



Introduction to the special issue on Social Protection Policies and Microsimulation

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Guest editor's introduction

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Application of Microsimulation Models in the Analysis of Taxes and Social Benefits in Croatia (AMMATSBC) is a research project run by the Institute of Public Finance and financed by the Croatian Science Foundation.¹ One of the main goals of the project is to promote the use of microsimulation models in policy analysis and academic research in Croatia.

In pursuit of these aims, AMMATSBC researchers initiated the scientific workshop *Social Protection Policies and Microsimulation* held in Zagreb on June 12 and 13, 2017. The goal of the workshop was for the gathered researchers and policy makers to discuss the ways in which microsimulation models can be helpful in the evaluation and design of social policies, particularly child benefits and “make work pay” fiscal instruments.

The workshop brought together about eighty participants – academic researchers, policy makers and analysts from all EU countries. Several very informative plenary speeches were given by academic researchers and Croatian policy makers. Sixteen academic research papers were presented in sessions about support for families and children, work incentives and labour supply, policy reforms and tax-benefit incidence.²

The workshop call for papers invited the potential presenters to submit their finished papers for publication in *Public Sector Economics*. Several submissions have arrived and were engaged in the regular peer-review process. This issue of the Journal is publishing three papers and additional articles will appear in subsequent issues.

Thus, in the current issue we first find two investigations employing EUROMOD. Venelin Boshnakov discusses the political parties’ proposals in the recently held parliamentary elections in Bulgaria, and calculates their eventual budget impact. Nuria Badenes-Plá and José María Buenaventura-Zabala assess the impact of the 2015 personal income tax reform on income inequality and poverty in Spain. Teo Matković and Dinka Čaha study the transitions of Croatian social welfare recipients into employment, estimating the roles of financial incentives, work-related capabilities and engagement in household work. The fourth paper, by Ebru Cankalp and Ilter Unlukaplan, reveals the relationship between political structure and social expenditures in Greece. It was not among papers presented at the workshop, but fits well into the current issue. This issue is rounded off with a book review by Predrag Bejaković, which contains reflections on Enrique Fernández-Macías, John Hurley and José María Arranz-Muñoz’s “Occupational change and wage inequality: European Jobs Monitor 2017”.

¹ AMMATSBC began in September 2015 and will finish in August 2018. Besides the researchers from the Institute of Public Finance, the collaborators come from the Zagreb Faculty of Economics and Business and the Institute for Social and Economic Research (United Kingdom). More information about the project is available at: <<http://www.ijf.hr/eng/research/croatian-science-foundation-projects/1053/ammatsbc/1062/>>.

² Detailed information about the workshop are available at: <<http://www.ijf.hr/eng/conferences/social-protection-policies-and-microsimulation/1204/>>.

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