Welfare states in Europe – what was it about?

• Prof. Dr. Günter J. Friesenhahn,
• Hochschule Koblenz
• International Seminar:
• Production of social services and social work in European contexts
• Hogeschoole Zyud/Sittard
• 2nd November 2017
• Friesenhahn@hs-koblenz.de
Viewed from the outside, the central feature of the EU is certainly the high level of welfare and social benefits (Schubert 2008, p.13)

Schubert, K.u.a.(eds.)( 2008): Europäische Wohlfahrtssysteme im Vergleich. VS Verlag, Wiesbaden
And now?
Reference: Nation State

• The development of the European welfare state is closely linked to the development of the Nation State

• Welfare arrangements are based on national thinking (methodological nationalism) in which >the social< has territorial boundaries
Methodological nationalism

Methodological nationalism considers nation states as the basic of all politics. It assumes that humankind is naturally distributed among a limited number of nations, which organize themselves internally as nation states and delimit themselves externally from other nation-states.
Welfare: a broad definition


• Institutionalisierte Verpflichtung zur sozialen Sicherung und Förderung der Staatsbürger (Schubert u.a. 2008)

• A type of state activity, which is closely connected with capitalism and representative democracy as a mode of political will formation. Institutionalized commitment to social protection and the promotion of citizenship (Schubert et. al. 2008)
The Birth of the Welfare State: 1880–1914

Cross-national evidence of these developments is varying in approximate. We may be reasonably certain about dates for the extension of suffrage and for the first introduction of various measures of social insurance. However, these list cover programmes of very varying range, expenditure and funding criteria which may mask important differences in the social and political impact of seemingly similar initiatives. Of these differences, perhaps the most important was whether provision was tax-funded or contributory. These figures may also conceal the extent to which alter-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OECD countries</th>
<th>Industrial accident</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Pension</th>
<th>Unemployment</th>
<th>Family allowances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>1903</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>1930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>1901</td>
<td>1929</td>
<td>1913</td>
<td>1916</td>
<td>1940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1898</td>
<td>1899</td>
<td>1875</td>
<td>1905</td>
<td>1932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1898</td>
<td>1886</td>
<td>1898</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>1936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1871</td>
<td>1883</td>
<td>1889</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>1954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>1897</td>
<td>1911</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>1911</td>
<td>1944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>1897</td>
<td>1911</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>1911</td>
<td>1945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>1898</td>
<td>1892</td>
<td>1891</td>
<td>1907</td>
<td>1952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>1909</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>1906</td>
<td>1946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>1901</td>
<td>1891</td>
<td>1913</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>1947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1895</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>1948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>1887</td>
<td>1888</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>1921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>1881</td>
<td>1911</td>
<td>1946</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>1952</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Approaches

- **Functionalist modernization approaches** lead to the emergence and extension of state social policy to socioeconomic factors. They see social policy as an answer "to problems such as industrialization, urbanization and migration.

- **Conflict-theoretical approaches** emphasize, on the other hand, the influence of political factors, such as rule elites or mobilization processes in the course of democratization and social movements (conflict theory, bottom-up).

- **Institutionalization approach**: emphasizes the role of institutional factors beyond socioeconomic and political factors. Once created institutions develop an institutional inertia, resulting in a path dependency: national state traditions characterize the social-political development in a country sustainably.

(see Mau, St./Verwiebe,R. (2009): Die Sozialstruktur Europas. UTB Verlag, Konstanz, p. 7ff)
Welfare Regimes – 3 sets of criteria

1. Relation between state and market
   - Welfare mix

2. Social rights – de-commodification
   - Rather, the concept refers to the degree to which individuals, or families, can uphold a socially acceptable standard of living independently of market participation (Esping-Andersen 1990, 37)

3. Stratification – degree of segmentation and inequality in different social security systems
   - the welfare state “is an active force in the ordering of social relations”;

Rights

Rights
• 18th century
• Civil rights - freedom of thoughts
• 19th century
• Political rights, election
• 20th century
• Social rights, education, Well being security

Institution
• Court
• Parliament
• Welfare arrangements
Welfare states in Europa – framework for social work

1° summary

- Democracy
- The state intervene in order to correct the market
- Welfare for all Citizen
- Constitutional state
- Distribution of power
- Security for Citizen
Welfare State and Social Policy

- Welfare state as a response to social risks
  - State secures social order and expects loyalty
  - Social question as a political challenge
  - Social protection - social care as a corrective of problems caused by capitalism
  - The right to benefit was provided by the belonging to the nation-state
  - Social policy – structuring of the social
The golden 30 years?

- Garett: “More broadly, shunning a ‘golden age’ interpretation, it is acknowledged that the welfare state was implicated in gendered and racialised forms of order making and exclusion.
- “…we are ‘paradoxically led to defend what is not entirely defensible’ (Bourdieu in Grass and Bourdieu, 2002: 71).
Transition

- Welfare state
- Public provision
- Protection of labour
- Universal entitlement
- Solidarity of citizenship
- Consumptive policy
- Sharing

- Activation state
- Privatization
- Promoting work
- Selective targeting
- Solidarity of membership
- Support
- Competition
Restructuring - Retrenchment – Redistribution

- Investment state, invest in human capital
- Instead of balancing deficits, promotion of competences
- Activation - from welfare to workfare
- Prevention
- „flexicurity“
- Voluntarisation
- De-regulation, privatization
- Social service for money
- Gate-keeper function
- Social policy is subordinated to labour market policy
The traditional welfare state as a special form of redistribution and socialization creates compensations/new arrangements.

The relationship between economics and social issues is being reformulated.

Social workers have to learn to work professionally in this context.
Participation society

- "The welfare state is to be replaced by a participation society. In such a society involvement is central. All Dutch citizens have the right to develop their talents and the duty to use those talents in the service of society. Those involved have a responsibility and must take an active attitude…In this approach work security (employability) rather than job security is central" p.8/9
Orientation

- Silvia Staub –Bernasconi

“The principles of human rights and social justice serve as the foundation of social work as a profession.”

“A profession has a triple mandate, which consists of both previously mentioned mandates (help and control) as well as a mandate from the profession itself“

A scientific base for methods to solve problems

A ethical basis oriented towards human rights and social justice
Die sozialpolitische Instrumentalisierung Sozialer Arbeit legt die theoretischen Schwächen des Professionalisierungsdiskurses offen (S.177)

The social-political instrumentalization of social work reveals the theoretical weaknesses of the discourse of professionalization. It is time to give up "normative vanishing points" and to deal instead with the real conditions of how social work is produced in Europe (p.177)
Neo-liberal social work?

Neoliberal policies not only privatise formerly public services but also focus one-sidedly on discourses of individual autonomy and responsibility. This makes it difficult to raise ‘the social question’ (the question what constitutes social bonds) publicly since market principles are presented as allowing no alternatives.

Social work owes its professional origins however to a shift from early capitalist individualism to policies recognizing the need for social reconstruction and cohesion.

Attempts in current social work to adjust to the cancellation of the social question through techniques of ‘activation’ and individualised care

Public control measures and privatised concerns for ‘care’, thereby altering its core identity.

Humans rights based social work?

- Reinventing Critical Social Work: Challenges from Practice, Context and Postmodernism
- By Karen Healy
- Department of Social Work, Social Policy and Sociology
  University of Sydney
  Sydney, Australia

- Human Rights and Social Work
- Towards Rights-Based Practice Revised Edition
- Human rights ideals are at the pinnacle of contemporary social work practice and international political discourse. Yet in recent years, with the heightened threat of terrorism, we have begun to witness an erosion of many traditional civil liberties.
Social work as.....