Dr. Jan Helmdag

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Professional experience

Assistant Professor, 2024–present

Swedish Institute for Social Research (SOFI), Stockholm University

Principal investigator of the project "The dualization of social rights in Sweden and beyond: How social policy design can maintain or mitigate income inequality" (2024–6), funded by the Swedish Research Council for Health, Working Life Welfare (FORTE) with 3.5 mil. SEK

Managing director of the Social Policy Indicators (SPIN) database

Data manager (2020–2) and Postdoc (2022–3)

Swedish Institute for Social Research (SOFI), Stockholm University (apr2020–mar2022, jul–dec2023) and Department of Government, Uppsala University (apr–jun2022)

Social Policy Indicators (SPIN) database and Comparative Policy Laboratory (COMPLAB)

Doctoral researcher and lecturer, 2015–20

University of Greifswald, Comparative Welfare Entitlements Dataset (CWED2)

Lecturer in political science (graduate and undergraduate level)

Education

Dr. phil. in political science, 2022

Doctoral thesis: *"The Three Faces of Partisanship: Uncovering Country-Specific Partisan Dynamics in Labor Market Policy Reforms"*, awarded with magna cum laude (1.1), University of Greifswald. Supervised by Prof. Dr. Detlef Jahn and Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Herbert Obinger

M.A. in political science, 2015

Master's thesis: *"Same shift – different dynamics? The conditionality of diffusion of labor market policies in the OECD"*, Grade 1.2 (excellent), University of Greifswald. Supervised by Prof. Dr. Detlef Jahn and Dr. Kati Kuitto

B.A. in political science and philosophy, 2012

Bachelor's thesis: *"How does compulsory voting impact the party system? A quantitative analysis"*, Grade 1.1 (excellent), University of Greifswald. Supervised by Dr. Nils Düpont

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Publications

Peer reviewed

Helmdag, J., and Väänänen, N. (2025). Financial sustainability above all else? Drivers and types of pension reform recommendations in the EU socio-economic governance. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, 63(4):1236–1258. doi:10.1111/jcms.13700

Kuitto, K. and **Helmdag, J.** (2021). Extending the tail end of working lives: How policies shape labour market participation and retirement of older workers. *Social Policy & Administration* 55(3):423–439. doi:10.1111/spol.12717

Kuitto, K., Salonen, J., and **Helmdag, J.** (2019). Gender inequalities in early career trajectories and parental leaves: Evidence from a Nordic welfare state. *Social Sciences* 8(9):253. doi:10.3390/socsci8090253.

Other languages:

Väänänen, N. and **Helmdag, J.** (2024). Eurooppalaiset eläkejärjestelmät tarkkailussa. *Talous & Yhteiskunta*, 2024(01). (Weblink)

Kuitto, K., Salonen, J., and **Helmdag, J.** (2019). Perhevapaat työurariskinä? Trajektorianalyysi nuorten aikuisten työurapoluista. *Yhteiskuntapolitiikka*, 84(2):197–205. (Weblink)

Chapters in edited volumes

Helmdag, J. and Nelson, K. (2025). Sustaining the welfare state in an era of population aging. In Vaalavuo, M., Nelson, K., and Kuitto, K., editors, *Social sustainability in ageing welfare states*. Edward Elgar. Link

Helmdag, J. and Kuitto, K. (2022). The politics of unemployment benefit reforms. In Baltz, E., Kosanke, S., and Pickel, S., editors, *Parties, Institutions and Preferences: The Shape and Impact of Partisan Politics*, pages 261–297. Springer VS. doi:10.1007/978-3-658-35133-5_11

Jahn, D. and **Helmdag, J.** (2019). Generosität von Sozialleistungen [engl. Generosity of social benefits]. In Obinger, H. and Schmidt, M. G., editors, Handbuch Sozialpolitik, pages 561–83. Springer VS. doi:10.1007/978-3-658-22803-3_28

Helmdag, J. and Kuitto, K. (2018). Interdependent policy learning: Contextual diffusion of active labour market policies. In Dunlop, C., Radaelli, C., and Trein, P., editors, *Learning in Public Policy: Analysis, Modes and Outcomes*, pages 317–46. Palgrave Macmillan. doi:10.1007/978-3-319-76210-4_14

Datasets

Nelson, K., **Helmdag, J.**, Burman, S., Dalén, P., Eneroth, M. and Strigén, J. (2024). Social Insurance Entitlements Dataset (SIED) 2000–2023 [Data set]. Swedish Institute for Social Research (SOFI), Stockholm University.

Nelson, K., **Helmdag, J.**, Burman, S., Dalén, P., Eneroth, M. and Strigén, J. (2023). Social Insurance Entitlements Dataset (SIED) 2020 update [Data set]. Swedish Institute for Social Research (SOFI), Stockholm University.

Current working paper

Helmdag, J. (2025). Tracing the benefit gap: Dualisation of social rights in Sweden, 1960–2025.

Helmdag, J. (2024). The three faces of partisanship: A systematic review and meta-analysis of partisan impact on social and labor market policy reform.

Stata ados

Helmdag, J. (2022). CWEDGEN: Stata module to generate sample-specific generosity scores for the Comparative Welfare Entitlements Dataset 2. (available upon request)

Helmdag, J. (2022). PANELPLOT: Stata module for panel-specific graphical comparison of observed and predicted values after panel regression. (available upon request)

Helmdag, J. (2022). XTDIAG: Stata module for automated diagnostics after time-series cross-section regression with tabular representation of test results. (available upon request)

Helmdag, J. (2017). INTERACTPLOT: Stata module to generate plots for interaction terms of multiplicative regressions.

Helmdag, J. (2017). IHSTRANS: Stata module to generate inverse hyperbolic sine (IHS) transformed variables out of a list of multiple variables.

Helmdag, J. (2016). PANELL: Stata module to display panel length for a given set of variables.

Conference papers and presentations

"Tracing the benefit gap: Dualisation of social rights in Sweden, 1960-2025", paper presented at the FISS conference in Sigtuna (4–6 June), the CSP research seminar at the Department of Social Policy and Intervention (DSPI), University of Oxford (28 May 2025) and the ESPAnet conference in Milan (26–29 August 2025).

"The three faces of partisanship: A meta-analysis on the effects of partisanship on labor market policy reforms", paper presented at the NoPSA congress in Bergen (25–28 June 2024), the ESPAnet conference in Tampere (28–30 August 2024) and the Political Sociology and Economy seminar series at the Department of Government at Uppsala University (25 September 2024).

"Sustaining the welfare state in an era of population ageing", book chapter presented at the SustAgeable book workshop, THL Helsinki (28–29 September 2023).

"In search of the silver bullet? Pension related country-specific recommendations in the European Semester", paper presented at the at the European Network for Research on Supplementary Pensions Annual Conference, Coimbra (8–9 September 2022) and the annual autumn meeting of the Swedish Association for Sociology in Umeå (24–25 November 2022).

"Interdependent learning from policy sucess: Contextual diffusion of active labour market policies", paper presented at the ESPAnet Conference in Oslo (4–6 September 2014), the IPSA World Congress of Political Science in Poznan (23–28 July 2016) and the workshop "Mechanisms and Outcomes of Learning in Public Policy" at the British Academy in London (19–20 January 2017).

"Extending the tail end of working lives: How policies shape labour market participation and retirement of older workers.", paper presented at the at the International Conference of Europeanists in Philadelphia (14–16 April 2016) and the ESPAnet Conference in Rotterdam (1–3 September 2016).

Other

Jahn, D. and **Helmdag, J.** (2017). Abschlussbericht des DFG-geförderten Projektes „Wohlfahrtsstaatlichkeit im erweiterten Europa". [engl. Final report on the DFG-funded project "Welfare Policies in the Enlarged Europe"]. Institute for Poltical Science, University of Greifswald.

Kuitto, K., and **Helmdag, J.** (2015). Studierbarkeit und Forschungsorientierung: Einstiegshilfe Statistik und Methoden für den Masterstudiengang „Politikwissenschaft". In: *Greifswalder Beiträge zur Hochschullehre*, 4(2), 25–32.

Acquired funds

Sum of acquired funds (rounded): **717,900 EUR // 7,897,000 SEK**

Swedish Research Council for Health, Working Life and Welfare (FORTE) starting grant as principal investigator for the project "The dualization of social rights in Sweden and beyond: How social policy design can maintain or mitigate income inequality" (3,510,000 SEK, approx. 350,000 EUR).

Swedish Research Council (VR) project grant as principal investigator for the project "*Dualiseringen av sociala rättigheter i Sverige och i andra länder: Hur utformningen av socialpolitiken vidmakthåller inkomstskillnader*" (3,622,000 SEK, approx. 360,000 EUR).

InGRID visting grant for research stay at the Swedish Institute for Social Research (SOFI), Stockholm, Sweden, nov–dec2016: 1,000 EUR

Multiple travel grants and accommodation allowances for three research stays at the Finnish Centre for Pensions (Eläketurvakeskus), Helsinki, Finland (2016, 2017, and 2018): approx. 3,000 EUR.

Erasmus scholarship for student exchange program at the University of Oslo: 900 EUR plus accommodation (approx. 3 000 EUR).

Note: I am the sole or main beneficiary of all listed items.

Research cooperations

Associated researcher, 2017–2021

Research project "Career discontinuities and pension security — parenthood as wage risk", Finnish Centre for Pensions, Helsinki, Finland

Associated researcher, 2015–2020

Comparative Welfare Entitlements Dataset (CWED2), University of Connecticut & University of Greifswald

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Outreach

Research visits and invited talks

Oxford University, Department of Social Policy and Intervention (DSPI). April–June 2025. Research visitor during the Trinity term. Included a presentation on ongoing research on "Tracing the benefit gap: Dualisation of social rights in Sweden, 1960–2025." and drafting joint project applications together with Prof. Kenneth Nelson.

Oxford University, Department of Social Policy and Intervention (DSPI). 15–17 May 2024. Included the presentation "The Social Policy Indicators (SPIN) Database: On the Dependent Variable Problem in Welfare State Research".

Bremen University, Germany. November 16, 2022. Invited talk on country-Specific partisan Dynamics in labor market policy reforms and data gathering procedures for social rights indicators.

Swedish Institute for Social Research (SOFI). November–December, 2016. Included a presentation on data gathering for social rights with a comparative perspective.

Finnish Centre for Pensions (Eläketurvakeskus). Multiple visits in 2016, 2017, and 2018 (all stretching two months, i.e. February–March, each).

Skills

Methodological

Panel analysis with additional applications (e.g., time-series cross-section, error correction models, regression discontinuity designs, synthetic control methods, difference-in-difference models); trajectory, sequence and survival analysis, logistic and multinomial regression, dyadic analysis, multilevel modeling, multiplicative models with polynomials or interactions

Software

Statistics: Stata, R
Typesetting: LaTeX, generic office programs
Other: Atom, Sublime text

Languages

German (native), English (fluent), Swedish (basic)

Teaching

Finnish Centre for Pensions, Helsinki, Finland

Invitation with remuneration

Course on advanced statistical modelling of social sciences data with Stata. With excellent evaluation (rated 4.5 out of 5). February–March 2018.

University of Greifswald, Germany

(23 courses in total)

Graduate course "Statistical analysis methods for graduate and PhD students in Political Science". Syllabus. Winter term 2019/20.

Undergraduate course "Introduction to comparative social policy reform". Syllabus. Winter term 2019/20.

Undergraduate course "Research seminar: The political economy of social policy reforms". Syllabus. Summer term 2019.

Graduate course "Statistical analysis methods for graduate and PhD students". Syllabus. Winter term 2018/19.

Graduate course "Labor Market Reform in the OECD: Managing the Transition from Post-Industrialism into the 4th Industrial Revolution". Syllabus. Winter term 2018/19.

Graduate course "Modelling the Interdependence of Policy-Making Processes". Syllabus. Summer term 2018.

Undergraduate course "Research seminar: Explanatory approaches of social policy reform" Syllabus. Summer term 2018.

Graduate course "Advanced Statistical Methods". Winter term 2017/18.

Graduate course "Restructuring European Labour Markets: Is Europe Prepared for the 4th Industrial Revolution?". Winter term 2017/18.

Undergraduate course "Comparative Welfare State Research". Winter term 2017/18.

Graduate course "Shifting towards the unknown: Influences, consequences, and institutional constraints of labour market policy reform". Summer term 2017.

Undergraduate research course „Moderne Wohlfahrtsstaaten im internationalen Vergleich" [Engl.: "Modern welfare states in international comparison"]. Summer term 2017.

Graduate course "Labour market policy reform in the OECD". Winter term 2016/17.

Graduate course „Fortgeschrittene quantitative Methoden" [Engl.: "Advanced quantitative-empirical methods"]. Winter term 2016/17.

Undergraduate research course „Erklärungsansätze der Wohlfahrtsstaatlichkeit" [Engl.: Explanatory approaches of welfare states]. Summer term 2016.

Undergraduate research course „Parteiendifferenzhypothese und Agenda Setting Power Model als Erklärungsansätze für Politikfelder" [Engl.: "Explaining policy shifts with partisan theory and the agenda setting power model"]. Summer term 2016.

Graduate course „Fortgeschrittene Quantitative Methoden" [Engl.: "Advanced quantitative-empirical methods"]. Winter term 2015/16.

Graduate course „Einstiegshilfe für den Masterstudiengang Politikwissenschaft" [Engl.: "Introductory course for graduate students"]. Winter term 2015/16.

Undergraduate course „Einführung in die vergleichende Wohlfahrtsstaatsforschung" [Engl.: "Introduction to comparative welfare state research"]. Winter term 2015/16.

Graduate course „Einstiegshilfe für den Masterstudiengang Politikwissenschaft" [Engl.: "Introductory course for graduate students"]. Summer term 2015

Undergraduate research course „Wohlfahrtsstaatliche Politik im empirischen Vergleich" [Engl.: "Welfare policies in empirical comparison"]. Summer term 2015.

Graduate course „Einstiegshilfe für den Masterstudiengang Politikwissenschaft" [Engl.: "Introductory course for graduate students"], together with Henrike Englert & Kati Kuitto. Winter term 2014/15.

Graduate course „Einstiegshilfe für den Masterstudiengang Politikwissenschaft" [Engl.: "Introductory course for graduate students"], together with Henrike Englert & Kati Kuitto. Summer term 2014.

Supervision

Master's theses:

Supervision of **four** Master's theses in total

Junge, L. (2019). *The influence of public policy on renewable energy substitution.*

Baltz, E. (2018). *Does ideology matter? Politische Institutionen in der Fiskalpolitik.* [engl. Does ideology matter? Political institutions and fiscal policy.]

Matejko, J. (2017). *Quantitative Analyse der rechtlichen Gleichstellung gleichgeschechtlicher Partnerschaft.* [engl. Quantitative analysis of the legal equality of same-sex partnerships].

Szelinski, B. (2016). *Lassen sich Wohlfahrtsstaaten wie in Esping-Andersens "The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism" typologisieren? Ein Replikationsversuch seiner Ergebnisse mit den Daten des CWED-Projektes.* [engl. How can welfare states be typologized? A replication of Esping-Andersen's "The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism" with CWED data].

Bachelor's theses:

Supervision of **fifteen** Bachelor's theses in total

Among others: Alekseev, O. (2019). *The gender gap in political preferences over governmental regulations in post-industrial societies.* Thesis was awarded with the *Gender Research Prize of the University of Greifswald*, endowed with 500 €.

Service to the community

Policy expert for the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound).

Head organizer of the stream *The Politics of Welfare State Reform* at the European Social Policy Analysis network (ESPAnet) annual conference (Warsaw, 2023; Tampere, 2024; Milan, 2025), together with Kenneth Nelson (University of Oxford) and Nils Düpont (University of Bremen).

Organizer of the *Social Welfare and Stratification* seminar at SOFI, aug2024–ongoing.

Organizer of the weekly research seminar for the *Social Policy Unit* at SOFI, jan2023–jul2024.

Member of the committee for the appointment of the Professor of Comparative Political Science at the Institute of Political Science and Communication Studies at the University of Greifswald, nov2017-jun2018.

Chief coordinator of the master study programmes for political science at the Institute for Political Science and Communication Studies at Greifswald University, mar2015–feb2020.

Reviewer for *Social Policy & Administration*, *Review of Policy Research*, among others.

References

Prof. Kenneth Nelson, PhD
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Prof. Tomas Korpi, PhD PhD
Swedish Institute for Social Research (SOFI), Stockholm University
Universitetsvägen 10 F, 106 91 Stockholm, Sweden
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Prof. Joakim Palme, PhD
Department of Government, Uppsala University
Östra Ågatan 19, 753 22 Uppsala, Sweden
+46 18 471 33 05, joakim.palme@statsvet.uu.se

Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Herbert Obinger
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