

15 families in 2022 inform the study, covering 18 children with ADHD aged between 7 and 16 years.

In our analysis, we integrate van Oorschot's model of benefit receipt with a game theoretic perspective, revealing the delicate interplay between strategy and chance for caregivers navigating the system. We find that the process of applying for basic benefits resembles a game of snakes and ladders, where the game board represents the application process, the snakes symbolize potential hurdles, and the ladders represent potential support. This analogy highlights the repeated interplay between individual, administrative, and policy design level factors.

## When Father Leave Policy Expands And Lags Behind

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Only recently has the importance of fathers as child caregivers been recognized and developed into an important policy issue. Welfare states around the world are experimenting with father quotas, father-only entitlements, and bonuses that give families more leave and resources if both mothers and fathers share the leave in an effort to increase fathers' involvement in childcare.

However, there is still no nation in the world with a fully father-sensitive, gender-equal leave policy. There are also striking differences between countries in timing of introduction and extent of changes in father leave policies. To date, there has been a lack of attempts to shed light on these phenomena, as the major focus of research is on describing policy changes or take up.

In this contribution we try to fill this important research gap by focusing on four driving forces of change: public preferences, electoral competition, resistance, and the crisis (financial, fertility, and pandemic). We maintain that addressing these determinants is particularly important in understanding policy change in this policy field. This argument is substantiated by a more detailed exploration of these drivers of change in a comparative analysis of father leave policy change in the Czech Republic and South Korea. Our analysis reveals that, in these two countries, only in Korea does the government seem to be responsive to the growing voter preferences for father leave policies. Crisis and party competition have a buttressing effect here. In the Czech Republic, instead, crises postponed reforms and father leave policy is perceived by political parties as a policy that harms their chances of re-election. Resistance prevents fully father-sensitive, gender equal parental leave in both countries.

## RN26 | T01\_02: Knowledge and learning

### Invoking and Contesting Expert Knowledge in Legislative Debates Over Social Policy in the Parliament of Finland, 1962–2022

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The literature on the relationship between expert knowledge and democracy is underpinned by two arguments. The first suggests that politics has 'scientized', pointing to the increased necessity to justify decisions with evidence. The second asserts that the dismissal and questioning of expert knowledge has become normalized, and that political discourse increasingly relies on personal experience and feelings. Both trends have been seen potentially detrimental for democracy. Our broader research project traces the intertwined development of these seemingly opposing trends. With this paper, we focus on parliamentary debates over new legislation in social policy, which we examine through the lens of epistemic governance framework. Social policy legislation has always provided a field for ideologically driven political struggles, wherein also experts have played a notable role. Depending on the perspective and situation, their role has sometimes been considered either too powerful, or too easily dismissed by governments in power. However, there is very little earlier research about the changes within politicians' practices of using and contesting expert knowledge. To shed light on the discursive and rhetorical shifts, we analyze a dataset consisting of all plenary debates over new social policy legislation which have taken place in the Parliament of Finland within the timeframe extending from 1962 to 2022. The first layer of our analysis utilizes corpus linguistics to examine the trends of invoking expert knowledge throughout seven decades, and the second focuses on discursive and rhetorical analysis of extreme cases wherein expert knowledge has been contested particularly intensively.

### Welfare and AI: An Experiment in Co-Learning for Local Governments

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The digital era has profoundly transformed social policies, pushing towards a new welfare model. This approach aspires to innovations in offered services and influences policy management (Campedelli and Vesan, 2023). In this context, artificial intelligence (AI) is viewed as a solution to reduce repetitive work and provide new tools for policy-makers (Toll et al., 2019). However, rapid advancements in

AI have raised concerns about the possibility of crucial decisions for social security escaping direct human control. To address and discuss this tension between the benefits and threats of generative AI in welfare, we present preliminary results from a research and intervention program called Govern-AI, focused on the regional welfare of Campania (Italy). The main goal of Govern-AI is to understand the interaction between institutional actors and new technologies through the introduction of an AI chatbot for local policy making. The construction of the chatbot follows a participatory research approach, as data provided by participating institutions not only constitute the chatbot's learning foundation but also significant empirical evidence. Before construction, preliminary focus groups identified relevant aspects of institutional imagination regarding AI, generating opinions and representations that translate into actual "policy frames" (Rein e Schön, 1996). Govern-AI not only provides a practical tool for decision assistance but also acts as a catalyst for co-learning between humans and the AI system, relying on information from human actors while providing outputs used by them.

## The Aura of Evidence? The Production of Recommendations for Policies in Social-research-based Projects

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Currently, social research knowledge is widely used as a basis for interventions and policies. Yet, while there are established methodologies in sociology for making descriptive knowledge ('what is'), the production of prescriptive knowledge ('what should be done') has been largely unguided by such well-defined approaches. This question remains underexplored not only in general sociology and in social research methods, but also within the specific fields like social policy. This presentation is based on a retrospective analysis of an extensive, European Commission-funded study about the role of men in gender equality in Europe, which was done through in-depth interviews with the project teams and secondary data analysis. The reconstruction was focused on how recommendations for social policies were developed in the course of the project. Our analysis suggests that translating social research findings into policy recommendations may pose a significant methodological and practical challenge. Specifically, we found that it may receive lower priority than producing findings, be unguided by any specific method or approach, and remain largely untransparent and even unreflected before, during and after the project. Discouraging an all-too-easy criticism, we argue for more reflection, frameworks, and methods that could support sociologists in the development of research-based guidelines for policies.

## The Making Of Good Practices

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Inspired by pragmatist beliefs and theories on collaborative governance, various administrations in the global North embrace experimenting in pilot projects as a fruitful strategy to bring about large scale institutional change. In such policy programs, experimentation in pilots is often combined with the development of large scale infrastructures for learning (e.g. quality collaboratives). The idea is that through experimentation and reflection new ways of organizing can emerge and that through the sharing of good examples and lessons learned the organizational transformation in other localities can be accelerated. This dynamic provides an incentive to actively produce good practices to showcase in infrastructures of learning. We take this dynamic as our analytical starting point. By drawing on a large scale ethnographic study to a program directed at healthcare reform, we show how good practices circulating in such infrastructures of learning are often fictions; in practice these initiatives seldom function as smoothly and effectively, or they do not exist at all. By drawing on a relational approach (Asdal & Cointe, 2021), we investigate how good practices are constituted by various interlocking mechanisms enacted by professionals, policy makers and technologies on different levels of the healthcare system. Our analysis raises important questions about what constitutes organizational learning in institutional reform processes.