



Dear Reader,

We would like to draw your attention to our April Policy Brief on “Housing Problems and Access to Basic Local Services in the EU27”, see the below information and link.

Sincerely yours,

Willem Stamatou
Publications Officer

Policy Briefs

Housing Problems and Access to Basic Local Services in the EU27. How Does Austria Compare?, *Orsolya Lelkes and Katrin Gasior*

The aim of this Brief is to explore (i) housing problems, such as poor housing quality, overcrowdedness, housing cost overburden, and (ii) access to basic local services, including public transport, postal and banking services across the EU27. We also assess whether the population at risk of poverty is exposed to cumulative disadvantage, suffering from both low incomes and housing deprivation. We complete the analysis with a focus on specific social groups in Austria and overall EU27.

In 2009, an estimated 30 million people, 6% of the EU27 population, suffered from severe housing deprivation and 18% lived in overcrowded conditions. Results suggest a major geographical divide across Europe with the highest rates in Eastern European countries.

The population at risk of poverty is likely to suffer from relative disadvantage in national terms in all EU countries with respect to housing cost overburden, overcrowded dwelling and severe housing deprivation, with the largest relative gap in case of the former indicator. In the majority of countries, this relative disadvantage prevails in case of access to basic local services.

The focus on social groups provides interesting insights into differences within a country. In Austria, migrants from outside the EU face the highest prevalence of severe housing deprivation, with a rate of 16%. Large families, single parents, and those at risk of poverty have an above average exposure to housing deprivation. The elderly living in rural areas have the most severe problem with access to public transport and access to postal and banking services.

Read more about: [Policy Brief](#)

For further information please contact: [Orsolya Lelkes](#), [Katrin Gasior](#)



Projects

External Expertise awarded: Central European Ageing Strategy

Pieter Vanhuysse has been appointed as External Expert on the Central European Ageing Strategy developed by the Central European Knowledge Platform for an Ageing Society. The project is funded by the EU's Regional Development Fund and run by a consortium of 13 partners from 8 CE countries, including Austria and Italy. The expertise is funded to contribute between March and September 2012 to develop *trends and scenarios* for the CE region until 2050, and by December 2012 to the 'CE-Ageing Strategy' document to be published as a *Green Paper* which will provide links between most central policies and recommend measures/actions to enable CE regions in managing and adapting to demographic change.

On the Central European Knowledge Platform for an Ageing Society see: [website](#)

On the CE Ageing Strategy see: [website](#)

For further information please contact: [Pieter Vanhuysse](#)

Events

Österreichisches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung (WIFO) External Meeting: Maria M. Hofmarcher, Reforming Austria's Highly Regarded but Costly Health System, 21 February, Vienna

Director of Health and Care, Maria M. Hofmarcher presented the results of the OECD working paper "Reforming Austria's Highly Regarded but Costly Health System" at the Austrian Institute for Economic Research (WIFO). The presentation looked closer at the high-quality but costly Austrian Health System with a critique of the fragmented governance and funding structure. Recommendations include more transparency in assigning responsibilities for performance and financing, enforcement of a national capacity plan, and increased support for the transition to integrated care, among others.

[Gönenç, R., M. M. Hofmarcher and A. Wörgötter \(2011\), "Reforming Austria's Highly Regarded but Costly Health System", OECD Economics Department Working Papers, No. 895, OECD Publishing](#)

For further information please contact: [Maria M. Hofmarcher](#)



EuroREACH Expert Panel Meeting, 27 February – 1 March, Tel Aviv

How do health systems perform in comparison to other countries? While this is a common question for researchers and policy-makers, the lack of comparable healthcare data between countries makes this a major challenge. Overcoming this obstacle is the focus of the EuroREACH project led by the European Centre.

At the end of February, Maria M. Hofmarcher and Leslie Tarver of the European Centre met with EuroREACH partners and experts in Tel Aviv to tackle key data challenges to cross-national research such as data protection, data linkage and comparability. Maccabi Healthcare Services in Israel hosted the meeting and took partners on a “virtual tour” of Maccabi’s advanced electronic health record and data collection efforts.

Invited experts included Dr. Michael Goldacre of the Oxford Record Linkage Study and Fabrizio Carinci of the EUBIROD Project. EuroREACH partners from Estonia, Israel and Finland also discussed key issues in the project case-study which compares health system performance across three countries using patient-level data.

For further information please visit: www.euroreach.net

EuroREACH Project Meeting, 20-21 March, London

A wide spectrum of experts from Europe and the U.S. met with EuroREACH project partners at the London School of Economics to discuss development of a “Health Data Navigator”, the final output of the EuroREACH project.

The Health Data Navigator will be a web-based tool for researchers conducting cross-country comparisons of health system performance. In an effort to collaborate with other FP7 projects working in this area, the meeting brought together project leaders from SHARE, ECHIM, ECHOUTCOME, EUPRIME-CARE and Data Without Boundaries. Invited experts from the OECD, EUROSTAT, the Commonwealth Fund and Kaiser Permanente also offered their experiences in collecting and comparing healthcare data across countries.

The dynamic discussions focused on the “toolbox” the navigator will provide, including a compendium of international and national healthcare databases and expert advice on key data challenges such as data access, linkage and comparability. The lively debates continued into the evening where project partners and esteemed experts dined on fine Indian cuisine in central London. The European Centre is coordinator of the project and organized the meeting, with Maria M. Hofmarcher, Leslie Tarver and Flip Maas attending.

For further information please visit: www.euroreach.net



The International Forum on the Rights of Older Persons, 26-28 March 2012, Mexico City, Mexico

The Government of Mexico City, through the Institute for the Care for Older Persons in the Federal District, and the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) – Population Division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) conducted the International Forum on the Rights of Older Persons. The Forum took place in Mexico City from 26 to 28 March 2012.

The Forum analysed in depth issues related to the human rights of older persons with the aim to contribute, from the Latin American perspective, to the work of the United Nations Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing and the Working Group on the Rights of Older Persons of the Organization of American States. The Forum was also intended to serve as a springboard to the Third Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing in Latin America and the Caribbean, which will be held in San Jose, Costa Rica, from 8 to 11 May 2012.

Alexandre Sidorenko participated in the Forum and made a key-note presentation on the theme “Participation of Older Persons in the Political and Public Life”.

For more information see: [website](#)

For further information please contact: [Alexandre Sidorenko](#)

Conference on Deep Poverty in Hungary, 29 March, Budapest, Hungary

Orsolya Lelkes has chaired a plenary session at the Conference on Deep Poverty in Hungary and about the policy elements of a possible aid reform, organized by the Patriotism and Progress Public Policy Foundation on 29 March in Budapest.

The aim of the conference was to present and discuss the final report of the Patriotism and Progress Public Policy Foundation’s research paper on deep poverty in Hungary. The Foundation argues for the introduction of conditional cash transfers in several sociopolitical fields in Hungary – these were used successfully in Brazil and other developing countries. The point of the idea of conditional transfers is that

- It is based on the principle of mutual obligations: it does not give unconditionally, and when it gives it does not stigmatize. It encourages the poor to use public services.
- It is acceptable for the majority of those who are dismissive of the poor, and it is also accessible for the poor who are not unemployed,
- It is able to bring quick results, because it contributes to reducing poverty through two channels – the cash transfers and the services aimed to break the hereditary cycle of poverty.



In the research, the Foundation was helped by the Budapest Institute and by the TÁRKI Social Research Institute. The Medián Institute and Conness were also involved in the opinion research part of the work. Conference participants included Mr. Gordon Bajnai, former Prime Minister of Hungary; Péter Balázs, former EU Commissioner, former Minister of Foreign Affairs; János Lázár, leader of the Fidesz Parliamentary Representation; representatives of other parliamentary parties; and social researchers.

For the final report see: [website](#)

For the detailed programme see: [website](#)

For further information please contact: [Orsolya Lelkes](#)

Publications

Journal Article

Vanhuyse, Pieter (2011) 'Y a-t'il un Sentiment d'Injustice Intergénérationnelle au Sein des États-Providence dont la Population Est Vieillissante? Examen de l'Opinion d'Étudiants Universitaires dans Huit Démocraties,' *Lettre des Académies Royales des Sciences, des Lettres et des Beaux Arts de la Belgique*, Numéro 22

Pieter Vanhuyse has contributed to the special issue of the Newsletter of the Royal Academy of Belgium, which is devoted to issues of intergenerational injustice and further includes entries by Bea Cantillon (University of Antwerp), Françoise Thys-Clement (Royal Academy of Belgium), and Axel Gosseries (UC Louvain).

For the Royal Academy Newsletter see: [download](#)

For further information please contact: [Pieter Vanhuyse](#)

Zaidi, Asghar / Zólyomi, Eszter (2011/12) 'Active Ageing: What Differential Experiences across EU Countries?', *European Papers on the New Welfare*, Paper No. 17: Counter-ageing Policies

The paper is geared towards providing empirical evidence on different aspects of active ageing across EU Member States using the most suitable comparative datasets available: the Harmonised European Time Use Surveys (HETUS); the Survey of Health and Retirement in Europe (SHARE); and the European Union Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS). Two aspects are covered: the formal labour market engagement of older workers and the nature of non-paid productive activities. It analyses variations across countries (so as to



explore the extent to which country differences could be associated with differences in public policies and institutions), and between subgroups of individuals (so as to analyse the differential experiences of ageing for those who differ in their needs and aspirations, on the basis of age, gender and employment status as well as marital status, living arrangements and educational attainment).

The paper is organised in five sections. Section 1 provides a brief review of selected literature on active ageing, especially from the recent past. Section 2 gives an overview of allocation of time between paid work and various forms of unpaid work of men and women across the life course in 14 European countries. Section 3 provides more details on patterns of unpaid work of older people. Section 4 focuses on analysing the patterns of labour market involvement of older workers across all 27 EU countries. Section 5 provides some policy conclusions.

In most EU countries, there has been a rising trend of employment among workers aged 55-64 from 2000 on up until the recession that started in 2008. Moreover, while this slowed down the trend or even brought it to an end, it is still the case that, unlike in previous economic downturns, employment among older workers has held up much better than among younger age groups.

Active ageing, however, is not only about encouraging people to work longer and making it easier for them to do so. Evidence from time use surveys indicate that unpaid work is also an important means for older people to remain active and actively contribute to, and participate in society. The results from SHARE on voluntary work indicate that there is much unused potential among older people to be involved in non-market activities which can be no less important as a source of social value as market activities. Policy-makers should take this into account in the future when designing policies for older age groups alongside measures to increase their labour market participation.

Paper is available at: [download](#)

For further information please contact: [Asgar Zaidi](#), [Eszter Zólyomi](#)

Newspaper Articles

[Marin, Bernd \(2005-2012\) Various articles in: Der Standard, in: Die Presse, in: Format, in: Kleine Zeitung, in: Salzburger Nachrichten, in: Der Falter, Vienna, Graz, Salzburg, 2012](#)

For further information please contact: [Bernd Marin](#)



Contact for general newsletter/web site comments, suggestions or questions:

Willem Stamatou
Publications Officer
European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research
Berggasse 17
A-1090 Vienna (Austria)
Tel: +43-1-319 45 05-27
Fax: +43-1-319 45 05-19
stamatou@euro.centre.org

Contact for general research questions: ec@euro.centre.org

Contacts for Activities & Products are listed on the website.

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