



# SNoW

Sino-Nordic Welfare Research Network

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Financed by NordForsk (2011-2013) & Nordic Council of Ministers (2013-2015)

### Background

China has in historical and comparative terms experienced a unique process of rapid economic and social development over the last three decades. Several hundred million people have been lifted out of extreme poverty, but at the same time inequality between social groups, between urban and rural areas, and between different regions of the country have dramatically risen. About 250 million people today belong to the so-called “floating population”, migrants from rural areas to cities and urban areas, generally with little or no social rights, creating unprecedented social challenges. Chinese academic and political interest in the development of social and welfare policies have, as a consequence, increased significantly during the last 10-15 years. Many social policies have been introduced since the mid-1990s, and the Chinese Communist Party and the government have during the last decade formulated and elaborated an ambitious vision of a “harmonious society”, with nationwide universal welfare programs for health care and pensions stipulated to be in place by 2020.

The Nordic countries have gained world-wide attention as representing a special kind of “welfare model”, and welfare research has gained a strong position in the Nordic social sciences. Interest in the Nordic experience was recently expressed by Dai Bingran, Fudan University, in this way:

### In this issue

- Introduction of SNoW
- Activities in 2013
- SNoW PhD Course
- SNoW Workshop

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*“The Nordic group of countries represents a distinct social model in every sense, the welfare state being its most distinct feature. In spite of its limitations, difficulties, and challenges, the welfare state, with its priority on a better balance between economic development and social justice and its emphases on full employment, social security, education, equality, assistance to the less-endowed, etc., enshrines many of the lofty human aspirations.....To China, still in the process of political, economic and social reform and transition, the experience and lessons are of special and specific values”* (Dai Bingran, «Preface», in Stein Kuhnle, Chen Yinzhang, Klaus Petersen and Pauli Kettunen (eds), *The Nordic Welfare State*. Shanghai: Fudan University Press (2010), published in Chinese).

The book on *The Nordic Welfare State* (*ibid.*) was launched at a seminar organized by the Nordic Centre at Fudan University in May 2010, is one manifest example of both the growing interest in China in the Nordic experience and in the Nordic scholarly interest in developments in China. On the basis of that event the editors, together with Chinese colleagues and representatives of the Steering Committee of the Nordic Centre of Excellence Welfare Program of NordForsk, took the initiative to organize two Sino-Nordic Welfare Seminars (SNoW): NordForsk subsequently financed one seminar in October 2011 at Fudan and one in June 2012 in Helsinki, both with about 15 scholars from the Nordic countries and 15 scholars from China. One or two book publications will appear as a result of these seminars.

### Core Steering Group (CSG)

**Stein Kuhnle**, Department of Comparative Politics, University of Bergen, chairs the SNoW network, and will jointly with **Klaus Petersen**, Centre for Welfare State Research, University of Southern Denmark, **Pauli Kettunen**, Department of Political and Economic Studies, University of Helsinki, and **Åsa Lundqvist**, Department of Sociology, Lund University, make up the project **Core Steering Group**.

### Extended Steering Group (ESG)

The ESG consists in addition to the CSG members of **Rolf Rønning** (Lillehammer University College), **Anneli Anttonen** (University of Tampere), **Peng Xizhe** (Fudan University), **Xiong Yuegen** (Peking University), Pan Yi (CASS), **Lin Ka** and **Wang Zhikai** (Zhejiang University) and **Kinglun Ngok** (Sun Yat-sen University).



### Purpose and goal

The purpose and goal of SNoW is to:

1. strengthen Sino-Nordic collaboration in welfare research and higher education;
2. strengthen networking through publication of an electronic newsletter;
3. strengthen competence-building and joint research interests through organization of PhD courses and seminars/conferences,;
4. strengthen networking through mutual exchange of scholars for shorter periods;
5. strengthen The Nordic Centre which will serve as the organizational and administrative hub for all activities in China;
6. increase the visibility of the Nordic welfare state experience in China

## Chinese and Nordic institutions active in SNoW since 2011

The Nordic Centre and Fudan University will play a crucial, strategic role for educational and research activities in China, but, evidently, we aim at including Chinese scholars from other universities and research institutions in our (established and developing) network and activities, and we also aim at active participation in educational and research activities beyond Fudan University to the extent such activities fit in our overall plans for strengthening Sino-Nordic welfare research cooperation.

### Scholars from the following Chinese institutions have participated in SNoW:

- Fudan University
- Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences
- Zhejiang University, Hangzhou
- Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou
- Peking University
- Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
- Renmin University, Beijing
- Beijing Normal University

### From the Nordic countries, scholars from the following institutions have participated in SNoW so far:

- University of Bergen
- The Stein Rokkan Centre, Bergen
- Fafo Institute for Labour and Social Research, Oslo
- Norwegian Social Research, Oslo
- Lillehammer University College
- Lund University
- Institute for Future Studies, Stockholm
- University of Stockholm
- Aalborg University
- University of Southern Denmark
- University of Helsinki
- University of Tampere
- University of Jyväskylä

**SNoW is open for participation by scholars and PhD students from higher institutions of education and research in China and the Nordic countries interested in welfare research.**

## Activities planned for 2013

### PhD Course

*Analyzing Welfare Institutions, Policies and Politics in China and the Nordic Countries*

Venue: Nordic Centre, Fudan University,  
Date: 17-21 October 2013  
See the following announcement on [Call for Papers](#).

### One-day workshop

*Welfare Research in China and the Nordic Countries: The State of the Art*

Venue: Nordic Centre, Fudan University  
Date: 22 October 2013  
Target group: Seniors researchers, young researchers and PhD students

## Analyzing Welfare Institutions, Policies and Politics in China and the Nordic Countries

**Venue:** Nordic Centre, Fudan University,

**Date:** 17-21 October 2013

**Aim:** Welfare is in high demand all over the world but different nation states have different institutional social policy architectures. The Nordic countries have gained world-wide attention as representing a special kind of “welfare model” based on a long historical development, and characterized by highly developed social services, tax financing and redistribution, universalism and gender equality. Over the last decades the Nordic welfare states have undergone a number of reforms in order to deal with the challenges of globalization, immigration and demographic change. China has in historical and comparative terms experienced a process of rapid economic and social development over the last three decades. Several hundred million people have been lifted out of extreme poverty, but a so-called floating population of around 250 million people migrating from cities to urban areas, generally with little or no social rights, create an unprecedented social challenge. Many social policies have been introduced since the mid-1990s, and the Chinese Communist Party and the government have formulated and elaborated a vision of a “harmonious society”(xiaokang shehui), with nationwide welfare programs for health care and pensions stipulated to be in place by 2020.

Welfare states have and can be studied from a number of theoretical and methodological approaches, with various chronological perspectives and with a focus on different empirical phenomena. With this PhD course it is our aim to stimulate cross-disciplinary and multi-perspective discussions and we welcome contributions from political science, sociology, history, social policy, economics, demography as well as other relevant disciplines. Our aim is to bring together PhD- students from China and the Nordic countries from different disciplines and stimulate a discussion that will challenge and maybe bring us beyond well established concepts and understandings.

**Reading:** Francis G. Castles, Stephan Leibfried, Jane Lewis, Herbert Obinger and Christopher Pierson (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of the Welfare State* (Oxford: OUP, 2010; paperback edition 2012, 876 pages); Chak Kwan Chan, King Lun Ngok, and David Phillips, *Social Policy in China* (Bristol: Policy Press, 234 pages). The books will be made available for admitted students. In addition, articles on demographic developments will be made available.

### The teachers:

**Professor Stein Kuhnle**

(Hertie School of Governance & University of Bergen)

**Professor Pauli Kettunen**

(University of Helsinki)

**Docent Åsa Lundqvist**

(Lund University)

**Professor Klaus Petersen**

(University of Southern Denmark)

**Associate Professor Ann-Zofie Duvander**

(Stockholm University)

**Professor Peng Xizhe, Professor Ren Yuan & Professor Fu Hua**

(Fudan University)

**Professor Xiong Yuegen**

(Peking University)

**Professor Wang Zhikai & professor Lin Ka**

(Zhejiang University)

**Professor Kinglun Ngok**

(Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou).

**The format:** The course will mix lectures by senior scholars from both China and the Nordic countries and presentation of papers by PhD-students. The teachers will give lectures on theoretical and methodological topics such as historical institutionalism, comparative welfare state studies, transnational perspectives, key concepts, gender and the welfare state, the politics of welfare state reforms, explaining the historical development of welfare states, and demography. Participating PhD-students are expected to present a paper and to participate actively in the discussions.

## *Analyzing Welfare Institutions, Policies and Politics in China and the Nordic Countries*

**Venue:** Nordic Centre, Fudan University,

**Date:** 17-21 October 2013

**Practicalities:** The course is organized by the SNOW-network and is financed by NordForsk and the Nordic Council of Ministers. We will cover accommodation (for a maximum period of 16 October to 23 October) and meals in Shanghai. Students are expected to finance their own travel costs through their home institution. For PhD-students without funding from home institutions there will be a limited number of travel grants (500 Euro for Nordic Students and 100 Euro for Chinese students).

**Certificates and credits:** Each student will be certified by their home institution based on the diploma written by the main organizer and the Nordic Centre. By European standards, the course is estimated to give 7,5 ECTS credits.

**Organizing Committee:** The course is organized by the SNoW-network in cooperation with the Nordic Centre at Fudan University. The Organizing Committee consists of: Stein Kuhnle (University of Bergen), Ren Yuan (Fudan University) and Freya Gao (Nordic Centre, Fudan University).

### *How to apply for participation?*

If you want to participate in the PhD-course please send an abstract (1 page outline of the paper you want to present) as well as a short bio (1 page with name, title of PhD-project, affiliation, name of supervisor(s), discipline and contact details) to **Freya Gao** at the Nordic Centre, Fudan University:

[phdsnow2013@nordiccentre.org](mailto:phdsnow2013@nordiccentre.org) no later than **10 May 2013**

Within four weeks you will be informed if you have been accepted or not. The maximum number of partly funded (see above) participants is 20, an additionally 5 students can be admitted at own cost. The full paper must be sent to the organizers one month before the course.

### *Workshop on Welfare Research*

On 22 October 2013, following the PhD course, a one-day workshop on

**Welfare Research in China and the Nordic Countries: The State of the Art** will be organized at the Nordic Centre, and will be open for PhD students to attend.

If interested: please contact [phdsnow2013@nordiccentre.org](mailto:phdsnow2013@nordiccentre.org)