



**Maynooth
University**

National University
of Ireland Maynooth

***Predicting Welfare
Attitudes by Precarity
of Work Regime Using
the European Social
Survey and the
European Working
Conditions Survey***

Dr. Amy Erbe Healy
Professor Seán Ó Riain



Research Question: Who supports Welfare?

- **From Class to Risk Groups**

- Working class votes for de-commodification (Esping-Andersen)
- ‘Insiders’ vote to protect themselves from commodification (Varieties of Capitalism)
- Both ignore the politics of workplace context
 - Workplace is a key site where class (and other social locations and identities) are experienced
 - Workplace regimes affect workers’ exposure to risk
 - Workplaces generate social bargains that resonate beyond their boundaries

- **Which Welfare Attitudes?**

- **Redistribution** (income inequality)
- **Protection** (poverty prevention)

Literature Review: work & welfare attitudes

Skill, Risk and Attitudes

- Wren and Rehm (2014): high skill workers in exposed sectors are anti-welfare (and a growing proportion of the workforce)

But ...

- Schwander et al. (2014): high skill does not insulate workers from precarity – precarious high skill workers would have stake in welfare
- Emmenegger (2009): all employees have an interest in security – low and high skill, sheltered and exposed sectors;
anti-welfare attitudes linked to opportunity (upscales)

Workplace Regimes: How Skill and Market Position Become Real

- When workers enter a workplace they
 - Experience certain profiles of Risk and Opportunity
 - Make a ‘Bargain’ that affects their attitudes to welfare (and other broader) issues

Problem: Where to get data on welfare attitudes and work regimes?

- **European Social Survey** (ESS 2004 & 2010): random sample Europe; work module has **limited questions on employment relationship and work organisation** (none on control mechanisms)
PLUS 2 questions on **welfare attitudes** (redistribution and protection)
- We check the analysis of ESS against **European Working Conditions Survey** (2005 & 2010): random sample European workers; data on both the **employment relationship and work organisation**

Work regime analysis: Latent class analysis:

- Clustering, data-reduction technique for categorical (nominal or ordinal) variables (McCutcheon 1987)
- Accounts for the distribution of cases within a cross-tabulation
- Produces mutually exclusive latent classes (in this case, work regimes)
- For labels of typologies, using an extension of Lorenz & Valeyre (2005): learn, lean, Taylorist & simple
- Unit of analysis: Employees within Denmark, Finland, Sweden; Ireland, the UK; Netherlands, Germany, France, Belgium; Spain, Portugal & Greece
- Weighted with post-stratification weight and then 'equivalised' so that each sector within country within year is the same size.

Classifying Workplace Regimes

- **Employment:**
 - Hours,
 - Fixed Time,
 - Weekends,
 - Evening &/or Nights,
 - Work-related train
 - Learning new things,
 - Autonomy
1. **‘Learn’**: high learning, high autonomy
 2. **‘Simple’**: low learning, low to moderate autonomy *
 3. **‘Lean’**: high learning and moderate autonomy
 4. **‘Learn extreme’**: learn regime with long & unsociable hours
 5. **‘Taylor extreme’**: low learning & autonomy, long & unsociable hours *

What Effects might Workplace Regimes & Precarity Have?

The 'New Service Class'

- Learn Extreme – highly individualised, total commitment bargain, high risk and opportunity; anti welfare

The 'Old Coalition' – higher levels of organisation (somewhat more favourable)

- Lean – 'high value' manufacturing (high skills/ pressure)
- Learn – usually skilled and sheltered

Vulnerable Workers

- Simple – vulnerable, some benefits of autonomy and flexibility; supportive with some ambiguity
- Taylor – highly controlled and vulnerable; most supportive
- Precarious – no job security; more supportive, especially insurance*

Attitudes towards redistribution by work regime & precarity

Work regime by precarity	Government should reduce income differences				
	Strongly	Agree	Neither a	Disagree	n
Learn Extend	0.16	0.36	0.18	0.30	1,593
Learn Extend precarious	0.29	0.42	0.13	0.16	242
Lean	0.22	0.45	0.17	0.16	2,694
Lean precarious	0.27	0.44	0.15	0.15	612
Learn	0.20	0.42	0.17	0.21	5,146
Learn precarious	0.25	0.40	0.16	0.18	840
Simple	0.31	0.44	0.14	0.11	3,336
Simple precarious	0.33	0.46	0.12	0.10	1,034
Taylor	0.33	0.43	0.12	0.12	659
Taylor precarious	0.40	0.42	0.09	0.09	246
Total	0.25	0.42	0.16	0.17	16,402

Attitudes towards protection by work regime & precarity

Work regime by precarity	Government protect people from falling into poverty				
	Strongly	Agree	Neither a	Disagree	n
Learn Extend	0.35	0.43	0.14	0.09	800
Learn Extend precarious	0.51	0.41	0.05	0.03	113
Lean	0.40	0.44	0.10	0.07	1486
Lean precarious	0.50	0.38	0.09	0.03	322
Learn	0.35	0.46	0.12	0.07	2624
Learn precarious	0.45	0.44	0.07	0.04	411
Simple	0.45	0.43	0.08	0.04	1807
Simple precarious	0.54	0.37	0.05	0.03	503
Taylor	0.57	0.34	0.06	0.02	334
Taylor precarious	0.56	0.36	0.06	0.02	140
Total	0.41	0.43	0.10	0.06	8540

Analysis of welfare attitudes: regression

- Ordered logit vs. generalised ordered logit vs. logistic regression (redistribution: strongly agree & agree vs. others; protection: strongly agree vs others)
- Dependent variables: government should reduce income differences & government should prevent people falling into poverty (strongly agree → strongly disagree (5))
- Control variables: age group, gender, citizenship, union membership, occupation, company size, values (helping others, equal opportunity, being rich & strong government), subjective feelings re: income, World of Capitalism (Southern, Liberal, Nordic & Continental)
- Independent variables: work regime by precarity – the focus here
- Other independent variables: skill level by exposed v sheltered sector (Wren & Rehm), structure of risk and opportunity, and income/security focus

Attitudes towards redistribution (strongly agree & agree vs the rest) – logit results

Government should reduce income inequality: *strongly agree & agree* vs. others

	All	Southern	Liberal	Nordic	Continental
	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio
<i>Learn perm (ref)</i>					
Learn prec	0.999	0.703	2.199**	0.773	1.07
Lean perm	1.198 [†]	0.688	1.60[†]	1.326*	1.18
Lean prec	1.042	0.817	1.803*	0.742 [†]	1.169
Learn ext perm	0.787**	0.817	0.921	0.83	0.733**
Learn ext prec	1.871**	1.354	2.015	2.176**	2.174*
Simple perm	1.364**	1.527	1.39	1.28	1.314*
Simple prec	1.812**	1.462	2.954*	1.257	1.538
Taylor perm	0.991	0.79	0.886	1.846	1.101
Taylor prec	1.073	0.705	1.76	1.276	0.654

Attitudes towards protection (strongly agree vs the rest) – logit results

Government should prevent people falling into poverty - *strongly agree* v others

	All	Southern	Liberal	Nordic	Continental
	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio
<i>Learn perm (ref)</i>					
Learn prec	1.42 [†]	1.48	3.64***	0.74	2.03***
Lean perm	1.04	0.84	1.53*	1.10	1.18
Lean prec	1.52**	2.13 [†]	3.02***	1.02	1.80**
Learn ext perm	1.16	1.40	1.84	0.76	1.30
Learn ext prec	1.26	2.88	0.65	1.66	0.81
Simple perm	1.01	1.22	1.19	0.74	1.22
Simple prec	1.67	5.45[†]	2.02***	0.52***	0.83
Taylor perm	1.19	1.35	2.97*	1.35 [†]	0.97
Taylor prec	1.69 [†]	1.55	3.14	6.89*	1.08

Who supports which Welfare?

Reduce Income differences

- 67% Agree/ Strongly Agree
- Strong support:
 - Vulnerable: Simple (Perm and Prec), All Precarious in Liberal
 - Relative Deprivation: Learn Extend Precarious
- Against
 - Learn Extend Permanent

Prevent poverty

- 84% Agree/ Strongly Agree
- Very strong support:
 - Vulnerable: Taylor , Simple Prec in Southern and Lib
 - Relative Deprivation: Learn Prec, Lean Precarious

A Cautiously Optimistic Conclusion

- High skills and trade openness does not mean the death of a welfare coalition
- A contingent politics of skill, risk and welfare
 - Organisation of workplaces
 - Exposure to Precarity
 - Context of Broader Political Economy
- Overall Trends
 - Overall support is high among employees
 - Vulnerability and Relative Deprivation boost support (and there's a lot of them around)
 - New work organisation (Learn Extend) creates resistance (but not for poverty prevention) and for those on its margins creates a new support base for welfarism

Attitudes towards redistribution (strongly agree & agree vs the rest) – logit results

Government should reduce income inequality: strongly agree & agree vs. others

	All	Permanent	Precarious
	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio
Feel Income			
Coping	1.467***	1.457***	1.558***
Difficulty	1.603***	1.683***	1.451*
Opportunity/risk			
High opportunity	1.013	1.004	1.090
High risk	1.137*	1.121†	1.297†
Both	1.146	1.138	1.227
Attitudes towards Risk			
Security focus	1.297*	1.242†	1.461†
Income focus	1.016	0.991	1.069
Both	1.493***	1.471***	1.400†

Attitudes towards protection (strongly agree vs the rest) – logit results

Government should prevent people falling into poverty - strongly agree v others

	All	Permanent	Precarious
	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio
Feel Income			
Coping	1.413 ***	1.407 ***	1.544 *
Difficulty	2.456 ***	2.427 ***	2.890 ***
Opportunity/risk			
High opportunity	0.993	1.008	0.961
High risk	1.252 **	1.265 ***	1.220
Both	1.188 *	1.253 **	0.985
Attitudes towards Risk			
Security focus	1.343	1.426	0.891
Income focus	1.030	0.872	1.669
Both	1.685 **	1.707 *	1.426