



INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SECURITY ASSOCIATION
ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DE LA SÉCURITÉ SOCIALE
ASOCIACIÓN INTERNACIONAL DE LA SEGURIDAD SOCIAL
INTERNATIONALE VEREINIGUNG FÜR SOZIALE SICHERHEIT

Announcement
Call for Papers

Luxembourg

29.9–1.10.2010

**INTERNATIONAL POLICY AND RESEARCH
CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL SECURITY**

Emerging trends in times of instability: New
challenges and opportunities for social security

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The current financial and economic crisis has had an enormous impact in terms of its suddenness, scale, and global reach. The fiscal impact on social security is significant due to the depletion of reserve fund assets and increasing expenditure. At the same time social security is experiencing a new-found legitimacy in the context of a fragile economy destabilized at the core. From a broader perspective, this crisis is connected with other major trends in the world today, including an ageing population, globalization, changes in the labour market, population displacement, changes in family structures, climate change, and a crisis of values.

The International Policy and Research Conference on Social Security, to be held from 29 September to 1 October 2010 in Luxembourg, at the invitation of the Association of Social Security Bodies of Luxembourg, will address these crucial issues relating to the role of social security in times of instability. The Conference, organized as part of the International Social Security Association's Policy and Research Programme, has several objectives. In bringing together researchers, policy-makers, administrators and other members of the social security community, it will provide a platform for discussing the best ways of adapting social security to the instability that characterizes the world today. In this way, the Conference will help to inform and enlighten the current policy debate, promote policy innovation and guide future research.

The Conference follows the International Research Conference on Social Security, held in March 2007 in Warsaw, Poland, which examined the role of social security facing labour market and employment policies.

OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE

In the context of an increasingly unstable world, social security programmes have to adapt to new requirements while working towards innovative solutions. With a forward-looking view, this Policy and Research Conference aims to:

- Identify the new demographic context which encompasses, among other things, the challenges of an evolving life-cycle and of increasing migration;
- Analyse the consequences of the current financial crisis and related socio-economic changes for the future of social security;
- Assess the impact of major emerging mega-trends on social policies and on forthcoming social security challenges.

A maximum amount of time will be devoted to discussion during both plenary and concurrent sessions. A limited number of keynote addresses will seek to clarify the major issues and set the framework for discussion. The themes and sub-themes of the Conference are presented in more detail below. The plenary sessions, and one of each set of concurrent sessions, will be interpreted into English, French, German and Spanish.

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE OF THE CONFERENCE

Christian Aspalter, Beijing Normal University-Hong Kong Baptist University (China); Nicholas Barr, London School of Economics and Politics (United Kingdom); Jos Berghman, Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium); Bea Cantillon, University of Antwerpen (Belgium); Mohammed Chaabane, Centre for Research and Studies of Social Security (Tunisia); Agnieszka Chlon-Dominciak, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (Poland); Gösta Esping-Andersen, University of Pompeu Fabra (Spain); Tetsuo Fukawa, National Institute of Population and Social Security Research (Japan); Neil Gilbert, University of California, Berkeley (United States); Evance Kalula, University of Cape Town (South Africa); Olli Kangas, Social Insurance Institution (Finland); María Patricia Kurczyn Villalobos, National Autonomous University of Mexico (Mexico); Milko Matijascic, Institute of Applied Economic Research (Brazil); Einar Overbye, Oslo University College (Norway); Joakim Palme, Institute for Futures Studies (Sweden); Sara E. Rix, AARP Public Policy Institute (United States); Peter Saunders, University of New South Wales (Australia); Achim Seifert, University of Luxembourg (Luxembourg); Roland Sigg, ISSA General Secretariat.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The ISSA encourages researchers interested in proposing a paper to submit an abstract which should refer to recent or current research activity, in particular to evaluations of innovative policies or programmes. Contributions should relate to one of the sub-themes as presented below. Moreover candidates are requested to explain the policy relevance of their contribution in light of the challenges that policy-makers are facing in the field of social security. Papers related to comparative research and reports of studies with a direct bearing on the functioning of social security systems are particularly welcome.

Deadline for proposals

The title of the paper, together with a detailed abstract of about 250 words presenting the subject, methodology, hypothesis and research questions, must be submitted via the Conference Website (www.issa.int/RC2010) no later than **30 October 2009**.

A Scientific Committee (see above) will be responsible for the definition of the Conference's programme and the selection of papers to be presented at the sessions. The selected papers will be available to the Conference participants in the original language only. All papers relating to the Conference will be accessible on the Conference Website. The Scientific Committee will inform those who have submitted a paper proposal whether or not their paper has been selected in **mid-November 2009**. The papers selected should then reach the ISSA General Secretariat no later than **15 May 2010**.

Poster sessions

There will also be an opportunity for researchers, research institutions and other associations to display any information or publication related to the themes of the Conference in the form of posters.

PRE-REGISTRATION AND FINANCE

An invitation to the Conference, together with a detailed programme, will be sent in mid-February 2010 only to persons who have expressed an interest in taking part in the Conference. To do so, please fill in the online form available via the Conference Website (www.issa.int/RC2010).

No fee will be charged to participate in the Conference. The ISSA is not in a position to meet the travel and subsistence costs of attendance for its meetings, and participants and contributors will be expected to find the means of meeting these costs themselves. A limited number of attendance grants will be available to younger researchers from low- and middle-income countries whose paper was submitted and accepted by the Scientific Committee of the Conference. Please consult the Conference Website (www.issa.int/RC2010) for further information.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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Policy and Research
Conference Website:

www.issa.int/RC2010

THEMES AND SUB-THEMES OF THE CONFERENCE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

THEME 1 - FACING THE CHALLENGES OF AN EVOLVING POPULATION STRUCTURE

Over the last years, there has been a fundamental transformation of the population structure, which varies according to the level of development of countries. On the one hand, “young societies”, mainly in the South, have an abundant supply of workers and pressures to emigrate. On the other hand, “ageing societies” in industrialized countries are experiencing an ageing of the labour force and the emergence of a significant group of senior citizens who are retired while still fully capable of work. Social security programmes have to adapt rapidly to the new requirements of a growing and often precarious migrant population – driven by an increasing imbalance between young and old, and the redefinition of work and retirement in the North. To maintain its sustainability, social security must learn to capitalize on these changes and on the dynamics of these emerging populations.

1.1. Strengthening the integration of newcomers to the labour market through social investment policies

The increasing prevalence of a highly-productive economy in a growing globalized and competitive world, added to the fact that the working-age population of industrialized countries is shrinking, and the ongoing changes in family structure and behaviour, will increase vulnerability among newcomers to the labour market. It will also mean that younger generations will have to shoulder an increasing burden of the support and care of the elderly. In emerging countries, a large number of newcomers to the labour market will face a lack of job opportunities, which in turn can lead to wasted human resources, pressure to emigrate and a brain-drain. *How do we improve the human and social capital of future generations and ensure their long-term integration into the labour market? How do we better integrate social investment policy approaches into social security programmes?*

1.2. High level of migration and flexibility: Coping with an unstable labour market

Labour market flexibility and migration are intrinsically linked. A large workforce in emerging countries can offset the shrinking workforce in industrialized countries, which need to maintain highly productive economies. At the same time, high levels of migration can create new vulnerable at-risk populations. *How do we reconcile an increasingly unstable and flexible labour market with the resulting growth of vulnerable populations? How can social security adapt its programmes to better integrate migrant populations and low-skilled workers, facilitate workforce mobility, and deal with the requirements of a highly productive economy?*

1.3. Redefining work and retirement in a long-life society: Towards a new management of ages

Increased life expectancy due, in particular, to progress in maintaining the health of older people has led to the emergence of a new group called “seniors” – people who have retired from work while still being fully capable of working. This is unsustainable in an emerging long-life society in which a third of the population is over the age of 60. Beyond measures adopted to lengthen working life, it is important to instill a new management of ages to reconcile the labour market with an ageing population that is still capable of work. *How can social security adapt to this new reality? By impeding retirement? By radically changing work arrangements?*

THEME 2 - FACING THE CHALLENGES OF MULTIPLE CRISES

In light of the unquestionable impacts of the current crises – the financial and economic crisis being only the most recent one, paradigm changes are unavoidable for social security. The impact of an increasingly unstable world (high unemployment, the persistence of the informal sector, increasing poverty and vulnerability, etc.) highlights the value of solidarity for social security policies. The challenge here for social security is to compensate for labour market shortages, provide an extension of coverage and advance economic development through dynamic policies.

2.1. Multiple crises affecting social security: The value of solidarity and dynamic social policies

Demographic and family changes, the changing world of labour, the financial crisis and its subsequent economic impacts, have brought into question market and growth-based economic models and social policies that emphasize individual responsibility and financial market performances. This, in turn, has the potential to strengthen the legitimacy of social security if it can take on the challenge of becoming more dynamic, through a renewal of its basic parameters. *Can we conceptualize a new paradigm to inform social security reforms? Should it be based on solidarity and the specificities of a dynamic social security? How would this play out in specific social policies? What new (normative) boundaries could there be for social security?*

2.2. Activation programmes facing increased precariousness in the labour market

Increased global unemployment due to the economic crisis will have a long-term impact on social programmes. Activation and back-to-work programmes – which have been implemented with success over the last decade – may be difficult to sustain under conditions of high unemployment. Past experience reminds us of the risk of long-term welfare dependency, through disability or pre-retirement benefits, which can become a reality for some newly-unemployed persons. This highlights the need for well-designed back-to-work programmes, especially for the most vulnerable. *How do we maintain and reinforce these programmes in times of economic crisis? What are the impacts on the most vulnerable groups? What is the appropriate role for social security in mitigating labour upheavals in the 21st century?*

2.3. Questioning the issue of extension of coverage: Between myth and reality

Social security coverage is one of the most complex but important challenges in modern social policy. On the one hand, industrialized countries face strong pressures to reduce levels of personal coverage in a context of increased international competition, increased precariousness of jobs, and ageing populations. On the other hand, many emerging countries have made progress toward universal coverage for the elderly and most vulnerable groups of people, but their growing informal sectors pose a challenge for all social security extension policies. *What are the chances of success for recent and innovative policies to extend the coverage of social security? What are the long-term perspectives?*

THEME 3 - IMPACT OF MAJOR EMERGING MEGA-TRENDS ON SOCIAL POLICIES AND ON FORTHCOMING SOCIAL SECURITY CHALLENGES

Major emerging mega-trends, including societal, technological, environmental, and geopolitical factors, increasingly constitute a challenge for social security, which in turn has to consider the best way to cope with them. The aim here is to identify the stakes for social security administrations in the next five, ten or twenty years and to develop a forward-looking approach in order to face these challenges.

3.1. Climate change, population movement and health issues

New emerging external “stresses” like climate change and other environmental issues, population movements in a changing environment and the scale of new pandemic diseases are becoming more prominent. Consequently, this will require a rethinking of the design of social security to respond to these external forces and the new related expectations. Reflections and policy recommendations should be made for both existing and new schemes. *How do we assess the impact of external factors on social security programmes? How do we cope with them?*

3.2. Impact of the knowledge economy and new technologies on the labour market and social policies

Viewed in terms of the life-course, low-skilled workers are unlikely to accumulate a great deal of pension wealth and are, accordingly, at risk of poverty in old age. Under these circumstances it is evident that cognitive and other skills are gaining importance in the context of the global knowledge revolution. Emphasis on higher education and life-long learning is becoming more essential. For social security, the digital economy will also provide many opportunities for the improvement of services. *How should social security adjust to the new requirements of the emerging knowledge economy, or e-economy? And, in turn, what impact can the new technologies have on social security in terms of values and governance models?*

3.3. The emergence of new leading economic powers: What new values for social security policies?

The emergence of new economic powers will bring new approaches to social security. The so-called “European model” as well as the “Anglo-Saxon model” will be now challenged by the “newcomers”. For instance, Brazil, Russia, India, and China (the BRIC countries) may question the existing social security models with reference to their own values and principles. *How will these geopolitical forces shape the future of social security? What impact might they have on major issues such as the extension of coverage, ageing, and the informalization of the labour market?*