

HIWED - a comparative historical research projekt on Western Europe

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HIWED – A Comparative Historical Research Project
on Western Europe

The main purpose of this contribution is to report on a comparative-historical research project, i. e. to define our basic objectives and to describe our approach in pursuing them. It does not attempt to discuss more specific theoretical questions or methodological problems investigated in the project or to present empirical results. The intention is to give the reader both a general impression of the project in order to stimulate general curiosity, and enough detailed information to create more specific interest.

„HIWED“ is the acronym for „*Historical Indicators of the Western European Democracies*“. This is the name of a macrosociological research project which was started in Fall 1973 by Wolfgang Zapf and myself at the University of Mannheim. Since Spring 1977 it has been directed by myself at the Forschungsinstitut für Soziologie of the University of Cologne. The staff consists of three sociologists: Jens Alber, Jürgen Kohl, and Winfried Pfenning, two economists: Franz Kraus and Kurt Seeböhm, and one political scientist: Richard Eichenberg. The project is generously funded by the Stiftung Volkswagenwerk through the Fall of 1979.

The HIWED-project has two main objectives¹. The first involves compilation of a historical data handbook for all Western European countries (with the exception of Greece, Portugal and Spain) for the time period 1815–1975. This task was our main concern in the first phase of the project conducted between 1973 and 1976. In the second three-year phase of the project – with a greatly expanded staff – the emphasis shifted toward the second goal, namely the attempt to analyze various aspects of the historical development of welfare states in Western Europe in comparative perspective and within a more general theoretical frame.

This objectives are closely related and support each other, but they also restrict one another. A larger part of the data compiled for the handbook are being used for description, analysis and „explanation“ of welfare state development, and thereby the reliability and comparability of the respective data have probably been improved. On the other hand, however, the phenomena and questions which can be analyzed

¹ For a more detailed discussion of these two objectives cf.: Flora, P., *The HIWED Project – The Handbook, Theoretical Orientations and Statistical Sources*. HIWED-Report No. 1, Mannheim 1975, and Flora, P., *Das HIWED-Projekt – Ein Zwischenbericht*, pp. 318–340, in: Zapf, Wolfgang (ed.), *Soziale Indikatoren. Konzepte und Forschungsansätze*, Vol. 3, Frankfurt/M. 1975.

in a comparative perspective are somewhat limited by the kinds of data: only quantitative aggregate data and institutional data are suitable for a more systematic compilation in a comparative historical handbook.

The project is greatly inspired by Stein Rokkan whose work represents the most important revival of Max Weber's comparative historical macro-sociology — a revival in a changed professional context which both requires and enables more systematic empirical research². Rokkan persistently encourages a comparative approach which had been axiomatic for classical sociology but which for a long period had lost its centrality. For Durkheim it was obvious that „la méthode comparative est la seule qui convienne à la sociologie“. For macro-sociological questions, most obviously, this implies comparison over time and space; and the area of European history is probably the best opportunity for such comparisons.

A Historical Data Handbook for Western Europe

Our effort to produce a historical data handbook for Western Europe should be seen in the context of other attempts to establish a more systematic data basis for the analysis of problems and developments of total societies. Between the middle of the nineteenth century and the First World War a great variety of comparative historical data collections were compiled creating a strong and rich tradition. The roots of this tradition reached back to the English Political Arithmetic with its exclusive emphasis on quantitative data, on the one hand, and to the German Universitätsstatistik with a greater interest in institutions, on the other. The interwar period produced a break in this tradition — coincident with, though not directly related to the break in the classical macro-sociological tradition — which was not renewed until around 1960³.

The early 1960's saw a first wave of cross-national data collections. The most important of these are Ginsburg's *Atlas of Economic Development, A Cross-Polity Survey* by Banks and Textor, and the first *World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators* by Russett et al., later followed by a second enlarged edition by Taylor and Hudson⁴.

² An attempt to „summarize“ the historical sociological work of Stein Rokkan can be found in the HIWED-Report No. 1.

³ A more detailed description of these developments is given in: Flora, P., *A New Stage of Political Arithmetic*, in: *Conflict Resolution* 18, No. 1 (1974), pp. 143–165.

⁴ Ginsburg, N., *Atlas of Economic Development*, Chicago 1961; Banks, A. S., and Textor, R. B., *A Cross-Polity Survey*, Cambridge/Mass. 1963; Russett, B.M., et al., *World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators*, New Haven and London 1964; Taylor, C. L., and Hudson, M. C., *World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators*, 2nd ed., New Haven and London 1972.

In the second half of the 1960's increased effort was made to compile comparative historical data collections. Among the most important projects are⁵: the „Correlates of War Project“ of Singer and Small at the Mental Health Research Institute, the University of Michigan; the „Minnesota Political Data Archive“ of Flanigan and Fogelman at the University of Minnesota, the „Suny-Binghamton Cross-National Time-Series Data Archive“ of Banks at the State University of New York, Binghamton; the project on „Comparative Causes of Societal Stability and Instability“ by Hage at the University of Wisconsin; the „QUAM-Project“ (Quantitative Analysis of Modernization) of Zapf and Flora at the University of Frankfurt; and the „Nordic Countries Project“ by Kuhnle at the University of Bergen.

The major comparative historical data collections published in this second wave are *The Wages of War, 1816–1965* by Singer and Small, *Cross-Polity Time-Series Data* by Banks, and most recently *European Historical Statistics, 1750–1970* by Mitchell⁶.

The QUAM-project⁷ conducted by Wolfgang Zapf and myself was to some extent a pre-stage of the HIWED-project, although, of course, only in retrospect. In this earlier and much smaller project we produced various data collections which were presented in 1971 at the „ISSC/ECPR Workshop on Indicators of National Development“, organized by Stein Rokkan at the University of Lausanne. This workshop brought together for the first time major projects with similar objectives and gave a strong impetus to future work.

It encouraged us to start in 1973 the HIWED-project with the intention of producing a handbook on Western Europe with more reliable and comparable (which is always a matter of degree) „indicators“ of major social, economic and political development, including growth processes as well as structural changes. The handbook will mainly consist of time-series of national aggregate data, supplemented by qualitative indicators of institutional changes. The time period covered will vary, embracing at least the years between 1920 and 1975, and a maximum time span from 1815 to 1975. The handbook will be strictly comparative. That is, it will contain only data which we were able to compile for all (or almost all) Western European countries (with the exception of Greece, Portugal and Spain). It will be finished in Spring 1979 in the form of two volumes of approximate 500 pages each. The table of contents on the two following pages will give a first impression of the topics included in the handbook.

⁵ Short description of these projects can be found in: Flora, P., *Quantitative Historical Sociology*, in: *Current Sociology*, 2 (1975).

⁶ Singer, J. D., and Small, M., *The Wages of War 1816–1965*, New York 1972; Banks, A. S., *Cross-Polity Time Series Data*, Cambridge/Mass. 1971; Mitchell, B. R., *European Historical Statistics 1750–1970*, London 1975.

⁷ Cf.: Zapf, W., *Materialien zur Theorie des sozialen Wandels*, Konstanz 1967; Zapf, W., and Flora, P., *Some Problems of Time-Series Analysis in Research on Modernization*, in: *Social Science Information*, 3 (1971), pp. 53–102; Flora, P., *Modernisierungsforschung – Zur empirischen Analyse der gesellschaftlichen Entwicklung*, Opladen 1974; Flora, P., *Indikatoren der Modernisierung – Ein historisches Datenhandbuch*, Opladen 1975.

State, Economy, and Society in Western Europe

A data handbook 1815–1975

Volume I

The Growth of Mass Democracies and Welfare States

A Boundaries

1. Territorial change
2. Cultural heterogeneity

B Mass Democracies

3. Elections and parties
4. Parliaments and coalitions

C Resources of the State

5. Public revenues
6. Public expenditures

D Personnel of the State

7. Public bureaucracies
8. Military

E Welfare and Education

9. Social security
10. Literacy and education

Volume II

The Growth of Industrial Societies

A Population and Families

1. Population growth
2. Families

B Urbanization and Housing

3. Cities and urbanization
4. Housing conditions

C Economic Growth

5. National Product: aggregates
6. National Product: origin and use

D Division of labour and inequality

7. Labour force

8. Income distribution

E Trade unions and Strikes

9. Trade unions

10. Strikes

Several steps in the production of the handbook can be distinguished:

(1) Our first task involved reconstructing the history of official statistics and compiling a bibliography of official statistics for all Western European countries since the beginning of the nineteenth century, a task which – to our surprise – the history profession has neglected until recently. A comparative history and bibliography of national official, international and private statistics was finished in early 1975 and was published in *Current Sociology* in my trend report on „Quantitative Historical Sociology“⁸. Since then we have also finished a bibliography of all census publications in Europe since 1800. Additional bibliographies of more specific statistical publications (e. g. of public revenues) are in preparation and we may decide to integrate the various bibliographies into one book.

(2) We also started a data archive, which consists (or will consist) at the end of the project in 1979) of: a) microfiche of all statistical yearbooks from the beginning to 1965, b) photo-copies of all published census results since 1801 (but for the national level only and somewhat selected), c) copies of the main publications of official statistics for a variety of fields (public finance and bureaucracies, social security, income distribution, education, strikes, demography), d) copies of the main publications of international statistics until World War II, e) copies of the most important ‚private‘ statistical collections (comparative and old national collections), f) copies of a great variety of important articles from statistical journals.

To my knowledge there will be no single library in Europe offering the same easy access and potential for systematic comparative study of societal development in Western Europe using official statistics. Therefore, it will be necessary to think about „institutionalization“ of the archive after the end of the HIWED-project in order to make it a useful instrument for future comparative research.

(3) A third step involves production of data reports on specific topics which will become chapters of the handbook. These reports contain much more data than will be included in the handbook, and they give complete documentation (i. e. in principle each single number is documented). A distinction is made between a first part with „country tables“ and a second part with „comparative tables“ in order to make the data strictly reproducible on the one hand, and relatively comparable, on the other. In addition, each report contains an introduction discussing problems of reliability and comparability as well as a bibliography. Data reports on the follow-

⁸ See note 5. This issue of *Current Sociology* also contains our first data collection in form of 21 tables.

ing topics have been finished or will be finished soon: population, urbanization, labor force, national product, income distribution, public bureaucracies, revenues and expenditures, social security, housing, trade unions, strikes, and elections.

We hope that these data reports can be made available in the form of micro-fiche. They would be used for documentation of the computerized data sets which we began processing in early 1978 with the very generous help of the Historical Archive of the ICPSR in Ann Arbor and the Zentralarchiv at the University of Cologne. Thus, we hope that with the end of the HIWED-project all data contained in the reports will be available on tape in combination with extensive documentation on micro-fiches.

On the Development of the Western European Welfare States

The search for the statistical sources, building the archive, and collecting data have been our main tasks during the first phase of the project simply because they are extremely time-consuming. Nevertheless, we have also consistently pursued a second and more substantial goal: analysis of the growth of welfare states in Western Europe covering a variety of different aspects on that growth. Although the extension of the archive still requires great expenditure of time, these studies have now become our major task.

It was not primarily specific concern with social policies which shaped this goal, but rather an interest in Stein Rokkan's theory of European political development. This theory essentially consists of two parts: a conceptual-analytical model on the one hand, and empirical typologies of macro-configurations, on the other. The conceptual-analytical model embraces:

- (a) a conception of basic structures which combines Parsons' functional distinction between four societal subsystems with a 'hierarchical' distinction between center (res) and periphery (ies), and
- (b) a corresponding conception of four basic developmental processes or problems the respective predominance of which may lead to specific stages or even crises:
 - (1) *State-Formation*: the formation of fiscal and military states; the phase (problem) of political, economic and cultural unification at the elite level, of creation of organizations for the mobilization of resources (tax-bureaucracies), for consolidation of the territory (armies), and for maintenance of internal order (police and army).
 - (2) *Nation-Building*: the building or growth of national states; the phase (problem) of establishment of direct contacts between the elite and larger sectors of the peripheral population through conscript armies, schools and mass media, of religious and linguistic standardization, and of development of feelings of national identity.
 - (3) *Participation*: the development of mass democracies; the phase (problem) of

establishment of political citizenship through the equalization of political rights: involving growing participation of the dominated population, the institutionalization of civil and political rights (franchise, parliaments), and creation of political parties.

(4) *Redistribution*: the development of welfare states; establishment of social citizenship through the redistribution of resources, goods and benefits: through the creation of public welfare systems (social security, health, education, housing) and of public policies for the equalization of economic conditions through progressive taxation and transfer payments.

Rokkan has devised several empirical typologies of macro-configurations specifying the general model in the context of Western European history. The main typologies look toward explanation of variations in territorial consolidation, the relationships between external consolidation and internal restructuring, the introduction and extension of the franchise, and the development of cleavage structures and party systems in Europe. His basic approach involves explaining variations of macro-configurations at a specific point of time by earlier macro-configurations *plus* new developments or events (e. g. the Reformation or industrialization). Progress in theory-building thus implies a persistent effort to improve the typologies of macro-configurations, to invent new ones and to combine them into a consistent whole.

Rokkan has not yet incorporated the fourth „phase“, the growth of welfare states, into his typological model. This has stimulated our attempt to analyze the development and variations of welfare institutions in Western Europe and to relate them to earlier or concomitant developments and variations in terms of Rokkan's typologies. The general question is how different developments in the first three „phases“ have created macro-settings promoting or retarding the development of welfare states. A first result of these attempts was presented at the IPSA World Congress at Edinburgh in 1976 in our paper: „On the Development of the Western European Welfare States“⁹.

Working with Rokkan's stimulating approach, we soon encountered two related theoretical problems:

(a) his approach emphasizes analysis and explanation of variations rather than uniformities, and the development of welfare states in Western Europe shows uniform features to an important degree;

(b) it is an approach which focuses upon the political collectivity or more generally – in Weber's sense – on the „Verbandsstruktur“ of societies, relatively neglecting socio-economic and sociocultural developments or introducing them as exogenous variables.

In his emphasis on historical variety (including a certain distrust of evolutionary theory) and his accentuation of „*politics* between economy and culture“, Rokkan's approach is essentially Weberian. In order to deal with the two limitations mentioned above, it will be necessary to incorporate theoretical elements of other macro-

⁹ This paper has now been published in German: Flora, P., et al., Zur Entwicklung der west-europäischen Wohlfahrtsstaaten, in: Politische Vierteljahresschrift, 4 (1977), pp. 707–772.

sociological traditions — a task which has not yet been attempted in the analysis of the welfare state. In our view, the two most relevant traditions here are those of Marx and Durkheim, emphasizing standardizing socio-economic and socio-cultural developments respectively.

The Marxian perspective suggests that the effort to understand the creation of the (relatively uniform) institutions of the welfare state is an attempt to deal with the (relatively uniform) socio-political problems (economic crises and class conflict) created by the dynamics of a relatively autonomous economic system. The Durkheimian perspective, on the other hand, suggests that the effort to understand the creation of the (relatively uniform) institutions of the welfare state is an attempt to solve the (relatively uniform) socio-cultural problems („moral“ integration, social solidarity) created by an ongoing process of functional differentiation¹⁰.

Whereas these two theoretical traditions thus help to understand primarily the general emergence of the welfare state as a response to common developmental problems, Rokkan's theory will serve to explain the divergent institutional solutions found for these problems. The attempt to integrate the various theoretical perspectives into a more general theory of the development of the welfare states is mainly motivated by the requirement of developing a common framework for the empirical studies which represent the true core of the project. These studies deal with specific aspects of the growth of welfare states in a comparative and historical perspective using quantitative aggregate data as well as qualitative institutional data. The aspects analyzed by the individual members of the project are:

Social security

by Jens Alber¹¹

Public bureaucracies

by Richard Eichenberg¹²

¹⁰ A first attempt to incorporate some of Durkheim's ideas into a macro-sociological study of the welfare state was made by Peter Flora in a paper „Durkheim and the Welfare State“ presented in July 1977 at a workshop on „The Western Welfare States: Historical Developments and Current Problems“ organized by the HIWED-group and the Social Policy Group of the Committee on European Studies.

¹¹ Alber has produced a data report on the coverage of the four major social insurance systems in Western Europe since their beginnings, containing quantitative as well as institutional data; a first analysis of the institutional data was carried out in our Edinburgh paper — cf. note 9; furthermore, he has studied the development of unemployment insurance systems on the basis of the standardized detailed characteristics of all major unemployment insurance laws; an analysis of these laws was presented at the above mentioned Luzern-workshop under the title „Governments, Unemployment and Unemployment Protection: On the Development of Unemployment Insurance in Western Europe“. A revised and extended version of this study has been presented at the 9th World Congress of Sociology at Uppsala.

¹² Eichenberg, who joined us as a computer specialist coming from Ann Arbor, Michigan, started a first analysis at the 1979 APSA meetings in New York under the title, „The Growth of Public Bureaucracy in Five European Countries“. The data report should be finished in 1979.

Public expenditures
Income distribution
Trade unions and strikes
Public revenues

by Jürgen Kohl¹³
by Franz Kraus¹⁴
by Winfried Pfenning¹⁵
by Kurt Seebohm¹⁶

Of these six theses¹⁷, three will be finished by the end of the project (Alber, Kohl, Kraus), the other three will require additional effort. Besides the data handbook, they will represent the substantial product of the HIWED-project marking its relative success or failure.

¹³ Kohl has finished a data report on enfranchisement and electoral participation, but his major subject is a study of the development of public expenditures; a first analysis can be found in our Edingburgh paper – cf. note 9; at the Luzern workshop he presented an analysis of the growth and structural change of public expenditures in Western Europe after World War II which soon will be extended to earlier periods.

¹⁴ Kraus has finished a data report on national product and is completing his collection of income distribution statistics until the end of 1978; he has done a critical study of the historical tax statistics as well as of the major studies using such statistics; this study was presented at the Luzern workshop under the title „Income Distribution in Western Europe: How Inequalities Can Be Assessed“.

¹⁵ Pfenning has finished in 1977 a Diplomarbeit on „Gewerkschaften und Streiks in Westeuropa 1880–1975“, including data reports on strikes and trade unions; he will continue this work.

¹⁶ Seebohm has finished in 1976 a Diplomarbeit on „Die Entwicklung der Steuerstruktur im Prozeß der Modernisierung“, including a data report on taxes; he continues his work, with special emphasis on income taxes; together with Flora he presented a paper on the „European Tax Systems in the Welfare State Era“ at the Luzern-workshop.

¹⁷ In addition a Diplomarbeit should be mentioned by Elisabeth Gransche on the „Wohnungsverhältnisse und Wohnungspolitik in Westeuropa – ein historischer Vergleich“ which was finished in 1976.