



# A worksheet exercise in comparative social policy

*Author: Judith Glover*

University of Surrey

## Aim

A staged problem-solving exercise to enable students to make an assessment of whether Esping-Andersen's categories or critiques of Esping-Andersen help our understanding of differences in health care inputs and outputs in selected countries

## Design Features

- 1¾ hour session with groups of around 20 students
- tutor led workshop; students are provided with guidance through a set of notes (summary of key points, prescribed reading) and then work through a set of exercises using statistical tables and referring to previously introduced theoretical models
- Most effective if students work in pairs, but can be an individual exercise if time is short, an independent study exercise or a combination of these.

## Benefits to students

- Using a case study approach, the exercise enables students to apply knowledge of individual countries and theoretical approaches covered earlier in the module
- Builds students' confidence in their own critical and analytical skills
- Improves students' familiarity with and ability to read statistical material.

“For students who come in with a lot of educational capital and confidence in using published statistics, this approach may be too structured, but for students who lack confidence in both their critical skills and their ability to use information in tabular form, this approach can give confidence – and it's quite fun!”

## Evaluation

- success can depend on the dynamics of the student group
- students who may otherwise struggle with the complexities of comparative work have developed their abilities to grasp and apply difficult concepts.