



Distributional impacts of public policies for children and families

A microsimulation analysis for Russia and Europe

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Ph.D. thesis defence on 16th September 2013

Abstract

This thesis analyzes the distributional impacts of public policies for families and children in Russia and Europe, by using ex-post and ex-ante impact evaluation techniques. Moreover, this thesis offers a new tool for a comprehensive impact evaluation of the performance of the Russian tax-benefit system – the static microsimulation model RUSMOD. The model allows testing of the first-order distributional impacts of both existing and hypothetical policy designs, while keeping other national parameters – original income distribution and socio-demographic structure – constant. Furthermore, being fully compatible with EUROMOD – the tax-benefit model for the European Union – the Russian model is suitable for cross-country policy learning.

The study assesses the performance of child targeted allowances in Russia and shows that it is possible to achieve better distributional results, even at the same level of spending, by means of better targeting and unification of programme design across the regions. In addition, the study estimates the potential gains if the Russian programme of child allowances were to be re-designed along the policy parameters of the relevant programmes in four European countries – Sweden, Germany, Belgium and the United Kingdom – countries representing different family policy regimes. This analysis suggests that there is a significant scope for expanding the budget for child allowances

in Russia. In terms of design, the best distributive outcomes are achieved by applying a mix of universal and means-tested child benefits.

On a theoretical level, this thesis contributes to the international debate on the directions of welfare state reform in conditions of contemporary demographic and economic challenges. On a practical level, it contributes to the promotion of the evidence based approach to social intervention. The scope of applications of the Russian model can be easily extended to the analysis of other tax-benefit policies and other EU countries. The output of the model can be incorporated into the dynamic model framework, to study the effect of policy reforms on labour supply and demographic behavior.



Jury: Martin Kohli (EUI), Fabrizio Bernardi (EUI), Holly Sutherland (University of Essex), Ted Gerber (University of Wisconsin)

Bio

Daria's research is related to the comparative analysis of social and economic policies and distributional issues. Substantively, she is interested in the following areas: social security, poverty and social exclusion, social and economic inequality, family dynamics. Her methodological interests include survey methodology, measurement of well-being, policy evaluation and policy transfer.

Daria's PhD project examines the distributional impacts of public policies for children and families in Europe and Russia using tax-benefit microsimulation modelling. During her PhD, she has been a visiting researcher at the Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of Essex. Daria holds a first degree in Sociology from Lomonosov Moscow State University and an MSc in Social Policy and Planning from London School of Economics. She has previously worked as a policy analyst and consultant in the projects of the European Commission, UNICEF, World Bank and others.