

Preface and acknowledgements

This book contains studies emanating from an international collaborative research project on the political economy of recent public expenditure development that has been in progress since 2003 under the convenership of Francis G. Castles, Professor of Social and Public Policy at the University of Edinburgh. Early in 2003, the majority of the authors of these studies held a two-day meeting at the University of Edinburgh on the topic of *Globalization and the Public Purse: The Missing Dimension*, a meeting made possible by a grant from the Anglo-German Foundation and additional funding from the School of Social and Political Studies of the University of Edinburgh. At that meeting, it was agreed that continued data gathering and analysis across a wide range of functional areas of public spending would be fruitful and might eventually lead to the publication of a book on the determinants of public spending in areas hitherto largely untreated by existing comparative political economy research. It was further agreed that scholars from the Edinburgh Social Policy subject area would take responsibility for data gathering and that each of those who had attended the Edinburgh meeting would undertake the analysis of a particular category of spending with a view to reporting their findings to a project workshop to be held at a later date.

That workshop took place at the Hanse-Wissenschaftskolleg (HWK) in Delmenhorst in Germany over three days in March of 2006, with the proceedings going under the title of *The Disappearing State?* All those who had met in Edinburgh participated in the Delmenhorst meeting, together with three additional scholars recruited to give a broader coverage of spending areas. The papers presented and discussed at the Delmenhorst workshop were rewritten and reworked over the following six months and constitute the chapters of this book. The authors of these chapters collectively wish to acknowledge the generosity of the Hanse-Wissenschaftskolleg in funding the Delmenhorst meeting. The HWK also provided valuable support for the project by making the editor an HWK Fellow for three-month periods in both 2006 and 2007, allowing him to conduct research related to the project as well as to undertake coordinating and editorial tasks associated with the preparation of the volume. Finally, the editor wishes to acknowledge the facilities made

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