

# ISTANBUL CONFERENCE ON ECONOMICS AND SOCIETY (ISTCES) 2025

*Pathways to Inclusive Growth: Overcoming Challenges in  
Emerging and Developing African Countries.*

24-26 SEPTEMBER 2025

*Book of Proceedings*

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Prof. Dr. Hasan Vergil

Prof. Dr. Muhittin Kaplan

Assist. Prof. Dr. Asad Ul Islam Khan

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Ayuba Napari, PhD

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Res. Asst. Abdülkadir Kömü - Res. Asst. Enes Cebe

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## 15.

# Economic and Institutional Drivers of Social Welfare Expenditure in Emerging Economies

Nuha Al-ziyadi<sup>1</sup>

Murat Yerlikaya<sup>2</sup>

This research examines the economic and institutional factors influencing public social welfare spending in eight emerging countries –Bulgaria, Chile, Colombia, Hungary, Korea, Romania, Poland, and Turkey– over the period from 2010 to 2023. By employing a fixed effects panel regression model with robust standard errors, we assess how employment rates, government consumption, GDP per capita, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, and control of corruption affect levels of social spending. The findings indicate that higher employment rates and enhanced government effectiveness are significantly linked to reduced welfare expenditure, implying that better labor market conditions and administrative competence may lessen the necessity for extensive social support. Conversely, increased government consumption, elevated GDP per capita, stronger regulatory quality, and improved control of corruption show a positive relationship with social welfare expenditure, highlighting that both economic capacity and institutional integrity are vital in increasing public investment in social programs. These results emphasize the need to align macroeconomic policies with institutional reforms to maximize the scale and effectiveness of social welfare spending in emerging economies.

**Keywords:** Social welfare expenditure, institutional quality, emerging economies, panel data analysis

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1 School of Graduate Studies, Department of Economics, Ibn Haldun University, Türkiye [nuha.alziyadi@stu.ihu.edu.tr](mailto:nuha.alziyadi@stu.ihu.edu.tr)

2 Department of Computer Engineering, İstanbul Ticaret University, Türkiye [yerlikayam@gmail.com](mailto:yerlikayam@gmail.com) [murat.yerlikaya@ihu.edu.tr](mailto:murat.yerlikaya@ihu.edu.tr)