



Dear Reader,

This is our last Newsletter for the year 2011.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your continued interest in our work.

We look forward to keep you well informed about us in 2012 again!

Sincerely yours,

Willem Stamatiou
Publications Officer

May happiness and inspiration snow upon you this season
with best wishes for an active year 2012

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Board and NLO Matters

Continuation of the Romanian Board of Directors' Mandate

On behalf of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and as recommended by the Board of Directors of the European Centre, the Acting Chairman of the Board, Mr. Jens Erik Sundby, has confirmed the appointment of Ms. Corches Lacramiora as member of the Board of Directors for Romania until the end of 2012, replacing Ms. Adina Dragotoiu, with the option of renewal during the next Closed Session in July 2012 for a further 3 years' mandate.

We cordially welcome Ms. Corches Lacramiora, who is General Director of the General Direction for Social Assistance at the Romanian Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection in Bucharest, to the European Centre.

For further information please contact: [Mercedes Gonzalez-Quijano](#)

Publication of the Official Slovak National Liaison Institute

The Institute for Labour and Family Research of our Slovak National Liaison Official Kvetoslava Repková has published a new issue of its Bulletin "Family and Work".

[Family and Work / Rodina a práca, 5/2011](#), Labour Migration in the Border Region: The Contextual Framework, by Marc Bittner, Michaela Hudler-Seitzberger, Claudia Neunteufl, Rastislav Bednárík, Zuzana Kostolná, Daniela Keselová.

This joint issue of the Austrian research institute Paul Lazarsfeld Gesellschaft für Sozialforschung (PLG) and the Institute for Labour and Family Research (IVPR) follows up on the tradition of international cooperation in presenting research findings. The interest in cross-border labour migration, mapping of the skill level of the labour force, and the life conditions in the border region of Western Slovakia and Vienna are the selected areas of the problems that were addressed by this project of FAMO, "Monitoring of the Professional Work Force – Regular Surveys of Supply and Demand for Professional Work Force in the Border Region between Eastern Austria and Slovakia", and which were included in this bulletin.

Based on their knowledge from comprehensive representative empirical surveys, the authors pointed out the development of the situation, and the market changes in the border region recorded in the period of 2008/2009 FAMO I and 2010/2011 FAMO II. The contribution of the Austrian research institute confronts the main research findings with the findings from the LAMO project implemented in the period 2003-2007, and is focused on the reflection of changes in the labour market in connection with the European Union enlargement.

Read more about: [issue 5/2011](#)

For further information please contact: [Michaela Szabóová](#)



Projects

CARICT Project Workshop, 21-22 November, Brussels

This workshop has been convened to discuss and validate the final results produced by the CARICT project consortium, led by the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research.

The project aimed to investigate the role of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in supporting informal carers of dependent older people through three actions:

- (1) the mapping of over 50 European best practice initiatives;
- (2) the development of a methodological framework for impact assessment;
- (3) the elaboration of policy options for the development, replication and transfer of such ICT-based initiatives for carers.

In particular, suggestions coming from the 19 external experts who attended the workshop will be integrated in the final report in form of policy recommendations that will address the main question: “What role can ICT-based initiatives play in future scenarios of long-term care in Europe and related policy challenges?”.

Read more about: [CARICT project](#)

For further information please contact: [Francesco Barbabella](#)

Measures for the Activation of the Labour Market for Older Workers

The Centre’s final report on “Measures for the Activation of the Labour Market for Older Workers” was delivered at the Austrian Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection (BMAK) on December 7th. The report describes measures implemented to activate older workers in Germany, The Netherlands, Finland and Sweden, and draws lessons from each case for the Austrian situation. Specifically, a wide range of measures in the field of labour markets, pensions, and health policies are discussed, with a specific focus on their joint effects as comprehensive policy packages.

Among the many policies and reforms studied are:

- the Last-In-First-Out (LIFO) law and medical directives for sickness, and rehabilitation chains in Sweden,
- the Hartz IV reforms, company-based health promotion, and part-time work policies in Germany,
- the experience ratings for employers’ contributions, invalidity reassessments, and the Gatekeeper laws in The Netherlands,
- invalidity reforms, the VETO action plan, and low-wage subsidies for older workers in Finland.



The report was authored by Katrin Gasior, Bernd Marin, Andrea Schmidt, Pieter Vanhuyse, Ulrike Waginger and Eszter Zólyomi.

Read more about: [report](#)

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

Events

EuroREACH Sounding Board Meeting, 2-3 November, Luxembourg

The first sounding board meeting for the EuroREACH project kicked off on November 2 in Luxembourg. Researchers from the European Centre along with the EuroREACH project partners met with external experts from the OECD, WHO, Eurostat, EUBIROD, DGSanco, DGRResearch, SHARE, and various universities. The productive exchange focused on the progress and next steps of the EuroREACH project, which aims to improve access to health care data for cross-country comparisons.

EuroREACH project partners presented the findings from the various work packages, including the EuroREACH framework to measure health system performance, a study on existing international data collection initiatives and findings from a review of national data systems. The presentations were followed by roundtable discussions with external experts assessing the findings and key challenges in each work package and setting the agenda for the future of the project.

One key idea discussed and currently in development is an interactive website to access EuroREACH findings on national and international health databases and tools for cross-country comparison of health system indicators such as efficiency and quality of care.

Read more about: [EuroREACH project](#)

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

Conference on Long-term Care for the Aged, Singapore Management University – Sim Kee Boon Institute for Financial Economics – 11 November

As one of the invited speakers, Ricardo Rodrigues presented on the financing of long-term care in Europe at the Conference on Long-term Care for the Aged organised by the Singapore Management University. The purpose of this presentation was to inform the discussion on reform options being considered by Singapore to improve its long-term care system.



Drawing on the research conducted by the Health and Care Pillar at the European Centre, the presentation provided an overview of strategies undertaken by European countries to finance long-term care (e.g. Germany, England and Sweden) and of some of the policy implications.

Among the topics covered were users' co-payments for care, private insurance, trade-offs involved in relying (too much) on informal care and the coordination between health and social care.

Read more about: [conference](#)

For further information please contact: [Ricardo Rodrigues](#)

Offsite-Meeting der Gesundheitsnetzwerker, 18 November, Berlin

Maria M. Hofmarcher, Director Health and Care, presented at the Berlin offsite meeting of the Health Network, on "The System of Medical Care in Austria". The presentation focused on an overview of the Austrian health system, with an in-depth look at the ambulatory care sector and an evaluation of performance on quality and efficiency.

In addition, a talk on "The System of Medical Care in the Netherlands" was also presented by Dr. Marith Rebel Volp, M.D., Policy Advisor at "Landelijke Huisartsen Vereniging (LHV)".

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

Belgium Federal Public Health Service and the WHO Regional Office for Europe Joint Conference on "Modern Health Care Delivery Systems and the Role of Hospitals", 21-22 November, Brussels

Maria M. Hofmarcher, Director Health and Care, participated in this workshop, which focused on integration and coordination of care as key to high performing health systems and the role of hospitals in these reforms.

Work in this field in the European context is closely linked to the global initiative started by WHO headquarters in identifying key questions to be addressed by the global hospital agenda within the wider context of coordinated care. Experiences from the various countries and regions of the world can be used to initiate a review of the place, role and function of hospitals within changing health systems, to support all Member States in the challenging process to remodel their hospitals appropriately and to build capacity to support health care delivery reform. The workshop aimed to move a step further on the road to a better integration and coordination of health care service delivery.

Read more about: [workshop](#)

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



Workshop on “The Future of the Long Term Care System”, hosted by the Austrian Ministry of Finance (BMF) and the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, 1 December, Vienna

Researchers from the European Centre presented at this workshop with the aim of informing policy-makers about the current challenges facing the long-term care system and reform options in both the organization and financing of the system.

Maria M. Hofmarcher, Director of Health and Care at the European Centre presented first an overview of current challenges including growing demand and on the supply side, workforce shortages and changes in skill mix required to transform institutional care into ambulatory and home-care settings. Her presentation underscored the importance of greater stewardship of long-term care delivery to ensure care is patient-centred, including care coordination across care and social settings and overcoming fragmented financing. Evaluating the performance of the system in terms of cost-effectiveness, responsiveness and access was also a key focus.

The second presentation by Ricardo Rodrigues, Researcher at the European Centre, focused on different approaches and common challenges to the financing of long-term care in Europe and the USA. Drawing on Germany as a social insurance model and England as a means-targeted system, the issues of guaranteeing a broad pooling of risks and the trade-offs involved in targeting public resources were highlighted.

The presentations were followed by a dynamic discussion on general challenges such as managing care markets, finding the appropriate balance of care providers (public, private, informal) and facilitating the coordination between health and social care.

The workshop will be continued in January 2012 to specifically discuss challenges of the Austrian Long-Term Care System in light of experiences in other countries.

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

Pension Policy Reforms in Ukraine, 19 December, Kiev

Asghar Zaidi, Bernd Marin and Alexandre Sidorenko will meet high-level representatives of the Ministry of Social Policy and UNDP in Kiev, on 19th December, to present recommendations for a future pension policy strategy in Ukraine. A substantive strategy paper has been drafted as a background document for this mission. This strategy paper has three-fold objectives:

- to describe the current Ukrainian pension system and set the context for future reforms;
- to report on challenges faced by the Ukrainian pension system and identify future policy goals; and
- to review international experiences of pension reforms and make specific recommendations for the pension policy reforms in Ukraine.



In light of these analyses, specific recommendations are made for short-term immediate (during 2012/2013) and medium- and long-term (beyond 2012/2013) measures for pension policy reforms in Ukraine. The Strategy Report is prepared by Asghar Zaidi, with contributions from Alexandre Sidorenko and Bernd Marin – see its outline below.

For further information please contact: [Asghar Zaidi](#), [Bernd Marin](#), [Alexandre Sidorenko](#)

Outline

1. Review of international experiences

- a. Benefit ratio and NRR development in EU
- b. Retirement age in comparison to LE development
- c. Indexation of pension incomes reduced to prices
- d. Contributory principles strengthened
- e. Pension contribution distribution between employees and employers

2. Pension reform measures for Ukraine

- A. Short-term immediate measures (during 2012/2013)
 - a. Expert commission to review special pension schemes
 - b. Changing pension contribution distribution
 - c. Rules of pension income indexation
 - d. De-shadowing informal market and raising coverage
- B. Medium to longer-term measures (beyond 2012/2013)
 - a. 1st pillar reformed to a NDC scheme
 - b. 2nd pillar to be introduced, as mandatory individual accounts
 - c. Statutory retirement age and contributory period linked to LE
 - d. Guaranteed minimum pensions to be maintained separately

3. Political feasibility of pension reforms in Ukraine

Publications

Newspaper Articles

[Marin, Bernd \(2005-2011\)](#) Various articles in: [Der Standard](#), in: [Die Presse](#), in: [Format](#), in: [Kleine Zeitung](#), in: [Salzburger Nachrichten](#), in: [Der Falter](#), Vienna, Graz, Salzburg, 2011

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