30. Public preferences
Katja Bender

30.1 INTRODUCTION

For reforms to be acceptable and sustainable in the long run, they should be aligned with public preferences. 'Preferences' is a technical term used in social sciences or humanities including for example disciplines such as economics, philosophy or psychology. Broadly speaking, preferences refer to an individual's judgements on liking one alternative more than others. More specifically, preferences are 'subjective comparative evaluations, in the form of "Agent prefers X to Y"' (Hansson and Grüne-Yanoff 2018). Here, we are particularly interested in people's policy preferences concerning social protection, an area which deserves more attention in policy debates and research.

Available research examines the micro-foundations of individuals' demand for redistributive policy measures or – albeit to a considerably lesser extent – specific social protection measures. It aims to understand individual preferences for redistribution and the underlying driving factors. As people's preferences reflect the acceptability of redistributive policies within societies, the distribution of preferences within a population is considered relevant in influencing the feasibility of social protection policies by shaping public support (or public opposition). However, it needs to be stressed that there is no direct transmission from public preferences to feasibility of social protection policies. As will be taken up below, the specifics of the political system, national institutions or international linkages play a crucial role in shaping resulting policies (see also Chapters 29, 31 or 32).

A burgeoning literature on public preferences exists, yet, considering the current state of art there are at least two caveats. First, social protection entails two basic functions: redistribution and risk pooling (Breyer and Buchholz 2007). A considerable share of the literature is focusing on income redistribution or risk pooling in general without being explicitly linked to any specific or actual social protection policies. Second, although the literature including middle- and low-income countries is expanding, more literature is at present available on high-income countries which tend to have lower inequality and more redistribution than low- or middle-income countries. With respect to single-country studies there is substantial literature on the United States, which is in fact an interesting country for investigation as it is characterized by increasing inequality and relatively little redistribution (Alesina and Giuliano 2011). Research on other high-inequality countries, for example South Africa, is however slowly emerging.

The remainder of this chapter is structured as follows. First, factors influencing preferences for redistribution will be presented and discussed.[1] Next, the issue of social accountability, i.e. the relationship between redistributive preferences and policy responsiveness, will be

---

[1]   Alesina und Giuliano (2011) provided the first comprehensive survey on the literature on preferences for redistribution.

addressed. Then, the chapter turns to methodological challenges in measuring preferences focusing on the validity of approaches used for measuring preferences and problems of endogeneity when addressing the causal link between preferences for redistribution and redistributive outcomes. The last section concludes.

30.2   WHICH FACTORS DETERMINE PREFERENCES?

The literature on redistributive preferences discusses a broad range of factors shaping preferences for redistribution. They can be divided into three main groups:

● Approaches assuming self-interested preferences, discussing the role of income, risk aversion and social mobility in particular.[2]
● Approaches examining other-regarding preferences, addressing the role of values and social norms.
● Approaches considering the role of information.

30.2.1   Self-Interested Preferences

The role of relative income and the median-voter model
Individual income is considered as a main driver of demand for redistribution: individuals with lower incomes are considered to be in favour of redistribution as they expect to benefit from redistribution, while individuals with higher incomes would rather oppose redistribution as they would incur an income loss.

The theoretical foundations are provided by the model developed by Meltzer and Richard (1981) suggesting a link between income inequality and the demand for redistribution. They present a median-voter model and address the utility derived from income as an explanatory variable. The basic argument is as follows. If individuals' market income is below the average market income, they will demand redistribution. Individual demand increases with a widening gap between the individual market income and average market income. The larger the gap between the median's voter market income and average income the higher the demand for redistributive policies. As self-interested politicians are interested in remaining in power they respond to the median voters' demand. Thus, at country level the model predicts that countries with high levels of market income inequality are supposed to have higher public demand for redistribution and higher levels of redistribution.

A number of empirical studies test the hypothesis that people with lower incomes tend to be more supportive of redistribution than people with higher incomes. However, the evidence that these studies provide is mixed. Supporting evidence is provided by Kenworthy and Pontusson (2005), Olivera (2015) and Kerr (2014).

Yet, numerous studies demonstrate also high similarities between the preferences of higher- and lower-income earners (Gilens 1999; Kenworthy and McCall 2008). Other studies demonstrate that even though inequality has risen, preferences have remained stable over time (Ura and Ellis 2008). In addition, there is also empirical evidence showing that poor voters are

---

[2]   Strictly speaking, the role of social mobility also partially overlaps with other-regarding preferences if intergenerational concerns within families are addressed.

actually the ones opposing redistribution, and many wealthy voters favour larger redistributive programmes (Fong et al. 2005; Gilens 1999). All the studies mentioned so far take the United States as a case. Using a comprehensive dataset of more than 50 countries Dion and Birchfield (2010) find that individual-level income does not systematically explain demand for redistribution either in countries with a low level of development or high level of income inequality. Focusing on low and middle incomes, Haggard et al. (2013) find that although individuals with lower incomes tend to be more supportive of redistribution, preferences among this group differ to a large extent across dimensions such as occupational status or residence. Also, they find no evidence that preferences of the poor are positively affected by the level of inequality. Lierse (2019) even finds a negative impact of inequality on support for redistribution.

Considering the inconclusive and seemingly paradox empirical evidence it is obvious that explanations solely based on income and income distribution are not sufficient in explaining redistributive preferences and additional explanations should be considered.

Risk aversion

The standard median-voter model assumes complete information, which implies that individual future income states are certain, and no risks are present. Allowing for uncertainty about future income states, social protection measures might alternatively be viewed as insurance programmes (risk pooling). Demand for insurance is commonly assumed to rise with income: people with more income are willing to pay more to safeguard their living standards against adverse risks such as job loss, illness or old age. Hence, if voters perceive a specific programme as risk pooling or an insurance mechanism rather than as redistribution from higher to lower incomes the median-voter model would predict a negative link between income inequality and demand for 'redistribution': the higher the level of inequality, and therefore the lower income of the median voter, the less redistribution the median voter will demand (Moene and Wallerstein 2001, 2003).[3] Addressing the link between uncertainty and homogeneity of preferences Bjerk (2016) finds by conducting a lab experiment that with uncertainty over future income situations, preferences tend to be similar across incomes, but without uncertainty the individual income situation matters as a determinant for redistributive preferences. Thus, the role of income and inequality may also depend on (individual perceptions of) the actual type of programme in question. This is explored further below in the section on 'Information'.

Social mobility

People might be willing to accept higher levels of inequality in society if they perceive the chances of upward mobility to be high. If people have a positive assessment of their own future prospects of upward mobility or consider the chances of upward mobility for their children as positive, the median voter prefers to have less redistribution compared to the standard median-voter model (Bénabou and Ok 2001). The empirical literature on the role of social mobility for redistributive mobility is vast and mostly confirmatory about the relevance. For example, using cross-country survey and experimental data from high-income countries (France, Italy, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States), Alesina et al. (2018) find that views on mobility are highly correlated with redistributive preferences across all countries: Respondents who are more pessimistic about mobility tend to favour more gener-

---

[3]   Kenworthy and McCall (2008, 62–3) offer a critical perspective on this argument.

ous redistributive policies and higher levels of government involvement. Yet, differentiating according to different types of policies they find that the correlation is stronger for 'equality of opportunity' spending policies (e.g. public education or health) than for 'equality of outcome' policies (e.g. progressive taxation or social safety nets). Steele (2015) analyses over 50,000 individuals from 38 countries at various income levels. While she finds that people who have experienced social mobility are less supportive of redistribution – which is in line with the above argument – she also finds that people who live in countries with higher perceived social mobility are actually more supportive of redistribution than people living in countries with less social mobility. This may point to a reinforcing relationship between social mobility, demand for redistribution and redistributive policies.

30.2.2   Other-Regarding Preferences: Social Norms and Values

All factors discussed so far relate to individual incomes: either current relative market income (standard median-voter model), expected income fluctuations (risk aversion) or expected future incomes (social mobility). In this sense, all these factors relate to self-interested motives. While self-interest is an important motive in human behaviour, individual attitudes are also determined by social norms or values[4] held. The empirical evidence that they matter is compelling.[5]

   From a social justice perspective, it matters how people evaluate the root causes of poverty (Appelbaum 2001). People might have different beliefs of the sources of poverty and inequality and consequently different perceptions on the adequacy of policy measures dealing with poverty and inequality. For example, if people stress individual responsibility and belief that personal effort is sufficient for bringing about material success, a society is less likely to support redistribution as the poor are able to change the situation for themselves. On the contrary, if people tend to believe that structural problems influence poverty and that these barriers cannot be overcome by the poor themselves, then societies are more likely to support redistribution. Fong (2001) and Alesina and La Ferrara (2005) provide empirical evidence for the United States that preferences are at least somewhat predicted by an individual's beliefs about the role of effort versus luck in determining outcomes. Fong et al. (2005) argue that contingent reciprocity and a distinction between 'deserving versus underserving poor' drives redistributive preferences in the United States. Focusing on developing countries, Duman (2013) also finds that attitudes towards the poor are a significant determinant of preferences towards redistribution. Lierse (2019) equally finds empirical support that societies with more individualistic fairness norms are less supportive of redistribution.

---

   [4]   Social norms are understood as informal rules governing behaviour in groups that are enforced by group members (e.g. social ostracism). Values are internalized rules that guide or motivate behaviour.
   [5]   Theoretical foundations are for example provided in Alesina and Angeletos (2005), who extend the median-voter model to include fairness considerations. Alesina et al. (2012) build on a probabilistic voting model to illustrate how changes in perceptions of fairness influence the evolution of redistributive policies, inequality and redistributive preferences over time.

30.2.3 Information

The basic median-voter mechanisms assume full information. Yet, apart from uncertainty about future outcomes (see above), individuals may have imperfect information and may thus misjudge for example their place within the income ladder, the true level of inequality or the size and the costs of redistribution (see for example Page and Goldstein 2016). The individual state of knowledge may influence demand for redistribution or support of a specific policy and reducing informational gaps may change observed demand or support.

Cruces et al. (2013), using survey data from Argentina, and Karadja et al. (2017), using survey data from Sweden, find that information on how people are positioned within the income ladder influences support for redistribution: people overestimating their income demand more, people underestimating their income demand less. Thus, these studies suggest that removing information imperfections provides support to the hypothesis that self-interest in the form of income maximization is a decisive factor. Interestingly, within the South African context, Pellicer et al. (2019) find that while providing information about local levels of inequality is statistically not significant, providing information about international inequality levels increases support for redistributive measures (e.g. a hypothetical progressive tax or a universal income grant). They conclude that in high-inequality contexts such as South Africa better knowledge about lower inequality elsewhere may change otherwise persistent social beliefs that inequality is inevitable.

Kuziemko et al. (2015), analysing survey data from the United States, find that information has only a very small and often insignificant effect on policy preferences for redistributive policies or on tax design. However, they find that providing information on how redistributive policies are linked to inequality increases support, which indicates that the public fails to connect inequality with actual policy measures. Boeri and Tabellini (2012), analysing support for pension reform in Italy, address the role of information with respect to the type, size and costs of redistribution. They find large knowledge gaps with respect to awareness on the current financial situation of the Italian pension system (deficit), understanding of the basic functioning of a pay-as-you-go scheme and knowledge of the contribution rate. Also, they find that information indeed increases support for reforms reducing the generosity of the pension system.

30.2.4 Relative Importance of Determinants

As the literature on preferences for redistribution takes into consideration a broad range of factors, the question then is if any factors are more important than others. As relatively few studies analyse different factors simultaneously, a definite answer is not possible.

Corneo and Gruner (2002) evaluate the explanatory power of three competing forces: the 'homo oeconomicus effect' (i.e. self-interest expressed as income maximization), the 'public values effect' (including beliefs on the relative role of hard work or structural factors for success as well as expectations concerning social mobility) and a so-called 'social rivalry effect' (effect of redistribution on relative living standards). They conclude that all three effects play a significant role in shaping individual preferences for political redistribution, yet the income-related effect is statistically the strongest. Similarly, Guillaud (2013), analysing survey data from 33 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and selected middle-income countries, finds that family income outweighs all other determinants followed

by social mobility expectations. Durante et al. (2014) conduct a lab experiment analysing self-interest and social concerns. They find that all factors matter, but again find a stronger role of self-interest-related motives. An exception is Steele (2015), who finds the opposite, namely that social mobility is more important than present income.

Blinder and Krueger (2004) analyse a broad set of explanatory factors by focusing on the relative role of 'self-interest', 'ideology' or 'information' in explaining public support for a variety of economic policies in the United States. Further, they compare preferences across different policy areas and they find strong variations across different social protection interventions including pensions and health insurance. Their results seem to suggest that information may affect preferences with respect to operational changes within a *given* system rather than influence more fundamental questions concerning systemic changes, which are driven by motives more deeply rooted in human nature, such as self-interest or ideology. Further empirical evidence is required to test this hypothesis.

30.3 VARIATION OF PUBLIC PREFERENCES ACROSS SOCIETIES

In several studies it has also been shown that the relevance of factors influencing preferences for redistribution differs systematically across societies. Lierse (2019) shows that about 10 per cent of the variance is attributable to differences between countries such as domestic policies and fairness considerations. Regional differences are also found with respect to social norms and values (Duman 2013) or social mobility (Steele 2015). Furthermore, Corneo and Gruner (2002) find in their analysis of the relative effects of different determinants of preferences that results strongly vary by country.

30.4 SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY: REDISTRIBUTIVE PREFERENCES AND POLICY RESPONSIVENESS

Social accountability refers to the mechanisms that citizens can use to control government actions and hold governments to account for their actions. Social accountability would entail that public preferences for redistribution are reflected in policy decision making and, thus, a corresponding relationship between types of preferences and welfare state output (policy responsiveness). Even though at least for democracies some sort of link between aggregated policy preferences and policy output might be expected,[6] this link cannot be taken for granted. Unfortunately, both at the empirical as well as at the theoretical level this is a widely under-researched area.

Only few empirical studies have examined this relationship. Brooks and Manza (2006), covering the 1980s and 1990s and high-income democracies, conclude that preferences have a significant impact on welfare state output and different welfare regimes. However, replicating Brooks and Manza's analysis, Kenworthy (2009) does not confirm that public opinion has

---

[6]   In democracies where elections are a means to hold politicians accountable politicians thus have incentives to take into account public policy preferences of voters so as to reduce the risk of electoral loss. Non-electoral mechanisms include for example protests or forms of civil obedience.

a direct impact on redistributive policies. Also, Brady and Bostic (2015) find no significant support between public support and transfer share.

From a theoretical perspective the median-voter model implies that policy makers' decision making is geared towards the known preferences of the majority. Meltzer and Richard contend that this decision-making rule might not refer to democracies only, but also to welfare-maximizing dictators or monarchs who would behave similarly to voting majorities in terms of these types of policy decisions. Yet is the median voter the correct collective decision-making mechanism to aggregate preferences and explain redistributive decisions? Although there is a considerable body of literature available examining how political systems, specific political institutions and resulting power structures influence policy responsiveness and may induce redistributional differences across countries (see Chapters 29, 31 and 32), only a relatively small number of studies are addressing the direct link between public preferences for redistribution and alternative political mechanisms of preference aggregation. Contributions in this context address in particular the role of democratic capture, i.e. the link between a lack of social accountability, preferences for redistribution and redistributive outputs. Mechanisms discussed include 'vote buying', i.e. the rich elite buying the votes of a share of the poorer population to shift the median-voter result (Breyer and Ursprung 1998; Docquier and Tarbalouti 2001; Balafoutas 2011), or 'political patronage', i.e. the rich elite forming coalitions with bureaucrats and paying rents to the bureaucracy, so that the bureaucrats support the interests of the rich rather than the poor (Acemoglu et al. 2011).

Empirically, the theoretical ideas described above have been taken up in the context of corruption, i.e. the level of corruption used as a proxy indicator for a political system characterized by vote buying or rent seeking and thus diverging from the median-voter assumption. Only a small number of papers address the link between corruption and preferences for redistribution empirically. In a comprehensive cross-country study including in total 148 high-, middle- and low-income countries, Sánchez and Goda (2018) provide empirical evidence that corruption diminishes redistribution. Balafoutas (2011) shows that corruption leads to lower levels of progressive taxation. Similar results are presented by Morgan and Kelly (2010) focusing on Latin American countries. In addition, they argue that in poorer countries perceptions of crime as a problem are strongly and positively correlated with support for redistribution, whereas the correlation ceases to exist in richer countries.

Whereas all the previous studies assume a negative link between corruption and support for redistribution, the paper by Hauk et al. (2018) is the only study known to the author that offers a more nuanced treatment of the potential causal links between corruption and demand for redistribution. They discuss two counteracting theoretical mechanisms. First, corruption may decrease the demand for redistribution as trust in governmental institutions is low. Second, corruption may increase the demand for redistribution as it reduces the relative wealth of the disadvantaged. Investigating the link between perceived levels of corruption and demand for redistribution in 18 Latin American countries, Hauk et al. (2018) provide evidence that corruption actually increases the demand for redistribution. Although they also find empirical evidence for the first mechanism, the effect of the second mechanism is stronger.

30.5   MEASURABILITY: METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES

Micro-level data derived either from surveys at the individual level including choice-based experiments in field surveys or from lab experiments are the major data source used in relating individual traits to redistributive preferences. Studies may focus on (respondents from) one country or make use of cross-country data. They may include cross-sectional time series data (panel data). Surveys are either specifically designed for the research in question or available survey data is used. Thus, methodological approaches applied are diverse. Here, two over-arching methodological challenges will be addressed: the validity of indicators used for the dependent variable 'preferences' and problems of endogeneity with respect to the direction of causality between redistributive preferences and social policy output.

30.5.1   Measuring Preferences: Validity

Validity comprises internal validity, i.e. whether the study design, conduct and analysis answer the research questions without bias, and external validity, i.e. whether the study find-ings can be generalized to other contexts. Ecological validity is a sub-dimension of external validity and examines whether findings can be generalized to real-life settings. Here we focus in particular on the validity of approaches used for operationalizing the dependent variable 'preferences'.

To measure preferences many of the surveys include questions asking about the respond-ent's support to the role of government in reducing (income) inequality. For example, one commonly used indicator to measure preferences for redistribution is the extensity, operation-alized by the following question: 'To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement: "It is the responsibility of the government to reduce the differences in income between people with high incomes and those with low incomes"?' (e.g. Corneo and Gruner 2002; Alesina and Giuliano 2011). The internal validity of this indicator is constrained as, strictly speaking, this type of operationalization does not measure preferences but attitudes (Pfarr et al. 2018). Although, sometimes used interchangeably, the concepts are not identical:[7] attitudes refer to subjective evaluations of an item with some degree of favour or disfavour. Preferences as defined above are subjective *comparative* evaluations. Thus, measuring preferences involves measurements across a set of defined alternatives.

More sophisticated methods to measure preferences rely on stated preference techniques. Stated preference techniques refer to techniques which seek to elicit preferences by using data based on behavioural intentions and hypothetical situations.[8] Stated preference techniques need to address the problem of 'hypothetical bias', i.e. the possible discrepancy between what people say and what they actually would decide to do in a 'real-life' situation. Hypothetical bias is directly related to the question of external validity, in particular ecological validity, as it reduces the transferability of results to real-life settings. One source for hypothetical bias is that due to the hypothetical nature of scenarios respondents do not have to face any real

---

[7]   See for example Phillips et al. (2002) for an interesting conceptual and empirical comparison between 'attitudes' and 'preferences'.

[8]   In addition, revealed preference techniques infer preferences from data on choices people actually made. For a comprehensive general discussion of methods for measuring preferences in a non-market setting see, for example, Champ et al. (2017).

consequences of their decisions. Also, how people respond is sensitive to the context, i.e. the framing of questions. Thus, mitigating hypothetical bias requires designing scenarios as realistic as possible so that it is in the best interest of respondents to answer truthfully (Louviere 2006).

It is obvious that the ecological validity of the indicator presented above is constrained. It is very general and does not relate to a particular mechanism through which redistribution can be accomplished (e.g. level and type of taxes or contributions). Further, no trade-offs are considered (e.g. higher benefits, higher financing requirements). Choice experiments are a more refined method for eliciting stated preferences: respondents are presented with a finite number of choice options, each including alternative combinations of attributes of the 'good' or policy in question, and are asked to choose between the different options. This approach reveals trade-offs and provides more realistic scenarios.[9] For example, Boeri and Tabellini (2012) ask questions specifying trade-offs among specific policy options (e.g. 'Are you willing to pay x% higher contributions in order to obtain y% higher benefits?'). Alesina et al. (2018) elicit policy preferences by designing policy alternatives distinguishing between preferred size of government, target groups and financing and including realistic trade-offs.

In addition, experimental approaches allowing the study of counterfactuals by (randomly) assigning control and treatment conditions are increasingly applied.[10] Field or quasi-experiments relying on (often self-conducted) surveys are for example conducted in Kuziemko et al. (2015), Boeri and Tabellini (2012) and Alesina et al. (2018). In recent years, studies conducting laboratory experiments are increasing in number. Laboratory experiments may be considered as a stated preferences technique as an experiment is always a hypothetical, not a real-life decision-making situation. Yet, within this hypothetical situation people make real choices, thus coming close to revealed preferences. Durante et al. (2014) and Bjerk (2016) provide examples of laboratory experiments.

30.5.2 Endogeneity and Feedback Processes

Do preferences for redistribution influence the social spending regime types or are preferences shaped by existing social spending regime types? Theoretically, the possibility of feedback effects was addressed quite early. Models developed by Alesina and Angeletos (2005) or Bénabou and Tirole (2006) demonstrate that feedback mechanisms, with redistributive policies leading to economic outcomes that in their turn influence preferences again, may lead to multiple politico-economic equilibria.

Empirical studies addressing endogeneity employ different methods. Brooks and Manza (2006) test for endogeneity using Hausman's test measure. They find no evidence for endogeneity being present, i.e. preferences being shaped by existing social spending regime types. Steele (2015) runs robustness tests by including the level of social as an independent variable and by constructing an alternative outcome measure in which individuals' views about redistribution are calculated relative to the level of benefits that exist in their society ('context-adjusted attitudes') (Steele 2015, 449–52). Also, she finds no evidence for any feedback effects. To address endogeneity Lierse (2019) lags all variables. She finds that people

---

[9] For a detailed discussion of choice experiments see Holmes et al. (2017).
[10] For a detailed discussion of experimental approaches see Landry (2017).

in countries with already extensive welfare states are generally less supportive of further redistribution.

Thus, the limited empirical evidence is mixed and the direction of causality in the policy–policy preferences relationship remains an open question. Also, as any feedback effect might result from longer-term experiences, longer time series data are required to further analyse this question. However, as Kenworthy (2009) observes, cross-nationally comparable public opinion data became available long after different welfare state institutions had begun to influence the social, political and economic circumstances of their countries. This problem relates to the difficulties in defining the starting point. Countries with relatively new or expanding social protection systems provide an excellent opportunity to further study the direction of causality and explore the relationship between preferences for redistribution and regime type development. Yet, research on this aspect has just started. Focusing on China, Im and Meng (2016) study the effects of social protection policies on individuals' attitudes towards inequality and welfare policy preferences. They find that individuals' experience with social protection policies reinforces views on government responsibility and that previous experience with one welfare policy also positively influences opinions about other welfare programmes.

30.6   CONCLUSIONS

The literature analysing preferences for redistribution is a dynamic research area. Major progress has been made in establishing that preferences are in fact influenced by multiple determinants including relative income, risk aversion, social mobility or social preferences such as fairness considerations or perceptions of social justice. Yet, available studies also demonstrate that with respect to the relevance of explanatory factors differences across countries exist. The context specificity of preferences still requires further attention. Due to better data availability cross-country studies also increasingly consider low- and middle-income countries. With respect to single-country studies, the number of studies analysing real policy proposals in low- or middle-income countries is still very small but has grown in recent years. Future research should also be dedicated to gaining a better understanding of public preferences across different social protection instruments and across political regimes, to studying the link between demand for redistribution and social protection regimes as well as the policy feedback processes between social protection regimes and preferences for redistribution.

At policy level, probably the major lesson to be learned from research on preferences for redistribution is that if constituencies are taken seriously, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to social protection – what people want (or don't want) differs across and within countries and across different pillars of social protection. This is important from a normative point of view, i.e. policy makers should be accountable to their population as well as from a more strategic point of view, i.e. the political feasibility or acceptability of devised policy options increase with the degree to which public preferences are taken into consideration.

The results also challenge the common narrative that social protection is per se in the interests of lower-income groups whereas higher-income groups tend to oppose redistribution. The formation of redistributive preferences is more complex and strongly shaped by individual or cultural beliefs, including values and social norms. Another important lesson to be learned is that people respond to information: putting measures in context and offering explanations may influence people's perspectives on social protection initiatives. Reform communication, thus, may be decisive in enhancing public acceptability of policies.

REFERENCES

Acemoglu, D., D. Ticchi and A. Vindigni (2011). Emergence and persistence of inefficient states. *Journal of the European Economic Association* 9 (2), 177–208.

Alesina, A. and G.-M. Angeletos (2005). Fairness and redistribution. *American Economic Review* 95 (4), 960–80.

Alesina, A. and E. La Ferrara (2005). Preferences for redistribution in the land of opportunities. *Journal of Public Economics* 89, 897–931.

Alesina, A. and P. Giuliano (2011). Preferences for redistribution. In J. Benhabib, A. Bisin and M. Jackson (eds), *Handbook of Social Economics*, Vol. 1A. New York: Elsevier, 93–131.

Alesina, A., G. Cozzi and N. Mantovan (2012). The evolution of ideology, fairness and redistribution. *The Economic Journal* 122 (565), 1244–61.

Alesina, A., S. Stantcheva and E. Teso (2018). Intergenerational mobility and preferences for redistribution. *American Economic Review* 108 (2), 521–54.

Appelbaum, L. (2001). The influence of perceived deservingness on policy decisions regarding aid to the poor. *Political Psychology* 22 (3), 419–42.

Balafoutas, L. (2011). How much income redistribution? An explanation based on vote-buying and corruption. *Public Choice* 146 (1–2), 185–203.

Bénabou, R. and E. Ok (2001). Social mobility and the demand for redistribution: The Poum hypothesis. *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 116 (2), 447–87.

Bénabou, R. and J. Tirole (2006). Belief in a just world and redistributive politics. *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 121 (2), 699–746.

Bjerk, D. (2016). In front of and behind the veil of ignorance: An analysis of motivations for redistribution. *Social Choice Welfare* 47 (4), 791–824.

Blinder, A. and A. Krueger (2004). What does the public know about economic policy and how does it know it? *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity* 1, 327–97.

Boeri, T. and G. Tabellini (2012). Does information increase political support for pension reform? *Public Choice* 150 (1–2), 327–62.

Brady, D. and A. Bostic (2015). Paradoxes of social policy. *American Sociological Review* 80 (2), 268–98.

Breyer, F. and W. Buchholz (2007). *Ökonomie des Sozialstaates*. Berlin: Springer.

Breyer, F. and H. Ursprung (1998). Are the rich too rich to be expropriated? Economic power and the feasibility of constitutional limits to redistribution. *Public Choice* 94 (1), 135–56.

Brooks, C. and J. Manza (2006). Social policy responsiveness in developed democracies. *American Sociological Review* 71 (3), 474–94.

Champ, P., K. Boyle and T. Brown (eds) (2017). *A Primer on Nonmarket Valuation*. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands.

Corneo, G. and H. Gruner (2002). Individual preferences for political redistribution. *Journal of Public Economics* 83, 83–107.

Cruces, G., R. Perez-Truglia and M. Tetaz (2013). Biased perceptions of income distribution and preferences for redistribution: Evidence from a survey experiment. *Journal of Public Economics* 98, 100–12.

Dion, M. and V. Birchfield (2010). Economic development, income inequality, and preferences for redistribution. *International Studies Quarterly* 54 (2), 315–34.

Docquier, F. and E. Tarbalouti (2001). Bribing votes: A new explanation to the 'inequality-redistribution' puzzle in LDCs. *Public Choice* 108 (3/4), 259–72.

Duman, A. (2013). Attitudes towards hard work and redistributive preferences in developing countries. In K. Bender, M. Kaltenborn and C. Pfleiderer (eds), *Social Protection in Developing Countries: Reforming Systems*. London: Routledge, 95–108.

Durante, R., L. Putterman and J. van der Weele (2014). Preferences for redistribution and perception of fairness: An experimental study. *Journal of the European Economic Association* 12 (4), 1059–86.

Fong, C. (2001). Social preferences, self-interest, and the demand for redistribution. *Journal of Public Economics* 82 (2), 225–46.

Fong, C., S. Bowels and H. Gintis (2005). Behavioural motives for income redistribution. *Australian Economic Review* 38 (3), 285–97.

Gilens, M. (1999). *Why Americans Hate Welfare*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Guillaud, E. (2013). Preferences for redistribution: An empirical analysis over 33 countries. *Journal of Economic Inequality* 11 (1), 57–78.

Haggard, S., R. Kaufman and J. Long (2013). Income, occupation, and preferences for redistribution in the developing world. *Studies in Comparative International Development* 48 (2), 113–40.

Hansson, S. and T. Grüne-Yanoff (2018). Preferences. In E. Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University. https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2018/entries/preferences/

Hauk, E., M. Oviedo and X. Ramos (2018). Perception of corruption and public support for redistribution in Latin America. IZA Discussion Paper No. 10854. Bonn: IZA Institute of Labor Economics. http://ftp.iza.org/dp10854.pdf

Holmes, T., W. Adamowicz and F. Carlsson (2017). Choice experiments. In P. Champ, K. Boyle and T. Brown (eds), *A Primer on Nonmarket Valuation*. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 133–86.

Im, D. and T. Meng (2016). The policy–opinion nexus: The impact of social protection programs on welfare policy preferences in China. *International Journal Public Opinion Research* 28 (2), 241–68.

Karadja, M., J. Mollerstrom and D. Seim (2017). Richer (and holier) than thou? The effect of relative income improvements on demand for redistribution. *Review of Economics and Statistics* 99 (2), 201–12.

Kenworthy, L. (2009). The effect of public opinion on social policy generosity. *Socio-Economic Review* 7 (4), 727–40.

Kenworthy, L. and L. McCall (2008). Inequality, public opinion and redistribution. *Socio-Economic Review* 6, 35–68.

Kenworthy, L. and J. Pontusson (2005). Rising inequality and the politics of redistribution in affluent countries. *Perspectives on Politics* 3, 449–71.

Kerr, W. (2014). Income inequality and social preferences for redistribution and compensation differentials. *Journal of Monetary Economics* 66, 25–48.

Kuziemko, I., M. Norton, E. Saez and S. Stantcheva (2015). How elastic are preferences for redistribution? Evidence from randomized survey experiments. *American Economic Review* 105 (4), 1478–508.

Landry, C. (2017). Experimental methods in valuation. In P. Champ, K. Boyle and T. Brown (eds), *A Primer on Nonmarket Valuation*. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 391–429.

Lierse, H. (2019). Why is there not more demand for redistribution? Cross-national evidence for the role of social justice beliefs. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 31 (1), 121–41.

Louviere, J. (2006). What you don't know might hurt you: Some unresolved issues in the design and analysis of discrete choice experiments. *Environmental Resource Economics* 34 (1), 173–88.

Meltzer, A. and S. Richard (1981). A rational theory of the size of government. *Journal of Political Economy* 89, 914–27.

Moene, K. and M. Wallerstein (2001). Inequality, social insurance, and redistribution. *American Political Science Review* 95 (4), 859–74.

Moene, K. and M. Wallerstein (2003). Earnings inequality and welfare spending: A disaggregated analysis. *World Politics* 55 (4), 485–516.

Morgan, J. and N. Kelly (2010). Explaining public attitudes toward fighting inequality in Latin America. *Poverty and Public Policy* 2 (3), 541–73.

Olivera, J. (2015). Preferences for redistribution in Europe. *IZA Journal of Labor Studies* 4 (1). https://doi.org/10.1186/s40174-015-0037-y

Page, L. and D. Goldstein (2016). Subjective beliefs about the income distribution and preferences for redistribution. *Social Choice Welfare* 47 (1), 25–61.

Pellicer, M., P. Piraino and E. Wegner (2019). Perceptions of inevitability and demand for redistribution: Evidence from a survey experiment. *Journal of Economic Behaviour and Organization* 159, 274–88.

Pfarr, C., A. Schmid and M. Mørkbak (2018). Modelling heterogeneous preferences for income redistribution: An application of continuous and discrete distributions. *Review of Income and Wealth* 64 (2), 270–94.

Phillips, K., F. Johnson and T. Maddala (2002). Measuring what people value: A comparison of 'attitude' and 'preference'. *Surveys Health Service Research* 37 (6), 1659–79.

Sánchez, A. and T. Goda (2018). Corruption and the 'paradox of redistribution'. *Social Indicator Research* 140 (2), 675–93.

Steele, L. (2015). Income inequality, equal opportunity, and attitudes about redistribution. *Social Science Quarterly* 96 (2), 444–64.

Ura, J. and C. Ellis (2008). Income, preferences, and the dynamics of policy responsiveness. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 41 (4), 785–94.