

Abstracts

Once poor, always poor? On the dynamics of poverty and welfare dependency in the Netherlands

Erik Snel and Serafim Karyotis

Social policy-makers in the Netherlands worry about the long-term unemployment and welfare dependency. Despite the flourishing economy, long term-unemployment does not seem to decline. This article, however, does not only provide new data about welfare duration but also a new way to compute welfare duration, the so called spell-methodology. According to official data almost half of the current welfare recipients lives from social security 3 years or longer. One third of all welfare recipients has a social security benefit even 5 years or longer. According to our computations the long term welfare dependency is much less widespread. A little less than a quarter of all welfare recipients from the last 15 years had a social security benefit for 3 years or longer. It also appears that welfare duration is declining recently. One can only conclude that the policies to alleviate people from social security are more successful than is often assumed.

Social Assistance and the weight of unintended effects - on reflexive modernisation of social policy

Jan Terpstra

In the early nineties the implementation of the Dutch Social Assistance Act becomes severely criticised. This can be considered as a part of a moral turn in the political climate, with regard to the welfare state taking place in many western countries. All kinds of supposed phenomena, like the rise in abuse of benefits or a declining readiness to work, are often seen as effects of a soft and permissive implementation of social policy. Here another view is presented, using Beck's concept of reflexive modernisation. The growing number of people living on benefits, in combination with the steady process of juridification, an institutional vulnerability of social assistance organizations, a stalemate in local politics and a growing managerialisation give rise to a web of unintended effects contrary to the goals of social assistance. As a result politics lose their future- or goal-orientation, and become primarily oriented to finding solutions for the unintended consequences of earlier politics and implementation.

The Tragedy of the Commons model and Dutch fishery management

Martijn van Vliet en Wim Dubbink

This article addresses the adequacy of the Tragedy of the Commons model and the policy recommendations that are based upon this model. The Tragedy of the Commons model consists of an explanation why commonly owned natural resources like fisheries are easily prone to overexploitation. The model recommends the introduction of individual transferable quotas as the most effective and efficient means to pre-

vent overexploitation in fisheries. The model is criticised by the revisionist school that stresses that individual quota systems cut through the social bonds and linkages on community level that often form good bases for sustainable managed fisheries.

On basis of an analysis of the cutter fleet regulation in the Netherlands since 1976, when a system of individual quotas was introduced, the Tragedy of the Commons model and its criticisms are assessed. It is concluded that neither the model nor the revisionist alternative is satisfactory in explaining the problems in the Dutch fishery management. However, the recent development in Dutch fishery policy to include fishermen's organisations in managing the resource can be considered as a recognition that the revisionist critique cuts some ice.