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978-0-521-52917-4 - Growing Public: Social Spending and Economic Growth Since the Eighteenth Century, Volume 2 - Further Evidence

Peter H. Lindert

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Growing Public

Social Spending and Economic Growth Since the Eighteenth Century

Growing Public examines the question of whether social policies that redistribute income impose constraints on economic growth. Taxes and transfers have been debated for centuries, but only now can we get a clear view of the whole evolution of social spending. What kept prospering nations from using taxes for social programs until the end of the nineteenth century? Why did taxes and spending then grow so much, and what are the prospects for social spending in this century? Why did North America become a leader in public education in some ways and not others? Lindert finds answers in the economic history and logic of political voice, population aging, and income growth. Contrary to traditional beliefs, the net national costs of government social programs are virtually zero. This book not only shows that no Darwinian mechanism has punished the welfare states, but uses history to explain why this surprising result makes sense. Contrary to the intuition of many economists and the ideology of many politicians, social spending has contributed to, rather than inhibited, economic growth.

Peter H. Lindert is a Distinguished Professor of Economics at the University of California, Davis, and a Research Associate of the National Bureau of Economic Research. His writings have touched on a wide range of economic and historical topics relating to Europe, the United States, China, Indonesia, and the global economy. His textbooks in international economics have been translated into eight other languages.

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Further Evidence

PETER H. LINDERT

University of California, Davis



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Preface to Volume 2

This volume covers most of the range of ideas and issues in the two-volume set, but readers will also want to consult Volume 1, which is written for a wide nonspecialist audience. Here is a condensed outline of the contents to Volume 1:

PART ONE: OVERVIEW

1. Patterns and Puzzles
2. Findings

PART TWO: THE RISE OF SOCIAL SPENDING

3. Poor Relief before 1880
4. Interpreting the Puzzles of Early Poor Relief
5. The Rise of Mass Public Schooling before 1914
6. Public Schooling in the Twentieth Century: What Happened to U.S. Leadership?
7. Explaining the Rise of Social Transfers since 1880

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PART THREE: PROSPECTS FOR SOCIAL TRANSFERS

8. The Public Pension Crisis
9. Social Transfers in the Second and Third Worlds

PART FOUR: WHAT EFFECTS ON ECONOMIC GROWTH?

10. Keys to the Free-Lunch Puzzle
11. On the Well-Known Demise of the Swedish Welfare State
12. How the Keys Were Made: Democracy and Cost Control

Bibliography for Volume 1

For readers wishing to dig deeper into the evidence of these two volumes, the main underlying data sets are available online at either (<http://www.cup.org/0521821754>) or the author's home page (<http://www.econ.ucdavis.edu/faculty/fzlinder>).

Permissions for Both Volumes

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