Call for papers EISS Conference on Social Security and Sustainability

11-12 October 2018 - Venice International University – Isola San Servolo

Intro

At the occasion of the 50 years celebration of the European Institute of Social Security, the annual conference of the institute will be organized around the topic of sustainability in social security.

Sustainable development in social security is often referred to as a major objective to be looked after by (inter)national social policy makers. Yet what is to be understood by the principle of sustainability in the field of social security? Is there something as a common understanding of the principle of sustainability, valid across various disciplines, relevant for social security, and in a cross-national setting? The topic will be addressed in a multidisciplinary manner, going beyond the approach of a mere economic-financial assessment of system sustainability (“i.e. financial and economic constraints to social security”). The conference addresses an international public and has the ambition to bring together established scholars in the field and the upcoming younger generation of social security scientists.

Call for papers

For the 2nd day of the conference we launch a call for papers around the three key-drivers in our current social security systems – work, residence income - and their relation with sustainability. The drivers are addressed from the current evolutions or recent changes they undergo and the possible impact this may have on sustainable development in social security.

For each key-driver two key-note speakers will be invited on the basis of a selection of papers sent in before April 30. The selected speakers will have the opportunity to present their paper at the second day of the conference in specifically designed sessions to that purpose. Each of the sessions will start with the presentation of the selected papers, followed by a first reaction given by a discussant - i.e. a young researcher from the PhD-event that precedes the conference – and subsequently by a public debate with the conference attendants.

For the selection of the papers the following criteria will be taken into account:

* relevance of the paper for the overall topic on sustainability and social security,
* multinational approach of the paper
* interdisciplinary relevance: paper can be written in a certain discipline (law, social science, economics, …) but should have relevance for other disciplines or it builds further on research from other disciplines
* thought provoking character of the paper
* the paper answers a central (research) question
* the paper is well written (writing skills and language)

Changing key-drivers of work, residence and income challenging sustainable social security introduced

Work, residence and income have traditionally been key-elements in the design and development of our (modern) social security systems in Western Europe.

*Work* has been from the outset a major element in the development of traditional social security (e.g. the *Bismarckian* systems). For many of our systems a direct or indirect link to work is the key element in accessing social protection. Work is an important factor for the concrete design of our systems, meaning that elements such as (minimum) work records, the presence of an employer, the availability for work, the full time/part time character of work, etc., play an important role in the condition setting to social security entitlements. The kind of work – wage-earnership, self-employment, civil service – may also have effect in the concrete system development, as social security will have to be shaped properly around the various work forms. Work normally generates income on the basis of which people earn their livelihood and which is consequently used as a proper basis for the financing of social security. Both contributions and income tax (used as a basis for financing of social security) are generally levied on salary from work and professional income from self- employment. The sustainability of the schemes therefore rely partly on a working population generating a steady flow of income to cover for the benefits.

Work is undergoing some (fundamental) changes now. Employers demand higher skills, work can be organized in more flexible and mobile manner and there is a growing number of people aged 60+ in the workforce. Furthermore, we see other signs of fundamental changes, like the growth of “the sharing economy”, leading to various forms of decomposed activities offered on different kinds of platforms that do not always align with ‘traditional’ work. Social security systems need to respond to these changes but struggle in doing so.

Apart from work *residence* has been traditionally a key element. Like work, residence is in systems of the universal or *Beverdigean* type a key factor in providing access to social protection. Yet more generally residence or the linkage to a geographically defined space (country, region…) has always been crucial for delineating geographically the solidarity circle(s) one does belong to: residence as indicator to (inclusive) participation in society. Like work, residence became an important factor for shaping the ‘conditionality’ in social security: people have to belong a defined period of time to a certain society to enjoy fully the social security entitlements; the period of residence becoming an important element in defining the level and scope of the benefits. Residence is an important indicator for (assumed) integration in society and participation in social security systems.

Enhanced mobility and migration challenge the structural link between residence and social security. Residence should be legal, and refers to certain time frame. Yet from which moment does (legal) stay turn into stable residence? And can a ‘*limited’* residence, such as a short period of stay or a ‘*corrupted*’ residence missing out one or fundamental components, such as irregular stay, lead to social security entitlements? If so, to what extent (full or partial coverage)? And what about the financing of partially covered benefits for persons staying only temporary on the territory (sustainability) Does residence play an equivocal function across the various social security contingencies? Or can we have different approaches in the residence definition or residence timeframe for contingencies such as health care (urgent treatments) and social assistance (emergency assistance), compared to social insurances designed for unemployment and work incapacity?

*Income* finally is an important element in relation to outcomes for social security (levels of income replacement; compensation of life-time costs for families helping them to save on their personal income). At the same time income is a crucial element (basis) for the financing and thus (long-term) sustainability for the systems. The relation between both elements refers to the degree of redistribution between groups in society; hence we come to the very essence of social security, generating solidarity at the end of the day. Social security is often looked at as the factor par excellence for having income redistribution, at least in continental Europe; in many developing countries however, it is a way to maintain privileges for the few working while being socially insured. But even in the Western industrialized world one questions the need for income redistribution and thus the way social security serves that goal. Does social security, especially social insurance, rather than redistributing between the richer and the poor, not have to respect the equivalence, the quid pro quo? And even assuming that a certain redistribution of income is desirable, is social security the way to achieve that goal? Income guaranteeing a (stable) livelihood for families is slowly loosened up from work; capital (returns) starts to have a growing function in the generation of income but not (yet) in the development or accrual of social security (rights). Is social security bound to concentrate for its financing on income out of work? Should other income sources not also be addressed? In an ageing society, having not known in Europe major property shocks as a consequence of war the last 70 years, is it to be justified that wealth and income are more function of what was inherited than of the own work? How is the relation between social security and inheritance schemes to be looked upon? What to think of alternative sources of financing social security not related to income, but to e.g. the value added? How broad should we define the element of income for the application of social security (financing and benefits)?

Practicalities on paper submission

Papers for the conference have to be submitted the latest on April 30 2018 (2 pm) on the following e-mail address: info@eiss.be to the attention of Paul Schoukens

The paper can be maximum 10,000 words (lettertype Arial 12), excluding footnotes.

Candidates are informed by their selection, the latest by July 4. Selected candidates will get financial support for travel and stay (invoice based), in the following manner

* VIU-members: travel and stay covered under the conditions for graduate seminars (consult VIU-webpage)
* EISS-members (or members to the EISS - Efese Working Group): travel and stay covered up to a max. of 350 euro
* Others: hotel costs covered up to a max. of 175 euro