Book of Abstracts
(in order of presentation at the conference)

Joan C. Tronto (University of Minnesota)
Does the Welfare State Provide Bad Care? The Caring Democracy Alternative

Welfare states are criticized from both the right and the left for providing bad care. From the right, critics chafe at the "nanny state" features of welfare. From the left, critics now believe welfare states have become too neo-liberal, making them stingy and inadequately funded and organized in the wrong way (such as new public management) and towards the wrong goals (such as independence). A caring democracy model is perhaps the best future for welfare states, since it starts from this question: what would good care for everyone require?

Jahel Queralt (Pompeu Fabra University)
Got Any Spare Change? A Defense of the Right to Beg

On February 2022, the Danish Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of a conviction against a Lithuanian citizen for begging at Copenhagen Central Station. He was not acting aggressively but held a paper cup, asking passersby for money. For this, he was sentenced to 60 days in prison and banned from entering Denmark for six years. Denmark's anti-begging law is among the strictest in Europe, yet similar challenges to begging exist elsewhere. Begging, or asking for money without offering anything in return, is often associated with passivity, lack of reciprocity, the exact opposite of working. For Kant, begging is to be avoided not only because it is degrading and undermines individual autonomy but also because it is "closely akin to robbery," as it manipulates others' emotions for financial gain. Similarly, Bentham condemns begging as a form of "extortion to which the tender-hearted, and they only, are exposed." However, these references should not lead us to overstate philosophers' interest in the topic, which has been practically nonexistent. This paper aims to examine the protection of begging as a right from a philosophical perspective. In 2021, the European Court of Human Rights, in *Lăcătuş v. Switzerland*, recognized a right inherent in human dignity to attempt to meet one's needs through begging. Despite this, bans on begging continue to spread across rich countries, raising critical questions about the status of this right. This paper seeks to provide a robust justification for the right to beg.
It begins by defining begging and contrasting it with related activities, such as busking and informal vending. It then develops a twofold argument for recognizing a right to beg. The first relies on a justification popular in the United States, which argues that begging is a communicative act that deserves protection under freedom of expression. Although begging involves asking for money for one's own benefit and, in this sense, may be equated to commercial speech, I will argue that it is more appropriate to classify it as a form of political speech. The second argument justifies the right to beg as a remedial measure in response to systemic injustice. It suggests that when governments fail to protect individuals' basic needs, they are obligated to allow measures they might otherwise restrict -e.g individuals have a right to self-defense when their safety is threatened.
Finally, the last section examines two objections to the right to beg. First, the *passers-by objection*, inspired by Kant and Bentham's observations, posits that individuals have a right not to be intruded upon in spaces where they expect privacy and a right not to be unwillingly drawn into relations of servility, given that beggars' ability to meet their needs depends entirely on the goodwill of others. Second, the *easy money objection* focuses on the interests of the beggars and claims that prohibiting begging is justified because giving money to beggars can trap them in a cycle of poverty. The paper finds both objections wanting.

Jurgen De Wispelaere (University of Bath), Tobias Jaeger (University of Freiburg)
Basic Income Exit as a Social Good

It is a staple of the basic income debate that a substantial unconditional basic income would provide workers with an exit option from their current employment or even the labour market altogether. This exit option is often framed as providing workers with a "power to say no" that boosts workers' bargaining power against their employer. This exit power is typically conceptualized as an individual power. Some (but not all) basic income proponents argue the individual power of exit provided by basic income is superior to the collective power of voice – i.e., collective bargaining backed by strikes – currently available to (some but not all) workers. This paper argues that the conventional view is mistaken and that while the basic income is an individual good, the exit option it provides is an irreducibly social good since its value (and power) is significantly impacted by the behaviour of other workers. In this paper we develop two arguments prevalent in the basic income exit literature and show that each strand leads to a distinctive social dilemma. The argument that workers can use their exit option to seek out better job alternatives is subject to social contagion and therefore faces a common good dilemma. By contrast, the argument that threats to exit will lead employers to offer better pay or working conditions depends on there being a critical mass of real exit or credible threat to exit: this argument takes on the form of a public goods dilemma. Importantly, whereas the marginal value of common good exit decreases with each additional exit, the marginal value of public good exit increases with each additional exit (threat). The implication of basic income exit being subject to not one but two contradictory social dilemmas is obscured in the basic income literature. Modelling both "common good exit" and "public good exit" together suggests that while a robust exit option is a theoretical possibility, the specific conditions under which this possibility becomes reality are too strict to provide a reliable political strategy for improving workers' bargaining position. In short: our paper shows that the basic income exit option is not the generalisable argument for promoting workers' bargaining power most basic income scholars and advocates seem to think it is.

José Carlos R. Alcantud (University of Salamanca), Marco Mariotti (Queen Mary University of London), Roberto Veneziani (Queen Mary University of London)
Threshold Theories of Distributive Justice

Distributive theories emphasising the normative relevance of thresholds are central in philosophical and policy debates. Sufficientarianism is one of the main contenders in contemporary debates on distributive justice and it has been central in discussions on the welfare state. "The notion of `having enough' and its ethical significance are by now central to any discussion of the ethics of distribution" (Benbaji 2006, p.327). Limitarianism has only recently emerged as an important contender, but it is generating a rapidly growing literature focusing on inequalities, justice, and various aspects of the welfare state.
So far, however, the discussion of both approaches raises more questions than it answers.
First, the normative foundations of the threshold approaches to justice remain unclear. Limitarianism is moving its first steps and its conceptual building blocks have not been spelled out yet. According to critics, limitarianism does not provide any original insights in debates on distributive justice, let alone represent a distinctive normative approach (Huseby 2022). As for sufficientarianism, very different, if not diametrically opposite normative intuitions are often invoked. While its originator explicitly conceives of it as an alternative to egalitarianism (Frankfurt 1987), many others have interpreted it as a kind of egalitarianism.
Second, and related, there is no clear, widely accepted, canonical ranking of alternatives based on either threshold theory of distributive justice.

We analyse both principles in a unified analytical framework and provide what we interpret as the canonical characterisation of sufficientarianism and derive the first characterisation of a limitarian social welfare ordering. These results are important because they identify the normative foundations of both criteria as distinctive approaches to distributive justice. Interestingly, the sufficientarian ordering is fully characterised by three properties none of which is specifically sufficientarian and that can each be defended on a non-sufficientarian basis. What is more, our analysis provides a unified framework to analyse both theories: a similar axiomatic structure describes the conceptual foundations of sufficientarianism and limitarianism alike and precisely identifies the similarities and differences between the two approaches. Further, it settles the debate between limitarians and their critics by showing that limitarianism does indeed provide a ranking of alternatives that does not coincide with, and cannot be reduced to, egalitarianism, sufficientarianism, or a mixture of the two.

Finally, our characterisations are important even if one believes that limitarianism, or sufficientarianism, should not be interpreted as complete theories of distributive justice (or if, as limitarians often claim, a threshold approach is meant to apply only to the world as it is, rather than to provide a distributive ideal). For the identification of the sufficientarian and limitarian social rankings is crucial in order to understand what their distinctive chracteristics are in evaluating actual distributions, how they can fit in a more general theory of justice, and which approaches they are consistent with.
We believe that this exercise in conceptual clarification is crucial for practical applications of thresholds theories of justice to analyses of the welfare state, and in particular health and education policies.

Roberto Mordacci (Vita-Salute San Raffaele University), Alessandro Volpe (Vita-Salute San Raffaele University)
An "Unfair Symmetry"? On Future Intergenerational Solidarity Discourses

Solidarity is often described as symmetrical relation of mutual concern and aid (Sangiovanni, Viehoff, 2023), based also on risk-sharing and common causes. These aspects apply also to intergenerational solidarity (IS) as an ethical-social precondition of intergenerational justice. However, how does the symmetry, and consequently the efficacy and stability, of IS hold up when demographic imbalances between generations emerge? In the European Union, recent data (EUROSTAT, 2024) reveal how, over the period 1 January 2003 to 1 January 2023, the share of children and young adolescents (those aged below 15) decreased from 16.4% to 14.9%. Share of those aged 80+ increased from 3.7% to 6.0% between 2003 and 2023, and, over the same period, also the share of persons aged 65 and over increased in all EU countries from 16.2% to 21.3%. By the year 2050, in Italy, the most affected country by ageing population in Europe, the number of individuals aged 65 and above will be threefold that of those under the age of 15 (ISTAT, 2024).
This demographic scenario points to a future marked by significant disparities between generations, with well-known implications for welfare systems and the practice of solidarity between age groups.
Conceptually speaking, symmetry in solidarity relations is not purely quantitative but qualitative (i.e., it is a counterfactual equality). Nonetheless, numerically prevailing older generations might monopolize the discourse on IS, even distorting the perception of fairness.
The present paper aims to explore and eventually respond to the following research questions: How do demographic trends affect solidarity among generations? What are the conceptual limitations of symmetry when numerical proportions are highly unequal? How might younger generations respond to their diminishing influence on intergenerational discourses?

The paper suggests that, even under conditions of IS, hidden or new forms of "generationism" or "ageism" could persist as structural inequalities. This means inquiring discourses of intergenerational solidarity as potentially distorted by asymmetrical relations of power.

In doing so, the paper aims also to elaborate on the debate over (and related objections to) practice-dependent, diachronic, and indirect-reciprocity schemes for intergenerational issues (Reglitz, 2016; XX). Critics of these frameworks argue that practice-dependent views of distributive justice encounter difficulties when reciprocity fails—for example, in pay-as-you-go pension schemes new generations might only contribute without benefiting. Furthermore, practice-dependent views might not adequately explain all of what we owe to future people, since obligations may arise independently from shared practices. This implies that younger generations should have the right to reciprocate and join IS only if they have real opportunities to recognize, criticize and influence past, current and future practices and their corresponding justifications through democratic discourse.

Keywords: ageing society, intergenerational solidarity, demography, generationism, justice

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XX (author's work)

Fausto Corvino (UCLouvain)

Why Global Millionaires Should Pay for International Climate Finance, and How to Get Them to Do So

The main instrument for achieving climate justice and curbing climate change is so-called international climate finance – ICF. ICF can be defined as all financing for climate action from (mainly) developed countries to developing countries that is based on commitments made at the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), that is new and additional to other international commitments, and that is provided at least in part on a concessional basis.

In both normative theory and policy practice, the issue of ICF burden-sharing is usually addressed through a state-mediated approach. According to this approach, the ICF burden should be passed on to individual taxpayers through two successive distributions. First, the ICF burden is distributed among governments. Second, the national share of the ICF burden is distributed by governments to their resident populations based on self-selected revenue raising policies. I argue that the state-mediated approach to ICF leads to an unfair allocation of ICF costs under non-ideal conditions of tax justice, as we have today in the vast majority of countries.

On the one hand, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC) calls for a major share of the ICF burden to fall on global millionaires. They have contributed more than anyone else to the worsening of the climate crisis, both as

consumers and investors. They have profited most from climate-damaging activities, and today they have the greatest capacity to mobilise liquid assets to finance climate action on concessional terms. On the other hand, however, implementing the state-mediated approach to ICF burden-sharing means that global millionaires bear a relatively small share of the ICF burden. There are two main reasons for that.

First, in most countries, millionaires pay much less tax on what they earn than everyone else. In fact, in almost every country, income from financial capital is subject to much lower taxation than income from labour. Moreover, through tax gimmicks such as unearned dividends and the use of holding companies, many millionaires manage to avoid any form of taxation. Second, millionaires pay taxes on their own emissions, where such taxes are in place, at a much lower rate as a percentage of their income than all other consumers. No country has the power to change these non-ideal circumstances on its own because of international tax competition.

I therefore argue that this justifies moving to a socio-economic cluster approach to ICF burden-sharing. The latter requires a sufficiently large group of countries to agree on a package of global revenue-raising measures for ICF, targeting global millionaires regardless of which country they live in. I outline a global policy toolbox that can be used to make the burden-sharing of the ICF compatible with the CBDR-RC principle. This global policy toolbox consists of: i) a 2% annual wealth tax on centimillionaires (the broad version of the so-called "Brazilian proposal"); ii) an asset-based shareholder carbon tax applied to the investments of centimillionaires; ii) a luxury carbon tax on a list of expensive and emission-intensive items.

Dimitrios Efthymiou (Vita-Salute San Raffaele University)

The European Socioeconomic Dilemma: A Tripartite Approach to Domestic and Global Inequalities through Migration Policy

Addressing the challenges of socioeconomic inequalities, particularly within the context of migration, poses a significant dilemma for policymakers. This is especially true when confronted with the trade-off between reducing domestic disparities and managing inequalities on a broader European or global scale. Despite evidence suggesting a decline in between-country inequality within the EU before the Euro crisis, recent trends, marked by the rise of Eurosceptic parties, indicate a renewed focus on domestic inequalities among citizens (EU Commission 2018; Piketty 2019). This emphasis contradicts the well-established role of migration into and within Europe as a pathway for social mobility and not just a refuge from politically and socially oppressive states (Carens 2013; Obermann 2016). More open borders, however, could potentially also increase competition for jobs, public services and housing between less well-off nationals and newly arriving immigrants (Miller 2016; Song 2019). This competition, in turn, could undermine social stability and fuel a distrust towards local politicians who are seen as bound to serve the interests of their constituents (Banting & Kymlicka 2017). This article aims to examine three different approaches to easing this dilemma. The first emphasises the role international fiscal and human capital transfers could play in mitigating specific migration flows. The second and third approaches delve deeper into the role that domestic policies could play in fostering the integration and recognition of migrant communities. This is accomplished by providing opportunities for participation in economic, social, and political life on the one hand and by cherishing cultural diversity and fostering communication among different communities on the other hand. Drawing insights from recent literature discussing the often uneasy relationship between equality and inclusion (Wolff & De-Shalit, 2023), the article contends that prioritising any of these three approaches exclusively, at the expense of the others, is more likely to sharpen the existing dilemma. Furthermore, the article distinguishes between three relevant desiderata that should be associated with each approach. The penultimate section addresses objections arising from the balancing act of socioeconomic inequalities, both domestic and global, against the wishes of a self-determining demos. The concluding section emphasises the need for a

multifaceted approach that meets the three distinct normative desiderata of equity, empowerment and inclusion to tackle the
tension between domestic and international inequalities in the European context and shows that a policy of short-term immigration with temporarily full social and partial political rights and one of permanent immigration with full social and political rights provides a more just and stable means to easing the dilemma to proposals found in the existing literature that may fair worse in terms of the three proposed desiderata (Bauböck and Ruhs 2021).

Mario Rizzo (New York University)
Is Rationality Normative? History and Analysis

The normative status of the rationality axioms underlying preference theory has resurfaced as an important issue in behavioral economics. It is often claimed that although behavioral research has demonstrated many "violations" of the axioms as a descriptive matter, behavioral economists still accept the axioms as normative. The purposes of this paper are to: (1) Determine whether this premise is accurate as a description of behavior economics;
(2) Delve into the history of economics to determine whether or in what sense the axioms were intended to be normative; (3) Evaluate the role of redescription in saving axioms from violations; (4) Analyze whether the axioms have enough substance to be employed as useful guides to policy. In the process of discussing these issues, the meaning of the term "normative" will be examined and differentiated from the term "prescriptive" and its close relative "re-constructive."

Malte Dold (Pomona College)
Normativity in Behavioral Economics

This article traces the meaning of normativity in behavioral economics, exploring the divergent interpretations of "irrational" behavior and its implications for policymaking. Our analysis begins with the heuristics-and-biases program of the 1970s and 1980s, which focused on rational and logical decision-making principles. Normativity in this period was tied to academic debates on how to interpret empirical violations of rationality axioms observed in real-world behavior. In the 1990s, the meaning of normativity shifted. Kahneman and colleagues made pivotal contributions by developing the concept of experienced utility, a concept of welfare grounded in behavioral insights. By the 2000s, interpretations of "irrational" behavior diversified, giving rise to varying policy approaches. Among the most influential was nudging, based on the notion of "true" preferences that individuals would express if they had unlimited cognitive resources. The article concludes by examining the rise of agency-centric approaches in behavioral economics, which have gained traction in recent years as a response to the limitations of the nudging paradigm. In line with these approaches, there has been a notable shift in behavioral public policy from individual-focused interventions (i-frame) to systemic-focused interventions (s-frame).

Ivan Moscati (University of Insubria)
Psychological Narratives in Behavioral Decision Theory: What They Are and What They Are Good for

The behavioral theories of decision-making under uncertainty developed in the past fortyfive years to overcome Expected Utility theory (EU) are replete with narratives concerning the psychological determinants of economic behavior, such as the certainty effect, loss aversion, reference dependence, decision weighting, and ambiguity aversion. I review the psychological narratives

associated with ten prominent behavioral models and investigate their epistemic functions in decision-theoretic modeling. I argue that psychological narratives draw from folk psychology rather than scientific psychology, are best understood as as-if narratives, and perform two primary functions. First, they serve as rhetorical devices that enhance the perceived validity of a model. Second, and more importantly, psychological narratives provide explanations for choice-behavior phenomena, despite their as-if, i.e., fictional, nature. Recognizing this explanatory function requires a reconsideration of the traditional notion of scientific explanation.

Colin von Negenborn (University of Hamburg)
An (In)decent Proposal? Price Justice in Digital Markets

Markets in the 21st century increasingly exhibit price discrimination (Bourreau & De Streel, 2018). That is, producers tailor the prices for their products to the individual willingness to pay of potential consumers. Identical goods are sold to different buyers at different prices. This practice is progressively simplified by the availability of consumer information, both individual and aggregate. Price discrimination is not limited to genuinely digital markets, where e.g. browsing data can be exploited. Increasingly, personalized prices are also employed in offline markets, e.g. at the group level using smart shelves. How should the surge in price discrimination be judged? From a welfare perspective, perfect first-degree price discrimination may actually be welfare-optimal. It mitigates informational asymmetries and the frictions connect therewith. At the same time, the welfare is unevenly distributed: while firm surplus is maximized, consumer surplus shrinks to zero. Nevertheless, the net welfare effect is positive (Mas-Colell et al., 1995).
Normative assessments of personalized prices differ. Consumers overwhelmingly perceive them as unfair (Xia et al., 2004). They ground this judgement on the argument that similar people are treated differently (by being charged different prices). Coker & Izaret (2021) question this reasoning by arguing that personalized prices in fact foster, rather than undermine, equal treatment: they cause equality in terms of net utility instead of nominal prices by accounting for differences in the willingness to pay. Similarly, Elegido (2011) questions the moral repugnance of price discrimination.
This contribution challenges this argument. It argues that personalized prices only provide equality at first sight – that is, if all consumers were equally subject to this practice. In reality, however, different consumers have different capacities to avoid it. For example, socioeconomic capital is required to move from markets with algorithmic automatization to human decision-making (O'Neil, 2016). Consumers lacking this capital are more frequently locked in economic contexts were prices (such as credit or insurance rates) are adjusted based on their true or alleged behavior. Other consumer groups, privileged by their ZIP code, ethnicity, or economic means, have the capacity to forego this automated treatment. The distribution of welfare from market interactions is driven by the exchange made in such interactions. Oftentimes, a good or service is exchanged for money. In the 21st century, the monetary price being increasingly individualized, based on personal data. This contribution aims
to contribute to the discussion of this practice, pursued most recently in Lippert-Rasmussen & Munch (2023).

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Yohei Yoshizawa (King's College London)

The Importance of Inequality of Opportunity Through Effort in Education: A Machine-learning Approach to Operationalizing Roemer's Luck Egalitarianism

Policymakers in today's welfare-states commonly aim at equalizing opportunity for welfare and not welfare itself. This is because many hold that inequalities due to different levels of effort are acceptable, while those due to uncontrollable circumstances (e.g., ethnicity, sex, parental socioeconomic status (SES)) are objectionable (Mijs, 2021). However, recent empirical studies reveal that the amount of effort people exert is partly conditioned by such circumstances (e.g., Radl et al., 2024; Foley & Radl, 2023) – an important caveat often overlooked in meritocratic societies (Andre, 2024). Then, as John Roemer (1998) argued, inequality of opportunity, which policymakers aim to correct, should be defined as inequality due to the effects of circumstances, including their indirect effects through effort. An accurate estimation of inequality of opportunity is indispensable for policymaking from the perspective of not only luck but also relational egalitarianism, as recent studies have come to advocate for equality of opportunity as being one of the distributive demands of relational equality (Heilinger, 2024; Schmidt, 2022).

This paper estimates the extent of inequality of opportunity in educational attainment, including, importantly, the portion of it that manifests through effort. To this end, I operationalize Roemer's (1998) model of inequality of opportunity by applying the following two methods to the data from OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). First, I use a recently developed measure of students' effort-level, which quantifies their performance decline during the assessment (Palacios-Abad, 2021). This makes this study the first to bring insights from the psychosocial studies of effort into inequality of opportunity analyses. And second, I adopt a tree-based machine-learning approach called Model-based Recursive Partitioning (Brunori et al., 2022; Zeileies et al., 2010). This makes it the first to conduct a machine-learning estimation of inequality of opportunity for education. The machine-learning approach comes with two merits: (1) it eliminates arbitrariness in model selection (i.e., the choice of which circumstance variables to include in the model) by taking a data-driven approach to model specification (Brunori et al., 2023) and (2) it yields a tree-diagram in which the characteristics of the disadvantaged social groups can be identified (unlike non-machine-learning ones) and thereby targeted by social policies. Eventually, this study presents inequality of opportunity estimates in Japan and other selected OECD countries. Japan is chosen as the target because of its effort-focused meritocratic culture combined with the post-2000 educational reform promoting students' self-motivated learning supported by their family raises reasonable suspicion that inequality of opportunity is higher than is usually thought. I find, for Japan, (1) a higher estimate for 2006 (23.75%) compared to another study which uses the same dataset but does not account for "inequality of opportunity through effort" (18.96~20.6%; Ferreira & Gignoux, 2014), (2) a significantly high ratio in 2015 (29.61%) outrunning Germany (28.62%), which usually ranks at the top in Europe, and (3) the most significant increase between 2006 and 2015 among the selected countries. Finally, these estimates

across time and countries open the door to fixed-effect regression analyses that clarifies which policies contribute to reducing inequality of opportunity.

Jens Jørund Tyssedal (University of Bergen)
The Dangerous Mirage of Automated Abundance

Technological advances such developments in artificial intelligence that may automate large parts of the economy are met with great expectations, also from progressives and egalitarians. Slogans such as "fully automated luxury communism" (Bastani 2020) suggest that this next step in the development of the means of production will make possible what the means of production of industrial capitalism have yet failed to provide: abundance and luxury for all. In this paper I use theoretical insights from Fred Hirsch and Karl Marx to show that great expectations of automated abundance rest on a mistake but may function as an ideology that masks the real interests of the majority who are promised abundance and luxury. The idea of automated abundance is a mirage, and a dangerous one.
The central step in the argument is based on economist Fred Hirsch's (1976) analysis of competition for positional goods in affluent economies. In Hirsch's analysis, 'positional goods' are goods for which supply cannot expand (significantly), such as high social status, power, urban housing, attractive jobs, seashore, scenic landscapes, and so on. Hirsch shows that as affluence grows and basic needs are satisfied, positional goods play a more important role in the economy, and competition and conflicts of interest in access to such goods intensify. Genuine abundance is therefore impossible: many of the things people want, such as living in attractive locations, seashore access, and high status, will never be available to all. Conflicts of interest over access to these goods will be no weaker in an automated economy. The idea of automated abundance is therefore a false hope. But to the extent that it encourages a positive view of automation by artificial intelligence it may also function as a dangerous ideology, for the following reason. The development of artificial intelligence is associated with great risks such as the alignment problem. Realizing that abundance for all is a mirage should lead us to reassess the costs and benefits of those developments. But more importantly, it shows that there is not really one alignment problem faced by humanity, but rather, that different social classes with different, conflicting interests each face their alignment problem. Even if the social class in whose hands the development of artificial intelligence rests manages to solve the alignment problem of their class, there is no reason to expect the social impact of these technologies to align with the interests of a majority. On the contrary, automation and artificial intelligence should be considered a greater challenge for progressive and egalitarian forces than anything we have yet seen.

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Tsung-Hsing Ho (National Chung Cheng University)
Should We Target Wealth Inequality?

Thomas Picketty famously shows that wealth inequality has been worsening since the rise of neoliberalism in the late 1970s. To alleviate the problem, he proposes a global wealth tax of 2 % on the superrich. Since then, wealth tax has gradually forced itself on the agenda in several countries. The US President Joe Biden has pledged to introduce a 'billionaire tax'.
However, it is well-known that wealth tax has several downsides: (1) capital flight: the superrich may move their wealth to foreign countries and become untaxable, and (2) administrative complexity: assets that have low liquidity and lack up-to-date market values are difficult to value accurately. Hence, enforcing wealth tax would be costly and ineffective in reducing wealth inequality.
I want to raise another neglected issue about wealth tax: the sensitivity of asset valuation to monetary policy. After the great financial crisis of 2008, central banks lowered the interest rates to zero or even negative and adopted unconventional monetary policies, such as quantitative easing. While stabilising the financial sector, central banks are often criticised because a longterm, loose monetary policy would inflate asset valuation and thus increase wealth inequality. For example, thanks partly to FED's loose monetary policy, the stock price of TESLA increased more than tenfold. This propelled Elon Musk becoming the richest person in the world. The inflation of asset valuation is partly due to the government's policy, not entirely to his genius or hard work. Therefore, it seems fair to tax his inflated wealth (which is the context of why some Democratic politicians become drawn to wealth tax).
However, the above justification of wealth tax is a double-edged sword. Due to high inflation in 2022, FED raised interest rates high and fast. The stock price of TESLA was once almost a quarter of the peak price. Again, wealth deflation is not due to Musk's fault, but due to a necessity of policy. Were the billionaire tax introduced, in 2021 Musk's wealth would be taxed based on inflated wealth thanks to low interest rates, but in 2022 his wealth would be greatly reduced by high interest rates. Neither was due to his doings. This seems unfair.
Since wealth can wildly fluctuate under the influence of monetary policy, I suggest that tackling inequality should not target wealth. As the economist John Cochrane points out, the payment from assets (such as dividends and rents) does not fluctuate as considerably as asset valuation. For example, housing prices have increased considerably, but rents have less so. From the perspective of asset valuation, house owners become much wealthier than tenants; from the perspective of payment, however, it is not as unequal because the rents saved or received by house owners have increased much less than house prices. Therefore, wealth is not a good target of inequality. Instead, I suggest that inequality research and policy should target the payment from the asset (or purchase power).

Nunzio Alì (University of Catania)
Welfare State and a Limit to Economic Inequalities

The welfare state model faces several challenges in the XXI century. Indeed, many have advocated that the welfare state is no longer able to guarantee, for all citizens, access to the material means necessary to live a good life, such as healthy food, clean water, safe and comfortable housing, clothing, access to transportation, and so on. However, one of these challenges seems to regard an intrinsic feature of the welfare state model. Namely, this model is not committed to dispersing capital and permits huge income and wealth inequalities so that the control of the economy and much of political life risks being in a few hands. A scenario that is no longer just hypothetical in almost all liberal and social democracies. For this reason, John Rawls excluded welfare state capitalism as an ideal social system compatible with the two principles of justice. Although recently, some social democrat authors, like Jeppe von Platz, have tried to rescue the welfare-state model from Rawls' rejection, these new reformulations still seem to be insensitive, at least in

principle, to very large economic inequalities once citizens achieved a basic welfare provision covering their basic needs.
On the contrary, I argue that the welfare state model for the XXI century should include an explicit limit to economic inequalities. I provide two main arguments. First, economic inequalities affect the value of (manifest and latent) positional goods; that is, goods whose value depends precisely on how much of them individuals have compared to others. For example, education is regarded as the paradigm of manifest positional goods because my education's competitive value depends on how well-educated other people are, while health is a social latent positional good insofar as it affects labour market opportunities. Hence, citizens' basic welfare provision is sensitive to economic inequalities. Second, a large concentration of economic resources in a few hands violates also political equality. I argue that in a free market society, political equality cannot be guaranteed only by appealing to the famous 'insulation strategy' aiming to insulate the political democratic process from the power of money by a set of methods to cap private contributions to candidates and parties, severely curtail television and radio advertising, and guarantee public slots in the media devoted to representing the views of all different candidates. The insulation strategy, albeit useful, is insufficient to ensure political equality, so only a cap on economic inequalities can satisfy this normative demand.

Antonio Pio De Mattia (University College Dublin)
Reimagining the Welfare State in the Twenty-First Century: A Habermasian Critique of Capitalism, Equality, and Democracy

The welfare state, once a cornerstone of social justice and political legitimacy, now confronts significant challenges in the twenty-first century, including deepening economic inequality, political disenfranchisement, and the forces of neoliberal globalization. While mid-twentieth-century welfare systems played a crucial role in balancing democracy and capitalism, contemporary models risk devolving into assistentialist frameworks that foster clientelism, undermine civic agency, and reduce citizens to passive recipients rather than active participants. This paper reimagines the welfare state through Jürgen Habermas' discourse theory of law and democracy, offering a critical perspective on these emerging issues. Habermas' discourse theory is instrumental in reevaluating the welfare state, particularly in terms of its relationship to formal and substantive equality. The paper examines how the liberal paradigm, with its emphasis on the formal universality of law, often neglects the structural inequities inherent in society. Conversely, the welfare paradigm's substantive approach frequently succumbs to bureaucratic overreach, compromising the efficacy of welfare systems. Habermas rejects the binary opposition between these paradigms, advocating instead for a deliberative framework in which citizens, as both authors and addressees of law, engage in democratic discourses to articulate needs, contest norms, and shape standards of equal treatment. Drawing upon Habermas' theories of communicative action, this paper critiques the welfare state's reliance on technocratic governance and economic rationalization. Such governance reduces citizens to passive clients, thereby eroding the autonomy essential for democratic self-determination. Moreover, the medium of money, as enshrined within neoliberal globalization, exacerbates existing inequalities, further limiting the capacity of the welfare state to respond effectively to social needs. Bureaucratic control replaces normative debate, alienating citizens from the political processes that directly affect their lives. Central to Habermas' critique is the concept of the colonization of the lifeworld by the systemic imperatives of economic rationality and bureaucratic efficiency. These forces displace the communicative infrastructure necessary for genuine democratic participation. Habermas advocates for a reflexive continuation of the welfare state, underscoring the democratization of decision-making processes and the realization of individual liberties and social rights. This would secure the co-originality of public and private autonomy. The paper argues that reducing the welfare state to a mechanism of distributive

administration—where bureaucratic rationality supplants democratic deliberation—compromises its emancipatory potential. The transition from a robust welfare state to an assistentialist model perpetuates patterns of dependency and disengagement, transforming citizens into passive recipients of aid rather than active participants in the political and social order. To address these concerns, this paper proposes a reconceptualization of the welfare state through the lens of communicative rationality, foregrounding the importance of public discourse and participatory practices in fostering democratic legitimacy. Habermas' proceduralist paradigm offers an alternative: a reflexive welfare state capable of balancing public and private autonomy through deliberative democratic practices. This model integrates substantive equality and ecological sustainability into its redistributive structures, while promoting participatory mechanisms to counter the alienating effects of bureaucratic administration and market logic.

In conclusion, this paper critiques the technocratic governance that defines contemporary welfare systems, advocating for a shift toward deliberative structures that enable citizen co-determination. By offering a normative framework aligned with justice, inclusivity, and democratic legitimacy, it contributes to ongoing debates about the future of welfare. The paper emphasizes the need to reconceptualize welfare systems not merely as instruments of social assistance, but as arenas for communicative action, where citizens engage as equals in the construction of a just and inclusive political order.

Mario I. Juarez-Garcia (Tulane University)

Corruption, Welfare State, and Legal Compliance

International organizations have focused their efforts on fighting corruption (the misuse of public office for private gain) since the mid-1990s. Despite decades of effort, corruption remains rampant in the developing world. Facing this persistent challenge, leading scholars in the field are rethinking corruption to develop a stronger foundation for legal compliance. Bo Rothstein argues that the welfare state can play a fundamental role in fostering respect for the law. According to him, a welfare state that provides aid universally (rather than only to those who qualify) would appear more legitimate, potentially establishing a norm of legal compliance. This paper casts doubt on Rothstein's claims. Even under the best-case scenario—where a robust welfare state is feasible for poor developing countries and norms of corruption do not undermine its functioning—a welfare state might still fail to foster legal compliance. This could happen if it is used for electoral purposes, if bureaucratic discretion creates the impression of corruption, or if citizens disagree with the services the welfare state provides.

I argue that legal compliance is more likely to develop when people view their laws as morally justified. Natural law theory may offer insights into why individuals develop a habit of following the law. In societies plagued by corruption, laws are more likely to be seen as legitimate if they avoid enabling abuses of power, are not perceived as political tools, and if citizens broadly agree with and can afford to comply with their demands. In highly corrupt societies, finding effective laws likely involves reducing their number to focus on essential moral rules that people agree with and can afford to follow. Cultivating a habit of following such laws could gradually establish a norm of legal compliance. Once this norm takes hold, corruption levels may decline, and additional laws can be introduced; yet, this time with less risk of fostering further corruption.

Mark Hoipkemier (University of Navarra)

Institutional Governance and the Logic of the Common Good

This paper shows how and why to integrate an Aristotelian logic of the common good with the polycentric institutionalism of the Bloomington School. More broadly, I hope to foster fruitful engagement between public choice and neo-Aristotelian theories, which are in many respects

complementary. The argument attempts to bridge the intellectual chasm between these two broad approaches at its narrowest point: where the real-world cases of Elinor Ostrom and her disciples stretch rational-actor models to the breaking point, opening the door to richer Aristotelian concepts. The only previous attempt to bridge these literatures (Albareda and Sison 2020) unhelpfully juxtaposed "the common good" as a normative idea against "the commons" as a descriptive one. In fact, both traditions include positive as well as normative elements, and the empirical presuppositions of the Aristotelian vision can enrich the under-theorized ethical dimensions of new institutionalism.

The Bloomington school successfully established common-pool resources (CPRs) as a category in their own right, requiring polycentric governance distinct from both state and market. One key insight underlying this breakthrough is that natural resources can be institutionalized in a variety of ways (Rayamajhee and Paniagua 2021), and the success of a given resourcemanagement scheme depends far more on the institutions than on any "technical" features of the resource itself. I propose a further dimension over which institutionalization can vary: the distinction between private and common goods. Goods can be institutionalized (to varymg degrees) either as private interests or, alternately, as "our" shared concerns which thereby activate a battery of cooperative modes of thinking and acting (Hoipkemier 2024). What CPR governance does, I argue, is to bring natural resources partially into the ambit of common goods, by erecting a shared institutional framework around them.

The common/private distinction is largely invisible to public choice models which assume that rational actors in any situation are ultimately concerned with private interest (here: my continued access to the resource in question). But in the paradigmatic CPR schemes, private interest can only be advanced if everyone buys into durable governance institutions that deploy rational-actor incentives (rules, monitoring and enforcement, etc.) alongside a host of communal mechanisms: reputation, authority, belonging, mutual respect, and so forth. The latter cannot be justified without the logic of common goods, i.e. without appealing to some form of solidarity as an end in itself. Of course, CPR institutions are unlike classic Aristotelian examples of family or politics, in that they finally aim to secure physical resources rather than intrinsically relational goals. But that is precisely why the Aristotelian and the public choice analysis are both plausible and both necessary in theorizing institutions between state and market. Natural resources are only "extrinsically common" - they figure as shared concerns (only) insofar as institutional governance makes them objects of communal modes of reasoning. CPRs can also be construed as objects of private interest, yet individuals' rational pursuit of sustainable access itself demands institutions that prioritize a logic beyond private interest. In this sense, we cannot fully understand polycentric governance without integrating the logic of common goods and the economic approach to institutions, as I begin to do here.

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Malte Dold (Pomona College), Tim Krieger (University of Freiburg)

Rules, Uncertainty, and Ordoliberalism: The Case of Climate Change

Climate change presents significant challenges to the modern welfare state, both in terms of maintaining its current functions and adapting to new demands. Climate-related disasters, such as

hurricanes, floods, and wildfires, increase the need for emergency relief, infrastructure repair, and healthcare services, potentially straining public budgets. Moreover, international migration driven by climate change could exacerbate challenges in housing, unemployment, healthcare, and education systems, potentially heightening social tensions and increasing demands on welfare programs. Climate change also raises questions about how welfare-state policies distribute resources and risks between present and future generations, challenging the principle of intergenerational equity.

Many economists argue for implementing climate change mitigation policies today to avoid significantly higher costs in the future. However, climate change presents multifaceted uncertainties—including environmental, technological, economic, and political uncertainties—which challenge the applicability of traditional economic tools like expected utility theory and cost-benefit analysis. Within economics, there is a longstanding tradition advocating rule-based policies to address complexity and uncertainty about the future. One such tradition is Ordoliberalism. Ordoliberals, such as Walter Eucken, emphasized the importance of rules in mitigating uncertainties in the economic system. However, the scale and radical nature of ("Knightian") uncertainties associated with climate change may require rethinking traditional rule-based approaches.

While rules can reduce uncertainty for economic actors, they may also hinder learning and necessary updates. Moreover, the criteria for selecting and designing these rules remain contentious. This paper examines the applicability of the maximin decision rule—an approach that prioritizes minimizing the potential worst-case scenario—as a framework for addressing the uncertainties of climate change. Maximin has been endorsed by influential economists and philosophers, including Arrow and Hurwicz (1972), Elster (1983), and Rawls (1971/1999), in contexts of uncertainty rather than risk. Moreover, some recent environmental economists, such as Tol (2023), argue that strong precautionary measures may be justified when regulating the harms of climate change.

This paper reflects on the maximin rule and explores whether his qualified defense aligns with the normative ideals of Ordoliberalism, in particular citizen sovereignty and mutually beneficial social contracts. A core challenge of the maximin approach is its framing of climate change mitigation as a decision problem faced by a single "chooser" (a regulator), tasked with weighing the relative severity of worst-case scenarios against the costs of stabilizing or reducing emissions. To address this concern, the paper advocates for adaptive and participatory rule-making processes that respect citizen sovereignty and emphasize the economist's role as a public educator on the merits and intricacies of maximin reasoning. Ultimately, the paper calls for an approach that moves beyond expert-driven, top-down decision-making, fostering democratic engagement in crafting climate policies.

Marco Emilio (Salesian University Institute of Venice)

Sustainable Welfare, Eco-social Policies and Robust Institutions

The growing impact of ecological disasters is shaping a "triple crisis" for the 21st century welfare state (Villa, 2023). Increasing social risks and fiscal budget issues interact with the emergence of new vulnerabilities that could be further exacerbated by traditional welfare adaptation and innovation strategies (Bailey, 2015). To cope with these challenges, the paradigm of sustainable welfare has gradually emerged within the debate on social policy (Fritz & Lee, 2023; Murphy & McGann, 2022), aiming to manage challenges posed by the environmental impact of economic growth, as in the case of climate risks (Hirvilammi et al., 2023). Eco-social policies (Mandelli, 2022) and eco-social work (Matutini, 2023) have also become distinct areas of investigation.

Accordingly, three notable issues could be proposed for philosophical investigation. First, from a normative perspective, it is posited that a more interventionist welfare state is necessary to address the climate emergency (Koch, 2022). Second, coping with climate risks demands specific (new)

programs and social security services, diverging from long-established ones (Bohnenberger, 2023). Third, some authors suggest the importance of inquiring about which empirical conditions can sustain the emergence of eco-social policies within diverse social landscapes. Therefore, a cross-cut topic concerns the tension between "what" sustainable welfare should be promoted and "how" it can be developed through the convergence of strategic interests or discourses (Mandelli, 2023).
The theoretical pull between normative and empirical dimensions is apparent in eco-social work interventions that aim at preventing or reducing ecological vulnerabilities and often confront conflictual understandings of the impacts of environmental crises (Bonetti & Villa, 2023).
These issues can be related to recent philosophical investigations on the sustainability (Hindriks, 2024) and dynamicity (Herzog et al., 2023) of institutions, their teleology and etiology (Hindriks & Guala, 2019), and to how metaphysical, normative and social sciences approaches could interact in social ontology research (Guala & Hindriks, 2023; Haslanger, 2024). Nevertheless, these lines of investigation are not yet systematically intertwined.
Starting from these observations, my aim is to sketch an account for the transformation of social practices governed by norms in eco-social work and eco-social policies, within the framework of sustainable institutions. I will claim that developing robust eco-social institutions entails articulating peculiar epistemic and learning practices embedded in decision-making processes.
To pursue this goal, I will analyse influential views on sustainable welfare and highlight some open issues regarding social practices, norms, and institutions. I will scrutinize the theoretical proposals on sustainable institutions developed by Hindriks and identify the general features of sustainable welfare institutions. Drawing on this framework, I will analyse two empirical cases of eco-social policies and work, and the underlying issues related to epistemic and learning practices (Manidis & Scheeres, 2013). Consequently, I will develop the idea that intentionally facilitating epistemic and learning practices in decision-making (Luján et al., 2010) is a precondition to building eco-socially robust institutions in deep-uncertain environments (Helgeson, 2020), even though it demands particular attention to non-ideal and contextual epistemic and social factors (McKenna, 2023). Finally, I will outline some future investigative directions regarding eco-social institutions and layers of collective agencies within the current debate on sustainable welfare.

Caroline Brett (University of Edinburgh), Mark Fabian (University of Warwick), Sabina Funk (University of Warwick), Caspar Kaiser (University of Warwick), Sofia Panasiuk (University of Toronto), Liana Pountney (University of Warwick)
Evidence against the Simple Validity of Life Satisfaction Scales from Long Cognitive Interviews

Statistical analysis of life satisfaction data standardly assumes 1) linear scale use 2) interpersonal comparability 3) intertemporal comparability. To interrogate the credibility of these assumptions, we need to understand the reporting function: the process by which individuals make life evaluations and then map them to a category on the response scale. We develop a formal model of the reporting function that informs questions in long cognitive interviews of a diverse sample of 100 residents of the United Kingdom. Our results bear out previous efforts to validate life satisfaction scales. However, we also find widespread, severe, systematic, and non-random violations of all three standard assumptions. In particular, many respondents do not use the top of the scale, major shocks appear to alter the meaning of the points on the scale, older people are more likely to interpret life satisfaction questions as referring to how life *went* rather than how it is going, and respondents rarely describe their own scale use as linear. We discuss the implications for welfare analysis using life satisfaction data.

Mariusz Maziarz (Jagiellonian University)
Two Problems with Randomized Field Experiments that Undermine Their Internal Validity

The movement of evidence-based policy mirrors the earlier methodological debates concerning the quality of evidence in medicine, with the characteristic feature of the EBM and EBP being the prioritization of randomized trials and amalgamated results of such studies. Several philosophers of both medical and social sciences took issue with this view (e.g., Worrall 2007; Cartwright &Hardie 2012), and others defended the 'gold standard' (e.g., Fuller 2019; Martinez & Teira 2024). Most discussions have focused on medical RCTs, and "field experiments have not attracted much attention [of philosophers] until recently" (Favereau & Nagatsu 2020a). One question that received some attention is the (lack of) similarity between medical RCTs and randomized field experiments in economics. Favereau & Nagatsu (2020b) argued that randomized field experiments resemble medical RCTs in being devoid of theory and have been criticized for not delivering a mechanistic understanding of how a policy under test works. Earlier, Favereau (2016) compared RFEs to phase Ill RCTs and observed that, in medicine, evidence concerning how an intervention works stems from clinical trials of earlier phases and laboratory research in biomedicine. The prioritization of RFEs in development economics has also been criticized by methodologically-minded economists (Barret & Carter 2010; Ravallion 2020; Sehar & Thapa 2024)

In our presentation, we analyze some aspects of design and analysis of program evaluation randomized experiments from economics and highlight two further differences between medical RCTs and RFEs. In detail, we argue that:

(l) testing for baseline imbalances and rerandomizing participants to treatment and control groups leads to misestimated p-values,

(2) the advancement of analytical models and common control for covariates instead of the straightforward testing for the difference in means raises the researchers' degrees of freedom and may lead to biased results.

First, we analyze the practice common among economists of testing for baseline imbalances (differences in characteristics of treatment and control arms) and argue in line with some earlier voices of biostatisticians that such a practice is misguided as it only allows for discovering false-positive differences, provided that an adequate randomization procedure took place (Altman & Dore 1990; Senn 1994). Re-randomizing participant assignments based on these false-positive results leads to a distorted distribution of p-values and changes the expected probabilities of type-I and type-Il errors.

Second, we argue that using advanced statistical models for data analysis creates more researchers' degrees of freedom (Wicherts et al. 2016), which may potentially be misused to inflate pvalues and report statistically significant results despite the intervention under test not being effective. One aspect of analytical advancement is controlling for covariates, including those that were (falsely) discovered to be imbalanced across trial arms despite covariate adjustment being known to make a negligible difference for estimate precision but may create a bias (Asmann et al. 2000; Rothman 1977). Another is using multiple outcome measures, which inflates p-values and leads to false-positive results more often than expected.

These two issues diminish the internal validity of conclusions from randomized field experiments as compared to medical RCTs.

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M. Victoria Costa (The College of William and Mary)
Freedom as Non-Domination, Rules and the Pandemic

This paper defends one particular understanding of freedom as non-domination and uses it to examine the justifiability of public health measures adopted by countries during the pandemic. It argues that, in the absence of effective vaccines, individuals who carry a virus with the profile of COVID-19 have the capacity to impose high risks of severe illness and death on other people, and therefore, potentially, are in a position of domination with respect to those other people. Arguably, even though infection is typically caused unintentionally, this capacity is a capacity for interference that needs to be properly checked. The paper defends a particular understanding of "interference": one that makes ineliminable reference to some normative notions. Such a normative conception of interference contrasts with a popular "pure" freedom as non-interference" account, which aims to be fully descriptive.
Despite the fact that the pandemic resulted in an increase in domination by infected individuals, the enforcement of formal and informal rules that effectively reduced transmission rates, mitigated that domination. But the enforcement of public health policy – including lockdowns and vaccine mandates – introduces the risk of domination of another sort: domination by governmental authorities. The present paper argues that, depending on the form it takes, public health policy can be consistent with the enjoyment of a high degree of freedom as non-domination within the population. But this requires some demanding conditions. First, the government must continue to operate under a number of suitable checks, even when there is a public health emergency. And, second, the relevant policies must suitably protect the basic interests of all members of the population.
As part of its defense of republican public health policy, this paper addresses a pair of criticisms raised by Kieran Oberman. Oberman stresses that that republicans require that the checks on

individuals' powers of interference be external. In his view, this commits them to advocating coercive measures such as lockdowns, even when less restrictive measures such as voluntary social distancing are available and effective. This is because – he argues – the possibility of self-restraint does not provide the right kind of checks. Second, Oberman points out that any measures authorized by republican procedures would not be considered infringements on the freedom as non-domination of the population. This is counterintuitive because lockdowns do seem to involve serious constraints on freedom. In response to the first of these criticisms, this paper examines the variety of controls that republicans accept as checks on interference, insisting on the need for proportionality in their selection and implementation. With regard to the second criticism, it depends on an implausible proceduralist account of non-dominating public policy. But even if republican policy is justified in terms of some substantive common interests, the paper concedes that it seems counterintuitive to deny that lockdowns reduce freedom as non-domination. But it suggests that this intuition is only problematic if one expects a single unified theory of freedom to capture the full variety of uses of this notion.

Mariam Nofiss (University of Eastern Piedmont), Chiara Pellegrini (Padua University)
Rethinking Welfare for an Aging Society: A Care Ethics Perspective

The aging population presents one of the main challenges for European societies in the 21st century. Advances in biomedical technologies and the resulting expansion ofpowers of intervention in life have significantly increased longevity, also leading to a rise in noncommunicable diseases (NCD), now the principal causes of death worldwide (World Health Organization, 2023). This demographic shift raises substantial concerns about the adequacy and sustainability of welfare systems, posing political, economic, social, and ethical issues related to the allocation of healthcare resources. The vulnerability of older individuals, often accompanied by disabilities and multiple chronic conditions, further strains healthcare systems (HS): the duration of illness increases, as does the need for care and hospitalization, resulting in higher costs (Callahan 1995). This growing strain highlights the limitations of current welfare models, which, while founded on universal principles aimed at ensuring access to services for all citizens, have often favored individualized support over collective solutions (Kluge 2007). Moreover, these systems frequently prioritize the so-called medicalization of aging, treating it as an illness that requires intervention, focusing on conditions of vulnerability and dependency generally associated with growing older, rather than addressing it as a natural life phase that may involve health promotion, social integration, and overall well-being (Schmidt 2011). To possibly address the challenges posed by the aging population, it is recommended to move on a twofold level: defining a conceptual framework where to discuss the issues highlighted (l) and identifying areas of application to provide possibilities to account for the problems at stake (2). The debate on the sustainability of HS and the allocation of resources could be reassessed within the care ethics framework (1), by valuing its theoretical roots (Noddings 1984; Tronto 1993; Kittay 1999; Held 2005) and placing itin dialogue not only with some of the related-recent literature (Pulcini 2009; 2020), but also with a vision of bioethical reflection that puts the "everyday features" of healthcare practices back at the core of the discussion (Berlinguer 2000) by appreciating the social value of HS (e.g. Berlinguer 1973). This proposal calls for a shift towards preventive policies, greater social solidarity, and a reflection on intergenerational justice, alongside a more holistic view of aging as a complex social phenomenon rather than merely a medical issue. These elements were already visible in the goals of the health reform in Italy, which then led to the introduction of the National Health Service (NHS) in 1978. The aim of overcome class and area divisions in access to medical treatments and to enable effective prevention of pathologies was already clear (Berlinguer and Scama 1974). The question is how to continue to ensure the universal coverage guaranteed by the NHS in view of the challenges raised by the ageing society. Therefore (2), it could be valuable to focus on palliative care as a compassionate and economically sustainable

approach to alleviating the burden on HS, particularly by reducing hospitalizations, managing chronic conditions, and supporting families, thereby addressing the needs of an aging population (Comitato Nazionale per la Bioetica 2023).

Roberto Fumagalli (King's College London)

A Defence of Informed Preference-Based Approaches to Welfare Evaluations in Public Policy

Economists, philosophers and policymakers (henceforth, EPPS) commonly attempt to ground welfare evaluations of public policies on information concerning individuals' preferences (e.g. Angner, 2016, Guala, 2019). However, several empirical findings indicate that individuals ' actual preferences - i.e. the preferences individuals happen to have in the examined choice settings - frequently fail to meet the information/consistency conditions putatively required to reliably track individuals' welfare (e.g. Gilboa et al., 2009, Sugden, 2018, ch.4). In light of these findings, many EPPs take individuals' informed preferences - i.e. the preferences individuals are able to form on the basis of accurate information and considerate judgments concerning their options/circumstances - to reliably track individuals' welfare (e.g. Bernheim, 2009, Hausman, 2012, ch. 7-8). According to these preference-based approaches to welfare evaluations (henceforth, PREF), individuals are well-off to the extent that their informed (rather than actual) preferences are satisfied, and the satisfaction of individuals' informed preferences reliably tracks individuals' welfare (e.g. Fumagalli, 2024, Hausman, 2022).

In recent years, several authors have criticized EPPs' reliance on PREF for hampering central democratic and liberal values such as recognition respect, individual agency, anti-paternalism, liberal neutrality between different conceptions of the good, and socio-economic justice. This paper combines insights from welfare economics, political philosophy and cross-disciplinary well-being research to defend PREF against these influential objections. My main claim is that the proponents of PREF can successfully address those objections and that EPPs are justified in relying on PREF. If correct, this result has important implications for welfare evaluations in public policy. For PREF and other approaches to welfare evaluations (e.g. capability approaches, opportunity-based approaches) ground different evaluations of policies' welfare implications and ground such evaluations on dissimilar justificatory principles (e.g. Adler and Fleurbaey, 2016).

The paper is organized as follows. Section I outlines the main tenets of PREF and distinguishes influential versions of PREF (e.g. Griffin, 1986, ch. I -2, on preference satisfaction theories of welfare; Hausman, 2024, on the evidential account of welfare). Sections 2-6 explicate and address five influential objections put forward against PREF: the objection from recognition respect, which holds that EPPs should not adopt PREF because adopting PREF leads EPPs to disrespect the individuals they target (e.g. Terlazzo, 2016); the objection from individual agency, which holds that EPPs should not adopt PREF because PREF equate agency with consistent preferences and thereby fail to recognize the continuing identity of individuals with inconsistent preferences (e.g. Sugden, 2010); the objection from anti-paternalism, which holds that EPPs should not adopt PREF because adopting PREF leads EPPs to endorse unjustified (or otherwise objectionable) paternalistic interventions (e.g. Rizzo and Whitman, 2020, ch. 7-8); the objection from liberal neutrality, which holds that EPPs should not adopt PREF because adopting PREF leads EPPs to violate liberal neutrality between different conceptions of the good (e.g. Arneson, 2006); and the objection from socio-economic justice, which holds that EPPs should not adopt PREF because adopting PREF hampers EPPs' ability to address the socio-economic factors that make it difficult for individuals to form and act on welfare-enhancing preferences (e.g. Nussbaum, 2001).

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Opinion Polarization and Incoherent Group Preferences

This paper studies polarization of opinions in a computational model of rational deliberation on preference rankings. It makes two main observations. First, in this model, deliberation increases polarization. Second, this increase in polarization is strongest when deliberation also increases the frequency of incoherent group preferences, i.e. of cyclic or intransitive rankings obtained by pairwise
majority voting. In other words, polarization and the formation of incoherent group preferences go hand-in-hand. The methodology of this paper is computational and builds upon an existing model developed to study the effects of rational deliberation on the formation of collective opinions (Rafiee Rad and Roy, 2021; Braun et al., 2024). In this model, participants enter the deliberation with some preference rankings over a given set of alternatives. During deliberation, they rationally and iteratively update these preferences after learning the opinion of others. The participants are assumed to be mildly consensus-seeking, in the sense that they are to a certain degree prone to move towards the opinions of others. Deliberation ends after a fixed number of rounds, typically when the opinions have reached a stable configuration, after which the collective preferences are computed using pairwise majority voting (Gaertner, 2009). Polarization is measured both before and after deliberation, using the Esteban-Ray aggregate polarization index (Esteban and Ray, 1994), as well as the fine-grained typology of opinion dynamics proposed by Bramson et al. (2016, 2017), which includes some of most standard measures of polarization like variance or difference-in-means

(Mehlhaff, 2024). The findings of this computational study are important for understanding the assets and possible drawbacks of rational deliberation. Our first observation, that deliberation increases polarization, adds to the growing body of evidence to the effect that polarization is not necessarily the result of irrationality or cognitive biases, e.g. (Olsson, 2013; Singer et al., 2019; Dorst, 2023). Opinion polarization can occur even when the participants deliberate rationally, are not cognitively limited, and, in the case studied in this paper, are minimally open to changing their views upon hearing the opinions of others. The second finding suggests that two important, well-known obstacles to collective decision-making and ultimately democratic procedures, namely opinion polarization and incoherent collective preferences, are not only possible under idealized circumstances but frequently go hand-in-hand. We argue that this observation is consequential for our theoretical understanding of ideal group deliberation and its role in grounding political legitimacy, e.g. Peter (2020), and that, beyond anecdotal evidence of incohrent group preferences in highly polarized contexts, it suggests an important avenue for empirical research.

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What Are Social Norms?

This paper develops a novel process-based theory of social norms that departs from standard attitude-based accounts. While existing theories typically ground social norms in attitudes like expectations or commitments, possibly jointly with practices, we argue that social norms are requirements generated by social norming processes. These are special communication processes through which members express and perceive support for certain requirements. Our account explains how processes are prior to attitudes and how social norms can exist without corresponding attitudes.

The paper advances both ontological and normative claims. Ontologically, we argue that social norms are neither clusters of attitudes nor social processes themselves, but rather requirements grounded in social processes. We propose specific conditions for when such processes successfully generate social norms, centered on widespread communication of support for making certain behaviors obligatory. This communication can be explicit or implicit, verbal or non-verbal.
Normatively, we develop a distinct account of social normativity – the specific type of normative force that social norms possess. Rather than grounding this normativity in attitudes, we locate it in features of the social norming process itself. We explore three potential sources: the process's status as an exercise of collective autonomy, its satisfaction of public reason requirements, or its basis in mutual consent. This process-based approach to normativity helps explain why social norms can bind even those who disagree with them.
Our theory illuminates important parallels between social and legal norms, as both are created through special processes rather than mere attitudes. Yet social norming processes are typically more informal and implicit than legal ones. The process-based view also clarifies what makes social norms genuinely "social" – they arise from interactive processes of communication, not merely from individuals having attitudes about others.
This novel theoretical framework advances our understanding of how social norms emerge, persist and generate normative force. It suggests new directions for empirical research on norm formation and change, while providing conceptual resources for analyzing the legitimacy of social norms.

Julia Wdowin (University of Cambridge)
An Application of Senian Agency and Commitment to Individual Choice and Welfare Assessment in the Environmental Domain

Capitalism, economic growth and the welfare state all hang in the balance as an environmental crisis unfolds. Whilst de-growth circles criticise economic growth for its environmental costs, some circles point to 'green growth' as a directed economic growth with diminished environmental costs, whilst providing a context for continued flourishing in other areas of human welfare. The directed growth aims to align private and social value more closely. In modelling green growth, individual preferences are key, yet, a strong economic modelling error in conventional approaches that advocates of green growth point towards is the strong assumption of exogenous preferences. Other assumptions in conventional economic individual choice analysis are single preference rankings and making observations based on revealed preferences. A focus on these assumptions neglects the possibility that individuals adjust or change their behaviour on the basis of changes to policy or incentives; have a narrow set of values motivating behaviour and choice; and that observed individual choices reflect individuals' true preferences, respectively. This paper explores an application of relevant concepts from Sen's capability approach to the question of modelling individual choice in the environmental domain, whereby these critiques of exogenous and revealed preferences, as well as single preference rankings, are addressed.
The Senian capability approach models a two-fold criterion to broader individual welfare assessment. One dimension refers to individuals' opportunities to achieve welfare, and the other to individual agency in the process (Sen, 1980a; 2009). We will focus on the latter and its particular definition in Sen's approach to welfare assessment, with implications for the process of formation of individual preferences and their role in individual choice. When preferences are believed to be influenced by changes in policy or incentives, a much more realistic assumption in economic modelling of individual choice and behaviour is to account for endogenous preferences. These, in turn, are contingent on acknowledging a broader set of values inherent to individual choice. Nested in the argument is the point that the types of preferences modelled have implications for the outcomes of economic welfare assessments.

A second issue is that of modelling preferences according to a single preference ranking in standard economic approaches. Yet, the environmental domain, in particular, is associated with a broad range of values that guide individual behaviour and choice, for which unidimensional preference rankings are a poor fit. Hence, the paper will look to the mechanism of commitment proposed by Sen (1977) in forming multiple rankings of preferences as tools for better modelling of individual choice in the context of the environmental domain.
In exploring relevant notions of the capability approach, namely agency and commitment, as a basis to the formation of (endogenous) preferences, the paper thus takes a broader-than-usual approach to modelling individual choice and behaviour with regards to the environmental domain. The Senian application contributes to conceptually and analytically moving beyond a unidimensionality of description (Sen, 1980b) and of economic modelling for understanding human welfare linked to the environmental domain by addressing issues linked to exogenous and revealed preferences, and single preference rankings as potentially misleading methods for analysing individual choice. In this light, the paper also makes a contribution to a conceptually more inclusive approach to welfare assessment.

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Kate Padgett Walsh (Iowa State University)
Wellbeing, Risk, and Household Debt

This paper extends my previous work on the ethics of household debt (including debt advertising, lending, payment, collections, and investment) to incorporate the relationship between debt upon risk. Much of the literature on risk focuses on finance and investment strategies, but I am interested in everyday experiences of risk within the context of household debt. To what extent do various forms, levels, relationships, and understandings of debt help individuals to mitigate or at least navigate risk? Alternatively, to what extent do debts perpetuate, deepen, and introduce risks to and for households? In what contexts and under what conditions?
These questions are pressing because household debt levels are at record highs. While conventional thinking holds that household debt is unproblematic insofar as it is primarily constituted by mortgage debt, rapidly rising housing costs raise the question of at what point debt levels undermine wellbeing for households. And when we look beyond mean household figures, we see that high debt levels are the norm for lower income borrowers, who are increasingly delinquent on auto loans and credit cards, despite significantly lower home ownership rates. Credit can contribute to wellbeing by providing tools not only for consumption smoothing, but also for risk mitigation. Yet, debt can also generate and compound risks to households. And while young adults are certainly more comfortable assuming risk than older adults, older adults today are significantly more indebted than a generation ago. Given both that dependency upon debt is now commonplace and even unavoidable for many households and that the volume of that debt is rising, it is essential that we carefully examine both the extent to which debt actually serves as a useful tool for households to deal with risk and the extent to which it exposes households to greater risk.
I build on the work of capability theorists to argue that higher risk exposure to households because of increasing debt levels has negative effects on well-being. This can be true even if a household is not in fact delinquent on debt. The experience of greater risk can itself be problematic, even for

households that succeed in upholding debt obligations. Thus, delinquency and default rates should not be the primary metric to assess whether debt burdens are too high. Rather, we should look to determinants of well-being. It can be hard to isolate such data with regard to risk specifically, but we can look to qualitative as well as quantitative work on the experiences of debtors, especially those who are lower income. We can also consider how debts are restricting choices, for instance about higher education, and driving self-protective rather than civic-minded attitudes. Not only do soaring household debt levels directly erode wellbeing, I argue, but higher risk exposure caused by that debt also has the effect of undermining bodily, cognitive, and social capabilities in various ways.

Erik Malmqvist (University of Gothenburg), András Szigeti (Linköping University)
Social Injustice and the Harm of Exploitation

It is widely recognized that exploitative transactions and relationships tend to occur against a background of unjust structural or institutional arrangements. Many of these injustices are in fact due to the deficiencies of the welfare state. For instance, the operation of sweatshops in developing countries is made possible or at least greatly facilitated by systemic poverty, weak or unenforced labor protections, suppression of unions, and the marginalization of female and migrant workers. Exploitative pharmaceutical research in such countries is enabled by widespread lack of access to essential medicines. And men's exploitation of women in patriarchal marriages is facilitated by gendered inequalities of opportunity on the labor market and an institutionalized unequal distribution of care burdens.

In such cases, the exploitee's vulnerability, which is what enables the exploiter to exploit, is the product of unjust background conditions. This bears significantly on the normative assessment of the resulting micro-level exploitative transaction or relationship. But how exactly is the micro-level wrong of exploitation related to the macro-level wrong of social injustice? The paper argues that there is a morally significant link between the two, beyond a mere causal or probabilistic one. Unjust background conditions are relevant to the moral assessment of exploitative transactions, but not because they help determine which transactions count as exploitative or because they create special obligations of non-exploitation. Rather, background injustice makes exploitative transactions more harmful for the exploitee.

We draw on recent discussions about relational equality and social hierarchy to develop and support these claims. Specifically, we argue that the exploitative transaction or relationship is itself made morally worse by the fact that background injustice is involved because exploitation involves a form of relational harm, i.e., harm to the exploitee's interest in not being inferior to others. This relational harm is greater when the exploitation arises from social injustice.

Here is why. Three inferiority-related bads are involved in cases when exploitation occurs against the background of structural injustice: (1) structural vulnerability: being left asymmetrically vulnerable to another by social institutions, structures, or practices; (2) exploitation: having one's vulnerability excessively or inappropriately taken advantage of by another; (3) confinement: being "locked" into an actual exploitative transaction or relationship with another due to structural vulnerability. Now, whether they are exploited or not, victims of structural injustice tend to suffer (1) the bad of structural vulnerability. However, when exploited they suffer, in addition to (1), both (2) exploitation and (3) confinement, both of which are inflicted through the exploitative transaction. By contrast, when such a transaction does not arise from social injustice—i.e., when the exploitee's vulnerability has other roots—the exploitee only suffers (2). An advantage of this account is that it connects exploitation to social injustice in a unified fashion. The badness of structural vulnerability, exploitation, and confinement have a common source: the frustration of people's interest in noninferiority.

Gideon Frey (Erasmus University Rotterdam)
Can Liberals Be Against More Stuff?

Calls for the reduction of total material production and consumption for developed economies is usually primarily based on supposed 'limits to growth' like climate change or resource scarcity. However, for many contemporary degrowthers and prior critics of infinite economic growth, a steady state need not be inherently bad. Underlying this is often a claim that at some point material consumption ceases to meaningfully contribute to human flourishing what I call the 'total satiation hypothesis'. I ask whether such an idea is compatible with liberal neutrality.

The closest cousin of the total satiation hypothesis in political philosophy are negative sufficientarians, who hold that a state is just if, and only if, all people meet some threshold, and that we can be prima facie indifferent to gains above the threshold. However, unlike those defending the total satiation hypothesis, negative sufficientarians can still hold either or both of the following claims:

a. It is prima facie possible, and good to improve a persons well-being, even if all their justice claims have been satiated.
a. If technological and economic improvements allow the material dimensions of a sufficiency threshold to move up, this might be something good. What was considered a sufficiently good life 50, 100, or 200 years ago, has shifted drastically. This 'escalation of needs' is prima facie, good.

However, if we believe that the material dimensions of well-being are truly satiable, we will seemingly have to deny both positions and say that there exists a point where *all* material well-being is satiated. This is plausible – for example, any preference-satisfaction account must be open to satiation-points where someone ceases to desire more material goods. Yet we might often believe that people and societies consume more 'stuff' than actually benefits them. This, however, obviously risks running afoul of the liberals deference to peoples judgements about their own well-being and conception of the good. We would seemingly exclude conceptions of the good that value an infinite amount of material possessions. I propose two ways, one (1) welfarist, and one (2) contractarian, that might offer a weak defence of the total satiation hypothesis.

1. Treating total satiation as subjective, we might still be able to make satiation more likely by removing sources of non-satiation: these might be (i) cases of clear forms of advertisement, but possibly also hegemonic social and cultural norms that falsely promise flourishing through consumption. (ii) cases of conspicuous and positional consumption where all or part of the consumption has scarce positional goods as their aim (i.e., consuming 'to keep up with the Joneses').
2. For contractualist person A's well-being qua her own first-person judgement can differ from A's well-being that is relevant from the perspective of her society. As suggested by Robeyns (2022), a public conception of flourishing can be satiable, even if a particular individual happens to have some insatiable desires for material wealth. I explore how such a claim can be defended.

I discuss the implications for distributive justice, welfare economics, and possible policy implications.

Peter Dietsch (University of Victoria)
The Normative Political Economy of Zero Growth

The threat of climate change requires us to adapt our economies to ensure that production happens in a sustainable manner. Plausibly, this will also require adjusting the principles of justice that govern the distribution of benefits and burdens in society. This paper formulates principles of justice for a zero growth economy.

Why a zero growth economy? Based on a growing literature pointing in this direction, we assume for the purposes of the paper that decoupling economic growth from greenhouse gas emissions is impossible (cf. Green 2022; Hickel & Kallis 2020) and that, therefore, a sustainable future requires zero growth.
The paper then argues that one core feature of several dominant contemporary theories of justice (e.g. Rawls 1999), namely their tolerance for economic inequality provided this inequality liPs all boats, is unfit to serve as a principle of jus5ce in a zero growth economy. This feature entails a productivist paradigm that is only socially sustainable in a growing economy. However, if we cannot have a growing economy for environmental reasons, then the productivist paradigm will have to go, too.
What should replace it? We argue that principles of justice for a zero growth economy require stricter limits on inequality, both when it comes to income and wealth and when it comes to individual carbon budgets. The justification of such limits is not merely pragmatic, but follows naturally when considering the fact that the production of wealth is inherently social in ways that neither mainstream economics nor the previously mentioned productivist paradigm acknowledge. The argument presented here is similar in spirit to recent "limitarian" contributions to the literature, but it differs from standard limitarianism (e.g. Robeyns 2023) in that it focuses on the distribution of income and emission rights rather than on the distribution of wealth.
Having spelled out some candidate principles in this category, the paper then inquires what incentive structures are necessary to convince individuals to make productive contributions to a zero growth economy. Arguably, some inequality in income and wealth is likely to be required in order to enlist individuals to play socially important roles.

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Olivier Ouzilou (University of Lorraine)
Populism and the Moralization of Public Debate

The nature of the impact of political populism on public debate is the subject of a number of studies (Krämer, 2014; Rooduijn, 2017). Political populism can be partly defined by its moral component (Hunger, 2024; Mudde, 2004), and more specifically by the moral dichotomy between people and elite that forms the basis of its anti-elitism and its anti-pluralism (Müller, 2017). As a result, populism has by its very logic a tendency to moralize public debate (op.cit.). In this paper, I would like to address two questions: (1) how does populism moralize public debate? (2) what can be the intellectual effects of this populistic moralization on protagonists and/or people exposed to these debates?
In order to answer (1), I wish to show that this moralization of debate operates at three levels (descriptive, explanatory and evaluative), and that it affects both the explicit content of debate and the way of assessing the ideas put forward. Firstly, populism discourse morally describes both social

cleavages, social groups (the people, the elite and, possibly, certain minorities it considers to belong to neither in the strict sense of the term) and the actions these groups are supposed to perform and suffer. Secondly, it mobilizes moral factors in two ways: on the one hand, to explain social phenomena deemed relevant (unemployment, immigration, institutional crisis, etc.); on the other, to explain epistemic phenomena, i.e the beliefs and theories held by different social groups, including those of the interlocutors. Finally, moralization affects not only the content of the debate, but also the ways in which ideas are justified and evaluated. It has often been noted that populist discourse was centered around moral blame (Hameleers, 2017; McKibben, 2010). But moral blame is also sometimes used to reject the content of certain ideas, regardless of their intrinsic plausibility. In other words, I want to show, using recent examples, that populist discourses are distinguished by the specific way in which they substitute moral reasons for epistemic ones in the evaluation of political ideas.
Concerning (2), numerous studies have shown how exposure to populist discourse is likely to produce polarizing effects (Ryan, 2017), distrust of expertise (Merkley, 2020) and lead to both dialectical and intellectual vices (Aberdein, 2020; Miščević, 2023). Here, I would like to focus on three other possible intellectual effects of the populist moralization: first, because the moralization it carries incites it to disseminate an individualizing and intentionalist account of the social world, it may inhibit our propensity to explain it structurally; second, because it frequently disseminates a depreciatory moral exegesis of the reasons why other political actors hold different beliefs, it contributes to opacifying the nature of political disagreements and make believe that there is no legitimate dissent; finally, because of its intimidating power and the confusion between epistemic and moral reasons it contributes to disseminate, populist discourse may foster a specific kind of anti-intellectualism: the tendency to succumb to what has been called "moralistic fallacy" (D'arms, Jacobson, 2001) when we evaluate the content of political ideas.

Daniel H. Hausman (Rutgers University)
Health and Well-Being: Some Complications

As something that is instrumentally and intrinsically good for people, health contributes to well-being. Yet measuring health by its contribution to well-being is problematic. There is evidence that people do not appraise health states by their bearing on well-being. The contribution of health to well-being is not separable from the contributions of other goods, and individuals who have serious health deficits can restructure their lives so as to attain a level of well-being as high or higher than the level of well-being of those who have no health problems. Moreover, from a public perspective in a liberal state, what matters about health is more its contribution to opportunity than its contribution to well-being.