

The Institute for Sociology, Centre for Social Sciences, HAS

cordially invites you to its twelfth *Jour fixe* event:

Attila Bartha (IPS CSS HAS):

Can we borrow policies from Nordic countries?  
Crisis-induced welfare reform trajectories in vulnerable European societies

Academic Symposium

**Opponents:**

Zsolt Boda (Institute for Political Science CSS HAS) and Márton Medgyesi  
(Institute for Sociology, CSS HAS, “Sustainable well-being in ageing societies” programme)

**Abstract:**

Nordic countries systematically outperform other European Union member states in welfare policy outcomes. This logically implies the idea of borrowing the ‘best practice’ welfare policies from Northern Europe, especially in the more vulnerable Southern and Central-Eastern EU member states. The global financial crisis and the subsequent Euro area debt crisis increased further the macrofinancial pressure on welfare systems, and welfare reform constraints have become particularly stressing in the more vulnerable European societies. Hence, the question of whether, how and to what extent political elites in the different European societies are able to adopt Nordic type welfare reforms is a crucial issue in comparative welfare policy research. Combining the European Social Survey data on welfare attitudes with datasets on quality of democracy and governance this paper compares the political institutional context of welfare policies in Europe. It first focuses on the period before the onset of global financial crisis through the lens of political trust and procedural fairness approach and sheds some light on the mechanisms of virtuous vs. vicious circles between politics and welfare policies and then it discusses the possible trajectories of crisis-constrained welfare reforms. Finally, it explores some typical behavioural patterns of political elites in response to the heightened reform constraints in the more vulnerable European societies.

**Keywords:**

welfare policy, welfare reform, Nordic countries, vulnerable European societies, politics of crisis management, trust in political institutions



The venue of the symposium:

Institute for Sociology, Centre for Social Sciences, HAS,  
Hegedüs room (former Library room), Budapest I. Úri u. 49.

Date: 28 November, 2013 (Thursday), 1p.m.

Please send an email to [szociologia@tk.mta.hu](mailto:szociologia@tk.mta.hu) before 27 November if you wish to participate