

**Dr. SHIM Jaemin**

**Presentation Title:**

Welfare Politics in East Asia: A Mixed-method Analysis of Legislation Patterns in South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan

**Abstract**

The project mainly seeks to explain the political logic behind the welfare expansion trend in three developed East Asian democracies—Korea, Japan, and Taiwan—since 1990. It analyses over-time and cross-country differences and, among others, focuses on the following aspects

- i. Going beyond the boundary of orthodox welfare benefits like pension, health care, or family care, this project examines the party-voter linkage of unorthodox social policies such as agriculture subsidies, construction projects, or strong labour market regulations.
- ii. Political cleavages revolving around non-social distribution issues and its implication on welfare politics
- iii. Role of entrepreneurial individual legislators on expanding welfare benefits
- iv. Relationship between the government power dispersion—in the form of divided/minority/coalition government—and welfare benefit generosity and universality

Unlike the conventional approach using welfare expenditure data in analysing welfare politics, the project examined the legislative activities of major political actors using the whole universe of hand-coded bills—roughly 50,000 in total—in three nations since 1990. And multiple methods (e.g. regression analysis, social network analysis, media content analysis, and elite interviews) have been applied to verify/triangulate/fine-tune findings from the legislation patterns.

**Bio**

Dr. Shim is currently a JSPS post-doctoral research fellow at the University of Tokyo and an associate fellow at the German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA). He

has received a PhD in Politics at the University of Oxford in October 2016 and his primary research interests lie in comparative welfare states, political institutions, and legislative politics. His dissertation entitled "Welfare Politics in Northeast Asia: An Analysis of Welfare Legislation Patterns in South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan" investigates how changing power structure affect incentives and constraints of elected politicians and elite bureaucrats in supporting different types of welfare bills by applying both quantitative and qualitative methods to his original dataset. Dr. Shim's wider work covers gender and politics, presidentialism, mixed-methods, party systems and cleavages. Building on his PhD project, he is currently working on a three-year global project "Convergence versus Divergence of Mass-Elite Political Cleavages: Conceptual, Methodological, and Theoretical Innovations."