

Sofiya An, Tatiana Chubarova, Bob Deacon and Paul Stubbs (Eds.)

**Social Policy, Poverty, and Inequality in
Central and Eastern Europe and the
Former Soviet Union**

Agency and Institutions in Flux

About CROP

CROP, the Comparative Research Programme on Poverty, is a response from the academic community to the problems of poverty. The programme was initiated by the International Social Science Council (ISSC) in 1992, and the CROP Secretariat hosted by the University of Bergen (UiB) was officially opened in June 1993 by the Director General of UNESCO, Dr Frederico Mayor. In 2018, the ISSC merged with the International Council for Science (ICSU) to become the International Science Council (ISC).

In recent years, poverty-related issues have moved up on the international agenda, with poverty eradication now defined as the greatest global challenge facing the world today. In co-operation with the ISC and the UiB, CROP works with knowledge networks, institutions and scholars to establish independent and critical poverty research in order to help shape policies for long-term poverty prevention and eradication.

The CROP network comprises scholars engaged in poverty-related research across a variety of academic disciplines. Researchers from more than a hundred different countries are represented in the network, which is coordinated by the CROP Secretariat at the University of Bergen, Norway.

The CROP series on *International Studies in Poverty Research* presents expert research and essential analyses of different aspects of poverty worldwide. By promoting a fuller understanding of the nature, extent, depth, distribution, trends, causes and effects of poverty and poverty-related issues, this series will contribute to knowledge concerning the prevention and eradication of poverty at global, regional, national and local levels.

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Sofiya An, Tatiana Chubarova, Bob Deacon and Paul Stubbs (editors)

PREFACE

This book derives from a workshop of the same title organized by the Comparative Research Programme on Poverty (CROP) at the Norwegian University Center in St Petersburg, Russian Federation, in June 2017. The workshop provided an opportunity for a systematic stock-taking of recent and historical post-socialist social policy developments in an increasingly diverse world region. Authors from different disciplines address key aspects of social protection including health care, poverty reduction measures, active labor market policies, pension systems, and child welfare systems. Contributions range in focus from comparative studies of welfare arrangements in a number of countries, to micro-level studies of the lived experiences of welfare users and their everyday lives. Throughout, the importance of policies to combat growing poverty, inequality and social exclusion is a major theme, with a number of texts addressing the complex policy nexus emerging from the interactions between international and domestic actors.

The original idea for the workshop came from Bob Deacon, a distinguished social policy scholar whose work on social policy in Eastern Europe, from the 1980s to today, continues to inspire researchers around the world and from the region. Following a long battle with cancer, Bob sadly passed away on 1 October 2017, aged 73. He will be missed by all who are committed to social justice across the world. Bob's commitment to the workshop and to this book was inspirational. It was a privilege, as co-editors, to work with him on this project. We are sorry that he was not able to see the book published, but we hope that it represents another important part of the legacy that he leaves behind.

We also wish to thank all those at CROP who worked hard to ensure the success of the workshop and to see this book to publication, in particular Alberto Daniel Cimadamore, Charlotte Lillefjære-Tertnæs, and Maria Sollohub. Thanks to Stein Kuhnle for his hard work during the

workshop. We thank all participants in the workshop and, particularly, all contributors, for their commitment to the project. From the publisher's side, Jakob Horstmann provided patient guidance throughout the process, for which we are extremely grateful. Comments at the proposal stage by Thomas Pogge and, at the full review stage, by an anonymous reviewer, were extremely helpful in preparing the volume for final publication. We dedicate the book to the memory of Bob Deacon.

Sofiya An, Tatiana Chubarova, and Paul Stubbs
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