


# Persistent Demands

## Running after Social Welfare Benefits in Brazil and Argentina

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In recent decades, countries across the globe have substantially expanded the nature and scope of government social welfare programs, especially those targeted at the poor. In fact, lower and middle-income democracies today promise more social benefits to more citizens than they have at any time in the past. At the same time, however, effective access to these programs and benefits remains highly variable, even among those who are eligible.

What explains why some citizens actually receive the social benefits and programs for which they are eligible while others do not? Weitz-Shapiro argues that individual persistence is crucial in explaining this variation. Drawing on original focus group and survey evidence from Brazil and Argentina, she develops and tests a theory of why some individuals engage in state-centric persistence and others do not.

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