

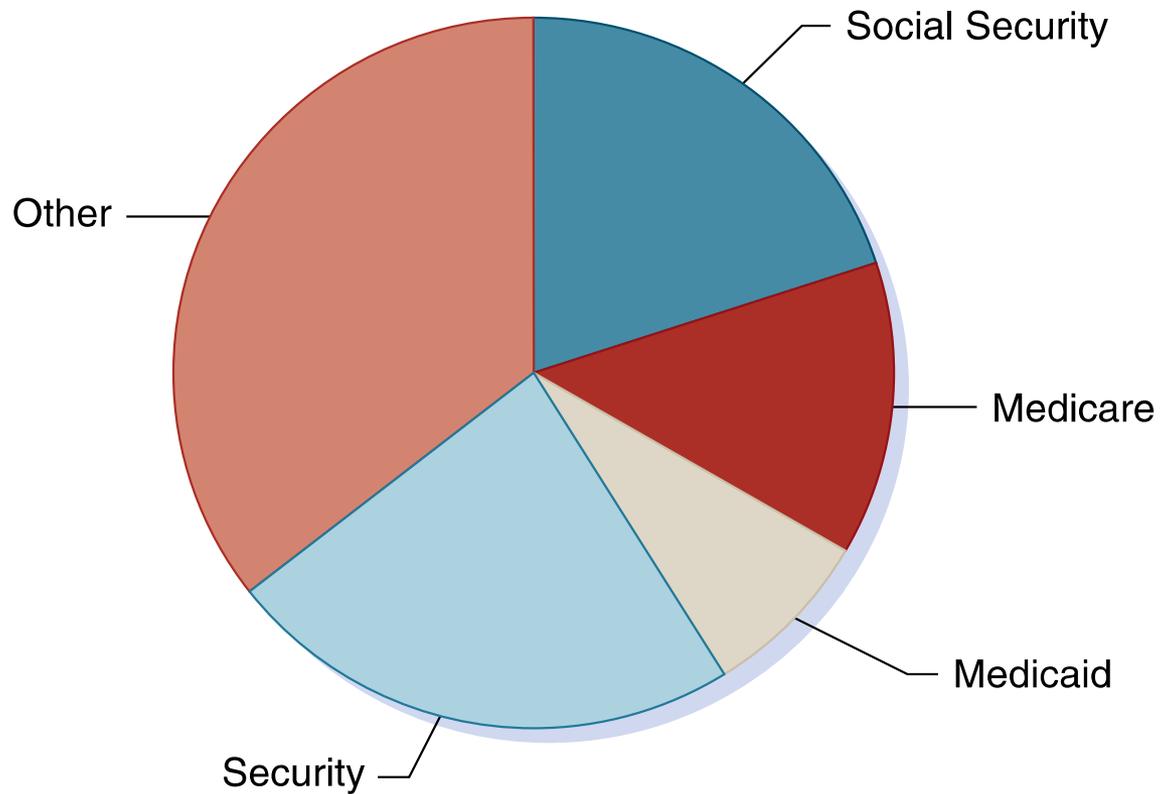
# American Social Welfare Policy: A Pluralist Approach

## Chapter 11

### Public Assistance Programs

# Assumptions and Myths about Public Assistance

- American attitudes toward public assistance
  - Characterized as a mixture of compassion and hostility
- Myths
- Facts



**FIGURE 11.1** 2011 Budget Outlays by Category  
(in billions of dollars)

# Aid to Families with Dependent Children

- AFDC was arguably the most controversial program in the U.S. welfare system
- The requirement for receiving AFDC
- One notorious chapter in AFDC history involved the man-in-the-house rule

# Aid to Families with Dependent Children

- The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996
  - Emergency Assistance Program
  - Entitlement
  - Participation rate

# Aid to Families with Dependent Children

- The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009
  - Passed in 2009 to strengthen safety net programs such as TANF and SNAP
- Has the PRWORA Worked?
  - By 2000, Democrats and Republicans had pronounced the PRWORA a raging success

**TABLE 11.1** TANF Work Participation Rates

Fiscal Year Percentages

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Work Participation for All Families

1997	25
1998	30
1999	35
2000	40
2001	45
2002 and beyond	50

Work Participation for Two-Parent Families

1997	75
1998	75
1999 and beyond	90

# Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

- Designed to provide cash assistance to the elderly and to disabled poor individuals
- Two groups of SSI recipients that have shown dramatic growth in their numbers
  - Children with disabilities
  - Adults with disabilities related to drug addiction and alcoholism

# General Assistance

- Most states limit GA eligibility to the severely poor, without children
- Some states fund GA programs
  - But delegate administration to counties, municipalities, or towns

# Trends and Issues in Public Assistance

- The responsibility of states to care for their poor is not new
- Transforming Public Assistance Policy into Labor Policy
  - AFDC had been a sore spot for conservatives since its inception

# Trends and Issues in Public Assistance

- The PRWORA was passed in a period of robust economic growth
- Teenage Pregnancy
  - Has been strongly associated with public assistance and welfare dependency
  - Ten percent of all U.S. births in 2009 were to mothers under the age of 20

# Trends and Issues in Public Assistance

- Welfare Behaviorism
  - Behavioral Poverty
  - Personal and Parental Responsibility
- Welfare to Work
  - Workfare

# The Evolution of Public Assistance

- There are myriad ways to provide social assistance to the poor
- Recipients of public assistance programs
  - Fare less well than as those covered under the social insurances

**TABLE 11.2** Sample of Non-Contributory Social Transfer Programs, 2004

	Guaranteed Minimum Income	Housing benefits	Family Benefits		Means- tested	Lone- parent benefit	Employment conditional benefits	Childcare benefits	
			Universal					Non-parental care	Parental care
Australia	Y	Y	–	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y
Canada	Y	GMI	–	Y		Y	Y	Y	–
Czech Republic	Y	Y	–	Y		–	–	–	Y
France	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y
Denmark	Y	Y	Y	–		FB	–	Y	–
Finland	Y	Y	Y	–		FB	Y	Y	–
Germany	Y	Y	Y	–		T	Y	Y	Y
Sweden	Y	Y	Y	–		Y	–	–	–
Greece	–	Y	Y	–		–	–	–	–
Hungary	Y	Y	Y	–		FB	–	–	Y
Iceland	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	–	–
Ireland	Y	GMI	Y	–		Y	Y	–	Y
Italy	–	Y	–	Y		–	–	–	–
Japan	Y	GMI	–	Y		Y	Y	–	–
Korea	Y	GMI	–	–		–	Y	Y	–
Luxembourg	Y	GMI	Y	–		T	–	Y	Y
Netherlands	Y	Y	Y	–		T	Y	Y	–
New Zealand	–	Y	–	Y		Y	Y	–	–
Norway	Y	Y	Y	–		Y	–	Y	–
Poland	Y	Y	–	Y		CCB	–	–	Y
Portugal	Y	–	–	Y		T	–	–	–
Slovak Republic	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	--	–	Y
Spain	Y	–	–	Y		Y	T–	–	–
Sweden	Y	Y	Y	–		Y	–	–	–
Switzerland	Y	GMI	Y	–		–	–	–	–
United Kingdom	Y	Y	Y	–		–	Y	Y	–
United States	–	Y	–	Y		–	Y	Y	–

Notes: "Y" indicates that the existence of a specific benefit or tax credit. "GMI" (guaranteed minimum income), "FB" (family benefit), or "CCB" (childcare benefit) indicate that housing or lone-parent specific provisions exist as part of these schemes. "T" indicates different tax provisions or specific tax allowances for lone parents where no other benefits are available.

# Conclusion

- The U.S. welfare system has dramatically transformed over the past 20 years
- The conversion of public assistance policy into labor policy
- Privatized social services