

Participants

1. Calling researchers, faculty, scholars, development practitioners, students, Policy makers and Policy analysts, NGOs and Think tanks working in the fields aligned to themes of Governance, Welfare and Policymaking to submit their abstracts for both in-person and online presentations.

Abstract Submission

Submission Guidelines for Abstract:

Max. 250-300 words without figures or tables

Abstracts should be sent to

Prof. V Anil Kumar at the following Email address: anilkumar@isec.ac.in by October 15th, 2025

Full research paper should be submitted by November 30th, 2025.

Full Research Paper (for the selected abstracts)

Word limit: 7000-8000 words and following the APA style of citation. Use Tables and Figures to the minimum in the paper.

National Seminar Date: 17th, 18th and 19th, December 2025

Seminar Venue: Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bangalore

Collaborating Organizations

1. Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), is a reputed institution established in 1972 by the visionary Prof. V K R V Rao, conducting interdisciplinary research, training, and policy dissemination in social sciences, simultaneously assisting central, state and local governments by providing advice based on policy-related studies.
2. The Karnataka Regional Branch of the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA-KRB) endeavours to act as a bridge between academia, research institutions, public and the government. It also seeks to equip public servants with knowledge and skills for effective governance, by collaborating with like-minded institutions.

Organizing Committee

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Governance and Welfare Measures in India: Policies, Challenges and the Way Forward

Three-day CPIGD- ISEC IIPA-KRB National Seminar

17th-19th
December 2025

Venue : Institute for Social and Economic Change
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Concept Note

Ever since the advent of liberalisation, many welfare measures are implemented by the Indian state aiming at enhancing social security, reducing poverty and stimulating economic growth. These welfare policies were implemented by both national as well as regional political parties. The welfare policies implemented by the national government are categorised as schemes on i. Health ii. Education iii. Economic Development and iv. Social Empowerment emphasises different welfare provisions.

India has a quasi-federal system where powers and responsibilities are shared between the Union and States, guided primarily by the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution. The logic of competitive federalism and constitutional design enables both the centre and state governments to implement various policies and schemes. Numerous socio-economic welfare policies and schemes are addressed towards supporting the vulnerable sections of society, targeting healthcare, education, financial assistance, and social empowerment of women and children.

There are welfare measures both Union and the States. The Union-led schemes are called the Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) and then there are innovations in welfare measures by State Governments. These schemes are derived from the policies of upliftment of women, farmers and the marginalized by the Union government and the State Governments.

The Union Government supports states through Centrally Sponsored Schemes that are partly funded by the Government of India and partly by the State Governments. (e.g., MGNREGA, PMGSY, Ayushman Bharat-Arogya Karnataka), reflecting shared responsibility. Ayushman Bharat, PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi. Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan (Poor Welfare Employment Campaign); PM Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY, PM Fish

Resources Scheme); Jal Jeevan Mission (Water Life Mission); Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT) like PM-KISAN; Ujjwala 2.0; Women & Child Welfare schemes.

The State-led governments also implement many welfare schemes that are fully funded by the States. Such as, for example, in Karnataka: Anna Bhagya; Ksheera Bhagya; Shakti; Grihalakshmi, Gruha Jyothi, Yuva Nidhi, KREIS residential schools, Sandhya Suraksha Yojane, and so on. South Indian states have been ahead in the welfare programmes, starting with the mid-day meals scheme, which was first implemented in Tamil Nadu.

However, the implementation of policies and schemes in India often faces constraints, despite good intentions and large allocations. The main constraints are bureaucratic inefficiency, financial bottlenecks, weak local institutions, political dynamics, social inequalities, and lack of awareness. Delayed fund release – Union or State transfers are often irregular, affecting continuity. Overlapping schemes – multiple similar programs create duplication and confusion.

The effectiveness of these schemes can vary depending on the implementation, allocation, and monitoring mechanisms in short, governance. Governance of the schemes has been improved of late through DBTs (Direct Benefit Transfer Measures) thereby ensuring transparency.

Scholars of comparative research across Indian States have identified three critical factors in explaining state-level political environment shaping social policy: the role of policy regimes and legacy, the role of political and social coalitions, and the role of political leaders shaping the socio-economic policies. While recent schemes uplift millions, long-term sustainability, efficient execution, and economic impact remain key challenges.

The major criticism of welfare measures is that they are not financially viable and burden the public exchequer, leading to the imposition of

excessive taxes on the people and deficit financing. Both the opposition and the CAG (Comptroller and Auditor General) have been warning the states of the limitations of welfare programmes. And therefore, what is being debated in this seminar is the long-term viability of the various welfare schemes provided by the Union and State governments.

The seminar invites abstracts on the following sub-themes from all over India. We will try to accommodate papers from all parts of India.

In the context of the above, the seminar broadly delineates the following sub-themes for the seminar:

1. The Constitution and Welfare
2. Welfare Programmes and the Indian state: Evolution and Trajectories
3. Electoral Promises and Welfare: Competitive Welfare or Competitive Populism
4. Welfare schemes or Populism or Freebies: Understanding Welfare Programmes at the State level.
5. State Governments and Welfare Programmes
6. Relationship between Policies and Schemes
7. Rationale of Division of policies between the Union and State Governments
8. Identification of Constraints in effective Implementation of the Welfare Schemes
9. Gender and the Welfare Issues
10. Sustainability of Welfare schemes: Combining Markets and Welfare
11. Fiscal Sustainability of Welfare schemes: Specific Cases
12. People's Response to Welfare Programmes
13. Qualitative Approaches to studying Welfare Programmes and People's Responses
14. Digital Governance and Welfare Measures
15. Social Security and Welfare Schemes
16. Rural and urban policies & welfare measures