

Juan

Thanks for your comments on my paper, which I found very interesting and informative.

I did not provide such a critique of the philosophical foundations of public finance in my paper but it does merit further discussion as you suggest. Likewise, I did not refer to the history of economic thought and the implications for the development and understanding of public finance. Nor did I explore in great depth the tradeoffs between the 4Es, this ultimately being part of the never-ending public policy debate regarding the appropriate role of the state and how it should adjust to changing circumstances as the capacity of economies and societies to finance welfare states changes over time. More attention could be paid to how that capacity in part reflects evolution of technological, demographic, political, institutional and cultural/collective factors and also global developments and changing perceptions of intergenerational equity. Lastly, the link between public finance and wellbeing could also be developed further, certainly in respect of the international table of wellbeing where the Nordic countries consistently have the highest rankings year after year. Finland is now the most highly ranked. It has a high level of welfare spending relative to GDP and yet managed historically to avoid a structural gap in its public finances. How it has done so could be further explored.

All these topics are worthy of discussion via the journal webpage, which I think is a very good idea and way of promoting development of an international interest group for public finance. As well as encouraging conference participation, it could also form the basis of a multi-authored book in the near future. The book could either be written specifically as a monograph or it could be an edited book, the chapters of which could be drawn from your journal and perhaps other related journals.

S Bailey