

## A Manifesto for Social Progress

### Ideas for a Better Society

At this time when many have lost hope amid conflicts, terrorism, environmental destruction, economic inequality, and the breakdown of democracy, this beautifully written book outlines how to rethink and reform our key institutions – markets, corporations, welfare policies, democratic processes, and transnational governance – to create better societies based on core principles of human dignity, sustainability, and justice. This new vision is based on the findings of over 300 social scientists involved in the collaborative, interdisciplinary International Panel on Social Progress. Relying on state-of-the-art scholarship, these social scientists reviewed the desirability and possibility of all relevant forms of long-term social change, explored current challenges, and synthesized their knowledge on the principles, possibilities, and methods for improving the main institutions of modern societies. Their common finding is that a better society is indeed possible, its contours can be broadly described, and all we need is to gather forces toward realizing this vision.

MARC FLEURBAEY is an economist, professor at Princeton University (Woodrow Wilson School and Center for Human Values) and member of Collège d'Etudes Mondiales (Paris FMSH). He is the co-author of *Beyond GDP* (with Didier Blanchet, Cambridge University Press, 2013), *A Theory of Fairness and Social Welfare* (with François Maniquet, Cambridge University Press, 2011), and the author of *Fairness, Responsibility and Welfare* (2008). He was a coordinating lead author for the IPCC 5th Report, and one of the initiators of the International Panel on Social Progress. He is also a member of the UN Committee on Development Policy, and of the Council for Global Problem-Solving.

OLIVIER BOUIN is an economist, director of the RFIEA Foundation, which supports Institutes for Advanced Study in France, Europe and worldwide, and former director of the Collège d'Etudes Mondiales (FMSH, Paris). His research interests focus on institutional economics, European economics and international science policies. He is the co-editor of *Europe's Crises* (with Manuel Castells et al., 2018). He is a member of the Governing Board of the European Alliance for Social Sciences and Humanities, and one of the initiators of the International Panel on Social Progress.

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-42478-3 — A Manifesto for Social Progress  
Marc Fleurbaey , With Olivier Bouin , Marie-Laure Salles-Djelic , Ravi Kanbur , Helga Nowotny ,

Elisa Reis , Foreword by Amartya Sen

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

MARIE-LAURE SALLES-DJELIC is a sociologist, professor, and dean of the School of Management and Innovation at Sciences Po. Her research focuses on the interface between business and society – the historical transformation of capitalism, the cross-national diffusion of ideas and practices, business ethics and corporate social responsibility, transnational governance, and the performative role of ideologies. She has published broadly on these issues in academic journals and books. In particular, she is the author of *Exporting the American Model* (1998), winner of the 2000 Max Weber Award (American Sociological Association) and, together with Sigrid Quack, of *Transnational Communities: Shaping Global Governance* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

RAVI KANBUR is an economist and professor at Cornell University. He has served on the senior staff of the World Bank including as chief economist for Africa. He is president of the Human Development and Capabilities Association, chair of the Board of United Nations University-World Institute for Development Economics Research, a member of the OECD High Level Expert Group on the Measurement of Economic Performance, former president of the Society for the Study of Economic Inequality, a past member of the High Level Advisory Council of the Climate Justice Dialogue, and a past member of the Core Group of the Commission on Global Poverty.

HELGA NOWOTNY is professor emerita of Social Studies of Science, ETH Zurich, and former president of the European Research Council (ERC). Currently she is chair of the ERA Council Forum Austria and visiting professor at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Her active engagement in scientific boards includes the Walling Falls Foundation (member), Lindau Nobel Laureate meetings (vice-president), and Complexity Science Hub Vienna (chair), among others. Her latest book publications are *The Cunning of Uncertainty* (2015) and *An Orderly Mess* (2017).

ELISA REIS is a political sociology professor at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and chair of the Interdisciplinary Network for Social Inequalities Studies (NIED). Her research focuses on elite perceptions of poverty and inequality, and on contemporary changes in the patterns of interaction between state, market, and society. She has published widely in Brazilian and foreign periodicals. She is one of the authors of the book by Michele Lamont et al., *Getting Respect, Responding to Stigma and Discrimination in the United States, Brazil and Israel* (2016).

# A Manifesto for Social Progress

Ideas for a Better Society

MARC FLEURBAEY

with

OLIVIER BOUIN, MARIE-LAURE  
SALLES-DJELIC, RAVI KANBUR,  
HELGA NOWOTNY, AND ELISA REIS



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-42478-3 — A Manifesto for Social Progress  
Marc Fleurbaey , With Olivier Bouin , Marie-Laure Salles-Djelic , Ravi Kanbur , Helga Nowotny ,

Elisa Reis , Foreword by Amartya Sen  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,  
New Delhi – 110025, India

79 Anson Road, #06-04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108424783](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108424783)

DOI: 10.1017/9781108344128

© Cambridge University Press 2018

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2018

Printed in the United States of America by Sheridan Books, Inc.

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

Names: Fleurbaey, Marc, author. | Bouin, Olivier, author.

Title: A manifesto for social progress : ideas for a better society / Marc

Fleurbaey, Princeton University, New Jersey, Olivier Bouin, Paris.

Description: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY : Cambridge

University Press, 2018. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2018015099 | ISBN 9781108424783 (hardback)

Subjects: LCSH: Social policy. | Economic policy. | Equality. | Democracy.

Classification: LCC HN18.3 .F548 2018 | DDC 306–dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2018015099>

ISBN 978-1-108-42478-3 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-108-44092-9 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Elisa Reis , Foreword by Amartya Sen  
 Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

## Contents

Foreword – Amartya Sen	<i>page</i> vii
Preface	ix
Acknowledgments	xiii
Introduction: The Future is in Our Hands	1
PART I SOURCES OF WORRY, REASONS FOR HOPE	19
1 Global Successes and Looming Catastrophes	21
2 Globalization and Technology: Choices and Contingencies	43
3 The Expanding Circle of Respect and Dignity	65
4 The Big Challenge	85
PART II ACTING FOR SOCIAL PROGRESS	105
5 In Search of a New “Third Way”	107
6 Reforming Capitalism	126
7 From the Welfare State to the Emancipating State	146
8 From Polaritics to Politics	171
Conclusion: Mobilizing Change-Makers	193

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-42478-3 — A Manifesto for Social Progress  
Marc Fleurbaey , With Olivier Bouin , Marie-Laure Salles-Djelic , Ravi Kanbur , Helga Nowotny ,

---

Elisa Reis , Foreword by Amartya Sen

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

VI CONTENTS

Appendix: <i>Rethinking Society for the 21st Century:</i> <i>Report of the International Panel on Social Progress –</i>	
Table of Contents	211
References	221
Index	227

# Foreword

Amartya Sen

Can social justice be cultivated? Can social progress be enhanced through dedicated research and its application? This manifesto – with its powerful vision and practical recommendations – draws on individual and collaborative research of more than 300 social scientists. The investigative findings have been put together with clarity and force by a team led by Marc Fleurbaey.

If the epistemic message underlying the Communist Manifesto published 170 years ago was the diagnosis that “the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles,” the main message of this manifesto of social progress is that justice can certainly be cultivated and social progress can be substantially enhanced through combining a constructive vision with well-thought-out changes in institutions and conventions. In contemporary debates on political economy too much time may have been spent already arguing for *or* against the market economy. We need to move on to the recognition that market institutions are necessary but far from sufficient as the basis of a just society – a society that guarantees fairness and human dignity as well as sustainability and robustness. Contemporary capitalism goes beyond making use of the market economy – often with uncritical application – by enforcing certain priorities and exclusions, all of which are open to questioning and careful scrutiny. It is such questioning and scrutiny that identifies, in this manifesto, the institutional and behavioral changes that just social progress demands.

It would be a mistake to think that the need for a manifesto of this kind has arisen only from the recent manifestations of inequity and fragility that the world sees today. As Adam Smith noted more

---

Elisa Reis , Foreword by Amartya Sen

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

VIII FOREWORD

than two centuries ago, the market economy needed – even then – both support and skepticism. He argued for allowing the markets to function in normal circumstances, but also for organizing institutions that restrain counterproductive market activities of “prodigals and projectors,” and that allow the state to do those essential things that the state alone can best perform. If such a balance was necessary in the eighteenth century at the dawn of modern capitalism, it is totally essential in the prosperous and yet unjust world in which we live today.

I very much hope that this manifesto, based on findings of extensive research, will generate initiatives that will be able to change the face of the globe. Radical changes are needed in the stricken and unjust world in which we live, and there are good reasons to think that the positive vision and constructive proposals presented in this manifesto will greatly contribute to that much-needed transformation. It is hard to exaggerate the global importance of a far-reaching manifesto of this kind.



## Preface

The recent decades have seen a decline in world poverty and an extension of democracy in many countries around the world. Nevertheless, many people have the feeling that this has also been a period of social setbacks, and there is a general atmosphere of skepticism regarding the possibility of long-term substantial social progress, not to mention a deeper transformation overturning the prevailing social injustices. Most intellectuals shy away not only from utopian thinking, but from any long-term prospective analysis of social structures. The crisis of social democracy after the collapse of the Soviet empire seems, in the West, to have generated a decline of hope for a just society just as the conditions of life of hundreds of millions of people in emerging economies have dramatically improved. These countries, however, have also abandoned the search for a different path to development: the trend is now to mimic the developed countries, rather than inventing a new model, and social hardships reminiscent of the early phase of Western capitalism are widespread in these countries.

Yet neither the collapse of illusions nor booming capitalism in developing countries should mean the end of the quest for justice. Given their special competence, social scientists ought to think about the transformation of society, together with scholars from the humanities and the hard sciences. If hope for progress is possible, they should provide it. If it is not possible, they should explain why.

Paradoxically, social scientists have never been so well equipped to assume such a responsibility, thanks to the development of all the relevant disciplines since the Second World War. But the expansion of disciplines, their growing specialization,

Elisa Reis , Foreword by Amartya Sen

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

X PREFACE

and the globalization of academic production have made it impossible for even the brightest mind to grasp, on its own, the complexity of social mechanisms and make serious proposals for changes in institutions and social structures. Such a task must now be collective and it must be cross-disciplinary.

#### INTERNATIONAL PANEL ON SOCIAL PROGRESS

The IPSP – [www.ipsp.org](http://www.ipsp.org) – was developed to address this task. It brought together more than 300 academics (of all relevant disciplines, perspectives, and regions of the world) willing and able to engage in a true interdisciplinary dialogue on key dimensions of social progress. Relying on state-of-the-art scholarship, these social scientists reviewed the desirability and possibility of all relevant forms of long-term social change, explored current challenges, and synthesized their knowledge on the principles, possibilities, and methods for improving the main institutions of modern societies.

The Panel is a truly collaborative effort, in its organization as well as its multi-sourced funding. It seeks to work in a way that is true to the key values and principles underlying its mission: wellbeing and freedom, security and solidarity, as well as pluralism and inclusion, distributive justice and equity, environmental preservation, transparency, and democracy.<sup>1</sup> The group has produced a major three-volume report – *Rethinking Society for the 21st Century* – which covers the main socio-economic, political, and cultural dimensions of social progress, and explores the values, the opportunities, and the constraints that underlie cutting-edge knowledge on possible improvements of institutions and policies. The report covers global as well as regional issues and considers the future of different parts of the world – the diversity of challenges and their interplay.

<sup>1</sup> A detailed discussion of values and principles of social progress is provided in IPSP (2018a, chapter 2).

All chapters in the IPSP report focus on a particular set of issues from the double perspective of gaining insights about (1) what are currently the main risks and challenges and (2) how institutions and policies can be improved if the plagues of inequality, segregation, intolerance, exclusion, and violence are to be fought. The full table of contents and authors can be found in the appendix to this book.

#### THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK

This book is written for a wider audience to share the message of hope of the larger report: ***A better society is indeed possible, its contours can be broadly described, and all we need is to gather forces toward realizing this vision.*** Although it largely relies on the report, it is complementary and offers its own original perspective in a coherent analysis. It does not seek to summarize the report with all its wealth of topics, and it does not pretend to reflect the full diversity of views of the Panel members. It is an invitation to take these issues to heart and to explore them more deeply with the help of the full report.

The team who wrote this book was at the core of the work of the IPSP, and is made up of scholars who are committed both to scientific research and to making social science serve the common good:

- Olivier Bouin, General Secretary of the European Network of Institutes for Advanced Studies, former Director of Collège d'Etudes Mondiales (FMSH, Paris)
- Marie-Laure Salles-Djelic, Professor and Co-Director of the School of Management, Sciences-Po, Paris
- Marc Fleurbaey, R.E. Kuenne Professor in Economics and Humanistic Studies, Princeton University, and member of Collège d'Etudes Mondiales (FMSH, Paris)
- Ravi Kanbur, T.H. Lee Professor of World Affairs, International Professor of Applied Economics, and Professor of Economics, Cornell University

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-42478-3 — A Manifesto for Social Progress  
Marc Fleurbaey , With Olivier Bouin , Marie-Laure Salles-Djelic , Ravi Kanbur , Helga Nowotny ,

Elisa Reis , Foreword by Amartya Sen

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

XII PREFACE

- Helga Nowotny, Professor Emerita of Science and Technology Studies, ETH Zurich, and former President of the European Research Council
- Elisa Reis, Professor of Sociology, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro

Readers are invited to follow the work, watch the videos, and attend the public events of IPSP. All information is available at [www.ipsp.org](http://www.ipsp.org) and on YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter.

## Acknowledgments

Many people have helped in the process of making this book and deserve special thanks. Excellent research assistance has been provided by Damien Capelle, Brian Jabarian, and Flora Vourch. Ottmar Edenhofer provided very helpful advice on the taxation of carbon and rents, as well as Jean-Paul Vallée on grassroots initiatives. Comments have been generously provided at various stages of preparation of the text by Nico Cloete, David de la Croix, Fernando Filgueira, Nancy Folbre, Jeff Hearn, Nora Lustig, Wolfgang Lutz, Anne Monier, Fabian Muniesa, Gian Paolo Rossini, Saskia Sassen, Erik Schokkaert, Simon Schwarzman, Noah Scovronick, Greg Shaffer, Christiane Spiel, Alexander Stingl, Lorraine Talbot, Peter Wallensteen, Finn Wölm, and three anonymous reviewers. The institutions that have supported the whole IPSP project deserve grateful acknowledgment here as well, and especially the Center for Human Values at Princeton University, the Collège d'Etudes Mondiales (FMSH, Paris), and the Institute for Futures Studies (Stockholm), among more than thirty. Last but not least, the support of the Cambridge University Press team (in particular Karen Maloney, Stephen Acerra, Adam Hooper, Gail Welsh and Kristina Deusch) has been very important in bringing this project to fruition jointly with the larger report.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-42478-3 — A Manifesto for Social Progress

Marc Fleurbaey , With Olivier Bouin , Marie-Laure Salles-Djelic , Ravi Kanbur , Helga Nowotny ,

---

Elisa Reis , Foreword by Amartya Sen

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)