

### **From street-level to screen-level: Digital welfare state interactions in South Korea and the Netherlands**

Across the world we see a rapid rise of digital welfare states (Pederson, 2019). According to Alston, the rapporteur on extreme poverty to the United Nations (UN), “there is little doubt that the future of welfare will be integrally linked to digitalization and the application of artificial intelligence” (Alston, 2019). The emergence of a digital welfare state has also sparked debate about how to appraise the increasing role of data in decision-making at the frontline. Some see digitalization as a great opportunity to increase efficiency, improve service provision, and argue that digital tools offer impartiality to counter human biases. Others see digitalization as a threat because badly designed digital tools privilege certain citizens while disadvantaging others (Illiadis and Russo, 2016, Kitchin and McArdle, 2016, Eubanks, 2018, Pederson, 2019).

Amidst this swift transformation from street-level to screen-level interactions, the perspective of citizens remains largely underexplored. This interactive seminar reveals how citizens’ perspectives play a role in the digitalization of the welfare state in the Netherlands and South Korea. (Inter)national scholars Suyoung Kim and Sabrina Rahmawan-Huizenga will share their insights about current digitalization experiments in welfare provision in youth care and welfare benefits.

Suyoung Kim will share her insights about welfare recipients’ experiences in South-Korea’s digitalized society. She focuses on online communities where benefit recipients share their insights with- and knowledge about the country’s benefits system. Her research sheds light on how the emergence of online communities influences the on/offline relationships among recipients.

Based on an ethnographic study of data experiments in the city of Rotterdam, Sabrina Rahmawan-Huizenga will discuss the design process of a data-driven policy tool in youth care in a street-level network. Despite the inclusion of the perspective of urban youth in the design process, the user journeys were not used and integrated into data-driven policy. The presentation will shed light on the underlying reasons why the citizen perspective was not incorporated into the policy.

This seminar aims to bring together scholars interested in the theme of digitalization at the frontline, to share knowledge, to inspire new research, and stimulate (international) collaborations.

This seminar is organized by the NIG research colloquium on ‘Street-level bureaucracy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century’. For more information about the colloquium see: <https://www.nigovernance.nl/street-level-bureaucracy-of-the-21st-century>

**Where:** Erasmus University, Mandeville building, T3-13

**When:** 19 January 2024, 9.30 – 13.00 (including free vegetarian lunch)

**Registration:** If you want to attend, please register by filling out our registration form: <https://forms.gle/kcHN63HpNjnzLrFf8> Please do so **before January 5th**, so that we can arrange lunch.

## Program

- 9:30-9:45 Walk in with coffee and tea
- 9:45-10:15 Presentation Suyoung Kim
- 10:15-10:45 Presentation Sabrina Rahmawan-Huizenga
- 10:45-11:00 Reflection and opening of the discussion (Lieke & Margot)
- 11:00-12:00 Plenary discussion
- 12:00-13:00 Lunch

## Information about the speakers



Dr. **Suyoung Kim** is Associate Professor in the Department of Social Welfare, Seoul National University, South Korea. Her research interests include the digital welfare state, social welfare ethics, interactions between social welfare bureaucrats and citizens, digital participation of citizens, and digital platform work. She is currently conducting a research project (funded by the Seoul National University) called 'Alone: A way of life in the age of individualised society.'



**Sabrina Rahmawan-Huizenga** works as postdoctoral researcher for the project Social Work and the Art of Crafting Resilient Societies. This project explores what governmental and community relations are being crafted in welfare experiments in Europe, and what political horizons they prefigure. Sabrina is trained as an urban sociologist and is currently rounding up her PhD trajectory on care and experimentation in the city, at Erasmus School of Health Policy and Management, Erasmus University Rotterdam.