



# BUILDING BACK BETTER: Forging a post-pandemic social contract that works for all

25th Annual QUEEN'S INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE ON SOCIAL POLICY

## 2020 Session Calendar

- **Week 1 - August 25, 26 & 27**
- **Week 2 - September 1, 2 & 3**
- **Week 3 - September 8, 9 & 11**

### Week 1

Keynote:

#### **From Response to Recovery to Reform - Toward a new Social Contract?**

The Covid-19 pandemic is exposing and exacerbating vulnerabilities in our current economic and social models particularly related to income inequality and precarious work. It is shedding light on the interdependence of economic prosperity and social and health security. What lessons is this crisis teaching us and how can advanced economies like Canada 'build back better'?

Speaker: **Daron Acemoglu**, M.I.T. Institute Professor,, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Moderator: **Margaret Biggs**, Matthews Fellow in Global Public Policy, Queen's University

#### **Taking stock**

Heading into fall 2020, as Canada and other OECD countries work to re-open their economies, what do we know about the pandemic's impact so far on different OECD economies, sectors, regions, citizens and generations? What have we learned about the enabling conditions and policy mix for resilient economies and societies? What can we glean about the effectiveness of different countries' responses and approaches? What actions has Canada taken and how does it compare? Are there early lessons to be learned?

Speakers:

- **Stefano Scarpetta**, Director, Employment, Labour and Social Affairs, Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
- **Kevin Milligan**, Professor of Economics, Vancouver School of Economics, University of British Columbia

Moderator: **Catherine Adam**, Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Employment and Social Development Canada

### Spotlight on those at risk of being left behind

What do we know about the differential impacts of the crisis on those who are often marginalized: women, precarious and contingent workers, new immigrants and refugees, people of colour, persons with disabilities, low skilled/low paid service workers? What do we know about the efficacy of different social protection systems and emergency policy responses across the OECD? How do we best protect equality of opportunity?

Speakers:

- **Heather Boushey**, President and CEO, Center for Equitable Growth, Washington, DC
- **Laura Gardiner**, Research Director, Resolution Foundation, UK
- **Carrie Bourassa**, Director, Institute of Indigenous Peoples' Health, Canadian Institutes of Health Research
- **Rene Morrisette**, Assistant Director, Statistics Canada

Moderator: **Denise A. Cole**, Deputy Minister, Ministry for Seniors & Accessibility, Ontario

## Week 2

### Rethinking income protection

The disruption and hardship caused by the 2020 crisis is heightening concerns about gaps in coverage, inequities and inefficiencies in the current patchwork of income security measures in Canada and other OECD countries. Emergency measures such as income benefits and wage subsidies have quickly been introduced to keep individuals and families afloat. As these emergency measures wind down, can countries build back better? Can public policies be designed that are more equitable in their coverage and better suited to the contemporary nature of work? These questions require looking at whether existing measures such as employment insurance can be reformed or new approaches such as a basic income can be adopted. What does research and evidence to date tell us about possible paths forward?

Speakers:

- **Hilary Hoynes**, Professor, Haas Distinguished Chair in Economic Disparities, University of California, Berkeley
- **Miles Corak**, Professor, Stone Center on Socio-Economic Inequality, City University of New York
- **David Green**, Professor, Vancouver School of Economics, University of British Columbia

Moderator: **Mark Stabile**, Stone Chaired Professor in Wealth Inequality, INSEAD, Paris

### Rethinking social protection and the care economy

For many, one of the greatest challenges of the pandemic lockdown has been the juggling of work and care - care for children, family members with special needs, and/ or the elderly. The crisis has shed light on the responsibility challenges families face at the best of times and the often unequal burden of care provision. The crisis has also sharpened the divide between the "have and have-nots" in our societies, whether it is in access to quality care for children, people with disabilities or the elderly. It has also demonstrated the particular vulnerabilities of the caregivers, often racialized and immigrant women, in both the formal and informal sectors, at home or in institutions. Can the pandemic lead societies to design stronger systems of social protection and stronger valuation of those who provide the care?

Speakers:

- **Andrea Doucet**, Professor and Canada Research Chair in Gender, Work and Care, Brock University
- **Ito Peng**, Professor and Canada Research Chair in Global Social Policy, University of Toronto

- **Samir Sinha**, Director of Geriatrics, Mount Sinai and the University Health Network Hospitals

Moderator: **Janet Menard**, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, Ontario

### Rethinking labour protection

In recent years, the impact of technological change and the changing nature of work have put the spotlight on employment standards and labour protection issues. The pandemic-economic crisis has thrown these issues into even starker relief. It has exposed gaps in employment standards and health and safety provisions for part time, contract and migrant workers, often in essential services, and those working in the gig economy. What have we learned from this crisis about labour protection and employment standards? What does the research show about the best policy mix?

Speakers:

- **Janine Berg**, Senior Economist, International Labour Organisation (ILO)
- **Kevin Banks**, Associate Professor and Director of the Queen's Centre for Law in the Contemporary Workplace, Queen's University

Moderator: **Armene Yalnizyan**, Atkinson Fellow on the Future of Workers, Atkinson Foundation

## Week 3

### Rethinking fiscal arrangements in Canada

COVID-19 has generated massive pressures on health and social services, burgeoning fiscal deficits at all levels of government and calls for higher standards and greater coverage for services such as long-term care. There is a risk of untenable fiscal imbalances in the federation. These tensions come on top of other frictions related to equalization and shocks to energy-dependent provincial economies. As a result, questions are being raised about the robustness of Canada's current fiscal arrangements. For example, should the federal government expand its unconditional transfer to the provinces? Should federal transfers be expanded to cover new areas such as long-term care? Should the division of responsibility for income support be rethought and fiscal arrangements reconfigured accordingly? These different pathways have dramatically different implications for Canada's social safety net and the long-term balance of power in the federation. What policy ideas should policy-makers be looking at? Are our intergovernmental governance mechanisms up to the task of harnessing this discussion?

Speakers:

- **Daniel Béland**, James McGill Professor and Director of the McGill Institute for the Study of Canada, McGill University
- **Robin Boadway**, Professor Emeritus, Department of Economics, Queen's University

Moderator: **Jennifer Robson**, Associate Professor, Kroeger College, Carleton University

Armchair discussion:

### Rethinking the social contract

The 2020 crisis has forced governments to intervene in their economies and societies in unprecedented ways, with stay-at-home orders on the one hand and massive infusions of liquidity on the other. The crisis has raised questions about the responsibilities of companies to their workers. It has led, at least in these early months, to strong feelings of social solidarity. Overall, it has raised questions about what societies really value; what citizens, families, communities and businesses owe each other; and what role government should play in the economy and society. Will this questioning be temporary or will it lead to a rethinking of the social contract?

Speakers:

- **Irene Bloemraad**, Thomas Garden Barnes Chair of Canadian Studies & Director of the Berkeley Interdisciplinary Migration Initiative, University of California, Berkeley
- **Hugh Segal**, Matthews Fellow in Global Public Policy, Queen's University
- **Debra Thompson**, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, McGill University

Moderator: **Keith Banting**, Stauffer-Dunning Fellow and Professor Emeritus, Queen's University

### **Citizens' views: Social distancing or social solidarity?**

Have citizens' personal priorities changed as a result of the pandemic crisis? Have their views on the respective roles and responsibilities of individuals, government, business, communities changed? Have levels of trust in institutions been altered? What are the implications for public policy and governance?

Speakers:

- **Ben Page**, Chief Executive, IPSOS-Mori, UK
- **David Coletto**, CEO, Abacus Data

Moderator: **Jennifer Ditchburn**, Editor, *Policy Options*, Institute for Research on Public Policy