

Risk Sharing, Justice and the Future of Social Insurance Systems

MANCEPT Workshops in Political Theory, 9-11 September 2019

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How can risks affecting large parts of society be managed justly and the burdens shouldered equitably across society? What are fair and sustainable arrangements for risk sharing? How can (social) insurance schemes be re-designed to better accomplish this task? Two recent developments, one theoretical and one political, motivate us to convene a MANCEPT workshop on these questions: First, following a surge in interest in risk by ethicists, political philosophers have recently begun to consider the normative implications of risk from a decidedly political point of view. Second, various technological and social changes put pressure on some long-standing risk-sharing arrangements, both in the public and private realm. The goal of our workshop is to explore how new theoretical advances in the political philosophy of risk can help us to understand, criticise and shape the far-reaching transformations of social insurance systems and other social risk-sharing mechanisms.

While there is a growing body of literature on *ethical* decision-making under risk and uncertainty, the *social and political* repercussions of risk, including how risks are created, externalised and distributed across society, have received comparatively little attention. Notable exceptions include Wolff & De-Shalit (2007), who observe a “clustering” of risks on vulnerable population groups. James (2012) criticises the dangerous externalisation of risks in speculative finance. Hansson (2013) argues that we should aspire to create “equitable social systems of risk taking” that work to everyone’s advantage. Most recently, Baderin & Barnes (2018) have shown an empirical link between economic insecurity and reduced self-respect. Proposals for regulating risks and distributing the burdens of prevention and compensation range from Rawlsian to luck-egalitarian to libertarian approaches. Our workshop aims at taking stock of the variety and contributing to the efforts in this field.

In our view, the growing interest in the political philosophy of risk also comes at a fitting moment. Population ageing is causing increasing pressure on intergenerational risk-sharing schemes such as health care insurance and pay-as-you-go pensions. Individuals are facing mounting economic insecurity with governments offloading risk-

management responsibility to the private sector and temporary employment replacing long-term opportunities in the labour market. At the same time, businesses are externalising many risks, like in the cases of climate risks and systemic financial risk, without bearing the corresponding share of burden. When it comes to the design of insurance policies, the availability of big data and genetic sequencing techniques allows states and private insurance businesses to build personalised profiles of their customers, causing concern in privacy issues as well as the fairness of insurance pricings. We hold that the normative frameworks generated by the political philosophy of risk offer valuable insights for the normative assessment of these developments.

We plan to divide the workshop into two parts. Part 1 will showcase new developments in the political philosophy of risk. Part 2 will put the new theoretical approaches to work to generate normative insights about the future of social insurance systems and other risk-sharing mechanisms.

Application details:

If you are interested in contributing, please send an abstract of 500 to 1000 words to risk.mancept@gmail.com by Friday 10 May 2019. Please ensure that your submission is suitable for blind review and include author information and your institutional affiliation in a separate document. Acceptance confirmations will be sent out shortly after the deadline. If you wish, you will have sufficient time to apply for the bursaries once your proposal is accepted.

Registration details:

Note that as a presenter at this panel you will need to register for the MANCEPT conference. This year's registration fees are £230.00 for academics and £135.00 for graduate students and retirees. Registration to the event will open in May. If you would like to apply for bursaries (available to current graduate students/early-career researchers and retirees only), you can do so until Friday 14 June. Successful applicants will be informed by Monday 21 June by the MANCEPT organisers. More information will be published on the MANCEPT website (<https://mancept.wordpress.com>).

Do not hesitate to contact us if you have any further questions. Thank you for considering to apply and spreading the word!

With best wishes,

Yunmeng Cai, Friedemann Bieber and Jakob Moggia