



Dear Reader,

I have to transmit to you the very sad news that Matti Heikkilä, our friend, colleague, Director General of STAKES since 1th May this year, Finnish Member of the European Centre Board of Directors for many years, died 20th July 2008.

I can still hardly believe it, after having met him in late April in Helsinki and talked to him repeatedly over the phone since. He worked hard to the last moment in this most difficult transition period for Stakes and its staff – and even more so in his own life.

A wonderful, most gentle person has been leaving us forever, and this is even more painful for his loved ones, closest to him, to whom our condolences go above all.

We will keep Matti in our minds and hearts and his memory alive as long as we are!

Prof. Dr. Bernd Marin

Executive Director, European Centre Vienna



Projects

New version of EUROMOD now available

As a result of the I-CUE project there is now a new version of EUROMOD available that includes tax-benefit policies for four new countries – Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia.

Read more about: [project, further information on how to obtain the model and the underlying datasets](#)
For further information please contact: [Orsolya Lelkes](#)

European Commission publishes study on “Social and Health Services of General Interest”

Social services are undergoing important changes in European Union Member States as they adapt to demographic challenges and respond to the need to improve access and quality. At the same time, the influence of EU rules has become more important and there is increasing concern about uncertainties and gaps in knowledge and understanding of the complex legal issues at stake. What are the trends in employment, expenditure, access to and quality of social services? How have Member States responded to the challenges posed by implementing EU rules?

In June 2008, the European Commission has published the final synthesis report of the Study on Social and Health Services of General Interest that was coordinated by the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research (Vienna) in cooperation with CIRIEC (Liège), the Institute for Social Work and Social Education (Frankfurt/Main) and a team of country, legal, and sector experts.

This study analysed five broad sectors of social services:

- long-term care,
- child care,
- social housing,
- labour market integration for disadvantaged people, and
- social integration of migrants and drug users.

It is based on literature reviews, a synthesis and analysis of legal issues at stake, country studies and case vignettes from eight countries (Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, and the UK), and a stakeholder enquiry.

Read more about: [project and study](#)
For further information please contact: [Manfred Huber](#)



European Commission publishes study on “Quality in and Equality of Access to Healthcare Services in Europe”

This study reviews barriers of access to health care that persist in EU countries and presents an analysis of what policies countries have adopted to mitigate these barriers. It has a focus on the situation of migrants, older people with functional limitations, and people with mental disorders.

What are the barriers to accessing high-quality health care for people at risk of social exclusion? What are the interdependencies between poverty, social exclusion and problems of accessing health care? What policies have EU Member States put in place to improve access and quality of health care for vulnerable groups of the population?

The study is based on eight country reports: Finland, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Spain, and the United Kingdom. This was complemented with findings from the literature and European comparisons.

The study was coordinated by the European Health Management Association, with the scientific lead of the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research.

Read more about: [project and study](#)

For further information please contact: [Manfred Huber](#)

European Observatory on the Social Situation

Orsolya Lelkes represented the European Centre in Rome (Italy) in July during a meeting with the project partners of four other countries to discuss the contents of their contributions to a future book published by the European Commission. The book will summarise evidence on income inequality, poverty and social policies affecting income distribution and will be a synthesis of the “best of” the network’s output over the past four years, complemented with analyses based on the most recent data.

Read more about: [project](#)

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



Events

Past Events

3 July 2008, Vienna: Global Development Network Southeast Europe

Isilda Shima presented at the Global Development Network Southeast Europe workshop her research about the victims of trafficking and exploitation in the Balkan region.

The research addresses the phenomenon of illegal migration and victims of trafficking in Balkan countries, it analyses the probability of being trafficked and exploited inside the Balkan region compared to the probability of being trafficked at international level. The theoretical framework of the capability approach is used to conceptualise well-being deprivation of the victims while being trafficked and exploited.

The dataset used in the analysis is based on the Assistance Interview Form of the Counter Trafficking Module (CTM) of the IOM (International Organisation for Migration). The study concludes that improving the political and economic situation in the origin country rather than relying on law enforcement intervention in the destination country contributes more to the prevention of victims' well-being deprivation by trafficking and exploitation.

Read more about: Global Development Network – [Central and Eastern Europe](#)
For further information please contact: [Isilda Shima](#)

8 July 2008, Vienna: Book Presentation “Männliche Jugendliche: Sexualität und Aufklärung” (New Publication “Young Men: Sexuality and Sex Education”)

The book was presented and discussed at the Hauptbücherei (Central Library) Vienna with

- the authors – Gabriele Schmied and Christine Reidl,
- two of the sponsors – Christoph Hörhan (Head of the Fonds Gesundes Österreich / Fund Healthy Austria) and Michaela Zimmermann (Stadt Wien, Magistratsabteilung 13, Bildung und außerschulische Jugendbetreuung / City of Vienna, department 13, education and extracurricular young people support),
- and the social practitioners Bettina Weidinger (Österreichisches Institut für Sexualpädagogik / Austrian Institute for Sex Education), Olaf Kapella (Österreichisches Institut für Familienforschung / Austrian Institute for Family Research) and Romeo Bissuti (M.E.N. – Männergesundheitszentrum / Men Health Centre).

During the discussion issues were raised such as:

- the need for long-term financing of sex education within programmes for young men,
- the preference for men as sex educators, being neither too young nor “too old” (20 to 40 years of age) who could transfer information and guidance to the young men,



- the current situation at school regarding this topic and the need to help teachers,
 - the challenges posed by new media like video clips on mobile phones to which children are increasingly exposed
- and many other interesting issues that should be looked at in further research projects.

Read more about: [book and media coverage](#)

For further information please contact: [Gabriele Schmied](#), [Christine Reidl](#)

Upcoming Events

3 September 2008, Graz:

Wissenstag Österreich – Triple-I '08 (Knowledge Day Austria – Triple-I '08)

Annette Hexelschneider holds a lecture on visualizing community potential: “Die Plattform Wissensmanagement (PVM) – eine Community wird visualisiert” (The Platform Knowledge Management – A community is being visualized).

Read more about: [Wissenstag Österreich, Triple-I '08](#)

For further information please contact: [Annette Hexelschneider](#)

8-9 September 2008, Bratislava (Slovakia): Impact of Poverty and Social Exclusion on Children's Lives and their Well-being

The programme, all abstracts and CVs of this workshop, jointly organised by the European Centre and the Institute for Labour and Family Research in Bratislava, are now on-line.

Read more about: [event](#)

For further information please contact: [Renate Kränzl-Nagl](#)

20 October 2008, Toronto (Canada):

Look Globally – Act Locally: Integrated Care Systems Symposium

Kai Leichsenring will be the keynote speaker at this symposium organised by the Canadian Research Network for Care in the Community (CRNCC) and the Ontario Community Support Association (OCSA).

Background: Ongoing concerns about the sustainability of publicly funded health care in the face of changing demographics, rising costs, and persistent shortages of human resources, set the context for a policy push towards more integrated health and social care systems locally, nationally, and internationally. Results have been mixed. Some integration initiatives in some jurisdictions have shown considerable success in meeting population needs and improving system sustainability. Others have yet to demonstrate positive outcomes.

Read more about: [event](#)

For further information please contact: [Kai Leichsenring](#)



8-10 June 2009, Ottawa (Canada): “Microsimulation: Bridging Data and Policy”

The 2nd General Conference of the International Microsimulation Association is currently being prepared. Asghar Zaidi, who was leading the organisation of the 1st conference last year hosted by the European Centre in Vienna, is a member of the organising committee for the 2nd conference too.

Currently the organisers call for proposals till 22 September 2008 in the areas of

- Static (cross-sectional) microsimulation models, including models of taxes and transfers;
- Dynamic (longitudinal) microsimulation models;
- Spatial microsimulation models;
- Behavioural (interacting agent) microsimulation models;
- Health and long-term care microsimulation models;
- Other types of microsimulation models (e.g. infectious disease, housing, child care);
- Issues relating to data underlying microsimulation models; and
- Reviews of the history/development of microsimulation models

Read more about: [event](#)

For further information please contact: [Asghar Zaidi](#)

Publications

Working Paper

Sutherland, H., Figari, F., Lelkes, O., Levy, H., Lietz, C., Mantovani, D., Paulus, A. (2008) “Improving the Capacity and Usability of EUROMOD – Final Report”, EM04/08

The working paper summarizes the outcome of the I-CUE project and experience of working with the new member states. It presents the latest developments in Euromod, including both the technical improvements and the inclusion of more countries, thus contains essential information on the latest version of the European tax-benefit model.

Read more about: [working paper](#), [project](#)

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



By our Research Affiliate Horacio Levy

Levy, H., Morawski, L., Myck, M. (2008) “Alternative Tax-Benefit Strategies to Support Children in Poland”

Eurostat data shows that children and elderly are especially at risk of being in poverty. In 2004 the average rates of poverty risk in the European Union for these groups were about 19%. In Poland, the rate was 29% for children and only 7% for the elderly. We examine the role of the tax-benefit system in explaining this situation and analyse how much child poverty figures could change under several reform scenarios.

In 2005, families with children were mainly supported by a means-tested family allowance and some supplements. This was extended in 2007 with the introduction of a non-refundable child tax credit. Making use of the European tax-benefit microsimulation model EUROMOD, this paper assesses the consequences of the recent reform in Poland. We examine the outcome in comparison to child policies in three other European systems and show that poverty reduction would have been more pronounced if child policies were changed along the lines of the system in France or the United Kingdom. The Austrian system – relying primarily on universal benefits – would bring about a similar reduction in the poverty rate but with much greater reduction in the poverty gap.

The paper presents detailed distributional analyses under the different systems assuming the costs of “importing” the 2007 reform into each of them.

Read more about: [working paper](#)

For further information please contact: [Horacio Levy](#)

TV

Bernd Marin gave an interview for the Austrian TV (ORF 2) magazine “Kontraste” (Contrasts) on the 24-hour-care discussion in Austria.

Read more about: [short overview](#)

For further information please contact: [Werner Bregar](#)

Radio

Irmgard Eisenbach-Stangl (14 July 2008): “35 Jahre Wiener Drogenpolitik: Was wurde erreicht?” (35 Years of Viennese Drug Policy: What Has Been Achieved?), The Austrian Radio Station Ö1 (“Journal Panorama”).

In the years after 1970 Vienna started to deal with drug problems. A drug coordinator position was created as an important step. Today the fight against the reasons for addiction has become the central task.

Read more about: [article in German](#), [teaser audio file](#), [book](#), [project](#)

For further information please contact: [Irmgard Eisenbach-Stangl](#)



Journal Article

Hexelschneider, A. (2008) “Europa im Fokus” (Europe in Focus) in “Soziale Sicherheit/CHSS” (Social Security) of the Schweizer Bundesamt für Sozialversicherungen (Swiss Federal Social Insurance Office)

This article provides an introduction to the work of the European Centre together with examples of its current research. It was made possible due to the support of our Swiss National Liaison Official Ms. Sabina Littmann-Wernli.

Read more about: [article in German](#), [article in French](#) – download at the bottom of the page
For further information please contact: [Annette Hexelschneider](#)

Newspaper Articles

Bernd Marin (2005-2008) Various articles in Der Standard, in Die Presse, in Format, in Die kleine Zeitung, Vienna, Graz, 2008

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

Website

Kränzl-Nagl, R. (2008) ‘Kindheitsforschung zur nationalen und internationalen Sozialberichterstattung’ (Measuring and Monitoring of Childhood and the Social Situation of Children – Challenges at the National and International Level), in “Thema des Monats”, Kinderrechte-Website Bundesministerium für Gesundheit, Familie und Jugend (“Topic of the Month”, website of the Austrian Federal Ministry for Health, Family and Youth)

Kränzl-Nagl, R. (2008) “Entwicklungen in der Kindheitsforschung” (Developments in Childhood Research), in “Thema des Monats – Expertinnenstimme”, Kinderrechte-Website Bundesministerium für Gesundheit, Familie und Jugend (“Topic of the Month – Expert’s Voice”, website of the Austrian Federal Ministry for Health, Family and Youth)

Read more about: [“Kindheitsforschung zur nationalen und internationalen Sozialberichterstattung”](#), [“Entwicklungen in der Kindheitsforschung”](#)

For further information please contact: [Renate Kränzl-Nagl](#)



News from our National Liaison Officials

Project of the Dutch National Liaison Official Thea Meinema, Netherlands Centre for Social Development (MOVISIE): “Combating Social Exclusion among Young Homeless Populations”

Homeless young people participate in a European research project.

May 1st 2008 was the starting date of the project “Combating social exclusion among young homeless populations (CSEYHP): a comparative investigation of homeless paths among local white, local ethnic group and migrant young men and women and appropriate reinsertion methods”. This 3-year research project is funded by the 7th Research Framework Programme of the European Union.

Levels of youth homelessness vary between European countries in relation to the patterns of support that are available to them. Within countries there are differences in relation to gender, ethnic minority group, and migrant status. Strong family support systems no longer form a sufficient guarantee for avoiding youth homelessness. In Northern Europe, interventionist programmes have been developed to work with homeless populations. The project aims to test the usefulness of two of these programmes – the Dutch 8-steps model and the Safe Moves model in the UK – when working with homeless youth.

The four project partners are: the London Metropolitan University, United Kingdom; Centro de Investigação e Estudos de Sociologia (CIES-ISCTE) in Lisbon, Portugal; Univerzita Karlova v Praze, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Civil Society Studies in Prague, Czech Republic; and MOVISIE, Netherlands Centre for Social Development in Utrecht, the Netherlands. MOVISIE will be the project coordinator.

The objectives of the project are fourfold:

1. to understand the life trajectories of different homeless youth populations in different national contexts
2. to develop the concepts of risk and social exclusion in relation to the experience of young homeless people and to the reinsertion process
3. to test how different methods of working contribute to the reinsertion process for young people
4. to investigate the roles of and relationships between the young persons, trusted adults, lead professionals, peer mentors and family members in the delivery of these programmes across all four countries.

The project involves the active participation of young people: as sources of information on their own lives and histories, as co-researchers in interviewing their peers, and as contributors to the national workshops that will take place in the four countries to assess and discuss the research findings. At the end of the three-year project the results will be presented at an international conference.

Read more about: [project](#)

For further information please contact: [Thea Meinema](#)



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

Annette Hexelschneider
Head of Knowledge and Information Management Support Unit
European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research
Berggasse 17
A-1090 Vienna (Austria)
Tel: +43-1-319 45 05-23
Fax: +43-1-319 45 05-19
hexelschneider@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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