



## Social Policy, Inequality, and Poverty in post-Socialist Societies

International workshop organised by the Comparative Research Programme on Poverty (CROP) at the University of Bergen (Norway), Institute of Economics, Zagreb (Croatia), Centre for Research in Comparative and Global Social Policy (CRCG) at the University of York (UK) and the Norwegian Study Centre in St. Petersburg (Russia)

**St. Petersburg, Russia, 12-14 June 2017**

### CALL FOR PAPERS

More than a quarter of a century after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the beginning of the wars of the Yugoslav succession, we know relatively little about the diverse welfare trajectories of the countries in this region, all of which have been subject to fundamental economic, political and social transformations.

In the initial years of post-socialist transition, considerable attention was given to how international actors were helping to shape social policies in the region and the impact of these policies on welfare, well-being, poverty and inequality. Since then, empirical and critical studies addressing these societies have been scarce and/or relatively poorly disseminated.

However, a general picture is often presented of a dramatic increase in inequality in the context of an overall decline in living standards in the 1990s. This was a period of transition, conflict and large-scale, often forced, migration. Although there is a general feeling that social and economic inequalities within and between these countries have become even more pronounced since the start of the financial crisis in 2008, there is still a scarcity of reliable data and evidence.

The time is now ripe for a systematic analysis of poverty and inequality in this region and how social policy has addressed these issues after the dramatic changes over the past three decades. The aim of the workshop will be to critically examine relevant data in order to provide explanations that could trigger new lines of thought on how to achieve improved well-being in post-socialist societies. Ideally, it will also contribute to theoretical and empirical evidence to sustain sound social policy.

The workshop will, inter alia, focus on questions such as:

- What are the developments with regard to poverty rates, and in particular child poverty?
- What are the causes and consequences of increasing inequality in these societies? How are they addressed?
- What policy innovations have there been with regard to pensions and child and family policy? What were their results?
- What role have transnational actors (international financial institutions, EU, UN, etc.) played in social policy change?
- How can the diverse welfare trajectories in the various countries and sub-regions be explained?
- What is the potential for transnational knowledge transfer in social policy and what are the lessons to be learned?
- How are these societies preparing for the SDG agenda with regard to poverty, inequality and sustainability?

We are looking for papers that present case studies or comparative studies of countries among the former Soviet republics and Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe, or papers that examine the role of international actors in the region. Papers might focus on the Russian Federation, the Baltic States, Central Asia, Central, East and/or South Eastern Europe.

The event will bring together a maximum of 30 participants from across all scientific disciplines. Selected participants will engage actively in presentations and discussions of all papers throughout the workshop. The workshop will be conducted in English. After the workshop, participants should be willing to work on their paper with a view to publication. Participants are responsible for their own travel expenses and insurance. There will be support to cover room and board during the event. A limited number of travel subsidies are available.

### DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACTS: 2 October 2016

The abstract must not exceed 500 words (one page) and must include: the title of the proposed paper, a presentation of the subject, the central argument, the main research questions and/or hypotheses, and key references. A CV no longer than one page must also be submitted, clearly indicating the applicant's name, title, nationality and contact information, as well as a list of recent publications. The **abstract** and **CV** must be sent by email to the following address: [crop@uib.no](mailto:crop@uib.no)  
Submissions exceeding two pages will not be considered.

The Academic Selection Committee will notify accepted participants of their selection by 1 November 2016 with guidelines for the format of the final paper to be submitted by **11 March 2017**.