



# **Understanding social security (Second edition) (Understanding Welfare: Social Issues, Policy and Practice)**

*Jane Millar*

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In an increasingly risky world the need for social security support is greater than ever. Benefits and tax credits aim to provide protection against economic risks, help families with the costs of bringing up children, enable people to save for retirement, and provide support in old age. Key goals are to redistribute income to alleviate poverty and help people maintain living standards across the lifecycle. Reform of the social security and tax systems has been at the heart of the UK Labour government's aspirations to modernise the welfare state since 1997 with major changes in both policy and administration. This second edition of the important text, *Understanding Social Security*, reviews these policy developments, giving readers the information and analytical tools to make sense of policy debates and reforms and to evaluate options for the future. The chapters have been extensively updated since the first edition, with new chapters on social security reform, inequalities and social security, and the new 'welfare market'. The main topics covered include: · the social security safety net · racism, ethnicity, migration · social security governance · global social security · social security and the life course · the challenge of childhood poverty · reforming pensions · welfare to work · sickness, incapacity and disability · tax credits · service delivery information technology

The book provides a critical examination of social security policy and practice and is essential reading for students of social policy, social work and sociology, as well as policy-makers and practitioners in the fields of social security, welfare-to-work, employment, anti-poverty strategies and welfare rights. It will be of interest to those interested in recent policy developments in these areas, emerging issues and debates, and in wider issues of the modernisation of the welfare state.

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