



Dear Reader,

The present issue covers the months of July and August. We wish you a nice summer break and will come back to you with our September news.

Sincerely yours,

Annette Hexelschneider

Head of Knowledge and Information Management Support Unit

Policy Brief

Fiscal Policy and Sustainability in View of Crisis and Population Ageing in Central and Eastern European Countries

This Policy Brief by Asghar Zaidi and Małgorzata Rejniak examines the interrelated aspects of the fiscal and economic policy as well as the impact of population ageing on the sustainability of public finances in the wake of the recent economic crisis.

The countries covered are the Central and Eastern European Countries of the EU: Bulgaria and Romania; the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania; and the so-called Visegrád Four – the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. These CEE countries experienced an impressive economic growth around 2006, matched by a similarly impressive contraction during the crisis in 2009. The governments were proactive in adopting an expansionary fiscal policy, and observed a successful recovery during 2010. During the same times, it also became clear how mounting government debts can lead a country to the brink of insolvency. This is a genuine concern for the CEE countries especially for the fact that these relatively young market economies are still learning to deal with the global economic fluctuations. They have sided with the austerity-now arguments and have therefore embarked on various measures to cut the budget deficit and reduce public debt. Such a choice is partly driven by the IMF and the EU conditions so as to raise market confidence on public governance, but also due to CEE countries' own ambitions to deal with their structural problems and to be fit to join the Eurozone.

What further accentuates the challenges of the sustainability of public finances is the prospect of rapidly aging populations, caused by a combination of longevity gains, falling fertility and emigration. The sustainability gap indicator of the European Commission shows that the demographic transition will have a significant impact on public finances of many CEE states, particularly in Romania, the Czech Republic,



Slovakia and Lithuania. Achieving the delicate balance between current and future economic and social policy issues as well as between the future financial and social sustainability issues requires not only the political will to make tough policy decisions, but also the ability to persuade the public to make sacrifices to ensure long-term sustainability of public welfare systems.

Read more about: [Policy Brief](#)

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

Spanish and German Versions of our July Policy Brief

A Spanish version of our July Policy Brief on “Intergenerational Solidarity: Policy Challenges and Societal Responses”, i.e. “Solidaridad Intergeneracional: Retos Políticos y Respuestas Societales”, has been published.

Translation courtesy of IMSERSO / Instituto de Mayores y Servicios Sociales, facilitated by the organisers of the EU-Presidency event in Logroño (La Rioja). Translated by Javier del Castillo Pintad.

A German version, i.e. “Generationenübergreifende Solidarität: Politische Herausforderungen und gesellschaftliche Antworten”, has been published too. Translated by Willem Stamatiou and Katrin Gasior.

Read more about: [Spanish, German Policy Brief](#) (available at the bottom of the page)

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

Projects

Mobile Sexuality: Towards a New European Strategy in Sex Education and Prevention of Sexual Transmitted Diseases (SAFESEX)

In June, the project SAFESEX started. It aims to improve the level of sex education and the competences of sex educators in the participating countries by implementing innovative methods such as modern teaching techniques and mobile technology. Youth empowerment is a central principle of the project.

The overall objective of the project is to reduce the frequency of sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies in the project countries.

Read more about: [project](#)

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

Austrian Champions in European Research

The European Centre (Catharina Hjortsberg) was honoured as “Austrian Champion in European Research” by the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) for the EuroREACH project (A Handbook to Access Health Care Data for Cross-country Comparisons of Efficiency and Quality).



From left to right: *Astrid Hoebertz* / Unit for Life-Sciences and Technologies, National Contact Point for HEALTH in FP7, FFG, *Catharina Hjortsberg* / European Centre, *Sabine Herlitschka* / Head of the Department for European and International Programs, FFG, *Friedrich Faulhammer* / Department Head, Austrian Federal Ministry of Science and Research

The Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) offers comprehensive information and expert advice to organisations and researchers located in Austria and their partners abroad interested in participating in European research programmes.

Image license: FFG/Anna Rauchenberger

Read more about: [event website](#), [EuroREACH project](#)

For further information please contact: [Catharina Hjortsberg](#)



INTERLINKS – European Overview Papers / Case Study Published

Within the INTERLINKS project (Health Systems and Long-term Care for Older People in Europe – Modelling the INTERfaces and LINKS between Prevention, Rehabilitation, Quality of Services and Informal Care), three European Overview Papers and a case study have been published.

The presentation on “Quality Development in Long-term Care: An Overview of European Approaches” by Kai Leichsenring at the AcademyHealth 2010 Annual Research Meeting in Boston, was based on the European Overview Paper “Quality Management and Quality Assurance in Long-term Care” (Nies et al., 2010). The focus of this paper is on one of the objectives: to analyse how the emerging long-term care (LTC) systems within European welfare states are dealing with issues of quality assurance and quality management in various settings of LTC for older people.

Read more about: [European Overview Papers / Case Study](#) (bottom of the page)

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

Mainstreaming Ageing Newsletter – Summer Issue

The Summer issue of the Mainstreaming Ageing Newsletter has been published. It focuses on the quality of life in old age.

Read more about: [Newsletter](#)

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

Events

Upcoming Events

2-4 September, Budapest (Hungary): Social Policy and the Global Crisis: Consequences and Responses

At the 8th Annual Conference of the European Social Policy Association Network (ESPAnet) in Budapest, Pieter Vanhuyse will present a paper on “The Political Timing of OECD Pension Generosity Cutbacks” in Stream 18, “Financing the Welfare State”, which is convened by Professors Joakim Palme and Natalie Morel.

Read more about: [event](#)

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



7-8 September, Liège (Belgium): Assuring Adequate Pensions and Social Benefits for All European Citizens

In the framework of the Belgian Presidency of the European Union, a conference on “Assuring Adequate Pensions and Social Benefits for All European Citizens” is being organised.

Ashgar Zaidi will contribute the presentation “The Economic and Social Outcomes of Pension Reforms” to Session IV: Evaluating Pension Reforms.

Read more about: [conference agenda](#)

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

3-4 November, Brussels (Belgium): Quality Management by Result-oriented Indicators – Towards Benchmarking in Residential Care for Older People

The Final Conference of the project “Quality Management by Result-oriented Indicators – Towards Benchmarking in Residential Care for Older People” will take place on 3 and 4 November 2010 in Brussels, at the Committee of the Regions’ conference facilities where the participation of about 150 experts and policy-makers from all EU Member States is expected.

The project was coordinated by the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of North Rhine-Westphalia, the University of Dortmund, Vilans (the Netherlands), the City University of London and E-Qalin GmbH. The project is co-funded under the Progress programme of the European Commission’s DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and runs from December 2008 till December 2010.

The main objective of the project has been the construction of an international framework of standards, including a conceptual analysis for quality of life and a set of result-oriented indicators to define, measure and assess quality in residential care for older people.

During the Final Conference we will present and discuss the obtained results of the project; simultaneous translation between English and German will be provided.

Registration deadline 6 September 2010 latest. There is no registration fee for this conference.

Read more about: [event information and registration](#)

For further information please contact: [Frédérique Hoffmann](#)



Past Events

8-11 July, Leeds (United Kingdom): 5th International Carers Conference: New Frontiers in Caring: 2010 and Beyond

Frédérique Hoffmann participated in the 5th International Carers Conference and presented during the workshop session: “Health, Social Care and Wellbeing”.

The other three main topics covered at the conference included:

- “Design, Technology and the Built Environment”;
- “Caring & Employment Issues and Funding”;
- “Financial and Legal Support”.

Read more about: [event](#)

For further information please contact: [Frédérique Hoffmann](#)

7-10 July, Helsinki (Finland): 8th European Conference on Health Economics

Ricardo Rodrigues presented some of INTERLINKS’ preliminary results at the 8th European Conference on Health Economics in Helsinki. The presentation was integrated into a session titled “Long-term Care for the Elderly: A European Perspective”.

Among the issues highlighted in the presentation were:

- the impact of multilevel governance and the existing health/social care divide in the financing of long-term care;
- equity and access to long-term care benefits;
- the changes and challenges brought about by the increasing reliance on market-based mechanisms to provide care services.

Read more about: [event](#)

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

29 June, Vienna (Austria): Portability of Pension, Health, and Other Social Benefits: Facts, Concepts, Issues

The presentation and the paper of our June International Seminar by Robert Holzmann, jointly organised with the Institute for Advanced Studies, Vienna, are on-line now.

Read more about: [presentation and paper](#) (bottom of the page)

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



25-26 June, Prague (Czech Republic): 5th International Health Summit

In the session “Long-term Care and Disease Management: Current Situation in Selected European Countries” Frédérique Hoffmann presented research findings based on the publication “Facts and Figures on Long-term Care”.

The event focused particularly on the topic of “Population Ageing and Chronic Diseases Management: Challenges for Health Reforms”.

The summit was organized by the think tank HealthReform.cz in cooperation with their American partner The Governance Institute. 160 delegates from 14 countries gathered to discuss issues related to financing of long term care and innovative care models in the area of chronic diseases.

Read more about: [event](#), [Facts and Figures on Long-term Care publication by the European Centre](#)

For further information please contact: [Frédérique Hoffmann](#)

24 June, Ancona (Italy): Long-term Care in Europe: Current Challenges and Future Perspectives

Bernd Marin and Frédérique Hoffmann were invited by the Gerontological Research Department of the National Institute of Health and Science on Aging in Italy (INRCA), to present and attend the Joint Scientific Workshop “Long-term Care in Europe: Current Challenges and Future Perspectives”. Other presentations by researchers of INRCA included:

- Fabrizia Lattanzio (Scientific Director of INRCA) on “Quality Indicators for the Care of Frail Older People in Italy”
- Giovanni Lamura on “The Role of Migrant Workers in the Elder Care Sector”
- Fiorella Marcellini on “The Application of Technologies to Support Older People”
- as well as Raffaele Tangora (General Director for Inclusion and Social Rights in the Ministry of Welfare) who presented the Italian national long-term care fund.

Read more about: [National Institute of Health and Science on Aging in Italy](#), [Facts and Figures on Long-term Care publication by the European Centre](#)

For further information please contact: [Frédérique Hoffmann](#)



Publications

Review of EC Book

**Zaidi, Asghar/ Harding, Ann/ Williamson, Paul (Eds.) (2009)
New Frontiers in Microsimulation Modelling. Public Policy and Social Welfare Vol. 36.
Farnham (UK): Ashgate / European Centre Vienna.**

Review by Sven Stöwhase (Fraunhofer-Institut für Angewandte Informationstechnik FIT, Germany) in the Journal of Artificial Societies and Social Simulation (2010) Volume 13, Issue 3, June.

Read more about: [review](#), [book details including sample chapters](#)

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

Book Contributions

Thom, B., with contributions from Eisenbach-Stangl, I. (2010) 'Drinking Contexts and Youth Drunkenness', in: Fox, A./ MacAvoy, M. (Eds.), Expressions of Drunkenness (Four Hundred Rabbits). New York: Routledge.

Contribution abstract:

While there is a tacit social assumption that a certain level of intoxication can be positive – enhancing communication and social bonding –, drunken behaviour beyond that level may be viewed more ambiguously and as a means to disengage the drinker from his or her moral and social responsibilities. When drinking to the point of drunkenness becomes normalized in a culture or a subculture, it becomes extremely difficult to change – particularly when there are occasions and contexts in which drunkenness is socially accepted as a rite of passage. Methodologies to change an entrenched drinking pattern to one that does not involve drunkenness have been poorly understood, let alone promoted, and have often focused on manipulating the external factors of supply or demonstrating the negative consequences of excessive consumption, with little effect.

Read more about: [publication](#)

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



Fuchs, M./ Reidl, Ch./ Schmied, G. (2010) 'Austria: neuerHAUSARZT – Demand-oriented Health-care Services for the Homeless', pp. 6-15 in: WHO Europe (ed.), Poverty and Social Exclusion in the WHO European Region: Health Systems Respond. Copenhagen.

Contribution abstract:

In the framework of the WHO Poverty and Health Technical Consultation 2007, the case study for Austria concentrated on under- and un-employed persons. The focus was on a measure to increase health system performance among homeless persons, in which four physicians offer medical care to residents of several homeless shelters in Vienna according to their needs ("Team neuerHAUSARZT"). The study is introduced by a short general description on the access to health care in Austria containing both the legal background and empirical evidence. Furthermore, it presents data and information on the number, demographic and socio-economic characteristics of homeless people, on inequities in health status and health system access as well as on policies to improve their socio-economic conditions and health system access. For the case study, available documents (concept, annual reports, etc.) were analysed and an expert interview with the project manager of "neuer-HAUSARZT" was carried out. On the basis of the analyses of the data, the documents and the interview, conclusions were drawn regarding the success of the project, its main challenges and hindering factors and possible and reasonable future measures to improve access to health care for homeless people.

Read more about: [publication](#)

For further information please contact: [Michael Fuchs](#)

van Soest, A./ Bovenberg, L./ Zaidi, A. (2010) Ageing, Health and Pensions in Europe: An Economic and Social Policy Perspective (Chapter 1)

Moreira, A./ Whelan, B./ Zaidi, A. (2010) The Demand for Older Workers (Chapter 9)

van Soest, A./ Bovenberg, L./ Zaidi, A. (2010) Policy and Research Challenges for Ageing, Health and Pensions in Europe (Chapter 12)

in: Bovenberg, L./ van Soest, A./ Zaidi, A. (2010) Ageing, Health and Pensions in Europe: An Economic and Social Policy Perspective. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan (forthcoming).

Book abstract:

This book presents an engaging overview of the future research challenges for economists and social scientists concerning population ageing, pensions, health and social care in Europe. Various experts discuss how scientific research can provide cutting-edge evidence on income security of the elderly, well-being of the elderly, and labour markets and older workers: three themes dominating the current European economic and social policy debate. By adopting a forward-looking approach, the book discusses the



remaining knowledge gaps and research opportunities. It also reviews data needs and other infrastructure requirements and explores the implications for research policy.

Read more about: [publication](#)

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

Newspaper Articles

[Marin, Bernd \(2005-2010\) Various articles in: Der Standard, in: Die Presse, in: Format, in: Kleine Zeitung, in: Salzburger Nachrichten, Vienna, Graz, Salzburg, 2010](#)

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



Personnel Matters

Keeping the European Centre Fit – The Vienna LCC Business Run, 24th June



After weeks of training – and one or the other moment of nervousness – a group of seven employees from the European Centre (in orange shirts, from left to right Werner Bregar, Malgorzata Rejniak, Katrin Gasior, Pieter Vanhuyse, René Czerny, Willem Stamatiou, and organiser Andrea Schmidt in the first row), also known as the “European Centre Running Team”, took part in the LCC (Lauf- und ConditionsClub Wien) Business Run in the Vienna Prater.

All runners from the European Centre, supported by a couple of cheerful but non-running colleagues (among them Catharina Hjortsberg and Mercedes Gonzalez-Quijano, first row from left to right) crossed the finishing line after 5 kilometres not only with an orange shirt but also with orange cheeks and an excellent team result. Congratulations to all who made this event a great success, in particular to organiser Andrea Schmidt and to Werner Bregar who arranged for the team dresses!

Image license: European Centre/Judith Schreiber

For further information please contact: [Andrea Schmidt](mailto:Andrea.Schmidt@eurocentre.org)



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