
the social welfare system in Australia which is characterized by strong relation between work and welfare with an expectation of self-reliance of those who are able to work. Yet the evidences show that poverty is not related solely to a lack of jobs.

In Chapter 18 South Korean experiences in balancing social welfare in post-industrial society are described. The Korean government has, similarly as in the majority of the presented countries, followed the neo-liberal ideology, yet it has the same time pursued the expansion and consolidation of welfare programs and accelerated the process of transition to the inclusive developmental welfare state.

Chapters 12, 13, 16 and 17 focus on narrow themes. In chapter 12 the criminal justice system in England and Wales is explored with clear remark that emphasis on cost-effectiveness may conflict with other influences of penal policy. Chapter 13 points out the changes in social assistance programs in Canada where the neo-liberal culture of individual responsibility and free market is in tension with values of just society. The consequence of reforms is that social assistance programs are no longer vital elements in Canada because more emphasis is put on punishment and the state split the obligations between market and worker citizens. Chapter 16 presents a policy framework for social services with children in South Africa emphasizing the importance of preventive actions as a complement to curative programs for chil-

dren to follow the aims of increasing skills and a knowledgeable society. Chapter 17 focuses on privatization trends in personal welfare services in Israel founding out that the privatization has lead to delivering of services by non-governmental organizations and private enterprises with no clear evidence of decline of welfare state.

The book offers a kaleidoscope of various important information for researchers, scientists, social policy students and also politicians (who usually base their decision on the ideologies rather than on clear empirical data). Despite of the fact that contributions in this volume do not enable direct comparisons between various welfare states they provide up-to-date information on variations of welfare states' development.

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Chiara Saraceno (ed.)
**Families, Ageing and Social Policy:
Intergenerational Solidarity in
European Welfare States**
Edward Elgar Publishing,
Cheltenham 2008, pp. 320,
USD 135.00
(ISBN 978-1847206480)

Today we speak of an ageing society and many political as well as scientific and research discussions deal with the themes of ageing, its effect on modern society, in particu-

lar the functioning of welfare states. Like other European countries, Slovenia is facing the rapid ageing of its population and the effects of ageing on society as a whole, while the functioning of its systems, institutions as well as familial and wider communal relations between generations are moving into the focus of discussions. Consequently, it is no surprise that scientific interest in the topic of ageing has been growing in the last few years in sociology and other scientific areas. Further, in political discussions necessary changes to the welfare state systems due to population ageing are currently topping the agenda, e.g. the necessary prolongation of working years and with that later retirement in order to create a sustainable pension system; also changes to the health system in order to adapt to ever stronger need for long-term care for the (very) elderly.

The book edited by Chiara Saraceno also deals with this topic; emphasising the link between intergenerational relations and social policy. Often the family as a unit and the relationships within it – how they deal with the ageing of their members – is observed and treated as a separate matter of that welfare system and social policy and how they react to population ageing. The family can be seen (and is often studied) as only playing a residual role compared to the role of the market and the state in studies of welfare regimes. In this book, the emphasis is on the link between these two levels and the welfare state is understood as a kind of

social contract between generations that runs parallel to the intergenerational contacts within families and kin.

The book consists of 13 articles from different contributors and covers several themes linked to intergenerational relations. Many of the articles offer a good overview of the main issues and research in the area of intergenerational solidarity and are therefore not only relevant for those already familiar with this topic, but also for those who would like to have a quick insight into this area. The advantage of the articles included in the book is that comparative perspectives are taken in many of them, i.e. comparisons between different welfare states are made, and several chapters use the internationally comparative data set of the SHARE project (Survey of Health Ageing and Retirement in Europe).

An example is the chapter by Martin Kholi and Marco Albertini which examines how children in young adulthood and middle age are supported by their elderly parents in two potentially critical situations – parenthood and marital break-up. They compare nine countries with different welfare regimes and confirm that the strategies adopted by parents differ among the countries and welfare regimes. What is innovative in their approach is observing not individual forms of support (i.e. financial transfers, social support, co-residence) that parents offer to their children, but combinations of support strategies. They find that specific combi-

nations of types of support are more typical of specific welfare regimes, thereby confirming the existence of so-called intergenerational transfer regimes.

Three of the chapters address the so-called crowding out/crowding in debate, i.e. the relationship between the welfare state and intergenerational solidarity. These are the articles by Herlad Kunemund, Sebastian Sarsa and Sunnee Billingsley and Wolfgang Keck. According to the crowding out hypothesis, generous welfare states crowd out private intergenerational solidarity since, due to the more generous welfare states and services for the elderly that are offered, help between family members is needed less and family solidarity is consequently weakened. All authors argue that there is no evidence of crowding out; on the contrary, the research seems to point more towards crowding in, i.e. the situation where the services and help offered by the state do not substitute but are an addition to familial help. Many of the debates on crowding out start from the premise that today we are facing diminishing solidarity within the family, and how this trend is a negative one for the quality of life of the elderly. However, Sarasa and Billingsley put the contrary position forward – the problem of family solidarity and the burden that is put on carers of the elderly and negative consequences that performing care can have for them. They see caring responsibilities as a possible factor contributing to social segregation.

Three other chapters also deal with the link between migration and the ageing of society. What is studied are intergenerational support patterns among migrant families in Germany (by Baykara-Krumme) and in France (by Attais-Donfut and Wolff) and intergenerational solidarity and social structures in Sweden (by Bjornberg and Ekbrand). The authors look at how migration affects intergenerational relations and they indicate the strong resilience of intergenerational relations, even in cases of distance due to migration. However, they also warn that new specific risks are arising for this group.

An article that might be of particular interest to Slovenian readers is by Teresio Poggio on the intergenerational transmission of home ownership. The author argues that the intergenerational transmission of home ownership is of pivotal importance in the reproduction of a welfare system centred on the family, i.e. mainly in the welfare systems of Southern Europe. It is also a significant factor in the reproduction of social inequality. The author studies Italy as an example and shows how the role of the family in providing support for housing has risen over time. Even though Slovenia is hard to place in the existing welfare regime typologies, there seems to be some resemblance to the welfare systems of Southern Europe. Perhaps parallels could also be drawn as in Slovenia the family assists younger generations to become home-owners to a large extent, either with financial

help or help in kind, co-habitation and other strategies.

The articles also touch on several specific and interesting themes and questions. Chiara Saraceno underlines in her introductory discussion the fact that the ageing of societies has also brought changes in how intergenerational relationships are experienced. Namely, vertical inter-generation relations are becoming more numerous than horizontal ones, and parent-child relations are growing longer and can last over 60 years. Therefore, people are finding themselves in completely new forms of intergenerational relationships – due to their longer time span these relationships experience several transformations and what is also new is the experience of co-ageing.

Gunhild Hagestad, for example, emphasises that the ageing of European societies is linked with another process, that is, the feminisation of ageing. Namely, the majority of the elderly are in fact women, which has serious implications for intergenerational relations and the transfer of particular knowledge and experience of men to grandchildren (especially grandsons). Another interesting question put forward is whether the increasing number of older people in society also brings an increasing number of contacts between children and older people. Surprisingly, it seems that the opposite is true as the age segregation of our society is such that these contacts might in fact be decreasing.

The book deals with different top-

ics and aspects of intergenerational solidarity, presenting the complexity and persistence of intergenerational relations, as well as their changes over time. It provides interesting and relevant reading for scholars, students as well as the general public interested in this area and research topics, i.e. solidarity, intergenerational relations, family structures, gerontology, demographic change and social policy.

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Drago Zajc
Coalition Building in Central Europe: (The case of Germany, Austria, Italy and Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia) an attempt to analyse the last wave of democratisation
Fakulteta za družbene vede,
Ljubljana 2009, pp. 180, 20.10 €
(ISBN 978-961-235-372-8)

It would be no overstatement to claim that coalition-building is one of the most elementary and simultaneously decisive processes of a parliamentary democratic political system – being it in everyday law-making? or when interest in this topic is focused on academic-research issues; being it in the pre-, interim, or post-election period of different types of elections. The book *Coalition Building in Central Europe: (the case of*