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Bent Greve

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Hugh Bochel
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Introduction

As noted in a number of chapters in this book, recent debates about liberal welfare states owe a great deal to the work of Gøsta Esping-Andersen, and in particular to his *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (1990), which drew upon social theory and empirical analysis to identify three welfare regimes: a social democratic or Scandinavian model (see Chapter 12), a conservative or continental model (see Chapter 13), and what he termed a liberal or Anglo-Saxon model, which is the concern of this chapter. He argued that these regimes arose owing to particular historical and cultural conditions, so that each state is broadly oriented in a particular direction, reflecting decommodification (the extent to which an individual’s welfare is reliant upon the market), levels of social stratification (concerned with the role of welfare states in maintaining or breaking down social stratification), and the private-public mix in welfare provision (the relative roles of state, family and the market).

In Esping-Andersen’s early work (1985, 1990), liberal welfare states were described as being those in which ‘means-tested assistance, modest universal transfers or modest social insurance plans predominate’ (1990, p. 26), with strict entitlement rules, low levels of rights of social citizenship or decommodification, low commitment to full employment, and taxation and transfer systems that provide only limited relief and do little to promote equality. In this model, the state is seen as seeking to encourage individuals to work through the provision of only low levels of benefits, and, rather than providing extensive welfare support, strongly promoting individual provision through the private market. Esping-Andersen suggested that ‘The archetypal examples of this model are the United States, Canada and Australia’ (1990, p. 27), and much of his discussion of liberal welfare states in *The Three Worlds* uses the United States as an exemplar of that type of regime. It is, however, important to note that, as discussed below, the term ‘liberal’ is used in many different ways, and there is no consensus that it is necessarily appropriate to describe the model as outlined by Esping-Andersen, so that some have suggested that it may more accurately be seen as a ‘neoliberal’ model (e.g. Aspalter, 2011), while others have used the terms largely interchangeably. This chapter explores the idea of liberal welfare states at a time when neoliberal ideas are often seen to be a major influence on social policy (see Chapter 25).
Critiques of Esping-Andersen and the liberal welfare state model

Over the past four decades, Esping-Andersen’s work has been subjected to critique, testing and development, some of which is discussed below (see also Chapters 23 and 24), including with regard to the theoretical and empirical construction of the idea of liberal welfare regimes and the assignment of countries to that classification.

Methodological critiques

Some critiques of Esping-Andersen’s work have related to his methods, and in particular to the variables he selected and the construction of the decommodification indexes and regimes, and the impact these have on the identification of regimes. For example, Scruggs and Allan (2006) have argued that using levels of government spending as the main empirical basis for evaluating welfare states is problematic, not least because it does not provide sufficient indication of the welfare state’s effects on individuals’ life chances. They also sought both to replicate Esping-Andersen’s work and to extend the period of coverage from 1971 to 2002, which had particular implications for the identification of ‘liberal’ welfare states, with Japan and Italy joining the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom and New Zealand, while Canada and Ireland moved to the conservative constellation. Some have also criticised his selection of states, highlighting, for example, the exclusion of East European states and East Asian societies (Walker and Wong, 2013), as well as countries such as Chile and Mexico, that are now part of the OECD, and the lack of attention to Southern Europe (Ferrara, 1996).

From a different perspective, some of the most significant early critiques of Esping-Andersen’s work highlighted that it ignored gender issues (Lewis, 1992; Orloff, 1993; see also Gornick and Meyers, 2004). Other policy areas have also been noted as being excluded from Esping-Andersen’s original framework, such as health and social care, education and activation. Bambra (2013), for example, notes that healthcare was long overlooked by regime typologists, despite it being the largest area of welfare state delivery in terms of GDP, and that this would have particular implications for some otherwise liberal welfare states, such as Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, which rank relatively low on labour market decommodification, but which have been highly decommodifying in healthcare, with services based on universalism, public provision and funding from general taxation (albeit that she notes that more recently healthcare systems in England and New Zealand have been subject to a greater degree of marketisation). Indeed, not only might the inclusion of areas such as healthcare affect the positions of individual countries, particularly in the liberal welfare category, but Bambra (2013) suggests that the inclusion of a healthcare decommodification index might challenge the internal consistency of welfare regimes, highlighting that there are different service and transfer mixes. On the other hand, examining disability benefits, Harris and colleagues (2012) note that, as might be anticipated, liberal welfare states encourage recipients of disability benefits to participate in the labour market, but that participation rates remain low, and people with disabilities are more likely to be in part-time work, have low relative income levels, and to live in or near poverty. Considering Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States, they argue that neoliberalism has influenced policies in a way which means that services are limited in their reach, and that wider structural issues, which if addressed would facilitate parity of participation, have been ignored. In addition, in an area more closely related to Esping-Andersen’s original work, Powell and Barrientos (2004) found that adding active labour market policies, as a key part of the welfare mix, helped identify regime clusters more clearly, and, in the case of the liberal regime, broadly reflected Esping-Andersen’s results. Adding other broadly social policy areas, such as
immigration, integration and multiculturalism, may be expected to further complicate the analysis.

It has also been questioned whether Esping-Andersen’s regimes should primarily be thought of as theoretical ideal-types, so that the value is in measuring states against them, or whether they are a typology in which a state either belongs to a type or does not (van Kersbergen, 2013). As Powell and Barrientos (2011) point out, while Esping-Andersen’s emphasis is on principles that underpin welfare states, these principles changed between his 1990 work and that in 1999, while it is also quite possible for different parts of a welfare state to be based on different principles and to use different mechanisms, as with the NHS and income maintenance in the United Kingdom, with the former being established on the basis of universality and equality, while the latter uses a mix of means-testing, social insurance and universal benefits to provide a relatively low level of replacement. This raises questions such as whether it would be possible for states to be located in more than one regime (e.g. Ebbinghaus, 2012).

Finally, and to some extent related to the preceding point, in states with strong federal or other forms of decentralised systems of government, it is worth noting that a focus on ideal-types at the national level may risk overlooking significant internal differences in approaches to the provision of welfare.

Problems with the liberal regime?

Other criticisms have been more directly specific to the concern with liberal welfare regimes, and these have been both empirical and theoretical. With regard to the former, some have taken issue with both the ideas and the interpretations of Esping-Andersen. For example, Zutavern and Kohli (2010) have noted that he used a relatively narrow concept of needs, and that it is not only liberal welfare states that are ‘needs-based’. Deeming (2016) takes this critique further by suggesting that Esping-Andersen’s theorisation of the liberal world has always been less clear than for the conservative and social democratic worlds, and notes that a number of critics have suggested that he misunderstood the development of social policy in the English-speaking nations and overestimated the congruence between linguistic and cultural heritages and accompanying welfare arrangements in Anglo-American countries.

From a different perspective, Wilson et al. (2013) suggest that he failed to recognise the ‘outlier’ status of Australia and New Zealand, while Whiteford (2013), among others, has also argued that the Australian approach to welfare does not fit easily into the original three worlds typology.

Danforth (2014), as have Scruggs and Allan (2006) and Bambra (2006), has highlighted the lack of attention paid to temporal aspects of welfare regimes, again with particular implications for the liberal regime. Drawing upon data from 1950 to 2000, he argues that even with the addition of further measures the three clusters identified by Esping-Andersen emerged clearly only from 1980 to 1995 or 2000, when a clear distinction between conservative and liberal welfare states was evident when post-tax/transfer poverty and activation are taken into account on top of the other dimensions. Bambra (2006) also suggests that the three worlds have not remained static, and that by 1998/1999 there had been considerable movement in the relative relationships of the constituent countries.

One further potential criticism is the very use of the term ‘liberal’ by Esping-Andersen. As an ideology, liberalism may arguably best be understood as reflecting a broad tradition of thought, rather than as a fixed set of beliefs. While individual freedom and liberty are generally central to the concerns of liberalism, they can be interpreted in different and sometimes conflicting ways. Harris (1999), for example, distinguishes between classical liberalism, expansive
liberalism, which sought to create a limited degree of socialisation of economic and social realms on the basis of promoting collective security, and advanced liberalism, which seeks to desocialise and subject these realms to market forces (Clarke, 2004). Indeed, in his assessment of *The Three Worlds*, Deeming (2016) highlights that ‘liberalism’ is both a deeply contested idea and a multifaceted ideology, and that there would be no agreement from an ideological perspective on what a liberal welfare state might look like. Similarly, Spicker (2013) suggests that ‘liberal’ values can describe many different things, although politically they have been used to emphasise civil and political rights, the equality of individuals and arguments for social mobility, while economically they have been associated with individual choice, property rights and a preference for the market. He also argues that the simplistic association of liberalism and market provision with residualism and a reluctance to spend is potentially misleading, and that in addition to being market-oriented a liberal welfare state would be likely to be pluralistic, localised and emphasise the rights of individuals. Martinsson (2012), broadly reflecting Spicker’s view of the nature of liberalism, is particularly critical, suggesting that when Esping-Andersen ‘finds a society that combines the free market with welfare-state mechanisms, he labels it a liberal welfare state’ (p. 49).

Esping-Andersen’s use of the term ‘liberal’ to describe a particular type of welfare regime may therefore be seen to fit to a greater or lesser extent with particular interpretations of liberalism, and is perhaps best viewed as a tool for analytical purposes, rather than describing a model of a welfare state that ‘liberals’ might support, or even recognise.

**Developing the analysis**

In addition to these critiques, further work by Esping-Andersen and others may be seen as both developing and supporting his original findings. For example, Esping-Andersen has accepted some of the criticisms in relation to gender issues, and that the state might affect traditional gender roles and diminish dependence on the family in providing care (1999), although he maintained that for liberal welfare states the level of defamilialisation remained low, with those receiving adequate incomes able to defamilialise by buying care-related services from the private market. He also took greater account of social risks, adding to the liberal regime’s restricted role of the state and preference for market provision a narrow characterisation of social risks, seen largely as arising from market failure.

In addition, despite some of the criticisms of the narrow range of policy areas in Esping-Andersen’s original work, others have argued that broadening the scope of analysis beyond income support can still produce broadly similar findings. For example, Schroder (2013) included both production and welfare regimes (drawing in varieties of capitalism (Hall and Soskice, 2001)) and largely confirmed Esping-Andersen’s findings, including the positioning of Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States as belonging to the liberal welfare regime/liberal market economy.

**The liberal welfare state**

Reflecting the discussion above, it is worth reiterating the point that there is no agreement on what a liberal welfare state might look like, and that the use of a liberal model in *The Three Worlds* is itself essentially a reification for comparative purposes (Deeming, 2016). Nevertheless, in debates about *The Three Worlds* and welfare regimes, liberal welfare states may be said to have a number of characteristics which can, arguably, be used to distinguish them from states belonging to other welfare regime clusters. In particular, a liberal welfare state may be seen as:
• Having low levels of social rights and making use of means-testing and/or other access criteria, with low, often means-tested and flat rate benefits, frequently attached to performance in the labour market (conditionality), and intended primarily to prevent or alleviate poverty, generally financed through taxation.

• Focusing on the poor, particularly those viewed as vulnerable and the most needy members of society.

• Subordinating the welfare state to the market, interfering only minimally with market outcomes, including resultant inequalities in income and wealth. The provision of additional benefits by employers or individuals is through the private market, although this may be encouraged by tax exemptions or allowances.

• Comparatively low levels of public social spending.

• Not necessarily being incompatible with attempts to achieve universalism, but in such cases the focus is on equality of opportunity rather than on equality of outcome, for example, in healthcare and education.

An alternative formulation may be that of Titmuss (1974), who described a ‘residual’ model of social policy, where the primary channels for meeting individuals’ needs are the private market and the family, and it is only when those break down that the state would play a role, which would be likely to be minimal and temporary. For Titmuss, the New Poor Law of 1834 in England was an example of such marginal welfare. Beyond income maintenance and employment, in policy areas such as education or healthcare, the state’s expenditure is likely to be supplemented considerably by private spending, so that, overall, a relatively high proportion of GDP could go on social expenditure. However, private expenditure generally favours the better-off, and, in common with other features of liberal systems, there will be less concern with equality of outcome, while social mobility is likely to be low. Given these characteristics, in such states, individuals with higher socio-economic positions are likely to have more choice in their lives, while those from poorer backgrounds are likely to face significant constraints.

Broadly speaking, therefore, liberal welfare states are likely to display a welfare mix that prioritises provision by the market, individuals and households, with significant use of the non-profit sector, and a more limited and reluctant role for the state, largely as a provider of last resort. From a theoretical perspective, the liberal welfare state typology has considerable value, sitting well with ideas of the New Right and the neoliberal agenda that has been highly influential from the 1980s, and helping us understand developments in welfare states around the world.

Liberal welfare states

As the preceding sections make clear, there have been methodological, empirical and theoretical arguments about not only what a liberal welfare regime might look like, but also which countries can be placed into that category, including, as discussed below, the degree of fit between English-speaking developed nations and the liberal welfare typology.

As noted above, Esping-Andersen (1990) suggested that the United States was one of the archetypal liberal welfare states, and described the USA and Canada as the “‘pure’ cases of liberal hegemony, virtually unchallenged by the paradigmatic alternatives of socialism or, for that matter, conservative reformism’ (1990, p. 54), and it is perhaps unsurprising that others have also seen the United States as the closest approximation to the ‘ideal-type’ liberal welfare regime. Becker (2006), for example, suggests that the liberal welfare state is most closely approached in the USA, while Seeleib-Kaiser (2013) argues that since the United States has never accepted the
concepts of social citizenship and social rights, and has never developed elements of a welfare state in those terms, it is clearly set apart from most European countries, and it is perhaps therefore unsurprising that it is frequently characterised as the prototype of the liberal welfare state regime.

Even for the United States, however, such a categorisation is not necessarily straightforward. In part that is because of its federal nature, which means that state governments have had some responsibilities, such as for public assistance, social care and healthcare, although the bulk of social spending comes from the federal government. In addition, some have argued that policy tools such as ‘tax credits’ and ‘tax expenditure’ serve the same or similar social welfare functions as those found in other welfare states (see e.g. Howard, 1997; Hacker, 2002), although others have argued that equating tax preferences with welfare spending is problematic (Prasad, 2011). And, of course, public expenditure is only one part of total social expenditure, so that when public and private social spending and the impact of tax systems are taken into account, OECD (2016) figures show that in 2013, rather than its twenty-fourth place among OECD states on public social spending, the United States moved into second place, behind only France. However, the same report also reinforces the argument for the United States as a liberal welfare state, noting that low-income workers often do not have access to private social benefits, and that ‘more private social spending does not necessarily contribute to more distributive outcomes’ (OECD, 2016, p. 7).

The United Kingdom was classified by Esping-Andersen as a liberal welfare state, although in 1980 it was borderline between liberal and conservative regimes (see e.g. Bambra, 2006), and may be argued to have been moving in a social democratic direction up until the 1980s, while under the Labour governments of 1997 to 2010 there were again significant increases in public social expenditure, particularly on education and healthcare.

In addition to arguments about closeness of fit with the liberal welfare regime, some writers have suggested that alternative classifications are more appropriate, so that Castles and Mitchell (1991), for example, argued for a ‘radical’ model of welfare regime (in which they included Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom), where the goals of ameliorating poverty and income equalisation are achieved through the use of redistributive instruments rather than by high levels of expenditure. More recently, Whiteford (2010) has argued that the Australian welfare state is particularly successful at redistributing income to the poorest 20 per cent of the population, although Mendes (2017) concludes that while Australia’s ‘small spending’ welfare state has had some success in protecting the standards of living of the lowest income groups through targeting, recent reforms have clearly reflected neoliberal ideas.

In the case of Ireland, again frequently portrayed as a liberal welfare state, Norris (2016) has suggested a distinctive model, based on property. Reflecting critiques of the emphasis by Esping-Andersen and others on social security benefits and public expenditure, and the lack of attention to other policy areas, and in this case housing in particular, she argues that from the late nineteenth century and into the second half of the twentieth century, the Irish state emphasised support for home ownership through public expenditure, driven significantly by the political power of small farmers, and to a lesser extent farm labourers, while at the same time ‘mainstream’ welfare developed relatively modestly.

Others have focused on Esping-Andersen’s methodology, so that Bambra (2006) suggests that if miscalculations in Esping-Andersen’s original decommodification data are corrected, then Japan joins Australia, the United States, New Zealand and Canada in the bottom group, while the United Kingdom and Ireland move to the middle group of states. Using updated data for 1998/1999, Bambra (2006) shows a bottom group consisting of New Zealand, Australia, the USA, UK and Japan, and a middle group of Ireland, Italy, Germany, Canada, the Netherlands and Denmark, while Switzerland joins the top group.
In their attempt to replicate and develop Esping-Andersen’s work, Scruggs and Allan (2008) found that on the ‘socialist stratification’ index, two ‘liberal’ countries, Canada and the United Kingdom, scored higher than most ‘social democratic’ states in 1980/1981, and continued to score relatively highly in 2002, while the United Kingdom and New Zealand only came into the medium category on the liberal stratification index in both of the chosen years. They also note that from their results both Canada and Denmark scored highly on both the liberal and socialist index in 1980.

Drawing upon 23 studies, although excluding education and healthcare, Ferragina and Seelieb-Kaiser (2011) define the United States as ‘pure’ liberal (in that it was classified in the liberal world in every analysis), Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and Japan as ‘medium–high consistency’ liberal (although they then suggest excluding Japan from their analysis, since it is unclear whether it might fit with an East-Asian or Confucian regime, because its political and social systems are not grounded in liberalism, Catholicism or social democracy), and New Zealand and Ireland as ‘medium consistency’ liberal. Switzerland, which has often, but by no means always, been included in the liberal cluster, is shown by Ferragina and Seelieb-Kaiser to fit with ‘high liberalism’ in terms of Esping-Andersen’s social stratification, although it scores more highly on decommodification, and is described by them as ‘hybrid’. Indeed, for Japan and Switzerland, although they were included in Esping-Andersen’s 1990 analysis, his categorisation of them is not always clear. For example, while he placed Switzerland in the middle set of states in terms of combined decommodification, he also referred to it as a liberal regime, so that in relation to universalism, he describes it as ‘the reigning principle in the Scandinavian social democratic welfare states, and is to a degree approximated in a few liberal regimes such as Canada and Switzerland’ (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 75).

Liberal welfare states and English-speaking welfare states

A number of authors, including Esping-Andersen (not least in his reference to the ‘liberal’ or ‘Anglo-Saxon’ regime), have highlighted the extent to which the English-speaking welfare states, Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States, may be seen as almost synonymous with liberal welfare states.

Of course, as with all such categorisations, a great deal depends both on how things are measured and when the measurements are made. Gough (2001) has highlighted this, and has shown that by using a cluster analysis methodology he could produce either a two-cluster solution that separates out English-speaking states, or a more optimally homogeneous seven-cluster solution that produces, among other things, three separate and distinctive English-speaking clusters. Similarly, at particular points in time, significant differences could be seen within the English-speaking world, as in the mid-1970s, when, compared with the residual approach taken in the United States, the United Kingdom adopted a fairly comprehensive approach to social policy, and perhaps again in the mid-2000s, when the Labour governments significantly increased spending on some areas of social policy, although there were also significant similarities, such as in relation to activation.

A somewhat related approach was taken in an edited volume, Families of Nations (Castles, 1993), which sought to explore whether shared geographic, linguistic or cultural and historical attributes might lead to ‘distinctive patterns of policy outcomes’ (Castles, 1993, p. xiii). The ‘families’ idea placed greater emphasis on cultural linkages than does the regimes approach with its focus on the ways in which policy is defined by social structures, and Castles and Mitchell (1993) noted that it was possible to identify significant systematic differences in social spending, so that there might be more than one English-speaking world of welfare.
Furthermore, the addition of new policy ideas to the regime literature, as discussed above, has led some to identify distinctively English-speaking characteristics while others have not. For example, Castles (1998) showed that the English-speaking countries had lower levels of total government spending, taxation and social security than in other countries in the 1990s (see also Obinger and Wagschal, 2001; Castles and Obinger, 2008).

However, Anttonen and Sipilä (1996) suggested that in relation to the provision of care services, Ireland and the United Kingdom fell somewhere between the Scandinavian and continental European models, while Lynch (2001) argues that in terms of orientation to the needs of older people, the USA was strongly age-oriented, but Canada and Ireland were much less so. Baird and O’Brien (2015) note that in some of the Anglophone countries there have been significant changes, including increases in female education levels and employment rates and the decline of the male breadwinner family, and that while these countries have traditionally been classified as liberal welfare states, in Australia and the United Kingdom in particular, the state has been intervening more directly in these policy areas. While in some respects these countries continue to exhibit liberal tendencies, for example, in focusing primarily on leave for mothers and having relatively low levels of income replacement for parental leave, they suggest that the state has been intervening ‘to a greater extent than would be expected from a conventional understanding of liberal welfare regimes’ (p. 12), and that this represents something of a paradox.

Deeming (2016) argues that for much of the post-war period many of the English-speaking states could not be considered as ‘liberal’ in any theoretical or classical sense, and concludes that there is no typical liberal approach to the welfare state in the English-speaking nations, and that the original portrayal of the liberal regime by Esping-Andersen did not reflect the degree of variation in the key social policy principles in those states (such as the attempts to achieve egalitarianism and wage-earner rights in Australia and New Zealand in the twentieth century, including through regulation of wages, against the United Kingdom’s redistributive post-war welfare state), which helps explain the lack of consensus on the fit of those countries with the liberal welfare regime portrayed in *The Three Worlds*. However, he also suggests that those countries have developed in the direction of the liberal world as described by Esping-Andersen, with welfare states that are highly commodifying in many respects, where the state enforces work, and the legitimacy of market provision and market discipline has grown, and that they stand out in terms of the high and growing levels of inequality. On the other hand, political developments, such as devolution within the United Kingdom, have seen the Scottish and Welsh governments, in particular, using rhetoric very different from that of the Westminster government, and making much less use of markets in social policy, so that at least some parts of the English-speaking world may be seeking to take a different direction.

In considering the fit of the idea of liberal welfare regimes with the English-speaking countries, it is important to recognise, reflecting the definitional and allocational challenges noted earlier, that a number of categorisations have included other states, most notably Japan and Switzerland, within the liberal category (see e.g. Arts and Gelissen, 2010; Ebbinghaus, 2012; while Powell and Barrientos (2004) found that adding active labour market policies tended to create a liberal regime that included the English-speaking countries, together with Japan and Switzerland), although Aspalter and Liu (2017) are among those who argue that Japan’s welfare system is very different from that of the liberal welfare regime states. Others have suggested that other countries may be changing their positions. For example, Kangas and Kvist (2013) suggest that reforms from the late 1990s mean that in many Nordic countries benefit levels ‘are not significantly less conditional than France, Germany or the UK’ (p. 151), while Seeleib-Kaiser (2013) argues that the conservative system of social protection in Germany has been converging towards the liberal American model for two decades, at least with regard to social protection for
unemployed people and pensioners, although Germany continues to constitutionally guarantee a minimum for all citizens, while the United States does not. Siegel and colleagues (2014) have also argued that welfare state reforms in relation to work and the labour market in Germany from the late 1990s have moved the country in a liberal direction, and that these have been reflected in income-related inequalities in health.

Taken together, therefore, it is possible to suggest that while there are some similarities between the English-speaking states (and that may not be entirely surprising, given that they have elements of common heritage, while language has made policy learning between those states particularly accessible), a liberal welfare state cannot simply be seen as a peculiarly Anglo-Saxon phenomenon.

Conclusion: how useful is the idea of liberal welfare states?

As with any such classificatory mechanism, Esping-Andersen’s regimes are an abstraction, and, inevitably, the construction of typologies and the allocation of countries to them will involve and reflect normative judgements, including the selection of countries and indicators and the choice of methodological techniques, as well as the time period chosen (e.g. Danforth, 2014). As a result, it is clearly possible to argue that there are problems both with the idea of liberal welfare regimes and the allocation of individual states to that category, and these may be exacerbated with the addition of new policy areas. However, equally, any attempt at comparison will be undermined if every case is seen as unique, and it may be here that the idea of liberal welfare states has its greatest value.

On the other hand, it is possible to argue both that few, if any, states actually come close to the ideal-type liberal model, and indeed that the very term ‘liberal’ is problematic, as ‘liberalism’ can be associated with many different approaches to social policy and there is no agreement on what a ‘liberal’ welfare state might look like.

However, regardless of both theoretical and empirical criticisms, the idea of the liberal welfare state continues to provide an exemplar against which the past and current positions and the trajectories of welfare states can be measured. Indeed, the identification of broad similarities between states has, at a minimum, helped encourage analysis of the nature of liberal welfare regimes, and this is perhaps particularly important at a time when many are suggesting that the dominance of neoliberal ideas is seeing many states, including those included in Esping-Andersen’s conservative and social democratic regimes, either moving in the direction of the liberal regime, or, at least, adopting policy choices that are often associated with such regimes.

References


