

Tóth, István György (ed.): Tárki European Social Report

Lelkes, Orsolya

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version

Rezension / review

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Lelkes, O. (2008). Tóth, István György (ed.): Tárki European Social Report. [Review of the book *Tárki European Social Report*, by I. G. (. Tóth)]. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 44(6), 1220-1222. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-65391>

Nutzungsbedingungen:

Dieser Text wird unter einer Deposit-Lizenz (Keine Weiterverbreitung - keine Bearbeitung) zur Verfügung gestellt. Gewährt wird ein nicht exklusives, nicht übertragbares, persönliches und beschränktes Recht auf Nutzung dieses Dokuments. Dieses Dokument ist ausschließlich für den persönlichen, nicht-kommerziellen Gebrauch bestimmt. Auf sämtlichen Kopien dieses Dokuments müssen alle Urheberrechtshinweise und sonstigen Hinweise auf gesetzlichen Schutz beibehalten werden. Sie dürfen dieses Dokument nicht in irgendeiner Weise abändern, noch dürfen Sie dieses Dokument für öffentliche oder kommerzielle Zwecke vervielfältigen, öffentlich ausstellen, aufführen, vertreiben oder anderweitig nutzen.

Mit der Verwendung dieses Dokuments erkennen Sie die Nutzungsbedingungen an.

Terms of use:

This document is made available under Deposit Licence (No Redistribution - no modifications). We grant a non-exclusive, non-transferable, individual and limited right to using this document. This document is solely intended for your personal, non-commercial use. All of the copies of this documents must retain all copyright information and other information regarding legal protection. You are not allowed to alter this document in any way, to copy it for public or commercial purposes, to exhibit the document in public, to perform, distribute or otherwise use the document in public.

By using this particular document, you accept the above-stated conditions of use.

would not have been as thought-provoking and interesting. Never mind the inconsistencies.

Anna Skarpelis
Max Planck Institute for the Study
of Societies, Cologne
skarpelis@mpifg.de

References

- Castles, Francis G. 2003. 'The World Turned Upside Down: Below Replacement Fertility, Changing Preferences and Family-friendly Public Policy in 21 OECD Countries.' *Journal of European Public Policy* 13 (3): 209–227.
- Neyer, Gerda and Gunnar Andersson. 2007. 'Consequences of Family Policies on Childrearing Behavior: Effects or Artifacts?' MPIDR Working Paper, WP 2007 – 021.
- Sand, Jordan. 2003. *House and Home in Modern Japan: Architecture, Domestic Space and Bourgeois Culture*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

István György Tóth (ed.): *Tárki European Social Report*

Budapest 2008: Tárki, pp. 132.

The Tárki European Social Report is compiled by Tárki, a Budapest-based research institute. Its special focus is the comparison of the EU 15 and the EU's New Member States (NMS), which joined in 2004, and in particular the situation of Hungary. In practice this means that sometimes specific Hungarian information is highlighted alongside European data. The report is 'Social' in the sense that it provides concise evidence about the social – e.g. the demographic, labour-market, income and housing – situation of households. It is 'European' in that it is based on a comparative dataset for 24 European Union member states – the Community Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) – and the weighted dataset comprises almost 190 million Euro-

pean households. This novel survey therefore allows for comparisons across the EU, including a comparison of the 'old' EU 15 and the NMS. The survey provides evidence on a particular point in time, so it is supplemented with alternative data sources when the report explores changes over time.

Chapter 1, on demographic processes, describes three determinants of the demographic profile of Europe: fertility, mortality and migration. This is followed by a brief outline of alternative options for social policy. Finally, the impact of macro-processes on households is explored based on individual and household data. The chapter presents evidence on total fertility rates by continents, by regions in Europe between 1950 and 2050, and also on the average age of first childbirth by country. This section seeks to answer the question of how to promote childbearing through public policy and in particular whether the role of financial support is significant. The chapter also tells us about the gap that exists between 'old' and 'new' Europe in terms of life expectancy and that future projections predict a slight convergence by 2050. As for migration, the authors note that the 'data on migration phenomena are unreliable' and they present existing estimates of the migration stock and flows. The socio-economic consequences of these processes are discussed briefly but with wide coverage of potential issues, including population ageing, migration policies, productivity and economic growth, labour market policies, and welfare spending. This macro-level perspective is complemented with a snapshot of the demographic features of households in Europe based on a data analysis by the authors.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of labour market processes. Employment, activity and (short- and long-term) unemployment trends are presented from the perspective of the Lisbon strategy over the years between 1995 and 2006. In addition

to these macro aggregates, the authors explore the effects of gender, educational attainment and labour market experience on the employment probability of individuals. The results of the multivariate models are presented in easy-to-read graphs where the effects of specific variables on employment can be viewed by country. The chapter also explores the work intensity of households (the labour market involvement of all household members) and the work intensity of individuals measured by the number of hours worked. A substantial part of this chapter explores the relationship between employment and education, with the implicit assumption that education is one of the key factors behind labour market participation and success. Four alternative measures of education inequality are presented and compared. They show that countries with poor labour market performance are characterised by a lower average number of years in education. On the other hand, in several of the new member states low education inequalities are accompanied by low (not high, as one might expect) employment rates.

The subject of Chapter 3 is income inequality and poverty. In addition to describing income inequality and poverty levels across EU countries using the widely employed Laeken indicators, the authors also investigate inter-country differences in the effects of age, education and employment on the distribution of incomes. The analysis includes not just a static decomposition analysis but also a dynamic decomposition analysis, in other words, the role of age, education and employment on inequality *change*. The results are presented with analytical rigour, but nonetheless with simplicity.

Finally, Chapter 4 explores housing and material conditions. The descriptive analysis presents information on housing conditions, including the affordability of housing and various measures of housing quality. The last section describes the

affordability of durable goods, in particular the availability of colour television, telephone, washing machine, and a car, all regarded as 'basic household appliances'. Although the analysis of the possession of these items is a standard empirical exercise used by many scholars and international institutions, the authors frankly admit that the lack of these items may also reflect the lifestyle choices of individuals and need not necessarily indicate poverty. Perhaps somewhat abruptly, the volume ends with a graph showing the share of households with cars in various European countries, leaving the reader to wonder whether automobilism is indeed a key indicator of social progress in the age of growing environmental concerns.

This report provides a rich array of evidence on vast subject areas. It includes a review of literature and an analytical overview of empirical evidence on past trends and future projections, all of it supplemented by original data analysis by the authors. Some of this analysis is a simple presentation of cross-country evidence using a recent comparative dataset. Other sections, for example, on the decomposition of inequality, offer more complex approaches. The virtue of all of these outcomes is a user-friendly graphical presentation and an easy-to-grasp explanation. The highlighting of key messages in the margins helps readers quickly grasp the main findings. Some of the more complex ideas are explained in text boxes, so that the interests of more curious readers are satisfied, while those not interested can skip over them if they wish. Rarely did I feel that brevity in the book led to a lack of information. For example, in the section warning about the methodological problems of measuring migration migrants are not actually defined, beyond the figures cited, and thus the reader may be left in doubt about whether the 40 million current migrants (a UN estimate) are measured in the same way as the 40 million more that are expected to re-

side in the EU by 2050 (a European Commission estimate). The clear referencing of the sources, however, offers a way out for curious readers, who can check the original sources themselves for additional information.

One of the virtues of the report is that the authors are honest about the implications of their outcomes: in particular, they do not claim a causal explanation where only a correlation is presented, and they advise caution where necessary. This rigour is also found in much of the analytical work. The authors' data analyses often include the confidence intervals of the estimates rather than just simple point estimates. This approach allows the reader to assess whether differences across countries or social groups are likely to occur in 'reality' or whether they are just simple artefacts of the survey-based estimates. The empirical analyses are embedded in literature reviews, which by academic standards may seem somewhat brief, but which nonetheless provide a context and a base from which to explore empirical hypotheses.

The readers of this publication will most likely be policy-makers, civil servants, graduate students, people who are not social scientists, or social scientists aiming to brush up their knowledge of facts or facts outside their own area of research. One might regard this volume as a kind of crash course in the social reality of Europe. According to the intentions of the editors, this is the first issue in a new series of volumes to come, so it is well worth keeping an eye on forthcoming issues.

Orsolya Lelkes
European Centre for Social
Welfare Policy and Research
lelkes@euro.centre.org

Jenny Billings – Kai Leichsenring (eds.):
Integrating Health and Social Care
Services for Older Persons: Evidence
from Nine European Countries

Aldershot and Vienna 2005: Ashgate and European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, 345 pp.

Long-term care is a crucial component of health and social services provided today for older adults. This has become a major challenge in light of recent demographic changes resulting from the rapid ageing of the population and the increasing incidence of chronic needs, disability and illnesses. A new paradigm in this field, rooted in the social protection perspective, calls for the provision of integrated health and social care services so as to continuously meet the complex needs of older individuals. According to this notion, integration and coordination at the interface between the health system and the social care system result in a better service delivery standard and consequently improve the quality of life of the elderly.

Integrating Health and Social Care Services for Older Persons provides an intensive description of qualitative findings merged from a research project named Providing Integrated Health and Social Care for Older Persons (PROCARE). PROCARE is part of the 5th framework programme of the European Commission, which was carried out in 2004 and the beginning of 2005 among nine EU member states: Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Its main goal was to explore the tendency towards integrated care in Europe and develop insights into integrated services from various perspectives. A total of 18 integrated care models, two in each of the nine partner countries, were examined to obtain a better understanding of the unique themes related to services incorporating integrated health and social care. This includes definitions of integrated care from different per-