



Dear Reader,

Please find below news from a successful first mission to Kiev in the context of the European Centre's consultancy to the Government of Ukraine by Bernd Marin, Alexandre Sidorenko and Asghar Zaidi.

We are also glad to welcome Leslie Tarver as a Researcher in the Health and Care team!

Sincerely yours,

Willem Stamatiou
Publications Officer

Projects

General Assembly Meeting / GAM 2011

We would like to thank once more all participants for their contribution to the General Assembly Meeting of the European Centre, during 5-6 September 2011. We highly appreciate all the preparatory work you put in, as well as your participation in the lively and constructive debates. We would like to disseminate information on the related presentations made – please refer to the links on our [GAM website](#):

username: gam
password: 27cybm

Furthermore, we have received the dates for the next General Assembly Meeting, which will take place at the UNOV 2-3 July 2012. May we kindly ask you to already mark this date in your calendar.

For further information on the GAM, please contact: [Mercedes Gonzalez-Quijano](#)



Consultancy to the Government of Ukraine, on pension reform issues, funded by UNDP

Bernd Marin, Alexandre Sidorenko and Asghar Zaidi went on an 'evidence gathering' first mission to Kiev, during 20-23 September 2011, to get the information and data from the Ministry of Social Policy (Ukraine) alongside the Lead Social Policy Advisor to UNDP, Ms. Lydia Shouleva. The European Centre delegation met with high-level officials of MoSP in exploring ideas about potential pension policy reforms in Ukraine, and also the political feasibility of selected pension policy reforms. This has been the first-pillar public PAYG scheme, but issues that overlap with the introduction of the second pillar of pensions were also discussed. The consultancy work will now develop a strategic paper with recommendations to the MoSP regarding the reforms of the pension system. The work will require a close coordination with the UNDP office in Kiev, as well as with many distinguished Ukrainian experts.

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

Workshop “Wirkungsweisen und Effekte von Geldleistungen und Sachleistungen im Sozialbereich” / Outcomes and Effects of Social Monetary Benefits and Benefits in Kind

The European Centre is currently working on a research project, commissioned by the City of Vienna, about “Outcomes and Effects of Cash Benefits as against Services in Kind in the Area of Social Welfare”. In this context, a group of Austrian experts was invited on 20 September 2011 to discuss and exchange experiences about advantages and caveats of cash benefits vs. services in kind in the area of adult social care (long-term care). The issue is of specific importance in Austria as it was one of the first countries in Europe to introduce a comprehensive LTC allowance. Today, about 5.1% of the whole population are entitled to this benefit that is funded by general taxes, needs-tested but not means-tested and gives beneficiaries the freedom to choose how to spend the money. While the larger part of the scheme has become an indirect payment for family carers in households with people in need of care, it also supported a sharp rise in social service provision that is funded by users' out-of-pocket payments and the regional governments (*Bundesländer*).

Most beneficiaries are quite or very satisfied with this benefit. However, among the negative and unintended consequences has been an emerging market for migrant carers coming mainly from neighbouring Slovak and Czech Republics, incentives for (older) women to leave the labour market and issues concerning the quality of care. At the same time, local authorities and regional governments report increasing difficulties to cover rising costs of subsidised services and residential care facilities, even though during the next few years a “long-term care fund” provided by the federal government will help to fill the gaps. But a major reform is under way to find a new balance – also between services in kind and cash benefits. The discussion made clear that this will not be an easy task as long as care remains a matter of subsidiarity rather than social solidarity. Furthermore, even if services in kind were to be expanded, it will be difficult to find, train, employ and retain the necessary workforce.



In their analysis, the experts agreed in most areas that were on the agenda and in their assessment that easy solutions will be difficult to find. However, related challenges might give rise to completely new approaches to a better integration of health and social care, improved steering mechanisms (prevention), new kinds of job profiles, innovative ways of networking, in particular in rural and alpine areas, and changing attitudes to combining work and care.

Read more about: [project](#)

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

Events

Upcoming Events

17-18 October, Cracow, Polish EU Presidency Event: First Annual Convention of the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion

Workshop on Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity – ‘Breaking the Vicious Circle of Poverty and Social Exclusion of Older People’

The Poverty Convention is jointly organised by the European Commission and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy on behalf of the Polish EU Presidency, and it is linked to a review of actions undertaken by the EU towards eradication of poverty and social exclusion in Europe, in particular taking stock of progress made towards the headline target, which is to help at least 20 million people in getting out of poverty and social exclusion.

For the goal of providing clear recommendations for future actions, five parallel workshops will be held in which good practices across EU countries will be discussed. Workshop 4 on Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity, titled “Fighting Poverty and Social Exclusion of Older People” will propose solutions on how to guarantee that national social inclusion strategies take fully account of the specificity of poverty and social exclusion in old age and support active and dignified ageing. The results of the workshops, i.e. final recommendations, will feed into the preparation and implementation of the European Year for Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity 2012 and the National Reforms Programmes.

Asghar Zaidi will act as rapporteur from the workshop to the plenary session of the Convention, combining the recommendations from workshop 4 with his own research on older people poverty in European countries.

Read more about: [First Annual Convention](#)

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



Past Events

19-21 September, Vienna (Austria): Challenge Social Innovation Conference

Francesco Barbabella, Andrea Schmidt and Giovanni Lamura made a presentation concerning the role of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in supporting family carers of dependent older people at the Challenge Social Innovation Conference. The meeting was co-organized by NET4SOCIETY with support from the European Commission, the Centre for Social Innovation in Austria and the Dortmund University of Technology.

Preliminary findings from the CARICT project were discussed with experts in the fields of social innovation and demographic ageing. Hence, some of the most relevant ICT solutions for carers currently available in Europe, as well as the impact assessment methodology developed in the course of the project were presented.

Read more about: [presentation](#), [CARICT](#), [Challenge Social Innovation Conference](#)

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

22-23 September, Vienna (Austria): Evaluating Care Across Borders / ECAB

From German dialysis patients seeking care in Lignano (Italy), to Finnish dental tourists in Tallinn and multi-resistant bacteria travelling with English patients to Amsterdam – the third ECAB project meeting provided the 13 scientific partners from the European consortium (coordinated by LSE Health) with a thorough overview of the status quo of the varied work streams. All work packages, from treatment pathways to telemedicine, deal with the potential challenges faced by patients moving across borders and the impact of these movements on national health care systems across the EU.

The European Centre hosted the meeting and project partners participated not only in a productive scientific exchange but also in a traditional working dinner at the Austrian tavern (Heuriger). Presenting at the dinner was Univ. Prof. Dr. August Österle from the Vienna University of Economics, whose speech highlighted the movement of migrant care workers across the border of the Slovak Republic and Austria, as well as cross-border dental care between Austria and Hungary.

Read more about: [project](#)

This project is co-funded by the EU through the FP7 Cooperation Work Programme: Health (contract number 242058; contract acronym EUCBCC) 2010-2013 EUCBCC consortium

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

Evaluating care across borders



European Union Cross Border Care Collaboration



5 October, Vienna (Austria): I. HuMan Forum

Bernd Marin was one of the panel discussants at the first of a series of public events on a paradigm shift in economy, society and politics.

Read more about: [agenda](#), [Institute for Humanistic Management](#)

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

Publications

Book Reviews

Irmgard Eisenbach-Stangl's co-edited book, *Two Worlds of Drug Consumption in Late Modern Societies* (Ashgate, 2009), has been reviewed by Prof Craig Reinerman in *Contemporary Sociology: A Journal of Reviews*, Vol. 39, No. 5, pp. 605-607.

Contemporary Sociology is the official reviews journal of the American Sociological Association (ASA).

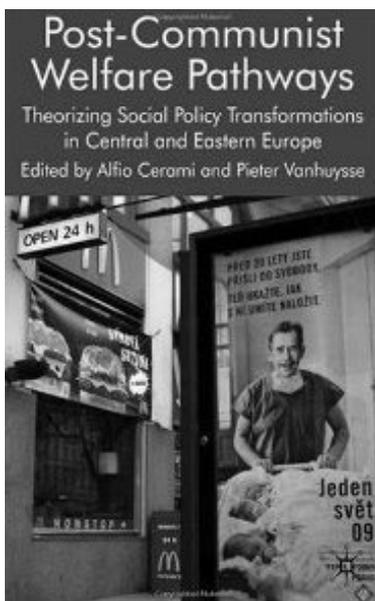
Excerpt:

“If you were told that this book is a six-city survey report on illicit drug use with 159 tables and figures, you might skip it. But read on, for these great convoys of data are sometimes strafed by fascinating findings. The case studies cover a wide swath of Europe – London, Amsterdam, Turin, Vienna, Prague, Warsaw – and if you look carefully, they are windows onto the tense border zone between law and culture, where conventional drug policy is battling to hold off a new paradigm.

In each city the authors synthesized existing national and city data on drug use and drug problems. They surveyed convenience samples of 100 “socially marginalized” users who had used heroin, cocaine, or amphetamine twice a week or more for the previous six months, located primarily via the treatment or legal systems; and 100 “socially integrated” users who had used cannabis once per week or more and/or cocaine, Ecstasy, or amphetamine at least once per month for the past 6 months, located mostly through clubs and private contacts. The authors also interviewed expert informants from criminal justice, treatment, and other agencies. (...)”

Read more about: [review article](#)

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



Pieter Vanhuyse's co-edited book, *Post-Communist Welfare Pathways* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), has been reviewed by Dr Bjorn Hacker from the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung in the journal *Osteuropa*, Vol. 10, pp. 120-122.

Excerpts:

“The thesis that postcommunist governments have used their state power in order to consolidate their own regimes through the preservation of social order in the sense of preventing protests is plausible. This explains the practice of politically promoted early retirement in many countries in the early 1990s, which aimed to solve labour market problems. The result was rapidly increasing rates of dependency between contribution payers and pension recipients, which subsequently necessitated radical cutbacks one decade later. ...The existence of hybrid welfare state models runs like a red thread through the country case studies. ...The analysis of this trait, which has long been ignored by the social sciences, is the great merit of this book.”

Read more about: [Post-Communist Welfare Pathways](#)

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

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

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



Personnel Matters

New Staff

Leslie Tarver



... joins the European Centre as a Researcher in the Health and Care team. Her previous work at the Gesundheit Österreich, GmbH focused on integration of care initiatives as part of the redesign of health systems to respond to aging populations and a growing burden of chronic disease. She hopes to continue to explore innovative models in this field and also expand her focus into other areas including healthy aging and coordination between health and social care.

Leslie is currently in the final year of her Masters' Program in Public Health with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Her Master's thesis explores the role of online social networks in improving chronic disease management.

Leslie has also completed the first half of her medical training at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. In 2009, she made a big decision to put medical school on hold and move to Vienna to join her husband for his first foreign service posting. Prior to medical school, Leslie graduated from Harvard with a degree in Social Anthropology and moved to Washington to pursue her idealistic goals: hoping to change the health system by working with the late Senator Ted Kennedy, and attempting to influence the media as a radio producer at NPR and the Washington Post.

After two years in Vienna, Leslie says she feels truly at home in this gracious city, and has developed a love for the Opera, the Heurigen and of course the fine Viennese tortes! She remains a California-girl at heart though, and tries to get back to San Diego often to visit her family and soak up the California sun!

For further information please contact: [Leslie Tarver](#)



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

Willem Stamatiou
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
stamatiou@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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