200 Euro per month. Upon application, travel costs can also be covered by the Graduate School. If applicable, a children's allowance will be added.

Requirements: We encourage international doctoral researchers who are working on a thesis in history, sociology, political science, or social anthropology to apply. For further information on the application process please take a look at:

http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/%28en%29/bghs/Ausschreibungen/visiting_fellowships.html

Applications should be submitted via the online application portal no later than *15 January 2016*. If you have any questions, please contact us at: application-bghs@uni-bielefeld.de.

PhD-position “Comparative European Labour Markets and Social Policy Research” at KU Leuven, Belgium (*Deadline: 17 January 2016*)

The project addresses two main research questions: 1) what are the social divides in working conditions and job quality in European labour markets, and how have they developed in the past two decades? 2) what is the effect on these divides of macro-level, contextual variants of labour market policy, industrial relations and welfare institutions? The project analyses micro-data from various comparative European surveys and combines them with macro-level data on labour market policy, industrial relations and welfare.

The project is supervised by Prof Valeria Pulignano (valeria.pulignano@soc.kuleuven.be) and Prof Wim van Oorschot (wim.vanoorschot@soc.kuleuven.be) at the Centre for Sociological Research of KU Leuven. More information can be obtained from them, as well as from:

<https://icts.kuleuven.be/apps/jobsite/vacatures/53566570>

WZB Directorship for a new research unit addressing fundamental questions in the field of institution-related inequality research in an international context (*Deadline: 31 January 2016*)

For more information see: <https://www.wzb.eu/en/jobs/director-1>

Other announcements

Improving Poverty Reduction in Europe: Lessons from the Past, Scenarios for the Future

The ImPRovE Final Conference, 3-5 February 2016, Antwerp, Belgium.

For the programme, registration form and more information on the ImPRovE Final Conference, please visit the [website](#).

Developing applied perspectives on professional groups

Viola Burau, University of Aarhus, Denmark Ellen Kuhlmann, Karolinska Institute, Sweden

Public services are no longer limited to welfare states; they have rapidly expanded across the globe and include a range of public and private providers. Services, such as health and social care services, are heavily populated by a wide range of different professional groups, including: classical professions like doctors, lawyers and university professors; public service professions like teachers, social workers and nurses; and emerging global professions like accountants, consultants and bankers. Professions are key to the delivery of public services; they translate public policies and political programmes into concrete services for citizens. In this process, they also define the substance of services and shape the organisation of services by drawing on different forms of expert knowledge. Taken together, this turns professional groups into important switchboards between macro level policies and meso level service provision.

These unique positional and substantive resources also mean that professional groups can make a potentially important contribution to processes of policy reform and organisational change in public services. As vertical boundary spanners, professional groups can adapt policies and organisational innovations to specific (local) contexts and thereby make changes in public services more sustainable. The potential contribution of professional groups is echoed by recent contributions to the literature that draw on the organisation studies of the professions perspective and which highlight the close interplay between professional and organisational projects.

In contrast, more applied studies of public services organisation and change, for example related to health and social care, do not fully acknowledge the potentially influential role professional groups can play. Studies tend to be more concerned with individual members of professional groups, and the relative fit between their personal characteristics and attitudes on the one hand and service changes on the other. This often goes hand in hand with a view of organisational change as a linear process of translating best practices into service innovation. The applied perspective thus fails to acknowledge the importance of professions as collective actors in the provision of services for citizens and the benefits of self-regulation and professional ethics.

Aims

To bring together a group of researchers and practitioners with an interest in developing applied perspectives on professional groups and to identify strategies for how professional groups can be used as a resource in processes of innovating public services.

Activities

If you are interested, and if you would like to be informed about and join future activities of this group, please contact Viola Burau (viola@ps.au.dk).

Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Social Policy Network

This recently established network will provide a first port of call for online information on social policy and social welfare issues in the Middle East and North Africa region. It will seek to promote the following:

- Academic research in relation to social policy in MENA
- Up-to-date policy analysis on the key social challenges facing MENA
- Information on social welfare issues for use by the wider public
- Academic resources for university-level students in the subject areas of social policy and social welfare in MENA

The work of the network will include:

- A core group of globally based academic experts who specialise in social policy topics in the MENA region
- A programme of events, round tables and ESRC funded conferences
- A *virtual library* for key relevant academic publications, policy briefs and working papers
- Country-based profiles of the welfare systems of the MENA countries
- A *blog* by Dr Rana Jawad
- A Middle East and North Africa Social Policy *jiscmail group* open to all for your subscription

Main network participants:

The main participants in the network will be a core group of established social policy academics covering the countries selected for this project. New members are welcome.

Coordinator: Dr Rana Jawad

Compiled by:

Alexandra Kaasch (alexandra.kaasch@uni-bielefeld.de)

Secretary, Research Committee 19 (ISA)

Junior Professor in Transnational Social Policy, Faculty of Sociology, University of Bielefeld, Germany