

The Meaning of the Welfare State

A conference about a contested political key concept's changing interpretations and connotations

The welfare state is a key concept of the modern world. It is widely applied to both past and present societies and policies and it has numerous, over-lapping and conflicting interpretations and connotations. Despite the widespread use of 'the welfare state' in popular, academic and political discourses, there are few studies of the changing ways in which it has been understood. The theme of the conference, with speakers from the UK, Hungary, Germany and the five Nordic countries, is the conceptual history of the welfare state and, more generally, the evolution of the language of social policy. This one-day conference is organised by NordWel, the Nordic Centre of Excellence: The Nordic Welfare State – Historical Foundations and Future Challenges, in co-operation with the Department of History, Stockholm University.

Thursday, December 12, 2013, Venue: Bergsmannen, Aula Magna, Stockholm University.

Participants have to register, deadline Friday December 6, contact simon.junstrom@historia.su.se.
For more information contact nils.edling@historia.su.se.

Program

- 9.00–9.15 Associate professor Nils Edling, Department of History, Stockholm University:
Welcome
- 9.15–10.00 Professor Dan Wincott, Cardiff Law School, Cardiff University, Great Britain:
Past Futures: Anticipations of the welfare state in Britain
- 10.00–10.15 Coffee
- 10.15–11.00 Associate professor Dorottya Szikra, Faculty of Social Sciences, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary:
The changing meaning of 'welfare state' in East Central Europe. An historical overview
- 11.05–11.50 Professor Stephan Lessenich, Institut für Soziologie, Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena, Germany:
Constructing the 'win-win' society: Conceptions of the welfare state in Germany
- 12.00–13.00 Lunch
- 13.00–14.00 **Five 10 minute presentations, one for each Nordic country**, by Pauli Kettunen (Finland), Klaus Petersen (Denmark), Norway (Per Haave), Iceland (Gudmundur Jonsson) and Sweden (Nils Edling): **The Meaning of the Welfare State in the Nordic Countries.**
- 14.00–14.30 **Comments** by Professor Åsa Lundqvist, Department of Sociology, Lund University, and associate professor Urban Lundberg, Department of History, Stockholm University.
- 14.30–14.45 **General discussion**
- 14.45–15.00 Coffee
- 15.00–16.00 **General discussion continued**