

A Guide to Key Sources on European and International Welfare Systems

○ Introduction

This Guide comprises two inter-related sections: [sources on European \(predominantly European Union\) welfare](#) and [those with a broader geographical remit addressing the different systems across the world](#). The division largely follows the growth in the teaching of 'international and comparative social policy' in the United Kingdom. Initially, interests were in comparing UK provision with its European neighbours and the United States in cross-national studies. While there is continued interest in these geographical areas and this method of comparison, broader conceptual concerns (discussed in part nine of *The Companion*) have led to increased attention being given to the impact of transnational and supranational organizations on welfare provision as well as the role of social policies in socio-economic development in, for instance, Africa, Asia, China, Latin America, and Russia.

○ Sources on the European Union

❖ Intergovernmental Sources: Web Sites

- Active Social Policies European Network (<http://aspen.fss.uu.nl>)
ASPEN focuses on European welfare reform programmes designed to 'actively integrate' unemployed, marginalized, and excluded groups. It provides a publications database of relevant articles, books, and chapters with summaries of their content, synopses of research reports, and links to national and international research institutes pursuing this theme.
- European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research (www.euro.centre.org)
The European Centre is a UN-affiliated organization researching many different aspects of social policy, including: ageing; childhood, youth, and families; health and disability; income, poverty and social inclusion; long-term care; personal social services; pensions and social security; and tax and benefits. It publishes policy briefings that are downloadable free from the web site as PDF files.
- European Commission (www.ec.europa.eu)
This site provides detailed synopses of the legislation and social policies of the European Union including those on: children's rights; criminal justice; disabilities; diversity and non-discrimination; education and training; health; pensions; poverty; social inclusion and social protection. Its summaries of legislation, its policies, and reports are accessible on the web site and downloadable free as PDF files.
- European Data Centre for Work and Welfare (www.edacwowe.eu)
This is a gateway to more than 500 data sources on work and welfare covering EU comparative and national data. It enables access to reports, surveys, and statistics on: education and training; families; income and benefits, and social care. Most can be downloaded free of charge as PDF files.
- European Observatory on Homelessness (www.feantsaresearch.org)
Supported by the European Commission, this site focuses on homelessness and housing exclusion in the EU. It publishes the *European Journal of Homelessness*, research reports, and

statistical data, all of which are accessible from this web address and downloadable free as PDF files. It also hosts a regularly updated repository of research on homelessness (the 'FEANSTA Review').

- **European Observatory on Health Systems and Social Policies (www.euro.who.int)**
Sponsored by the World Health Organization (Europe), the European Commission, the World Bank, and several European governments, and working in partnership with the London School of Economics and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, this site publishes: health system profiles (for the countries of geographical Europe); a newsletter about Observatory research and publications; policy bulletins; policy briefings, and an 'Observatory Studies' series of reports. All are accessible on the web site and can be downloaded free as PDF files.

- **Eurostat (epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu)**
Eurostat is the statistical office of the European Union. It provides national and regional data, and analyses of a wide range of policy-relevant topics, including: the economy; education; fiscal trends; health; housing; income and living conditions; labour markets, unemployment and migration; and poverty and social exclusion. It publishes its research in books, news releases, pocketbooks, reports, and yearbooks, all of which are accessible on the web site and downloadable free as PDF files.

- **Eurydice (eacea.ec.europa.eu)**
This network is part of the European Union's Educational, Audiovisual and Cultural Exchange Agency. It supports and facilitates cooperation in the fields of education and culture, training, and lifelong learning by undertaking research and providing information on education systems and policies across 33 European countries. It publishes: profiles of national education systems; national and comparative studies; and key statistical data. It also hosts the new Eurypedia site, which it describes as 'an encyclopedia on national education systems' that consists of: national profiles; over 5000 articles; news on the latest reforms and information organized by topic and educational level. All the materials are accessible on the web site with a choice of download and print formats

- **UN Economic Commission for Europe (www.unece.org)**
This is a statistical database with time-series data on 56 countries (geographical Europe plus the United States). Its 'Gender Statistics' field provides indicators on: population; families and households; education; health; and work and the economy. Some of its statistics are in read-only formats, but there are also reports accessible from the site and downloadable free as PDF files.

❖ **Non-governmental Sources: Academic Journals**

- *European Journal of Criminology*
- *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research*
- *European Journal on Housing Policy*
- *European Journal of Social Security*
- *European Journal of Social Work*
- *Journal of European Social Policy*
- *Journal of European Public Policy*

❖ **Non-governmental Sources: Web Sites**

- **European Network for Social Policy Analysis (www.espanet.org)**

Espanet is an association of academics involved or interested in the analysis of social policy in Europe. It organizes annual conferences, summer schools, and doctoral workshops.

■ European Trade Union Institute (www.etui.org)

The policy-relevant social research undertaken by ETUI is linked to its concerns with employment and the labour market. Its current areas of interest are: the challenges of the economic crisis for social policies; cross-border labour mobility patterns within Europe; education and welfare; precarious employment; and pensions. It publishes its research outcomes in policy briefs and working papers, which are accessible on the web site and can be downloaded free as PDF files. It also hosts an archive of past ETUI publications at Labourline (www.labourline.org).

■ Mannheim Centre for European Social Research (www.mzes.uni-mannheim.de)

The Mannheim Centre is a leading European academic social research centre with interests in the economy; education; ethnic inequalities; gender disparities; globalization; health care; pensions and population. It publishes books, journal articles, reports, and working papers – many of them in English. The site has synopses and publishing details of the books and journal articles and, in most instances, accessible and downloadable PDF files of its reports and working papers.

■ Social Policy Research Unit (www.york.ac.uk/inst/spru)

The research interests of this university centre focus on: adults, older people, and carers; children and families; health, and welfare and employment in both UK and European contexts. Its analyses are published in books and journal articles (synopses and publication details are presented on the web site), research works, and research reports, which are accessible from the site and downloadable free as PDF files.

○ **Sources on International Welfare Systems**

❖ **Intergovernmental Sources: Web Sites**

■ International Labour Office (www.ilo.org)

The ILO provides data and analyses on social policy topics linked to employment, including: equality of opportunity and treatment; social protection and employment strategies. Its reports are accessible on the web site and downloadable free as PDF files. It also hosts the LABORSTA database, which has labour statistics for over 200 countries and territories covering: household income and expenditure; economically active populations; unemployment and employment characteristics (including working hours; wages; labour costs and consumer prices).

■ International Monetary Fund (www.imf.org)

The IMF is an intergovernmental organization working to: foster global monetary cooperation; secure financial stability; facilitate international trade; promote high employment and sustainable economic growth; and reduce poverty around the world. As part of its supporting research programme, it monitors a range of social and poverty indicators and conducts a number of national and regional socio-economic analyses. These are published in country-specific reports, discussion notes, factsheets, fiscal and financial analyses, and working papers that are accessible on the site, and most are downloadable free as PDF files.

■ International Social Security Association (www.issa.int)

This web portal of the International Labour Organization provides news, information, and data analyses on social security worldwide. Its observatory provides country profiles and a database

of major reforms in social protection schemes since 1995. It publishes: 'Social Policy Highlights' (policy briefings) and reports that are downloadable free from the site as PDF files. It also hosts the online version of *International Social Security Review*, which is available via subscription (check with your college or university library).

- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (www.oecd.org)
The mission of the OECD is to 'promote policies that will improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world'. These policies are based on extensive research in a range of social policy-relevant areas such as: the economy; education; employment; the environment; health; insurance and pensions; and social and welfare issues. It publishes its analyses in: annual reviews and outlooks, OECD journals, and working papers, which are accessible on the web site and downloadable free as PDF files. It also hosts a statistics portal with country-specific data on a variety of indicators in: demography; employment; and expenditure on education, health, and pensions.
- United Nations Children's Fund (www.unicef.org)
UNICEF is the international charity working for children's rights, their survival, development and protection. It publishes a number of factsheets, reports, and reviews on these topics, which are accessible on this web site and downloadable as PDF files.
- UNdata (data.un.org)
This web site offers access to 33 United Nations and UN-linked databases. They cover a range of international policy issues, including: children and well-being; crime; education; employment; the environment; gender; health; population and refugees. They are presented in both country-specific and transnational statistical analyses and reports. Some are in read-only format; others can be downloaded free as PDF files.
- United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (www.unrisd.org)
UNRISD is an agency that carries out research on the social dimensions of contemporary problems affecting economic development. It has published research on ageing, demography, gender, globalization, health care, social care, and social protection. A number of its papers and reports are downloadable free as PDF files once you have registered with the site.
- World Bank (www.worldbank.org)
The World Bank offers financial and technical assistance to developing countries for capital programmes. Its primary goal is the reduction in poverty through sustainable economic and social development. Its web site has a 'data catalogue', which lists datasets, preformatted tables, and reports on a wide-range of policy-related topics including: economic policy, education, gender, health, labour, social protection, and urban development. Its project reports and working papers are downloadable free as PDF files.
- World Development Indicators (www.data.worldbank.org)
Produced yearly by the World Bank, this annual report contains tables with quantitative indicators for over two hundred countries on issues such as: economy and trade; public expenditure; demography; education; gender; health; poverty, and social protection. The underlying databases are accessible through the web site.
- World Factbook (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>)
The World Factbook is a public information source developed by the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States. The web site contains datasets on some 200 countries covering topics such as: demography, education, health, labour force, and unemployment rates, as well as a host of

broader economic indicators. Its data run from 1981 and are updated every two weeks. The site offers advanced search facilities and downloadable data.

- World Health Organization (www.who.int)
WHO is the public-health arm of the United Nations. It monitors disease outbreaks and assesses the performance and effectiveness of health systems around the globe. It publishes: world health reports, country-specific statistics, a mental health atlas, a monthly bulletin, and a world health survey. All are accessible from the web site and downloadable free as PDF files.

❖ Non-governmental Sources: Academic Journals

- *Compare: Journal of Comparative and International Education*
- *Global Crime*
- *Global Economic Review*
- *Global Social Policy*
- *Global Society*
- *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice*
- *International Journal of Health Services*
- *International Journal of Housing Policy*
- *International Migration Review*
- *International Social Science Journal*
- *International Social Security Review*
- *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*
- *International Journal of Social Welfare*
- *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society*
- *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Non-Profit Organizations*
- *Work Organisation, Labour and Globalisation*

❖ Non-governmental Sources: Web Sites

- Centre for Global Development (www.cgdev.org)
This is an independent American research centre working to reduce global poverty and inequality. Its interests include: capital flows/financial crises; debt relief; economic growth; education; global health policy; globalization; inequalities and poverty. Its publications include: books; briefing papers; essays; reports and working papers. All are accessible on the web site and downloadable free as PDF files.
- Comparative Research Programme on Poverty (www.crop.org)
Crop is a research programme of the International Social Science Council and hosted by the University of Bergen. It co-ordinates and facilitates global research on poverty which it publishes in the form of books (with Zed Books); briefing papers and a CROP newsletter. All are accessible from the web site and downloadable free as PDF files.
- E-Library for Global Welfare (www.globalwelfarelibrary.org)
The library offers a searchable collection of online resources for international and comparative policy analysis. Among other topics, it covers: demography and migration; education; health; social care; social protection; and work and employment.
- International and Comparative Social Policy Group (www.social-policy.org.uk)

ICSPG is a special-interest group of the United Kingdom's Social Policy Association. Its web site provides a resource database and offers links to the sites of a number of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

- International Council on Social Welfare (www.icsw.org)
ICSW is an international NGO involved in 'social development, social welfare and social justice'. It undertakes international research in such fields as: community participation; economic development; education; health services; housing; human rights and social protection. It publishes a monthly global newsletter, policy papers, and a global policy digest (which also appears in the *Global Social Policy* journal). All these publications are accessible on the web site and can be downloaded free as PDF files.
- LSE Asia Research Centre (www2.lse.ac.uk/)
This London School of Economics' Research Centre undertakes a wide range of country-specific and transnational studies utilizing data on: China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Pakistan, and Taiwan. Its books, listed on the web site, are available from the publishers, its working papers are available free from the web site and downloadable as PDF files.
- NationMaster (www.nationmaster.com)
This is a worldwide data source providing comparable macrodata in fields such as: the economy, education, health, immigration, industry, and labour. The data are presented in tables, graphs, and scatter plots in a read-only format.
- Oxfam (<http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk>)
Within its general remit of alleviating poverty across the world, Oxfam undertakes research on numerous dimensions of poverty and a number of linked issues, including: benefits, education, gender divisions, health care, housing and communities, migrant workers, pensions, and social care. This research has been published in background papers, books, campaign reports, case studies, discussion papers, evaluation reports, journal articles, and working papers. Most are available from this web site and are downloadable free as PDF files. It provides a link for the journal articles that it does not host, and they can also be downloaded free as PDF files.
- Third World Network (www.twinside.org.sg)
TWN is an independent network of individuals and organizations interested in issues relating to Third World development and the impact of advanced economies. Its research areas relevant to social policy include: trade issues, global finance and economic crises, women and gender, health, and global trends. It publishes briefing papers, reports and the magazine *Third World Resurgence*, all of which are accessible on the web site and downloadable free as PDF files.