



**HAL**  
open science

# Redistribution, Pension Systems and Capital Accumulation

Christophe Hachon

► **To cite this version:**

Christophe Hachon. Redistribution, Pension Systems and Capital Accumulation. 2008. halshs-00279167

**HAL Id: halshs-00279167**

**<https://shs.hal.science/halshs-00279167>**

Preprint submitted on 14 May 2008

**HAL** is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

# Redistribution, Pension Systems and Capital Accumulation\*

Christophe Hachon

Centre d'Economie de La Sorbonne

University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne †

## Abstract

In this paper we study the macroeconomic impact of a policy which changes the redistributive properties of an unfunded pension system. Using an overlapping generations model with a closed economy and heterogenous agents, we show that a weaker link between contributions and benefits has an impact on the level of capital per capita if and only if there are inequalities of length of life. Furthermore, this policy has positive implications for every agent of the economy if the system has a defined-benefit structure. The tax rate and inequalities decrease, whereas the wealth of each agent increases. However, with a defined-contribution pension system, this policy has a negative impact on every macroeconomic variable except on the wealth of the poorest agents.

*Keywords:* Inequality; Pension Systems; Redistribution; Capital

*JEL Classification:* H55; E21

## 1 Introduction

Pension systems can be classified according to three dimensions (Feldstein and Liebman (2002)). Firstly, they can adopt either a Pay-As-You-Go (PAYG) or a fully-funded structure<sup>1</sup>. The size of unfunded pension systems is large in most industrialized countries. For

---

\*I thank my supervisor A. d'Autume and three anonymous referees for their helpful comments, and participants to the working-group GTMPE. I also thank F. Terrier for her precious help. This paper has also been presented in a seminar at the university of Evry and at the 6<sup>th</sup> International Workshop on Pension and Saving. All remaining errors are mine.

†106-112 Boulevard de l'hôpital 75 013 Paris. E-mail: Christophe.Hachon@malix.univ-paris1.fr

<sup>1</sup>In this paper we only consider PAYG pension systems. In a portofolio approach Dutta *et al.* (2000) show that a mixed pension system is desirable because risks of funded and unfunded pension systems differ.

example, the payroll tax rate used to finance them ranges from 12.4% for the United-States to 29.6% for Italy (Nyce and Schieber (2005, pp.236)).

Secondly, pension systems can have either a defined-benefit or a defined-contribution structure. A pension system has a defined-benefit structure if it is the tax rate which adjusts itself to changes in the economic and demographic environment. Conversely, it has a defined-contribution organization if it is the replacement rate which adjusts itself. Most countries have chosen a defined-benefit pension system (Nyce and Schieber (2005)). However, because of the increase in life expectancy, the fiscal burden of this structure has increased strongly. Consequently, some countries, such as Italy, have adopted a defined-contribution pension system<sup>2</sup>.

Thirdly, pension systems can be more Beveridgian or more Bismarkian. A pension system is purely Beveridgian if every agent receives the same pension. Conversely, a pension system is purely Bismarkian if pensions depend completely on the wages of agents. A pension system is mixed if it has a Beveridgian and a Bismarkian component. The more a pension system is Beveridgian, the higher intra-generational transfers are. Countries highly differ by this intra-generational component. France, Germany and Italy have a Bismarkian structure. Canada, the Netherlands and New-Zeland are essentially Beveridgian. Finally, Japan, the United-Kingdom and the United States have mixed pension systems (Sommacal (2006), Casamatta *et al.* (2000)).

Theoretical literature has explored the impact on the economic activity of the size of PAYG pension systems<sup>3</sup> organized either with a Beveridgian or with a Bismarkian structure<sup>4</sup>. The usual result is that Bismarkian systems provide more incentives to accumulate human and physical capital and then induce a higher growth rate than Beveridgian pension systems. But in fact, pension systems are usually a combination of these two elements. Only a few authors have studied the impacts of a change along the third axis mentioned above<sup>5</sup>. However, it is a central issue given the wide dispersion of countries along this third axis.

The main idea of this paper is that PAYG pension systems can adopt a structure

---

<sup>2</sup>In this paper we do not explain the switch from a defined-benefit to a defined-contribution pension system. A model with a representative agent and an increasing life expectancy would be more appropriate for this study.

<sup>3</sup>See Belan and Pestieau (1998), Breyer and Straub (1993) or Homburg (1990) among others for the analysis of the transition from unfunded pension systems towards fully-funded pension systems.

<sup>4</sup>See Docquier and Paddison (2003), or Casarico and Devillanova (2007). These results are questioned notably by Groezen *et al.* (2007), Lambrecht *et al.* (2005) or Le Garrec (2005).

<sup>5</sup>Except Sommacal (2006) with an endogenous labor supply model with a defined-contribution pension system.

which combines Bismarkian and Beveridgian components, and we study the impacts of a policy which increases the Beveridgian component of pension systems. We show that these effects are different depending on whether the pension system has a defined-benefit or a defined-contribution structure. Last but not least, the inequalities of length of life play an important role in the qualitative and quantitative results of this paper.

There is a growing empirical literature which analyzes these inequalities. Mesrine (1999) studies the inequalities of length of life according to socio-professional groups in France<sup>6</sup>. The most striking feature of his paper is that a worker has a probability to die between 35 and 65 years old almost twice higher than that of an executive manager. Furthermore, their life expectancy at 35 is 38 and 44 respectively. The same qualitative results are observed in the United-States (Panis and Lillard (1995), Deaton and Paxson (2000)).

Finally, Robert-Bobbée and Cadot (2007) show that this inequality is also observed for elderly people. For agents who are 86, the ones with highest education level can expect to live 20% longer than the ones with lowest education level.

Only a few papers have explored the economic impacts of these health inequalities. Mitchell and Zeldes (1996, pp.365) emphasized that these health inequalities have implications on the redistributive properties of pension systems but they do not provide any empirical or analytical analysis. Drouhin (2001) showed with a small open economy that a Bismarkian PAYG pension system induces transfers from agents with a short life expectancy to agents with a long life expectancy. His model is a first step in order to study the impacts of the inequalities of length of life but it uses only a Bismarkian structure and there are no general equilibrium effects in his model. The political economy literature has recently become interested in the implications of the link between life expectancy and wages<sup>7</sup>.

In this paper we study the macroeconomic impact of a policy which modifies the redistributive properties of an unfunded pension system<sup>8</sup>. In order to obtain clear qualitative results for every macroeconomic variable we first give an analytical resolution of our model.

---

<sup>6</sup>These inequalities also depend on other factors like sex or the geographical localization. For example, in France the life expectancy of women is 84.1, whereas that of men is only 77.2 (INSEE, 2006). Moreover, Rican and Salem (1999) show that there are strong disparities according to the localization of people in France.

<sup>7</sup>Borck (2007) shows that the size of a pension system can be determined by a coalition of elderly, very poor and very rich agents. Poor agents benefit from the Beveridgian part of the pension system, whereas rich agents benefit the longest time from the pension system.

<sup>8</sup>In this paper the term "redistributivity" means that we change the Bismarkian structure of pension systems. A decrease in the redistributivity means that there is a stronger link between wages and pensions per unit of time.

Then, because the impact is ambiguous for some variables, we calibrate our model on French data and we numerically solve our model. We work on French data because the French pension system is highly Bismarkian (Casamatta *et al.* (2000)) and because the efficiency of such a system is widely questioned. However, we also show that our numerical results do not depend on this specific case. Using an overlapping generations model with a closed economy and heterogenous agents, we show that a weaker link between contributions and benefits has an impact on the level of capital per capita if and only if there are inequalities of length of life. We also show that this redistributive policy has positive implications for every agent of the economy if the system has a defined-benefit structure. The tax rate and inequalities decrease, whereas the wealth of each agent increases. However, with a defined-contribution pension system, this policy has a negative impact on every macroeconomic variable except on the wealth of the poorest agents.

Gorski *et al.* (2007) also emphasized the role of the mortality differential to analyze the impact on educational choices of a change towards a more Beveridgian pension system. They find that this impact is positive. In this paper, we analyze the impact of this policy on physical capital accumulation.

This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 presents the main elements of our model. In section 3 we detail the dynamic of the economy and its properties. The implications in terms of utility and inequalities are studied in section 4. In section 5 we calibrate and solve our model. Finally, section 6 includes some concluding remarks.

## 2 The Model

At each period  $t$ , it is assumed that two generations overlap: the young and the old. Their respective size are  $N_t$  and  $N_{t-1}$ . The population grows at a constant rate  $n$ , such that  $N_t = (1 + n)N_{t-1}$ . Each member of one generation receives at the beginning of his life a productivity endowment  $a$ . This productivity takes its values in the interval  $\Omega_a = [a_-, a_+]$ . The density function and the cumulative distribution function of  $a$  are denoted by  $f(a)$  and  $F(a)$  respectively. These functions are such that:  $\int_{\Omega_a} f(a)da = 1$ ,  $F(a_-) = 0$  and  $F(a_+) = 1$ . Furthermore,  $\bar{a}$  denotes the average productivity of the economy:

$$\bar{a} = \int_{\Omega_a} af(a)da \tag{1}$$

The density function  $f(a)$  is assumed to be independent of time and of the level of capital.

Each agent lives completely his first period of life<sup>9</sup> but only a fraction  $T(a)$  of his second period of life<sup>10</sup>. We assume that  $T'(a) > 0$ . The higher the productivity is, the longer the length of life is. In doing so we assume that the length of life depends positively on the productivity level of each agent. In our model, the wage level is an increasing function of the productivity level. Consequently, the assumption on  $T(a)$  uses the empirical evidence that the wage level is a significant variable to explain the mortality differential between agents (Adams *et al.* (2003))<sup>11</sup>. Borck (2007) uses the same assumption in a political economy framework.

The average length of life is denoted by  $\bar{T}$  and is determined by:

$$\bar{T} = \int_{\Omega_a} T(a)f(a)da \quad (2)$$

The link between productivity and length of life is measured by the covariance:

$$COV_{T(a),a} = \int_{\Omega_a} T(a)af(a)da - \bar{T}\bar{a} \quad (3)$$

This covariance is positive because of our assumption on the sign of  $T'(a) > 0$  (See appendix E). The stronger the link between  $T(a)$  and  $a$  is, the bigger this covariance is. Conversely, if  $T'(a) = 0$ , i.e. if the length of life is the same for every agent, then this covariance is null.

## 2.1 Consumers

The utility of consumers depends on their consumption flows of their two periods of life. For an agent born in period  $t$  endowed with a productivity level  $a$ ,  $c_t(a)$  and  $d_{t+1}(a)/T(a)$  denote the first period and the second period consumption flows respectively. Their utility function is intertemporally separable and has the following form<sup>12</sup>:

$$U_t(a) = u(c_t(a)) + \beta T(a)u\left(\frac{d_{t+1}(a)}{T(a)}\right) \quad (4)$$

where  $\beta$  represents the pure time preference factor for the present, and the  $T(a)$  in front of their second period utility implies that the longer the length of life is, the more

<sup>9</sup>The length of each period is normalized to 1.

<sup>10</sup>There is no uncertainty in this economy to simplify our model. However our model can also be interpreted as a model with uncertain lifetime. In that case  $T(a)$  is the probability that an agent survives at the end of his first period of life as in Drouhin (2001). It also implies that there exists a perfect annuity market for each group of agents.

<sup>11</sup>See also Mesrine (1999), Pannis and Lillard (1995), or Deaton and Paxson (2000).

<sup>12</sup>It implies that the marginal rate of substitution between  $c_t$  and  $d_{t+1}$  depends on the length of life.

consumers value their utility of this period<sup>13</sup>.

Each agent offers inelastically his work during his first period of life and obtains a wage  $w(a)$ <sup>14</sup>. This wage is taxed at a rate  $\tau$ , and the revenues of this tax are used to finance a PAYG pension system. When an agent becomes old he receives a pension  $p(a)$ . For an agent born in period  $t$ , his budget constraints are:

$$c_t(a) = w_t(a)(1 - \tau) - S_t(a) \quad (5)$$

$$d_{t+1}(a) = R_{t+1}S_t(a) + p_{t+1}(a) \quad (6)$$

with  $R_{t+1}$  the interest factor and  $S_t(a)$  the saving function.

We also assume that the utility function has the following form :  $u(x) = \ln(x)$ . It simplifies the analytical expressions<sup>15</sup>. Using all these assumptions, the saving function is the following:

$$S_t(a) = \frac{\beta T(a)w_t(a)(1 - \tau)}{(1 + \beta T(a))} - \frac{p_{t+1}(a)}{(1 + \beta T(a))R_{t+1}} \quad (7)$$

## 2.2 Firms

We assume a perfect competition on the final good market and on the inputs markets. The production function of firms is<sup>16</sup>:

$$Y_t = AK_t^\alpha \left( N_t \int_{\Omega_a} af(a)da \right)^{1-\alpha} \quad (8)$$

with  $0 < \alpha < 1$ ,  $K_t$  the physical capital level, and  $A > 0$  the level of the technology. As there is perfect competition on each market, firms take wages and interest factors as given. Profit maximisation implies the following expressions for prices given that the final good is the *numéraire*:

$$R_t = A\alpha K_t^{\alpha-1} \left( \int_{\Omega_a} af(a)N_t da \right)^{1-\alpha} \equiv A\alpha k_t^{\alpha-1} \bar{a}^{1-\alpha} \quad (9)$$

$$w_t = A(1 - \alpha)K_t^\alpha \left( \int_{\Omega_a} af(a)N_t da \right)^{-\alpha} \equiv A(1 - \alpha) \frac{k_t^\alpha}{\bar{a}^\alpha} \quad (10)$$

---

<sup>13</sup>In this paper we do not represent fertility choices even if life expectancy inequalities and wage inequalities have an impact on these choices.

<sup>14</sup>In doing so we do not model the burden of income taxation on labor supply.

<sup>15</sup>It notably simplifies the conditions that will be obtained and the aggregation of the saving functions.

Our qualitative results do not depend on this assumption.

<sup>16</sup>Our results do not depend on the form of the production function but it clarifies our analysis with simple analytical results.

with  $k_t \equiv K_t/N_t$ , the capital level per young agent.  $w_t$  is the wage per efficiency unit of work. For agents with a productivity level  $a$ , their wage is:

$$w_t(a) = w_t a = A(1 - \alpha) \frac{k_t^\alpha}{\bar{a}^\alpha} a \quad (11)$$

It implies that relative wages are independent of the level of capital, whereas absolute differences of wages depend on it.

In the rest of this paper,  $\bar{w}_t$  will denote the average wage of the economy at period  $t$ . It has the following expression:

$$\bar{w}_t = \int_{\Omega_a} w_t(a) f(a) da = A(1 - \alpha) k_t^\alpha \bar{a}^{1-\alpha} \quad (12)$$

### 2.3 The Pension System

We assume a PAYG pension system. The revenues of this system come from a proportional tax on wages :  $\tau$ . It is used to provide a pension for elderly people. Their pension depends on the wages of young agents having the same productivity as theirs, and on the average wage of the economy. Their respective weighting is  $\lambda$  and  $(1 - \lambda)$ . The first part of this pension represents the Bismarkian component, whereas the second part represents the Beveridgian component of this system (Casamatta *et al.* (2000)).  $\lambda$  measures the indexation of pensions on activity wages of agents. **The smaller  $\lambda$  is, the more this pension system is redistributive.**<sup>17</sup>.

Consumers receive only a fraction  $\nu$  (with  $0 < \nu \leq 1$ ) of this weighted average, and only during their second period of life  $T(a)$ .  $\nu$  denotes the average replacement rate of the pension system. The pension of an agent endowed with a productivity level  $a$  is:

$$p_{t+1}(a) = \nu (\lambda w_{t+1}(a) + (1 - \lambda) \bar{w}_{t+1}) T(a) \quad (13)$$

With equations (11) and (12) we obtain:

$$p_{t+1}(a) = \nu A(1 - \alpha) \frac{k_{t+1}^\alpha}{\bar{a}^\alpha} (\lambda a + (1 - \lambda) \bar{a}) T(a) \quad (14)$$

We also assume that the government does not use debt. It implies that for every period we have:

$$\int_{\Omega_a} \tau w_{t+1}(a) f(a) N_{t+1} da = \int_{\Omega_a} p_{t+1}(a) f(a) N_t da \quad (15)$$

---

<sup>17</sup>In this paper the term "redistributivity" only concerns the direct redistribution of pension systems and not the effective redistribution of pension systems. The effective redistribution, which is the difference between tax paid and amount received, can be very different because of life expectancy inequalities.

We show in appendix A that we obtain the following expression:

$$\tau = \frac{\nu}{1+n} \left( \lambda \frac{COV_{T(a),a}}{\bar{a}} + \bar{T} \right) \quad (16)$$

It defines the tax rate in function of the parameters of the model. We say that it characterizes a defined-benefit organization.

**Proposition 1** : *With a defined-benefit PAYG pension system  $\tau$  is an increasing function of  $\lambda$ <sup>18</sup> if and only if  $COV_{T(a),a} > 0$ , i.e. if there are inequalities of length of life.*

This result is very intuitive. Indeed, the richer agents are, the longer their length of life is. Therefore, an increase in  $\lambda$  (i.e. a decrease in the redistributivity of the pension system) increases the indexation of pensions on their wages. It implies that the pension of rich agents increases. Moreover, they benefit from these pensions for a longer period of time than other agents. Consequently, the tax rate has to increase to finance these additional expenditures.

We have to note that this result depends only on the budget constraint of the government and not on the preferences of consumers.

Let us now assume that we have a defined-contribution PAYG pension system ( $\tau$  is exogenous). It is the replacement rate  $\nu$  which adjusts itself in order to maintain the government budget constraint at equilibrium:

$$\nu = \frac{\tau(1+n)}{\left( \lambda \frac{COV_{T(a),a}}{\bar{a}} + \bar{T} \right)} \quad (17)$$

**Proposition 1 (bis)**: *With a defined-contribution PAYG pension system, the replacement rate ( $\nu$ ) is a decreasing function of  $\lambda$  if and only if  $COV_{T(a),a} > 0$ .*

The intuition is the same as before. A smaller indexation on wages (a smaller  $\lambda$ ) benefits to poor agents who live for a shorter period of time than rich ones. Then, for a given replacement rate, expenditures are lower. Finally, government can increase the replacement rate for every agent.

**Corollary 1**: *With a defined-benefit (defined-contribution) PAYG pension system, the tax rate (replacement rate) is independent of the redistributivity of the pension system if*

---

<sup>18</sup>This proposition can partly explain why Bismarkian pension systems are bigger than Beveridgian ones.

and only if there are not any inequalities of length of life.

Without inequalities of length of life a variation in  $\lambda$  does not affect the total amount of pensions which are paid.

### 3 The Dynamic and its Properties

The dynamic of this economy is represented through the equation of capital accumulation. Furthermore, because the marginal return of capital in the production function is decreasing, the economy converges towards a steady state equilibrium such that the capital level per worker is constant. The dynamic is the following:

$$K_{t+1} = \int_{\Omega_a} S_t(a)f(a)N_t da \quad (18)$$

It is straightforward to show that we finally obtain:

$$\begin{aligned} k_{t+1} & \left[ 1 + n + \nu \frac{1-\alpha}{\alpha} \int_{\Omega_a} \frac{\lambda \frac{a}{\bar{a}} + (1-\lambda)}{1+\beta T(a)} T(a)f(a) da \right] \\ & = \frac{\beta A(1-\alpha)(1-\tau)k_t^\alpha}{\bar{a}^\alpha} \int_{\Omega_a} \frac{T(a)a}{1+\beta T(a)} f(a) da \end{aligned} \quad (19)$$

The right-hand-side of this equation is a strictly concave function of  $k_t$ . Consequently, there is a unique non-trivial steady state which has the following form:

$$(k^*)^{1-\alpha} = \frac{\frac{\beta A(1-\alpha)(1-\tau)}{\bar{a}^\alpha} \int_{\Omega_a} \frac{T(a)a}{1+\beta T(a)} f(a) da}{1 + n + \nu \frac{1-\alpha}{\alpha} \int_{\Omega_a} \frac{\lambda \frac{a}{\bar{a}} + (1-\lambda)}{1+\beta T(a)} T(a)f(a) da} \quad (20)$$

**Proposition 2:** *With a defined-benefit PAYG pension system, a decrease in  $\lambda$  has a positive impact on  $k^*$ .*

**Proof:** The numerator of equation (20) is a decreasing function of  $\lambda$  because only  $\tau$  depends positively on  $\lambda$ . Moreover, we know that  $T(a)/(1+\beta T(a))$  is an increasing function of  $a$ . It implies that  $T(a)/(1+\beta T(a)) < T(\bar{a})/(1+\beta T(\bar{a})) (>), \forall a < \bar{a} (>)$ . Then,  $(a-\bar{a})T(a)/(1+\beta T(a)) > T(\bar{a})/(1+\beta T(\bar{a}))(a-\bar{a}), \forall a$ . The denominator is an increasing function of  $\lambda$  if the following condition is satisfied :  $\int_{\Omega_a} \frac{a-\bar{a}}{1+\beta T(a)} T(a)f(a) da \geq 0$ . We know that  $\frac{a-\bar{a}}{1+\beta T(a)} T(a)f(a) \geq \frac{a-\bar{a}}{1+\beta T(\bar{a})} T(\bar{a})f(a), \forall a \in \Omega_a$ . Integrating the two sides of this equation on the interval  $\Omega_a$ , the right-hand-side is equal to zero and the condition

mentioned above is satisfied.  $\square$

Two kinds of effects play a role when we analyse the effects of a decrease in  $\lambda$ . The former concerns the impact on the tax rate. Indeed, we have showed in proposition 1 that the tax rate is an increasing function of  $\lambda$ . If  $\lambda$  falls, the tax rate decreases for every consumer, which has a positive effect on saving without ambiguity. The latter concerns the impact on the pension received by each agent. If  $\lambda$  decreases, consumers with a productivity lower than  $\bar{a}$  receive a greater pension, whereas consumers with a productivity higher than  $\bar{a}$  receive a smaller pension. The first group of agents saves less and the second one saves more. Proposition (2) shows that the net effect on saving is positive. Indeed, agents for whom the pension decreases have a longer length of life than the others. Consequently, the increase in the saving of rich agents overcompensates the decrease in the saving of poor agents.

**Proposition 2 (bis):** *With a defined-contribution PAYG pension system, a decrease in  $\lambda$  has a positive impact on  $k^*$  if and only if:*

$$\frac{\int_{\Omega_a} \frac{1}{1+\beta T(a)} T(a) f(a) da}{\int_{\Omega_a} T(a) f(a) da} \leq \frac{\int_{\Omega_a} \frac{a-\bar{a}}{1+\beta T(a)} T(a) f(a) da}{\int_{\Omega_a} (a-\bar{a}) T(a) f(a) da} \quad (21)$$

**Proof:**  $\tau$  is fixed because it is a defined-contribution pension system. It is  $\nu$  which adjusts itself and only the last term of the denominator depends on  $\lambda$ . The condition ensures that the derivative of this term with respect to  $\lambda$  is positive.  $\square$

In a defined-contribution PAYG pension system, we have showed in proposition 1 (bis) that  $\nu$  is a decreasing function of  $\lambda$ . Then, following an increase in the redistributivity of the pension system (a decrease in  $\lambda$ ), the government increases the replacement rate. It has a positive impact on the pension of every consumer *ceteris paribus*, and thus a negative effect on saving. But the decrease in  $\lambda$  has a positive (negative) impact on the saving of agents endowed with a productivity higher (smaller) than  $\bar{a}$ . The condition of the proposition ensures that the positive effect is higher than the two negative ones.

**Proposition 3:** *(i) If there are no inequalities of length of life then  $k^*$  does not depend on  $\lambda$ . (ii) This result remains true for every homothetic preference.*

**Proof:** See appendix B.□

We have showed with proposition 1 and 1 (bis) that if  $T(a) = T$  for all  $a$ , then the tax rate (replacement rate) is independent of  $\lambda$ . The only effects concern the increase in the saving of agents endowed with a productivity higher than  $\bar{a}$ , and the decrease in the saving of agents endowed with a productivity lower than  $\bar{a}$ . These last two effects exactly compensate.

## 4 Wealth, Consumption and Redistribution

This section has two main objectives. The first one is to study the evolution of the wealth, of the consumption and of the utility of an agent if the degree of redistribution of the pension system increases ( $\lambda$  decreases). The second one is to study the evolution of inequalities of consumption and of welfare if  $\lambda$  decreases.

These analytical results are obtained at steady state to simplify the exposition. Every derivative is thus a comparison between steady states.

### 4.1 Wealth, Welfare and Redistribution

The wealth of an agent born in period  $t$  endowed with a productivity level  $a$ , has the following form:

$$W_t(a) = w_t(a)(1 - \tau) + \frac{p_{t+1}(a)}{R_{t+1}} \quad (22)$$

We want to know if the wealth of each consumer increases when the redistribution of the pension system is higher ( $\lambda$  decreases).

***Proposition 4:** With a defined-benefit pension system, if  $\lambda$  decreases then the wealth of agents endowed with a productivity smaller than  $\bar{a}$  increases, whereas the impact on the wealth of other agents is ambiguous. The net effect is positive for every agent if<sup>19</sup>:*

$$-\frac{dk}{d\lambda} \geq \frac{\frac{a_+}{\bar{a}} - 1}{\lambda^{\frac{a_+}{\bar{a}}} + 1 - \lambda} \quad (23)$$

**Proof:** See appendix C.□

Proposition 1 has showed that the tax rate is an increasing function of  $\lambda$ . Furthermore, we have showed with proposition 2 that  $k^*$  is a decreasing function of  $\lambda$ . Then the net

---

<sup>19</sup>It is a sufficient condition.

wage of the first period of life is higher when the redistributivity of the pension system increases. More generally, wages per efficiency unit of work increase.

Moreover, a decrease in  $\lambda$  reduces the indexation of pensions on wages. Consequently, it has a positive impact on the pensions of agents endowed with a productivity smaller than  $\bar{a}$  and a negative effect on pensions of agents endowed with a productivity higher than  $\bar{a}$ . The condition in the proposition ensures that for rich agents ( $a > \bar{a}$ ) all positive effects overcompensate the decrease in the indexation of pensions on wages.

**Proposition 4 (bis):** *With a defined-contribution pension system, if  $\lambda$  decreases then:*

- *If the condition of proposition 2 (bis) is true then the wealth of agents endowed with a productivity smaller than  $\bar{a}$  increases, whereas the impact on the wealth of other agents is ambiguous. The net effect is positive for every agent if<sup>20</sup>:*

$$-\frac{\nu \frac{dk}{d\lambda} + k \frac{d\nu}{d\lambda}}{k} \geq \frac{\frac{a_+}{\bar{a}} - 1}{\lambda \frac{a_+}{\bar{a}} + 1 - \lambda} \quad (24)$$

- *Otherwise, the net impact is ambiguous for every consumer.*

**Proof:** See appendix C.□

If the condition of proposition 2 (bis) is true then a decrease in  $\lambda$  has a positive impact on  $k^*$ . Furthermore, it affects the pension of agents differently depending on whether consumers have a productivity higher or lower than  $\bar{a}$ . The effects are the same as before except that  $\tau$  is fixed exogenously. Every agent benefits from the increase in  $\nu$  and more particularly agents with a long life expectancy. That is why the condition is less restrictive than that of proposition 4. Nevertheless, if the effect on  $k^*$  is negative then the impact on the wealth is ambiguous for every consumer.

The utility of an agent depends on the level of consumption of the two periods of his life. Using the budget constraints of consumers we obtain:

$$c_t(a) = \frac{W_t(a)}{1 + \beta T(a)} \quad (25)$$

and

$$d_{t+1}(a) = \beta T(a) R_{t+1} \frac{W_t(a)}{1 + \beta T(a)} \quad (26)$$

---

<sup>20</sup>It is a sufficient condition.

The consumption level of his first period of life depends on  $\lambda$  only through the wealth level, whereas the consumption level of his second period of life depends on the wealth level and on the interest factor. The utility level is an increasing function of the redistributivity of the pension system if and only if:

$$-(1 + \beta T(a)) \frac{dW(a)/d\lambda}{W(a)} > -(1 - \alpha) \beta T(a) \frac{dk/d\lambda}{k} \quad (27)$$

The left-hand-side represents the evolution of the wealth of an agent and the right-hand-side the evolution of the interest factor. Indeed, a change in  $\lambda$  affects  $k^*$  and thus the interest factor. Let us consider the case of a defined-benefit pension system. A decrease in  $\lambda$  has a positive impact on the wealth of every consumer ( $dW(a)/d\lambda < 0$ ). But at the same time it reduces the interest factor ( $dk^*/d\lambda < 0$ ). The net effect on utility is thus ambiguous. More precisely, the net effect can be negative for agents with a long life expectancy because they save a large part of their wealth and are strongly affected by the decrease in the interest factor.

## 4.2 Inequalities and Redistribution

To study inequalities, two groups of agents are used: the poorest endowed with a productivity level  $a_-$  and the richest endowed with a productivity level  $a_+$ <sup>21</sup>. The main objective is to study welfare inequalities, but the relative inequalities of wealth have to be studied first.

**Proposition 5:** *With a defined-benefit pension system, the relative inequality of wealth  $W(a_-)/W(a_+)$  is an increasing function of the redistributivity of the pension system (a decrease in  $\lambda$ ) if<sup>22</sup>:*

$$\frac{T(a_-)}{a_-} \geq \frac{T(a_+)}{a_+} \quad (28)$$

**Proof:** See appendix D.  $\square$

The direct impact of a decrease in  $\lambda$  is to reduce the pensions of rich agents ( $a > \bar{a}$ ) and to increase these of poor agents ( $a < \bar{a}$ ). It increases the ratio  $W(a_-)/W(a_+)$ . Moreover, a decrease in  $\lambda$  has a positive effect on net wages because of its positive impact on capital *per capita* and because of its negative impact on the tax rate. This effect benefits essentially to the richest. Finally, a decrease in  $\lambda$  has a positive impact on  $w_t/R_t$ . The richest are

<sup>21</sup>We do not use here the Gini coefficient for analytical convenience. See section 5 for an estimation of the Gini coefficient in our model.

<sup>22</sup>It is a sufficient condition

the ones who essentially benefit from this effect because they live for a longer period of time. The condition of the proposition ensures that the redistributive effect dominates every other.

**Proposition 5 (bis):** *With a defined-contribution pension system, if the condition of proposition 2 (bis) is true then the relative inequality of wealth  $W(a_-)/W(a_+)$  is an increasing function of the redistributivity of the pension system (a decrease in  $\lambda$ ) <sup>i<sup>23</sup></sup> :*

$$\frac{T(a_-)}{a_-} > \frac{T(a_+)}{a_+} \times \frac{\lambda^{\frac{a_+}{\bar{a}}} + 1 - \lambda}{\lambda^{\frac{a_-}{\bar{a}}} + 1 - \lambda} \quad (29)$$

**Proof:** See appendix D.□

The interpretation is the same as before except that  $\tau$  is fixed exogenously and that  $\lambda$  has a negative impact on  $\nu$ . The increase in the replacement rate benefits essentially to agents with a long length of life, i.e. to rich agents. Condition (29) is therefore more restrictive than condition (28) and cannot be true for a  $\lambda$  which tends towards 1.

The study of welfare inequalities can now be done. These inequalities can be measured as the difference between the utility of the richest ( $U(a_+)$ ) and the utility of the poorest ( $U(a_-)$ ). Analytically it has the following form:

$$U(a_+) - U(a_-) = (1 + \beta T(a_+)) \ln(W(a_+)) - (1 + \beta T(a_-)) \ln(W(a_-)) + \beta(T(a_+) - T(a_-))(\alpha - 1) \ln(k) + cste \quad (30)$$

If the redistributivity of the pension system increases ( $\lambda$  decreases), the previous differential decreases if and only if:

$$-(1 + \beta T(a_+)) \frac{dW(a_+)/d\lambda}{W(a_+)} - \beta(T(a_+) - T(a_-))(\alpha - 1) \frac{dk/d\lambda}{k} < -(1 + \beta T(a_-)) \frac{dW(a_-)/d\lambda}{W(a_-)} \quad (31)$$

This equation is useful because it details the different channels through which the redistributivity has an impact on the utility differential. Let us study the case of a defined-benefit pension system. First, let us assume that the condition of proposition 5 is true. Then we have showed that the wealth ratio ( $W(a_-)/W(a_+)$ ) is an increasing function of the redistributivity of the pension system, i.e.:

$$-\frac{dW(a_+)/d\lambda}{W(a_+)} < -\frac{dW(a_-)/d\lambda}{W(a_-)} \quad (32)$$

---

<sup>23</sup>It is a sufficient condition

Condition (31) is more restrictive if, for the moment, we neglect the impact on the interest rate. Indeed, the richest can benefit from their wealth for a longer period of time. Then the decrease in the wealth inequalities does not necessarily imply a decrease in the utility differential. Nevertheless, the left-hand-side also shows that the decrease in the interest rate affects more strongly the richest who save more because of their high length of life. This last effect reduces the utility differential.

## 5 Calibration and Results

We choose to calibrate our model on French data because the French pension system is clearly Bismarkian. As it will be mentioned later, Hairault and Langot (2008) find that  $\lambda$  in the French pension system is 0.885. Then we can consider the opportunity to switch towards a more Beveridgian pension system.

The availability of data thanks to the study of Hairault and Langot (2008) is also a main factor which has influenced our choice to consider the French case<sup>24</sup>.

First of all we have to define an interval for the set  $\Omega_a$ . We assume that it is:  $\Omega_a = [0.08, 1]$ . The ratio  $a_+/a_-$  is 12.5. It implies that the wage inequality ratio between the poorest and the richest is 12.5. Piketty (2002), studying the distribution of wages in France, finds a ratio of 5 between the wages of the first and of the last decile. The gap between this empirical fact and our calibration can be explained by the fact that we use the two extreme values of a *continuum* and as a consequence wage inequalities are greater. We could even say that it underestimates the reality. We choose this interval for  $\Omega_a$  because once it is combined with the density function of  $a$ , our model matches the Gini coefficient of the wage distribution calculated by Hairault and Langot (2008) on French data.

The density function of productivity levels ( $f(a)$ ) has to respect the essential property: mode < median < mean (Lambert (2001, pp.23)). This property is a common feature of most industrialized countries. It implies that the wage distribution among the population is asymmetric. The most common income level is less than the median wage. And because of strong wage inequalities the median wage is less than the average wage of the economy.

$f(a) = b - ca$ , with  $b, c \in \mathbb{R}$  is the simplest way to represent it.  $b$  and  $c$  have to be fixed such that:  $f(a) > 0, \forall a$  and  $\int_{\Omega_a} f(a)da = 1$ . Furthermore the Gini index has to tend towards 0.32 in order to match the estimation on French data used in Hairault and Langot (2008).

Lambert (2001) shows that the Gini index can be calculated as:

---

<sup>24</sup>Appendix G sums up our calibration and the main statistics.

$$G = -1 + 2 \int_{a_-}^{a_+} \frac{aF(a)f(a)}{\bar{a}} da \quad (33)$$

The following density function respects these properties:

$$f(a) = 2.1129 - 1.9a \quad (34)$$

Moreover we can check that the mean is higher than the median because  $\int_{a_-}^{\bar{a}} f(a)da > 0.5$ .

The second important function that we have to specify is  $T(a)$ . To simplify and because of the lack of information we assume that this function has the form:  $T(a) = a$ . We obtain that  $\bar{T} = 0.4167$  and that  $COV_{T(a),a} = 0.05533$ . It implies that the average length of life of the population is 77 years old. It is slightly lower than the average life expectancy observed in France which is 80 years old (World Bank)<sup>25</sup>.

The initial value of  $\lambda$  is fixed at 0.885. It is the estimation obtained by Hairault and Langot (2008) on French data. It implies that the French pension system is highly Bismarkian. The growth rate of the population is  $n = 0.3$ . It corresponds to an annual growth rate of the population of 0.65% calculated by Charpin (1999) on French data. The technology parameter  $A$  is normalized to 1.

Finally, the last two parameters are common to a wide economic literature which uses calibration to solve overlapping-generations models. The length of each period is 40 years. The elasticity of the production function with respect to capital is  $\alpha = 0.33$ . It also represents the share of capital in total output. The pure time preference factor is  $\beta = 0.6$  (d'Autume (2003)), i.e. an annual psychological discount rate of 1.3%.

We analyse the effects of a decrease in  $\lambda$ , i.e. an increase in the Beveridgian part of the pension system<sup>26</sup>. We distinguish between the long term effects and the transitional dynamic for defined-benefit and for defined-contribution pension systems.

## 5.1 The Long Term Effects

With a defined-benefit pension system it is the tax rate which adjusts itself and the average replacement rate ( $\nu$ ) is fixed at 0.757 which is the value obtained by Hairault and Langot

<sup>25</sup>Appendix F shows that it has no impact on our qualitative results.

<sup>26</sup>Appendix F provides a sensitivity analysis.

$\Delta\lambda = -11.3\%$	Defined-Benefit	Defined-Contribution
$\Delta\tau^a$	-2.5%	-
$\Delta\nu$	-	+2.55%
$\Delta k^*$	+2.7%	-0.15%
$\Delta W(a_+)$	+1.14%	-0.55%
$\Delta W(a_-)$	+2.68%	+0.053%
$\Delta RIW^b$	+1.53%	+1.08%
$\Delta GDPpc^c$	+0.88%	-0.05%
$\Delta dUtil^d$	-1.18%	-0.85%
$IGb^e$	0.3383	0.3351
$IGa$	0.3364	0.3338

<sup>a</sup>Here we report a change in % and not in %pts.

<sup>b</sup> $RIW = W(a_-)/W(a_+)$ .

<sup>c</sup>GDPpc means GDP per capita.

<sup>d</sup> $dUtil = U(a_+) - U(a_-)$ .

<sup>e</sup>IGb (IGa) denotes the Gini coefficient before (after) the change in  $\lambda$ .

Table 1: Macroeconomic impact of a more redistributive pension system

(2008) on French data. The annual interest rate obtained is approximately 4.4%<sup>27</sup>.

Qualitatively, we observe the expected results. Indeed an increase in the redistributivity of the pension system (a decrease in  $\lambda$ ) has a negative impact on the tax rate, and a positive one on the steady state capital per worker, on the GDP per capita and on the wealth level. Welfare inequalities decrease.

Quantitatively, diminishing arbitrarily  $\lambda$  from 0.885 to 0.785, i.e. a decrease of 11.3%, we find a decrease in the tax rate of 2.49%. The steady state level of capital per worker and the GDP per capita increase of 2.7% and of 0.88% respectively. Welfare inequalities decrease of 1.18%. Finally, the Gini coefficient of wealth<sup>28</sup> decreases which means that wealth inequalities decrease. Table (1) sums up the main results.

We now study the case of a defined-contribution pension system. The tax rate is fixed exogenously at 0.23. It is the value calculated by Hairault and Langot (2008), and it is

<sup>27</sup>The annual interest rate is obtained by  $R^{1/40} - 1$ , with  $R$  the interest factor obtained using equation (9).

<sup>28</sup>Using the same methodology as for the distribution of wages, the Gini coefficient of Wealth is obtained using the formula of Lambert (2001, pp.33) :  $G = -1 + 2 \int_{a_-}^{a_+} \frac{W(a)F(a)f(a)}{\bar{W}(a)} da$ .

near the tax rate reported by Nyce and Schieber (2005). We also study the impact of an arbitrarily decrease in  $\lambda$ . The annual interest rate is approximately 3.9%.

Qualitatively the results show an increase in the replacement rate. Furthermore, the net effect on saving is negative since the steady state capital per young decreases. This last effect implies a decrease in the wealth of the richest, whereas the net effect remains positive for the poorest because of the redistributive effect.

Quantitatively, diminishing  $\lambda$  of 11.3% (from 0.885 to 0.785), we find an increase in the replacement rate of 2.55%. The steady state level of capital per young and the GDP per capita decrease of 0.15% and of 0.05% respectively. The utility inequalities decrease of 0.85%. As before we also observe a decrease in the Gini coefficient of wealth, i.e. a decrease in wealth inequalities. Table (1) sums up the main results.

Two conclusions can right now be stressed: (i) the net impact is greater for a defined-benefit pension system than for a defined-contribution pension system because in the first case every effect has the same sign. (ii) For a defined-contribution pension system the only positive impact of the redistributivity is to reduce inequalities.

## 5.2 The Transitory Dynamic

The main objective of this part is to study the short term effects of an unexpected decrease in  $\lambda$  of 11.3%. We assume that the economy is initially at its steady state.  $\lambda$  is assumed to remain constant during the first two periods and then to decrease to 0.785. Agents born in period 2 do not expect this change and thus do not adjust their saving. But, for every following generation the assumption of perfect foresight implies that they exactly adjust their saving in order to maximize their utility. Because of the unpredictability of the change in  $\lambda$ , the capital per worker remains constant until period 3 and adjusts only during the following periods.

With a defined-benefit pension system the tax rate becomes 0.31 from period 3 (0.3 initially). Agents born in period 1 are not affected by this change and are used as a reference. The capital per young adjusts progressively to its new steady state value. The utility of the richest decreases substantially for agents born in period 2 because they do not sufficiently save for their second period of life. But the utility of the poorest increases until it reaches a new steady state value which is higher.

Utility inequalities decrease strongly right the second generation and then stabilize

themselves after a very small increase because of the adjustment of the saving of the richest. Figures 1-4 sum up the main results.

For defined-contribution pension systems the simulation is the same. Qualitative results show a quick adjustment of the variables towards their new steady state value. Only the utility levels of the consumers born in period 2 describe a different trajectory. The utility of the richest and that of the poorest decrease and increase respectively. Figures 5-8 sum up the main results.

**Remark :** Qualitative and quantitative results are very different according to the nature of the pension system (defined-benefit or defined-contribution). It has to be taken into account in order to study the impact of a change in the redistributive properties of a pension system.

## 6 Conclusion

The increase in the redistributivity of a defined-benefit pension system can : (i) decrease the tax rate of the pension system; (ii) increase the capital per capita; (iii) increase the wealth and the welfare of every agent; (iv) reduce the inequalities of wealth and of welfare. However, if the pension system has a defined-contribution structure, then the only positive effect is that it increases the wealth and the utility of the poorest agents.

Therefore, the knowledge of the nature of a pension system (defined-benefit or defined-contribution) and the taking into account of the life expectancy inequalities are both important in order to determine the qualitative and quantitative impacts of a more redistributive pension system.

The first extension of this paper would be to introduce labor supply in order to take into account the distorsive impact of our redistributive policy.

Another application of this paper would be to study the impact of redistributive policies on educational choices. In the case of a capital-skill complementarity, and given the mechanism we described above, it is possible that a more redistributive pension system implies that a larger share of the population decides to educate herself. Another extension would be to clarify theoretically the debate on the inequalities of contribution to pension systems. Indeed, the inequalities of length of life imply that pension systems are far less progressive than they seem.

## REFERENCES

- Acemoglu, D.**, 2002. "Technical Change, Inequality, and the Labor Market". *Journal of Economic Literature*, 40, 7-72.
- Adams, P., Hurd, M.D., McFadden, D., Merrill, A., Ribeiro, T.**, 2003. "Healthy, Wealthy and Wise ? Tests for Direct Causal Paths between Health and Socio-Economic Status". *Journal of Econometrics*, 112, 3-56.
- d'Autume, A.**, 2003. "Vieillesse et choix de l'âge de la retraite. Que peut nous dire le modèle à générations ?". *Revue Economique*, 54 (3), 561-571.
- Belan, P., Pestieau, P.**, 1998. "Privatizing Social Security: A Critical Assessment". *The Geneva Papers on Risk and Insurance*, 24(1), 114-130.
- Borck, R.**, 2007. "On the Choice of Public Pensions when Income and Life Expectancy are Correlated". *Journal of Public Economic Theory*, 9, 711-725.
- Breyer, F., Straub, M.**, 1993. "Welfare effects of unfunded pension systems when labor supply is endogenous". *Journal of Public Economics*, 50(1), 77-91.
- Casamatta, G., Cremer, H., Pestieau, P.**, 2000. "The political economy of social security". *Scandinavian Journal of Economics*, 102, 503-522.
- Casarico, A., Devillanova, C.**, 2007 (forthcoming). Capital Skill complementarity and the Redistributive Effects of Social Security Reforms. *Journal of Public Economics*, doi:10.1016/j.jpubeco.2007.06.007.
- Charpin, J.M.**, 1999. "L'avenir de nos retraites". *La documentation française*.
- Deaton, A. and Paxson, C.**, 1999. "Mortality, education, Income, and Inequality among American Cohorts". *NBER Working Paper* No. 7140.
- Docquier, F., Paddison, O.**, 2003. "Social Security Benefit Rules, Growth and Inequality". *Journal of Macroeconomics*, 25, 47-71.
- Drouhin, N.**, 2001. "Inégalités face à la mort et systèmes de retraite". *Revue d'Economie Politique*.
- Dutta, J., Kapur, S., Orszag, J.M.**, 2000. "A portfolio approach to the optimal funding of pensions". *Economics Letters*, 69(2), 201-206.
- Feldstein, M. and Liebman, J.B.**, 2002. "Social Security", in *Handbook of Public Economics*, volume 4, Edited by Auerbach, A.J. and Feldstein, M.
- Gorski, M., Krieger, T. and Lange, T.**, 2007. "Pensions, Education and Life Expectancy". *Working Paper*.
- Groezen, B.v., Meijdam, L., Verbon, H.A.A.**, 2007. "Increased Pension Savings: Blessing or Curse ? Social Security Reform in a Two Sector Growth Model". *Economica*,

74(296), 736-755.

**Hairault, J.O. and Langot, F.**, 2008. "Inequality and Social Security Reforms". *Journal of Economic Dynamics and Control*, 32 (2), 386-410.

**Heer, B., Maussner, A.**, 2005. "Dynamic General Equilibrium Modelling: Computational Methods and Applications". *Springer Berlin-Heidelberg*.

**Homburg, S.**, 1990. "The efficiency of unfunded pension schemes". *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics*, 146, 640-649.

INSEE, 1999. "Revenu et patrimoine des ménages". 28.

**Lambert, P.J.**, 2001. "The Distribution and Redistribution of Income". *Manchester University Press*.

**Lambrecht, S., Michel, P., Vidal, J-P**, 2005. "Public Pensions and Growth". *European Economic Review*, 49, 1261-1281.

**Le Garrec, G.**, 2005. "Social Security, Inequality and Growth". OFCE, *working paper* 2005-22.

**Mesrine, A.**, 1999. "Les différences de mortalité par milieu social restent fortes". *Données Sociales*, INSEE, 228-235.

**Mitchell, O.S. and Zeldes, S.P.**, 1996. "Social Security Privatization : A Structure for Analysis". *American Economic Review*, 88 (2), 363-367.

**Pannis, C. and Lillard, L.**, 1995. "Socioeconomic Differentials in the Returns to Social Security". *RAND Working Paper*, Santa Monica, CA.

**Piketty, T.**, 2002. "L'économie des Inégalités". *Repères: La découverte*.

**Rican, S. and Salem, G.**, 1999. "Les disparités spatiales de mortalité des adultes en âge d'activité". *Données Sociales*, INSEE, 236-242.

**Monteil, C. and Robert-Bobée, I.**, 2005. "Les différences sociales de mortalité : en augmentation chez les hommes, stables chez les femmes". *INSEE première*, No.1025.

**Nyce, S.A. and Schieber, S.J.**, 2005. "The Economic Implications of Aging Societies: The Cost of Living Happily Ever After". *Cambridge University Press*.

**Robert-Bobée, I. and Cadot, O.**, 2007. "Mortalité aux Grands Ages : encore des écarts selon le diplôme et la catégorie sociale". *INSEE première*, No.1122.

**Sommacal, A.**, 2006. "Pension systems and intragenerational redistribution when labor supply is endogenous". *Oxford Economic Papers*, 58, 379-406.

## APPENDIX

## Appendix A

Computation of the expression of  $\tau$ :

$$(1+n) \int_{\Omega_a} \tau w_{t+1}(a) f(a) da = \int_{\Omega_a} p_{t+1}(a) f(a) da \quad (35)$$

Furthermore, we know that:

$$p_{t+1}(a) = \nu A (1-\alpha) \frac{k_{t+1}^\alpha}{\bar{a}^\alpha} (\lambda a + (1-\lambda)\bar{a}) T(a) \quad (36)$$

Computing the right-hand-side we obtain the following expression:

$$RHS = \nu A (1-\alpha) \frac{k_{t+1}^\alpha}{\bar{a}^\alpha} \left( \lambda \int_{\Omega_a} T(a) a f(a) da + (1-\lambda)\bar{a} \int_{\Omega_a} T(a) f(a) da \right) \quad (37)$$

Equation (3) implies:  $\int_{\Omega_a} T(a) a f(a) da = COV_{T(a),a} + \bar{a}\bar{T}$ . The second part of the expression between brackets is the average length of life. Finally we have:

$$RHS = \nu A (1-\alpha) \frac{k_{t+1}^\alpha}{\bar{a}^\alpha} (\lambda COV_{T(a),a} + \bar{a}\bar{T}) \quad (38)$$

We recognize in the left-hand-side the average wage:  $\int_{\Omega_a} w_{t+1}(a) f(a) da$ . Then equalizing the left-hand-side and the right-hand-side we obtain equation (16).  $\square$

## Appendix B

(i) The study of equation (20) shows that  $\tau$  and the denominator become independent of  $\lambda$  if  $T(a) = a$ ,  $\forall a$ .  $\square$

(ii) Let us consider the case of homothetic preferences which have the following form:

$$U_t(a) = U \left( c_t(a), \frac{d_{t+1}(a)}{T(a)} \right) \quad (39)$$

The intertemporal budget constraint of this agent is:

$$c_t(a) + \frac{d_{t+1}(a)}{R_{t+1}} = w_t(a)(1-\tau) + \frac{p_{t+1}(a)}{R_{t+1}} \equiv W_t(a) \quad (40)$$

Given the preferences, the solution for consumers is:

$$c_t(a) = \xi(T(a), R_{t+1}) W_t(a) \quad (41)$$

And finally:

$$S_t(a) = w_t(a)(1-\tau) - c_t(a) = \xi_1(T(a), R_{t+1}) w_t(a) - \xi_2(T(a), R_{t+1}) \frac{p_{t+1}(a)}{R_{t+1}} \quad (42)$$

Therefore saving is a linear function of the wage and of the pension. Assuming that the length of life is the same for every agent ( $T(a) = T, \forall a$ ) then the capital market equilibrium can be written:

$$(1+n)k_{t+1} = \int_{\Omega_a} S_t(a)f(a)da \quad (43)$$

or,

$$(1+n)k_{t+1} = \xi_1(T, R_{t+1})\bar{w}_t - \xi_2(T, R_{t+1})\frac{\nu T\bar{w}_{t+1}}{R_{t+1}} \quad (44)$$

$\lambda$  does not appear in this expression.  $\square$

## Appendix C

### Proof of proposition 4:

The derivative of equation (22) with respect to  $\lambda$  gives the following expression:

$$aA\frac{1-\alpha}{\bar{a}^\alpha} \left( \alpha k^{\alpha-1} \frac{dk}{d\lambda} (1-\tau) - \frac{d\tau}{d\lambda} k^\alpha \right) + \nu \frac{1-\alpha}{\alpha} T(a) \left[ \left( \lambda \frac{a}{\bar{a}} + 1 - \lambda \right) \frac{dk}{d\lambda} + k \left( \frac{a}{\bar{a}} - 1 \right) \right]$$

We know that  $d\tau/d\lambda > 0$  and that  $dk^*/d\lambda < 0$ . Finally, the previous expression is negative if the second part of the equation is negative, i.e. if:

$$\frac{dk}{d\lambda} \leq \frac{1 - \frac{a}{\bar{a}}}{\lambda \frac{a}{\bar{a}} + 1 - \lambda}$$

However, as the right-hand-side is a decreasing function of  $a$ , then it is sufficient for this inequality to be true for  $a = a_+$ .

**Remark:** This inequality is always true for  $a < \bar{a}$ .  $\square$

### Proof of proposition 4 (bis):

The methodology is the same as before except that  $\tau$  is fixed exogenously and that  $\nu$  is a decreasing function of  $\lambda$ .  $\square$

## Appendix D

**Proof of proposition 5:**

Equation (22) can be written :

$$W_t(a) = A(1 - \alpha) \frac{k_t^\alpha}{\bar{a}^\alpha} a(1 - \tau) + \nu \frac{1 - \alpha}{\alpha} k_{t+1} \left( \lambda \frac{a}{\bar{a}} + (1 - \lambda) \right) T(a) \quad (45)$$

or, in the steady state:

$$W_t(a) = k \left[ A(1 - \alpha) \frac{k^{\alpha-1}}{\bar{a}^\alpha} a(1 - \tau) + \nu \frac{1 - \alpha}{\alpha} \left( \lambda \frac{a}{\bar{a}} + (1 - \lambda) \right) T(a) \right] \quad (46)$$

With equation (20), the left-hand-side between brackets can be written:

$$a \frac{1 + n + \nu \frac{1-\alpha}{\alpha} \int_{\Omega_a} \frac{\lambda \frac{a}{\bar{a}} + (1-\lambda)}{1+\beta T(a)} T(a) f(a) da}{\beta \int_{\Omega_a} \frac{T(a)a}{1+\beta T(a)} f(a) da} \equiv a f(\lambda)$$

Equation (46) becomes:

$$W_t(a) = k \left[ a f(\lambda) + \nu \frac{1 - \alpha}{\alpha} \left( \lambda \frac{a}{\bar{a}} + (1 - \lambda) \right) T(a) \right] \quad (47)$$

The relative wealth inequalities can be written:

$$\frac{W_t(a_-)}{W_t(a_+)} = \frac{a_- f(\lambda) + \nu \frac{1-\alpha}{\alpha} \left( \lambda \frac{a_-}{\bar{a}} + (1 - \lambda) \right) T(a_-)}{a_+ f(\lambda) + \nu \frac{1-\alpha}{\alpha} \left( \lambda \frac{a_+}{\bar{a}} + (1 - \lambda) \right) T(a_+)} \quad (48)$$

The result of the proposition is obtained if the derivative of this expression with respect to  $\lambda$  is negative. It is true if and only if:

$$\begin{aligned} & [f(\lambda) - \lambda f'(\lambda)] \left[ a_+ \left( \frac{a_-}{\bar{a}} - 1 \right) T(a_-) - a_- \left( \frac{a_+}{\bar{a}} - 1 \right) T(a_+) \right] < \\ & f'(\lambda) [a_+ T(a_-) - a_- T(a_+)] + \nu \frac{1-\alpha}{\alpha} T(a_+) T(a_-) \left( \frac{a_+ - a_-}{\bar{a}} \right) \end{aligned}$$

The left-hand-side has two components. The second is obviously negative. It is straightforward to show that  $1 > \lambda \frac{f'(\lambda)}{f(\lambda)}$  and then that the left hand side is negative.

It only remains to show that the right-hand-side is positive. It is true under the condition of the proposition.  $\square$

**Proof of proposition 5 (bis):**

The relative wealth inequalities can be written:

$$\frac{W_t(a_-)}{W_t(a_+)} = \frac{A(1 - \alpha) \frac{k^{\alpha-1}}{\bar{a}^\alpha} a_-(1 - \tau) + \nu \frac{1-\alpha}{\alpha} \left( \lambda \frac{a_-}{\bar{a}} + (1 - \lambda) \right) T(a_-)}{A(1 - \alpha) \frac{k^{\alpha-1}}{\bar{a}^\alpha} a_+(1 - \tau) + \nu \frac{1-\alpha}{\alpha} \left( \lambda \frac{a_+}{\bar{a}} + (1 - \lambda) \right) T(a_+)} \quad (49)$$

The derivative of this expression with respect to  $\lambda$  is negative if and only if:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{1-\alpha}{\alpha} c [(\alpha - 1)k^{\alpha-2} \frac{dk}{d\lambda} - \frac{d\nu}{d\lambda} k^{\alpha-1}] [a_- T(a_+) (\lambda \frac{a_+}{\bar{a}} + 1 - \lambda) - a_+ T(a_-) (\lambda \frac{a_-}{\bar{a}} + 1 - \lambda)] \\ + \frac{1-\alpha}{\alpha} c k^{\alpha-1} [a_+ T(a_-) (\frac{a_-}{\bar{a}} - 1) - a_- T(a_+) (\frac{a_+}{\bar{a}} - 1)] \\ + \nu \frac{1-\alpha}{\alpha} T(a_-) T(a_+) \left( \frac{a_- - a_+}{\bar{a}} \right) < 0 \end{aligned}$$

with  $c = A(1 - \alpha) \frac{1-\tau}{\bar{a}^\alpha} > 0$ .

The last two terms are strictly negative. Then under the condition  $dk/d\lambda < 0$ , and knowing that  $d\nu/d\lambda < 0$ , the sign of the first term depends only on the sign of the condition mentioned in the proposition.  $\square$

## Appendix E

The covariance can also be written as:  $\int_{\Omega_a} (a - \bar{a})(T(a) - \bar{T})f(a)da$ . But as  $\int_{\Omega_a} (a - \bar{a})f(a)da = 0$ , we can write that:  $\int_{\Omega_a} (a - \bar{a})(T(a) - \bar{T})f(a)da = \int_{\Omega_a} (a - \bar{a})(T(a) - X)f(a)da$ , with  $X$  a constant, whatever the value of  $X$ . So it is particularly true for  $X = T(\bar{a})$ . Then we can write that:  $\int_{\Omega_a} (a - \bar{a})(T(a) - \bar{T})f(a)da = \int_{\Omega_a} (a - \bar{a})(T(a) - T(\bar{a}))f(a)da$ . The RHS is positive as it is an integral on a product of terms with the same sign because  $T'(a) > 0$ .  $\square$

## Appendix F

In this appendix we try to determine if our qualitative results depend on an initial condition, on the form taken by  $T(a)$  or on values taken by our parameters, notably by the average replacement rate ( $\nu$ ) or the tax rate ( $\tau$ ). In doing so we extend our results to other countries than France.

### *For defined-benefit pension systems*

Firstly, let us consider the impact of a decrease in  $\lambda$  in function of its initial value. A simple numeric exercise, using our calibration, shows that our qualitative results remains true whatever the initial value of  $\lambda$  and whatever the percentage of change in  $\lambda$ . It implies that a decrease in  $\lambda$  has always a positive impact on capital per capita and on wealth of every agent. It also always has a negative impact on wealth inequalities, on the Gini coefficient and on the utility differential ( $dUtil$ ).

Secondly, we do the same exercise but with the new function  $T(a) = a^{0.75}$ . The form of this function implies that the average life expectancy of agents in our model is 80 years

old, what matches the observed life expectancy in most industrialized countries. We find the same qualitative results. As previously, our results do not depend on the initial value taken by  $\lambda$ .

Thirdly, we solve our model for different values of  $\nu$  ( $\nu \in \{0.757, 0.6, 0.4\}$ )<sup>29</sup>. Whatever the function  $T(a)$  which is chosen, our qualitative results are unchanged.

*For defined-contribution pension systems*

We find a monotonous relationship between macroeconomic variables and  $\lambda$ . It implies that the impact of  $\lambda$  on macroeconomic variables has the same sign as this reported in Table 1 whatever its initial value.

As in the defined-benefit case, the use of the functional form  $T(a) = a^{0.75}$  has no impact on our qualitative results.  $\lambda$  still has a monotonous impact on macroeconomic variables.

Finally, we check that our qualitative results remain unchanged for  $\tau \in \{0.1, 0.23, 0.3\}$ .

## **Appendix G**

In this appendix, we sum up our calibration of the functions and of the parameters of our model. Furthermore, we detail some important statistics.

### **The Basic Calibration**

The length of each period is 40 years. Table 2 sums up the basic parameters which we use for the numerical resolution of our model.

### **The calibration of functions and their main statistics**

Firstly, we calibrate the interval  $\Omega_a$ . We use:

$$\Omega_a = [0.08, 1]$$

The ratio  $a_+/a_-$  is lower than the one found in Acemoglu (2002) but higher than the

---

<sup>29</sup> $\nu = 0.4$  seems to be the lowest replacement rate in among industrialized countries. See Nyce and Schieber (2005, pp.236).

Parameter	Meaning	Value	Source(s)
$\alpha$	$R_t K_t / Y_t^a$	0.33	Sommacal (2006) among others
$\beta$	Actualization factor	0.6	APDR=1.3% <sup>b</sup> , d'Autume (2003), Heer and Maussner (2005)
$A$	The technology level	1	Normalization
$n$	Population's growth rate	0.3	AGR=0.65% <sup>c</sup> , Charpin (1999)
$\nu$	Average Replacement rate <sup>d</sup>	0.757	Hairault and Langot (2008)
$\tau$	Tax rate <sup>e</sup>	0.23	Hairault and Langot (2008)
$\lambda_I$	Initial value of $\lambda^f$	0.885	Hairault and Langot (2008)

<sup>a</sup>The share of income spent on capital.

<sup>b</sup>Annual psychological discount rate.

<sup>c</sup>AGR=annual growth rate.

<sup>d</sup>For defined-benefit pension systems.

<sup>e</sup>For defined-contribution pension systems.

<sup>f</sup>We use this value as a reference. We analyse the effects of a decrease in  $\lambda$  knowing that  $\lambda$  is initially  $\lambda_I$ .

Table 2: Basic Calibration of the model

one of Piketty (2002). The corresponding density function is:

$$f(a) = 2.1129 - 1.9a \quad (50)$$

These two components respect the two main properties:

- mode < median < mean, Source: Lambert (2001)
- $IG_w = 0.32^{30}$  in France, Source: Hairault and Langot (2008), INSEE (1999)

In our model, we have:

$$\begin{aligned} \bar{a} &= 0.4167 \\ a_{median} &= 0.378 \\ a_{mode} = a_- &= 0.08 \\ Var(a) &= 0.05533 \end{aligned}$$

Secondly, we calibrate the function  $T(a)$ :

$$T(a) = a$$

It implies that the distribution of the length of life has the same properties as the distribution of the variable  $a$ . Furthermore, we have:

<sup>30</sup> $IG_w$  denotes the Gini coefficient of wages.

$$COV_{T(a),a} = Var(a) = 0.05533$$

Knowing that the length of each period is 40 years, the average length of life<sup>31</sup> is 77 years. It is lower than the figure for France which is around 80 years<sup>32</sup> (Source: INSEE or World Bank). The standard deviation is:

$$\sigma_{T(a)} = 0.24$$

which corresponds to a standard deviation of almost 9.4 years<sup>33</sup>.

---

<sup>31</sup>The life expectancy of each individual is  $(1 + T(a)) * 40$ .

<sup>32</sup>Appendix F shows that it has no impact on our qualitative results.

<sup>33</sup>The standard deviation for the function  $T(a) = a^{0.75}$  is lower than 9 years.

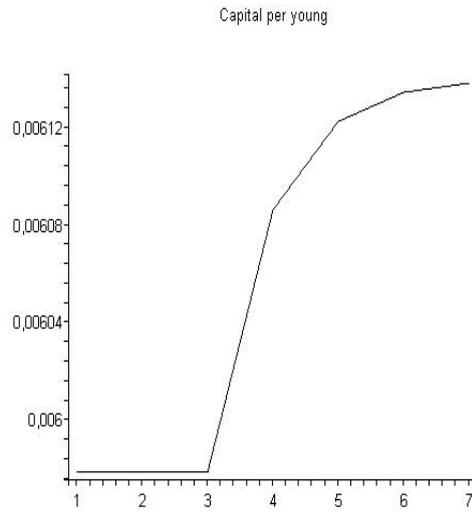


Figure 1: Capital per young ( $k_t$ ) for defined-benefit pension systems. Periods are reported on the abscissa.

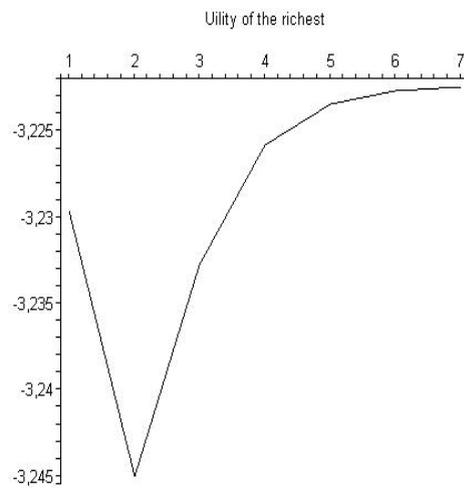


Figure 2: Utility of the richest ( $U_t(a_+)$ ) for defined-benefit pension systems. For example  $U_1(a_+)$  is the utility of the richest born in period 1.

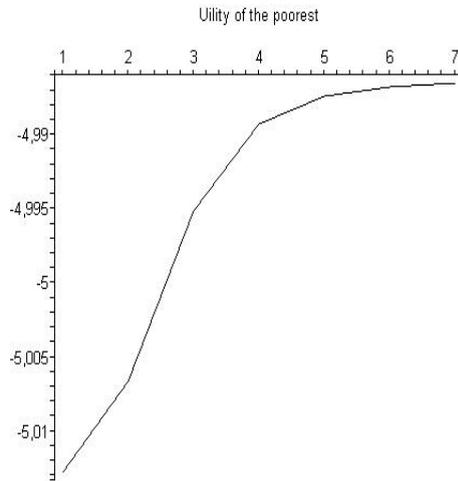


Figure 3: Utility of the poorest ( $U_t(a_-)$ ) for defined-benefit pension systems. For example  $U_1(a_-)$  is the utility of the poorest born in period 1.

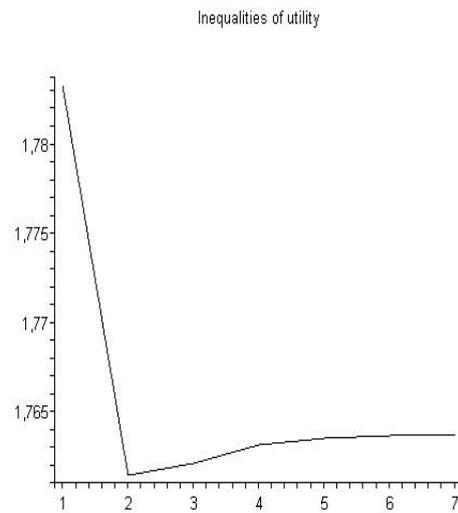


Figure 4: Utility differential for defined-benefit pension systems

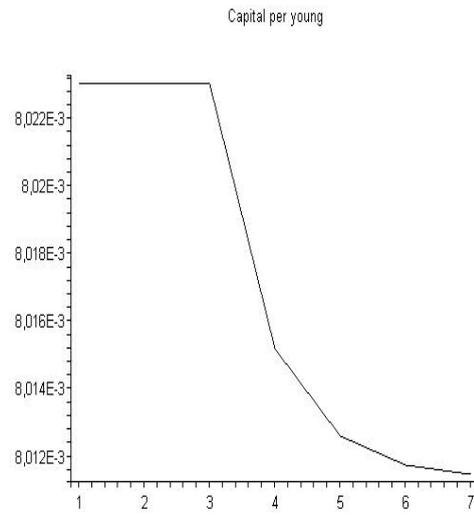


Figure 5: Capital per young ( $k_t$ ) for defined-contribution pension systems

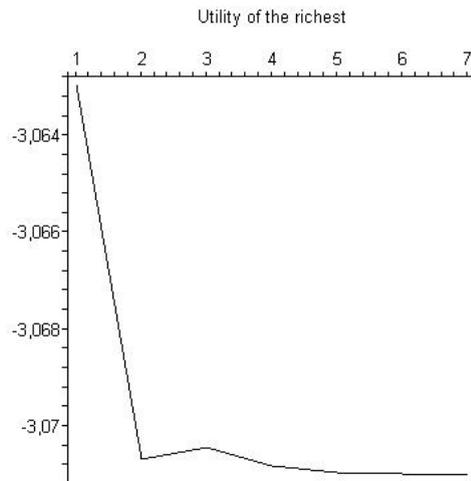


Figure 6: Utility of the richest ( $U_t(a_+)$ ) for defined-contribution pension systems

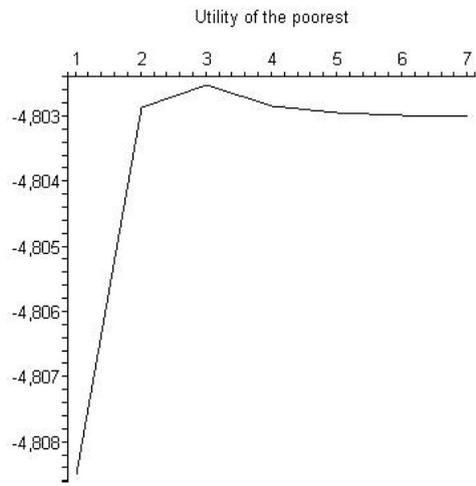


Figure 7: Utility of the poorest ( $U_t(a_-)$ ) for defined-contribution pension systems

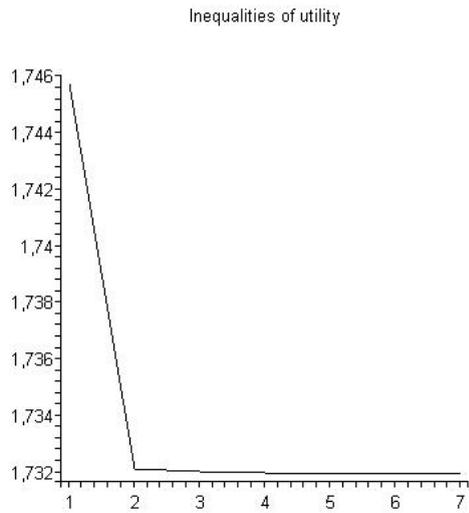


Figure 8: Utility Differential for defined-contribution pension systems