

Editorial

After 18 months of efforts and work, we are very pleased to announce the launch of an important activity of RECWOWE: the **European Data Center for Work and Welfare (EDACwowe)**. It provides information on and access to databanks on work and welfare issues from a European comparative perspective. EDACwowe has been developed under the responsibility of the University of Tilburg and SFI in Copenhagen. It is the result of a strong and permanent collaboration among the partners and the members of the RECWOWE Network of Excellence (NoE) and with the advice of external experts. This newsletter presents detailed information about its creation and its objectives. The Center is a central building block of the NoE and we hope that, with permanent updating, it will become a very useful instrument for researchers and for policy-makers.

Please consult the website: www.edacwowe.eu

We would also like to draw your attention to the second annual RECWOWE "Integration Week" (formerly annual conference) that will be organised in Oslo from the 10th to the 14th of June 2008. This newsletter also includes the most recent information on the activities of RECWOWE, interesting publications in the area of work and welfare, as well as the recent developments in European employment and social policy.

Wim Van Oorschot and Denis Bouget

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1 - INTERVIEW OF THE MONTH

**WIM VAN OORSCHOT, PROFESSOR OF SOCIAL POLICY, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY,
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Wim VAN OORSCHOT

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EDACwowe is a newly launched meta-data-shell offering information on and access to a wide variety of data concerning issues of work and welfare. EDACwowe is an integrative initiative in the REWCOWE framework. Wim van Oorschot, overall coordinator of EDACwowe, explains some details of the new data center

Question – What is the purpose of EDACwowe and what are its advantages compared to existing sources of data on issues related to work and welfare?

The main purpose of the EDACwowe meta-data-shell is to structure the ocean of information that is available on work and welfare issues. There is a very large and steadily growing number of databases and it is possible to access many of these on the web. But, while more information has become accessible, from the perspective of academics and policy-makers it is not systematic and lacks transparency. EDACwowe endeavours to structure that ocean of data on **both** work and welfare in one unique integrative instrument. It is the first database of its kind on work and welfare in a European comparative perspective. It gathers, explains and rationalizes the various sources of data, and makes them accessible through the EDACwowe website. It does not exclude databases that have either a more global comparative or single national perspective, but these are not its main focus. There are four types of comparative data that cover the main nexus of work and welfare included in the EDACwowe website: opinion surveys, socio-economic surveys, indicators and statistics, policies and institutions. In existing databases these categories are often combined and not clearly separated. EDACwowe provides information on as well as, in most cases, a direct link to the data. Doing this is an advantage for many reasons: the data and the

by Caroline de La Porte

way it is presented is more structured (according to type of comparative data), more comprehensive (rather than scattered or merged), more focused on particular topics, more coherent, and with more direct links to the data itself and with information about how to access it. In sum, EDACwowe combines a focus on work and welfare topics, with a very good and accessible structure and direct linking for access to data.

Question – Who is the target audience?

The ultimate test of the robustness and indeed usefulness of EDACwowe will be through the use of the database, by students, academics, policy makers and other users. It deemed useful, then the information about the website, which is free of charge, will be shared informally, even for the non-REWCOWE members. The EDACwowe database is aimed at academics, to facilitate research and systematic access to data in work and welfare issues. It is also aimed at policy-makers and interest groups so that they can rapidly find information about opinion polls, work and welfare policies and institutions, statistics and indicators. We hope that the website will also facilitate teaching and supports small research assignments (by students).

Question – How do you expect the data centre to contribute to research?

I expect that the EDACwowe meta-data-shell would be used in at least three different ways. The first is to facilitate the data-searching, compilation of data and the use of information generally in the areas of work and welfare. Secondly, I hope and expect that it will lead academics, who tend dominantly to use one source of data they are most acquainted with, to reflect more about the different sources of data available to them and to test key hypotheses with different sources of data that address similar issues. Thirdly, I expect EDACwowe to stimulate multi-level analysis, understood in a broad sense, where one combines data from various levels and types. A qualitative analysis could for example be complemented by quantitative indicators data

to illustrate and compare the structural contexts of the phenomenon under study. Conversely, analyses that are dominantly quantitative could be complemented by information about policies and institutions or survey data. In other words, I expect EDACwowe to lead to more creative ways of using data and thus to more interesting research results.

Question – Since the RECWOWE project is five years, then what are the plans for the data centre after the end of the project?

Our medium and long-term plan is that EDACWOWE should be continued, which should be possible if it is successful. If we cannot secure future funding through the EU budget, then we could obviously look for other sources of funding, but at this stage it is not possible to provide more detailed information. It will essentially depend on who uses EDACwowe and how, and what kind of a market there is for EDACwowe after five years.

Question – Could you give an example of how the data base could be used for a particular research topic, such as comparing the reform of labour market policies in Denmark, the Netherlands, Italy, the UK and the Czech Republic?

That is quite a straightforward task which can be undertaken relatively easily. The first is to find information about policies and institutions in the areas of labour market and employment policies for the five countries. The second, in the indicators and statistics section, is to look at statistical indicators about investments in active labour market policies, about outcome (employment rates), and such like. The relevant data bases are included in the EDACwowe data-shell. But I would like to address how the database could be used for a more complex research question, requiring various types of data. A question can be for instance: what are the welfare attitudes in a changing Europe and what are the relations of these attitudes with the welfare state. The idea would be that we can relate people ideas about welfare (that can e.g. be found in the ESS and ISSP surveys, which are accessible via EDACwowe) to reform measures that are being undertaken by governments (data on policies and institutions), as well as to social realities (data on statistics and indicators). People's ideas on child care (reforms), for instance, may be different in a country with extensive child-care facilities compared to a country where there is a clear lack of such facilities. Or, ideas may differ between countries with a lower or

higher female labour market participation. Data over a period of time can show how people's ideas on child care, actual child care facilities, and work-care behaviour are related. For such questions, by using EDACwowe an integrated data matrix can be compiled (using all four sources of data) as the basis for the actual empirical analysis. In our future work plan, we have foreseen to use EDACwowe to make a data demonstration combining different sources of data.

Question – Who are the key academic researchers working in the EDACwowe team?

The EDACwowe team is located in two research centres. The first is at University of Tilburg, The Netherlands, where I manage the team and the second is at Danish National Centre for Social Research (SFI) in Copenhagen, where the team is directed by Torben Fridberg. Each research centre has staff that works on the data centre. I would like to express special gratitude for the work by Marjon Schols at Tilburg, who has done a great job as daily manager of the whole project. And also, to the group of colleagues from the four RECWOWE strands who operate as intermediates between EDACwowe and the strands. The information they delivered after consultation within their strands and their ideas on the data and its structuring have been invaluable for us. I am grateful to the local Tilburg and SFI teams of EDACwowe.

Question – How is information about the website disseminated?

The first is the RECWOWE newsletter, which is relevant as it is targeted at users that specialize in research in the areas of work and welfare. But we also have disseminated information via mailing lists to academics in the disciplines of social policy, political science, sociology and economics and to officials in EU institutions, as well as to and officials in non-governmental organisations in the field.

Question – Can you give an example of an analysis where various types of data have already been used?

Together with Prof. Uunk, I made an analysis of welfare spending and public opinion about immigration from various European countries. The combined opinion data, with institutional data ('welfare stateness') and statistical data (e.g. migration rates). The title of the article is: Van Oorschot, W. and Uunk, W. (2007), [Welfare Spending and the Public's Concern for Immigrants: Multilevel Evidence for Eighteen European Countries](#), *Journal of Comparative Politics*, Vol.40, No.1, pp.63-82

2 – NEWS FROM THE NETWORK

CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS

– 2nd Annual RECWOWE Integration Week, Oslo, 10 June to 14 June 2008

The 2nd annual RECWOWE “Integration Week” will take place in Oslo, from Tuesday the 10th to Saturday the 14th of June 2008. It is co-organised by two Norwegian research institutes: the Institute for Research in Economics and Business Administration ([SNE](#)) and Norwegian Social Research ([NOVA](#)). The endeavour is that it should be a “Work in progress” conference. It should provide possibilities for presenting but also for discussing on-going academic work that we are undertaking the main RECWOWE strands. It should also assess the various activities developed under RECWOWE. Two plenary sessions will focus on discussing the capacity of the Nordic welfare state model to confront the main challenges in work and welfare. In addition, the some sessions address the important question of Harmonising our way to analyse, measure and compare key concepts such as the tensions or policies and reforms. The programme of the Oslo conference is posted on the [RECWOWE website](#).

Please contact [Amélie Guisseau](#) who has just launched an initiative to develop the programme of the conference, according to the main strands for additional information.

OTHER NEWS FROM THE NETWORK

– Congratulations to Philippe Pochet and Anne Peeters

Philippe Pochet was director of the Observatoire social européen ([OSE](#)) (Partner 11) from 1992 to 2008. Under his leadership, the OSE became a unique centre, producing high quality research and policy analysis in national and European contexts. Through Philippe’s capacity to anticipate policy issues and research agendas, the team at the OSE was mobilized to develop analytical work in a wide range of areas, collaborating with partners in Belgium, all over Europe and also trans-atlantically. The OSE was often the first to provide analyses on a wide range of topics, from the European constitutional convention, the social consequences of EMU and the social dimension of enlargement, to name but a few. The researchers at the OSE and all the members of the RECWOWE team would like to congratulate him on his new position as General Director of the European Trade Union Institute for Research, Education and Health and Safety ([ETUI-REHS](#)).

The RECWOWE team would also like to welcome Anne Peeters, the new Director of the OSE, to the network. She is doing a fantastic job at taking over the large number of on-going projects that the OSE is participating in. Furthermore, she brings her own areas of expertise, which includes public policies, and the corporate social responsibility. Like Philippe, she has experience and knowledge from various professional areas – academic, interest organisation and administrative.

ACTIVITIES: SUMMER SCHOOLS

– New Risks and new governance in Europe, University of Utrecht, 8-18 July 2008

This summer school is aimed at PhD students at early stages of their research. The seminar will address new social risks – demographic changes, changing family patterns, flexible labour markets – and the combinations of various means of governance which are used to confront these risks. The specific topics that will be included in the workshop are welfare regimes and social and family policies, social protection and activation, privatisation of risks and privatised interventions, new governance and decentralization policies, the role of the EU in these fields.

Deadline for application : **30 April 2008**.

For more information please contact: [Judith Raven](#).

Students will get three ECTS points for attending the summer school.

For the full course description and application form, consult:

<http://www.utrechtsummerschool.nl/index.php?page=courses&code=S8>

– Work, care and well-being: public and private arrangements, Helsinki, 16-17 September 2008

This summer school addresses how public and private actors interact in work and care and how this is related to the issue of well-being. It is aimed at doctoral students in early stages of their PhD research.

For the full programme and registration, please contact Dr. [Jussi Simpura](#).

The two-day doctoral workshop is organised jointly by the National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health (STAKES) and the [University of Tampere](#).

Deadline for application: **31 May 2008**

Contact: Ms [Merja Paimensaari](#)

ACTIVITIES: EXECUTIVE SEMINARS

RECOWE has just launched a new seminar series – the executive seminars. These seminars are aimed at the policy-making community, to transfer knowledge developed by academic researchers on labour market and social protection issues.

– Active Labour Market Policy: Learning from International Experiences, 23-24 October 2008, Lausanne (Switzerland)

The first RECOWE Executive seminar deals with the shift from passive to active labour market policy (ALMP). The seminar is designed to provide relevant information for policy-makers and practitioners who are involved in the planning and/or management of employment promotion measures and policies. The seminar focuses on the mechanisms for getting people (back) into employment, drawing on examples from a wide range of countries. The seminar is targeted at the people involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of ALMP, employment and social affairs departments, trade unions and employers associations, NGOs active in the field of social exclusion and international organisations. The seminar will take place at the Alpha-Palmiers hotel in Lausanne (Switzerland).

The deadline for applications is 26 September 2008. All details of the seminar can be found at <http://recwowe.eu/>.

For further information contact: [Fabio Bertozzi](#).

On 4 April 2008, the website of RECOWE's European Data Center for Work and Welfare, EDACwowe was launched. After more than a year of preparation, the EDACwowe team has launched a website to provide standardized information on and (mostly) direct access to a large number of comparative (European or international) surveys, data banks and archives, in the area of work and welfare and related fields.

The idea behind the website is to provide researchers and policymakers an overview of quantitative and qualitative, micro and macro data of relevance for the analysis of work and welfare issues, to provide information on these data, and to offer direct links to them.

Entering the website the user encounters the following basic structure:

- **COMPARATIVE DATA**
 - Opinion Surveys
 - Socio-economic surveys
 - Indicators & Statistics
 - Policies & Institutions
- **NATIONAL DATA**
 - National Data Archives
 - National Statistical Offices
 - National Surveys
- **INTERNATIONAL REPOSITORIES**
 - Survey Portals
 - Survey Keyword Search Engines
 - Information Gateways
 - Global Statistical Databanks
- **EUROPA**
 - Gateway to the EU

The main focus of the website is to present the possibilities for utilising COMPARATIVE DATA.

Under the headline of OPINION SURVEYS there is a list of links to European and international comparative opinion surveys, which focus on people's values, beliefs and attitudes concerning a broad range of social issues, including opinions on issues of work and welfare. 13 data banks are included, such as the European Social Survey (ESS) and the European Values Survey (EVS). The general information window for each data bank includes a short general description of the data

base and a description of the type of survey, including periods covered, countries included in the survey, topics of the survey, whether questionnaires are available on-line, whether it is possible to carry out a keyword search in the questionnaires, and whether data can be accessed on line. All necessary links to data and data documentation are included in these general information windows.

Under the headline of SOCIO-ECONOMIC SURVEYS there is information on and links to the data of a series of European and international comparative socio-economic surveys, which usually measure work, income and household situations at the level of individuals and/or households, but also surveys that measure various work and employment practices at the level of firms and organisations. It is surveys like the European Community Household Panel (ECHP) and the European Union Labour Force Survey (LFS). Again, all necessary links to data and data documentation are included in the general information window for each of the data sets.

The headline INDICATORS & STATISTICS covers a series of European and international comparative data banks with aggregated social indicators and statistics that are relevant to the areas of work and welfare. Data banks in related fields such as economic production, education, demographics, health and safety, families, industrial relations, migration, politics, taxes and contributions, etc are also included. This section includes descriptions and links to data provided by organisations like Eurostat and OECD, but also indicator banks established by researchers like the Comparative Welfare Entitlements Dataset (or the Lyle Scruggs dataset). However, as the large institutions like Eurostat and OECD provide statistics and indicators within a very broad field, only topics of possible relevance for studying work and welfare are included. At the site of Indicators & Statistics the first sub-level presents a list of topics like "Income and benefits", "Social Care", and "Work and Employment".

The headline POLICIES & INSTITUTIONS covers information on data banks and reports with information on policies and institutions

that are relevant in the areas of work and welfare, and also includes policies and institutions in the related fields mentioned above. Again, the general information windows are further divided according to the most important topics for analysing questions on work and welfare. The data banks under this headline consist mostly of qualitative macro data on statutory regulations. An example is the Mutual Information System on Social Protection (MISSOC) or the ILO Natlex database of national labour, social security and related human rights legislation.

The list of databases included at the EDACwowe website has been worked out by the EDACwowe team in line with RECWOWE strands, e.g. through the data inventory reports produced by the strands at the 2nd RECWOWE conference in Warsaw, June 2007. The EDACwowe Advisory Board discussed the website lay-out and contents in Warsaw 2007, as well as at a workshop in Tilburg, January 2008, together with strand representatives.

However, as we most likely not have included all databases of relevance and as new databases are published and existing databases are changed, it will be an ongoing activity in the next years to improve and maintain the EDACwowe data-shell and website. So, all RECWOWE members and other users of the web-site are encouraged to contribute to this process by reporting bad or outdated links, suggesting new data banks or report on experiences with the quality of data.

You are invited to have a look at the EDACwowe website www.edacwowe.eu

3 – EUROPEAN NEWS

– European Spring Council, Brussels, 13-14 March 2008

The yearly spring Council highlighted various issues related to labour market policy. First, the aim of attracting more people to the labour market was reiterated, even strengthened. The conclusions insisted on upgrading skills of early school leavers and especially learners with a migrant background; facilitating geographic and occupational mobility; promoting higher overall labour force participation and tackling segmentation in order to ensure active social inclusion; improvement of coherence and coordination of economic, employment and social policies in order to enhance social cohesion. Furthermore, the conclusions also highlighted flexicurity as a means to develop a balance between flexible labour markets and employment rather than job security. In particular, the Council agreed that attention should be given to employment of youth and disabled persons. The conclusions also drew attention to the importance of available affordable high quality childcare. The reconciliation of family and working life for both men and women were emphasized in the conclusions.

Download full conclusions [HERE](#)

– Commission Recommendation on Posted Workers

Following recent controversial case-law for posted workers (notably the *Laval* case – see Newsletter 2), the debate about how to strike an adequate balance between the freedom of establishment of a company together with the protection of workers is being pursued. On 4 April, the European Commission adopted a Recommendation to enhance cooperation of Member States (also applicable to the countries of the European Economic Area) for posted workers. The recommendation notably focused on better administrative cooperation between Member States, especially through a more effective system for exchanging information and better implementation of the Directive on Posted Workers.

Full recommendation [HERE](#).

– Is Social Europe Fit for Globalisation?, Policy Brief, March 2008

Following the open consultation and policy debate launched by the Commission about Social Europe and Globalisation, the Center for European Policy Studies prepared a Policy Brief that highlighted the main challenges for Europe in a globalized economy. The Policy Brief echoed policy priorities of the Lisbon Agenda – notably the issue about how to combine social protection and economic flexibility. But it also highlighted that active labour market policies should be complemented by policies to protect the losers from globalisation.

Download the policy brief [HERE](#)

4 – PUBLICATIONS

– Call for Proposals for Special Issue of the *Journal of European Social Policy*

From 2009 onwards, the *Journal of European Social Policy* (JESP) will be published five times a year, out of which there should be one special issue. The call for proposals for the special issue of 2010 is posted on the RECOWE [website](#). The proposals should be submitted by 31st October 2008. Interested parties are requested to send a short proposal (no more than 1000 words) describing the scope of the proposed theme, the papers that it would contain and the timetable. They should make a case to justify the dedication of a special issue to a particular theme and discuss its topicality. They should demonstrate that the special issue would have an overall analytical and theoretical coherence.

For more information, contact at the University of Bath: [Professor G. J. Room](#).

PUBLICATIONS IN THE AREA OF WORK AND WELFARE



Pension Reform in Europe, Politics, Policies and Outcomes

Camila Arza and Martin Kohli (eds.), Routledge, London
240 pages

This book provides a cross-country comparative analysis of the key issues shaping the latest pension reforms in Europe: political games, welfare models and pathways, population reactions, and observed and expected outcomes.

Pension reform has been a top policy priority for European governments in the last decade. Ageing populations, changing labour market patterns and the process of European integration are the 'irresistible forces' pushing for reform throughout the region.

The volume also examines the nature and outcomes of pension reform experiences in Europe, searching for a solution to the

financial challenge posed by growing pension budgets. By addressing the nature of change, the pathways of reform, and the outcomes of the new pension mix, the authors conclude with an analysis of people's perceptions and attitudes towards pension policy and their acceptance or otherwise of different reform options.

This book will be of interest to students and scholars of international political economy, European politics, and social policy.

The book is divided in two parts – the first on the politics of Pension Reform and the Second on Reform Options and Outcomes.

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1. Introduction: The Political Economy of Pension Reform (Camila Arza and Martin Kohli)

Part I. The Politics of Pension Reform

2. The 'New Politics' of Pension Reforms in Continental Europe (David Natali and Martin Rhodes); 3. Between Conflict and Consensus: The Reform of Bismarckian Pension Regimes (Martin Schludi); 4. How do Politicians get Away with Path-Breaking Pension Reforms? The Political Psychology of Pension Reform In Democracies (Einar Overbye); 5. The Politics and Outcomes of Three-Pillar Pension Reforms in Central and Eastern Europe (Katharina Müller).

Part II. Reform Options and Outcomes

6. Changing European Welfare. a New Distribution Pattern of Pension Policy? (Camila Arza); 7. The Interdependence of The System of Solidarity and the System of Equivalence (Martin Rein and Karen Anderson); 8. The Anglo-American Pension Regime: Failures of The Divided Welfare State (Robin Blackburn); 9. The Gender Pension Gap: Effects of Norms and Reform Policies (Patricia Frericks and Robert Maier); 10. Generational Equity: Concepts and Attitudes (Martin Kohli)

[To order ...](#)

— **Pension Politics: Consensus and Social Conflict in Ageing Societies**

Patrik Marier, Routledge, London,
240 pages

Population ageing and slower economic growth have raised serious questions about the willingness and ability of governments to maintain current social policies. Within this new reality, discussions on the future of public pensions have been predominant in political debates across Europe.

This book explains why certain countries have been able to radically transform their pension system while others have simply altered parameters. To answer this question an extensive comparative analysis, including more than 60 interviews, was conducted in Belgium, France, Sweden and the UK. This empirical data provides an interesting contrast between reforms. Parametric reforms have stemmed from the creation of pension administrations outside the traditional state apparatus in France and Belgium and the resulting inclusion of social partners; while the state administrations of Sweden and the UK where debates have been internalised have led to programmatic reforms. Two controversial findings of this book include an explanation for the lack of influence on the part of the labour movement in the 1994/98 Swedish reform and a rejection of arguments claiming that policy change will be minimal with coalition governments. Finally the conclusion seeks to extend the applicability of the model to other industrialized countries.

This book will be of interest to students and scholars of public policy, specifically social policy, political economy, the welfare state and comparative politics.

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4. Sweden: Do Unions Still Matter?: Committees Instil a Radical Pension Reform
5. United Kingdom: A Marriage with the Private Sector?
6. Conclusion: Comparative Tests of the Hypotheses and their Application to other Industrialized Countries

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