

New Horizons in Social Policy First ESPAnet Poland Conference Poznań University of Economics, Poland, 2-4.10.2014

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The European Network for Social Policy Analysis (ESPAnet) Europe was set up in 2002 and it is “an association of academics involved or interested in the analysis of social policy in Europe”¹. The first ESPAnet annual conference *Changing European Societies – The Role for Social Policy* was organised in 13th to 15th of November 2003 by the Danish National Institute of Social Research (SFI), Copenhagen, Denmark. Since that moment, the yearly conferences became an excellent opportunity to exchange ideas and research outputs in the analysis of social policy.

Poznań University of Economics hosted the first ESPAnet Poland conference between 2nd and 4th of October 2014. The conference included parallel English and Polish streams. We will detail below the English ones. For more details please visit <http://espanetpolska.ue.poznan.pl/index.php/en/>.

The welcome and opening of the conference was done by Vice-Rector Maciej Żukowski. The first key speaker Irena E. Kotowska presented a paper about *Social Investment and New Demography of Europe*. The first parallel session (*In search for a new social policy strategy/model in Central and Eastern Europe*) was focused on social policy changes encountered after the fall of the communism in 1989. This stream included three presentations: - *Effectiveness of the social system in the CEE countries regarding the poverty situation* by

Karina Kubelková (University of Economics, Prague, Czech Republic);

- *The impact of EU accession of East European countries on their institutional shape of social policy* by Simona Maria Stănescu (Research Institute for Quality of Life, Romanian Academy);

- *Social policy in new EU Member States 2008-2013* by Maciej Żukowski (Poznań University of Economics, Poland).

Discussions and debates were focused on common social policy elements among analysed East European countries: Czech Republic, Romania, and Poland.

The next round of papers were included into a joint session: the stream Education in the 21st century – impact, measurement, challenges and the stream Work – family reconciliation policy – issues of equality, equity and efficiency. Education related papers approached the issues of access to education, the quality of education, education policy, modern forms of education, and the link between education and labour. The following topics were presented:

- *Risk of investments in human capital and expected workers mobility* by Olena Shelest (Poznań University of Economics, Poland); -*Education As Social Policy? Theoretical Impact and Empirical Challenges: The German Case* by Michaela Schulze (University of Kassel, Germany);

- *Students at the Poznań University*

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of Economics and the Labour Market - Expectations and Perspectives by Baha Kalinowska-Sufinowicz (Poznań University of Economics, Poland);

- *Maternal Separation Anxiety from the family policy perspective. Is there space for action?* by Klaudyna Szczupak (University of Warsaw, Faculty of Journalism and Political Science, Poland);

- *Meaning of work in changing labor market* by Magdalena Andrałójć (Poznań University of Economics, Poland).

The subject of the current demographic challenges was approached in the first morning session of the second day of the conference. Three papers were presented and discussed under the stream of *Social services in ageing societies*:

- *Social services for the elderly. The context of mass consumption society* by Agnieszka Furmańska-Maruszak, and Anna Wójtewicz (Institute of Sociology, Nicholas Copernicus University, Torun, Poland);

- *Public or private, central or local? – how to finance and organize the national LTC system* by Natalia Marska-Dzioba (University of Szczecin, Szczecin, Department of Finance, Poland);

- *Are older people free to choose their social care service or is it enforced?* by Jiby Mathew (Social and Public Policy University of Jyväskylä, Finland).

The increase demand for provision of social services is caused by various factors, among each: ageing of population, growing age – dependency ratios, migration of young adults.

The second morning session included the following presentations:

- *Undocumented migrant women victims of violence in the crisis-stricken edges of Europe* by Konstantina Davaki, and Dimitris Boucas (London School of Economics, United Kingdom);

- *New Horizons in Social Policy? German Trade Union Influence on Social Policy Reform Processes* by Hanna Jeanrond, and Michaela Schulze (University of Kassel, Germany);

- *Pension literacy and consumers' decisions in the context of pension system reforms* by Iwona Olejnik, and Sylwester Białowas (Poznań University of Economics, Poland);

- *Explaining the modification of the pension reform in Hungary* by Michał Polakowski (International Centre for Research and Analysis, Warsaw, Poland).

The Key speaker Professor Peter Peter Taylor-Gooby lectured about *Ways Forward in European Welfare*. Peter Peter Taylor-Gooby emphasised the point of social policy as both a field of study and distinctive concern, with focus on welfare state. Among current challenges, Professor Taylor-Gooby had mentioned: ageing, decline in solidarity, immigration, ascendancy of liberal economics, as well as practical problems soluble by solidarity. Comparative European statistics were focus on population at risk of poverty, and impact of access to social benefits and social services on their "laziness" and decision to stay or move to another country. Other subjects approached referred to poverty policies, as they remain mainly work-centred policies. The conclusion of the presentation invited the auditorium to wonder if we are not looking the wrong way in social policy.

The first afternoon joint session grouped paper under two complementary topics: *Welfare State Comparative Methodology and The Welfare Funding Puzzle – New Financial Approaches*. Presented papers were:

- *Comparing Active Welfare Regimes and Active Ageing Strategies: Time and Path Dependency* by Rosangela Lodigiani (Department of Sociology, Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Milano, Italy), and Emma Garavaglia (Department of Sociology and Social Research, Milano University);

- *Measuring social security coverage* by Krzysztof Hagemeyer (Professor at Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg, Warsaw, Poland);

- *The impact of living and working longer on pension income in five European countries: Estonia, Finland, Hungary, the Netherlands and*

Poland, by Elena Jarocińska (CASE, Poland), Anna Ruzik-Sierdzińska (CASE, Poland), Niku Määttänen (ETLA Finland), Andres Võrk (Praxis, Estonia), Robert Gal (Kopint-Tarki, Hungary), Theo Nijman (Netspar, the Netherlands);

- *(Polish) social enterprises – taking ‘administrative risk’ instead of economic one* by Anna Ciepiewska-Kowalik (Institute of Political Studies, the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, Poland), and Bartosz Pielński (Institute of Social Policy, Warsaw University, Poland).

The morning session of the last day of the conference has included papers under the subject Work – family reconciliation policy – issues of equality, equity, and efficiency:

- *The parental leave reforms and childbearing in Poland* by Anna Kurowska (Institute of Social Policy, Warsaw University, Poland);

- *Welfare mix in practice – classification of intersectoral instruments of public tasks performance*, by Stanisław Kamiński (Statistical Office in Wrocław, Wrocław, Poland);

- *Work-Life Balance – a challenge for social policy* by Renata Tomaszewska-Lipiec (Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz, Poland);

- *Gender, household labour division and subjective well-being* by Piotr Michoń (Poznań University of Economics, Poland).

The first ESPAnet Poland conference represented an excellent scientific event focus on sharing the knowledge in the field of social policy. The international participation enriched the multi-disciplinary approaches of social policy, supporting comparative further research.

Note

¹ <https://blogg.hioa.no/espanet/>.