



Institute of Public Finance, publisher of the journal **Public Sector Economics** invites you to a virtual presentation

CARE GAP BETWEEN PAID PARENTAL LEAVE AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION ELIGIBILITY IN CROATIA

presented by

ANA MARIJA SIKIRIĆ SIMČIĆ

VIA **ZOOM** ON **TUESDAY, February 17, 2026**

FROM **10:00** TO **11:00 AM (CET)**

moderated by

SARA ČULO

Ana Marija Sikirić Simčić will present findings of her **article** that – based on an anonymous online survey – examines the “care gap” in Croatia, i.e. the period between the end of the paid parental leave and eligibility for early childhood education and care (ECEC) services. The gap particularly burdens mothers, who often adjust their work engagement during this time. These findings highlight the importance of aligning parental leave and ECEC enrolment policies to promote gender equality and support a better work-life balance for families.

Mihaela Bronić
Editor-in-Chief, Public Sector Economics

Vjekoslav Bratić
Director, Institute of Public Finance

The presentation is open to the general public but all participants are required to register in advance at this **registration link**.

ANA MARIJA SIKIRIĆ SIMČIĆ, an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Rijeka and president of Gender Equality Council of University of Rijeka. Her research interests include gender-responsive budgeting, gender analysis, work-life balance, child penalty, and gender equality in the labour market.