

Miroslav Nemčok¹

¹University of Oslo

Support for the welfare state among benefit recipients: A revision of the self-interest perspective

Bakgrund/Frågeställning

Individuals receiving welfare benefits are often found to be more supportive of the welfare system. However, the empirical evidence supporting this link has come mostly from (cross-sectional) survey data—thus, identifying a mere correlation. It may be equally valid that high regime support constitutes a predisposition for membership in a welfare program, or that the regime support is a more stable value-based orientation and people had been fond of the regime already before their life situation changed and made them eligible for welfare provisions. Diving deeper into the causal effects of welfare benefits, this study utilizes data from a three-wave panel surveys fielded in Norway and Germany between 2014-2017. The three-wave structure enables to conduct individual-based difference-in-differences analysis examining the trends in welfare support among those who became eligible to receive benefits. The findings indicate that high support is indeed characteristics for the welfare benefit recipients. However, the size of the effect varies depending on whether the trends are compared against individuals' previous attitudes (i.e., within-person reference) or against the trends revealed by their fellow citizens standing outside of the welfare programs (i.e., between-person reference). Such discrepancy calls for further examination.

Metod och Resultat

Konklusion