

THE NATIONAL EUROPE CENTRE
RESEARCH SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES, ANU,
PRESENTS:



PUBLIC SEMINAR

A NEW WORLD OF WELFARE? A STUDY OF MIGRANT WORKERS' EXPERIENCES AND THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIAL SECURITY

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Friday 3 August 2007, 12.30–2.00pm

ANU National Europe Centre, 1 Liversidge St [67C], The Australian National University. Light refreshments will follow the seminar. Parking available in Balmain Lane, opposite University House. This lecture is free and open to the public. RSVP preferred:

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Dr Virpi Timonen is the founding Director of the Social Policy and Ageing Research Centre (SPARC), which was established in 2005 at Trinity College Dublin, Ireland (www.sparc.tcd.ie). Dr Timonen is also a principal investigator in the Irish Longitudinal Study of Ageing (www.tilda.ie) with a focus on social care and engagement of older people. She has published four books and several book chapters as well as articles in international journals including *Ageing & Society* and *The Journal of Ageing Studies*.

The population of all European countries is ageing, and many are increasingly reliant on 'externally sourced' (migrant) elder care workers to provide the care required by their older populations. The paper investigates this new and important phenomenon, including the relationship between migrant workers and the welfare state. The research was carried out in Ireland, formerly a country of emigration that now has one of the highest net migration rates in the EU. Semi-structured interviews with 40 migrant care workers yielded qualitative data on, inter alia, their understanding and experiences of the welfare state, and possible alternative sources of security. The findings of this research are important because they suggest that (1) migrant workers are split into a large number of constituencies with differing entitlements to social protection, (2) many migrant workers are reluctant to access benefits that they are entitled to, (3) migrant workers harbour negative views of the welfare state and (4) they rely exclusively or predominantly on non-welfare state sources of security. The possible emergence, in Ireland and other European countries, of substantial groups of people who are neither anchored in the standard system of social protections nor support the welfare state, may gradually undermine the legitimacy and sustainability of European welfare states.

The views in this Lecture are those of the presenter and do not necessarily represent the views of The Australian National University



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