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Economic Effects of Social Protection

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Economic Effects of Social Protection

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Social protection aims to protect individuals against negative income shocks and to reduce poverty and inequality. In developed economies, no less than 20-30% of GDP is spent on social protection, such as pensions, public expenditure on health and benefits targeted at the elderly, unemployed, disabled, sick, families and the poor. In order to ensure that these expenditures are well-targeted and cost-efficient, we need to know the economic effects of social protection.

This thesis studies a number of the intended effects and potential adverse effects that social protection may have. It contains four empirical studies that answer the following questions. Are mandatory activation programs for young welfare recipients reducing the number of individuals Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEETs) during a severe economic recession? To what extent are income losses caused by unemployment shocks compensated by increases in earnings from the spouse? Does a right to social security in the constitution have an impact on social expenditure? How are different social expenditure types related to poverty, inequality and GDP growth? Altogether, this book considers the welfare state from different perspectives, with a focus on both the redistributive effects and the employment effects of social protection.

This is a volume in the series of the Meijers Research Institute and Graduate School of the Leiden Law School of Leiden University. This study is part of the Law School's research program on 'reform of Social Legislation'.