

Workshop proposal nr.10

Title: **Welfare Inequalities and Migration**

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Welfare Inequalities and Migration

Our panel seeks to address how inequalities in provisions of welfare across states have impacted migration flows. Explanations of migration predominantly focus on regional (spatial) inequalities in terms of income and employment. As such, they miss out the potentially important role of differences in welfare regimes in destination and origin countries in affecting migration decisions, and hence, their potentially crucial role in attracting and retaining migrants. Therefore, our aim is to assess the role of welfare systems in both countries of origin and destination on migration patterns (macro level) and migration aspirations and decision-making process (micro level) within and towards Europe.

The way in which origin and receiving welfare regimes across Europe affect migration has remained surprisingly under-studied. Prior work has only partially captured the role of welfare provisions in mobility patterns by taking an exclusively (macro level) receiving country perspective. This has resulted in a strong bias that ignores the role of the country of origins' welfare regimes in migration. This is unfortunate as from a theoretical perspective, social security and socio-economic inequality in origin countries are expected to play a major role in migration decision-making.

While a macro-perspective serves to identify patterns, trends and correlations between migration and characteristics of welfare systems, a micro-perspective is crucial to uncover the social mechanisms explaining these patterns, and in particular the role of perceptions of welfare provisions and their transferability in the formation of migration aspirations and decisions. In order to fill these theoretical and empirical gaps, the overarching questions to be addressed are, how different types of welfare arrangements in both origin and destination shape migration patterns (macro perspective), and how perceptions of welfare provisions and their transferability in origin and potential destination countries shape migration aspirations and decisions (micro and meso perspective). Conceptually, we consider both formal welfare arrangements, available through public/state institutions, as well as informal, family and community based arrangements. Another potential line of enquiry is how migration impacts inequalities in terms of transforming welfare provisions in both destination and sending countries. We also welcome contributions focusing on the legal aspects of welfare transferability, as well as practical barriers and opportunities in relation to welfare arrangements encountered by migrants.