

## WELLCHI NETWORK

<http://www.ciimu.org/wellchi>

Sixth Framework Programme



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## USEFUL LINKS

For further reports on  
National Family-Policy  
Reforms, see:

<http://europe.eu.int>

The European Observatory  
on the Social Situation,  
Demography and Family. A  
multi-disciplinary network  
of independent specialists  
that monitors political  
developments in Europe as  
well as demographic, socio-  
economic and political  
changes having an impact  
on families.

<http://www.oif.ac.at>

Austrian Institute for Family  
Studies, which currently  
coordinates the European  
Observatory of Social  
Situation, Demography and  
Family.

<http://www.reformmonitor.org>

A website giving relevant  
information on social policy,  
labour market policy and  
industrial relations in 15  
OECD countries.

<http://www.york.ac.uk/ins/t/>

The website of the *Nordic  
North-European Project on  
Welfare Policies and  
Employment in the Context  
of Family Change.*

## POLICIES AND POLITICAL REFORMS

## GERMANY

**New Policy towards Social Security for the Unemployed**

The German government has changed its legislation in the field of social benefits for the unemployed. The new programme is called the "Sozialgesetz II" or "Hartz IV" Programme. Its implementation began in January 2005 and is the result of the idea of the "Unemployment benefits II" that had been discussed since the beginning of 2003.

The period of entitlement to unemployment benefits by the unemployed was abbreviated to six months up to a maximum of one year, depending on the duration of continuous employment before unemployment. After one year maximum, the unemployed are no longer entitled to unemployment benefits, but rather to social assistance - in this case called "Unemployment benefits II", providing assistance at poverty-line level. The unemployed are also obliged to accept any job offered to them independent of the skills required and the level of pay offered. This is complemented by a comprehensive employment programme, within the framework of which the unemployed with unemployment benefits are offered special jobs in the non-profit sector at the hourly rate of 1 to 2 euros. As a consequence of these policies, social scientists expect that poverty rates will increase substantially. In order to support the families of employed parents on low incomes with their childcare costs, the government introduced a "child supplement" (Kinderzulage) of 207 euros per child under 15, and 276 euros per child older than 15. Social scientists nevertheless expect a dramatic increase in child poverty as a consequence of the 'Hartz IV' programme. Interesting links:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hartz\\_concept](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hartz_concept) (English)

<http://www.sozialpolitik-aktuell.de> (German) [www.sozialpolitik-aktuell.de/docs/B%203%20%20ALGII%20Kinderzulageohne.pdf](http://www.sozialpolitik-aktuell.de/docs/B%203%20%20ALGII%20Kinderzulageohne.pdf)

## SPAIN

**Divorce Reform**

On the November 29<sup>th</sup> 2004, the bill modifying certain articles of the Spanish Civil Code relating to aspects of the divorce and separation process was presented in the Spanish Parliament.

The reforms are aimed at liberalising separation and divorce, facilitating direct access to divorce (though maintaining the conceptual difference between formal separation and divorce), and accelerating the process by up to three months. Other changes lead toward the elimination of the grounds for divorce. These reforms aim to move forward from a divorce model based on fault towards a modern concept of divorce based on the freedom of the partners to separate, in an attempt to adapt to contemporary forms of understanding partnership relations. Another important aspect of this bill is the promotion of joint custody, with the idea that promoting joint parenting is children's best interests.

These reforms have been viewed negatively by certain conservative groups close to the Catholic Church as well as by the Catholic Church itself, believing that the reforms encourage family break-up. On the other hand, feminists groups have criticized the promotion of joint custody and the fact that joint custody might be imposed by judicial decision.

Interesting links:

<http://www.euroresidentes.com/Blogs/2004/09/divorce-in-spain.htm> (English)

<http://www.juecesdemocracia.es> (Spanish) [www.juecesdemocracia.es/pdf/TXT%20PTYCTO%20LEY%20DIVORCIO.pdf](http://www.juecesdemocracia.es/pdf/TXT%20PTYCTO%20LEY%20DIVORCIO.pdf)
**Same-sex marriages**

On the January 12<sup>th</sup> 2005, the bill modifying certain articles of the Spanish Civil Code concerning the right to marriage by people of the same sex was presented in the Spanish Parliament.

With the aim of "ending discriminatory tendency based on sexual preference", this reform modifies the Spanish Civil code, facilitating marriage between people of the same sex. The relevant aspect of this reform affects article 44 of the Civil code concerning marriage, which will have equal requirements and effects for all people -as regards rights, social benefits and adoption- irrespective of the sex of the married couple. Another important element in this reform is the change in terminology defining marriage. To date, Spanish law refers to married people with the terms "wife" and "husband"; the reform replaces these concepts by the generic term "spouses".

The initiative for this change, outlined in the preamble to the bill, bases its argument on the fact that Spanish society demands an adjustment of the law to current practice. Nevertheless, the reform has given rise to strong reactions against it from conservative political and social groups. The Catholic Church has expressed its opposition to this reform, the issue of adoption being seen as particularly controversial. Conservative positions have argued that adoption by homosexual couples might cause psychological damage to the child's development, basing this argument on the notion that it is better for children to be raised in a two-parent heterosexual household. This idea is counteracted by other positions arguing that adoption by homosexuals is currently social practice, as Spanish law allows individuals to adopt a child, and the supposedly negative influence of parents' sexual preferences on the child's development has not been proven. In this light, the reform represents an important change as it gives homosexuals the right to adopt as a couple and not only as individuals.

Interesting links:

<http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/1320722/posts> (English)

<http://www.juecesdemocracia.es/pdf/ProyectoLeyreformaMatrimoniopersonasmismosexo.pdf> (Spanish)

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## MILESTONES IN THE SOCIOLOGY OF CHILDHOOD

## Policies and political reforms

Alberdi, I. (1999). *La nueva familia española* [The New Spanish Family]. Madrid: Taurus.

Archard, D. (2003). *Children, Family and the State*. Hampshire: Ashgate.

## Milestones in the Sociology of Childhood

Beisenherz, H.G. (2002). *Kinderarmut in der Wohlfahrtsgesellschaft. Das Kainsmal der Globalisierung* [Child Poverty in the Welfare-State Society. Globalisation's Mark of Cain]. Opladen: Leske + Budrich.

## Reviews

Bradshaw, J. (ed.) (2001). *Poverty: The Outcomes for Children*. Occasional Paper 26. London: Economic and Social Research Council/Family Policy Studies Centre/Social Policy Research Unit.

## International and national events

Brannen, J., P. Moss and A. Mooney. (2004). *Working and Caring over the Twentieth Century: Change and Continuity in Four-Generation Families*. London: Palgrave.

## Interesting links

Cameron, C., P. Moss and C. Owen. (1998). *Men in the Nursery: Gender and Caring Work*. London: Paul Chapman.

Commaille, J. and C. Martin. (1998). *Les enjeux politiques de la famille*. [The Political Issues of the Family]. Paris: Édition Bayard.

Dandurand, R., R. Hurtubise and C. Le Bourdais (eds.) (1996). *Enfances* [Childhood]. Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval.

De Singly, F. (ed.) (2004). *Enfants, adultes. Vers une égalité de statut* [Children, Adults. Towards an Equality of Status]. Paris: Éditions Universalis.

Flaquer, Ll. (2000). *Las políticas familiares en una perspectiva comparada* [Family Policy in Comparative Perspective]. Barcelona: Fundación 'la Caixa'.

Gordon, D., S. Nandy, C. Pantazis and S. Pemberton. (2003). *Child poverty in the developing world*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Hallett, C. and A. Prout. (2003). *Hearing the Voices of Children. Social Policy for a New Century*. London: Routledge.

Hantrais, L. (2004). *Family Policy Matters: Responding to Family Change in Europe*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Iglesias, J. and G. Meil. (2001). *La política familiar en España* [Family Policy in Spain]. Barcelona: Ariel.

Jensen, A. and L. McKee. (2002). *Children and the Changing Family. Between Transformation and Negotiation*. London: Routledge.

Markefka, M. and B. Nauck (ed.) (1993). *Handbuch der Kindheitsforschung* [Handbook on Childhood Research]. Neuwied: Luchterhand.

Pringle, K. (1998). *Children and Social Welfare in Europe*. Buckingham and Philadelphia: Open University.

Qvortrup, J. (1991). *Childhood as a Social Phenomenon - An Introduction to a Series of National Reports, Eurosociological Report 36/1991*. Vienna: European Centre for Social Welfare Training and Research.

Qvortrup, J., M. Bardy, G. Sgritta and H. Wintersberger (eds.) (1994). *Childhood matters. Social theory, practice and politics*. Aldershot: Avebury.

Ridge, T. (2002). *Childhood poverty and social exclusion. From a child's perspective*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Simons, R. (1996). *Understanding differences between divorced and intact families: stress, interaction, and child outcome*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Smart, C., B. Neale and A. Wade. (2001). *The Changing Experience of Childhood: Families and Divorce*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Thomas, N. (2002). *Children, family and the state. Decision-making and child participation*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Vlemminckx, K. and T. M. Smeeding (eds.) (2001). *Child Well-Being, Child Poverty and Child Policy in Modern Nations: What Do We Know?*. Bristol: Policy Press.

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## REVIEWS

**Infancia y familias: realidades y tendencias****[Childhood and Families: Realities and Trends]**

C. Gómez-Granell, M. Garcia, A. Ripol-Millet and C. Panchón (Coord.)

Ariel, Barcelona 2004



The CIIMU Observatory of Childhood and the Family has developed from a concern with the impact of rapid changes in Catalan and Spanish society on children. This initiative, created with the aim of improving knowledge of children and their families, as well as monitoring the evolution of their situation in Spain, produces a biannual report, this book being the first.

The report provides information and current data on the various conditions affecting childhood in Catalan and Spanish society. Along with the need to develop statistical indicators on childhood and the evolution of the social theory of childhood in Spain, the book also asserts the need for public debate on these issues in order to create political awareness of the social reality facing children and their families. Detecting such problems and guiding public policies is therefore the aim of this Observatory, characterising the spirit of this initiative, one which is particularly innovative in the case of Spanish.

On the basis of various methodologies and approaches, the book focuses on the changes in living conditions and children's ways of being and living in the modulating context of contemporary Spain. It tackles the issue from multiple approaches, focusing on the dynamics of family change, the development of social policies, education, access to work, health, leisure, cultural identities and life styles, immigration and children at social risk. The question of public action/intervention in coping with the effects of social change within childhood is a constant concern in the contributions to the book, all of which concur on emphasising the need for a global system of public protection for childhood.

Childhood is placed in the context of the changing process of family relations in which social policy plays an important role. Children are also considered from the perspective of health, the analysis focusing on the impact of certain patterns of consumption and life styles on children's health, increasing their vulnerability to illness (such as AIDS or mental disorders) and death.

Multiculturalism in Spanish society and the place of children therein is also raised in the book, from a variety of closely inter-related approaches. The issue of cultural identity and youth life styles connects with the problem of migrant children and their access to the health system and public services. The results highlight - in a critical manner - the ambivalences of an integration policy that does not seem to have adequately faced up to this problem. Other aspects, such as those concerning children's socialisation, are also present within the contributions; once again, the idea of public responsibility for children's well-being establishes itself as the principal issue.

**Kinderarmut in der Wohlfahrtsgesellschaft****Das Kainsmal der Globalisierung****[Child Poverty in the Welfare-State Society.****Globalisation's Mark of Cain]**

Beisenherz, H.G.

Leske + Budrich, Opladen 2002



The author has localised the development of child poverty in Germany at the point of intersection of three long-term social developments. First, the fact that current discussion on poverty is focussed on children shows a change in social standing for children and childhood, which the author considers as an element of **cultural globalisation**. Second, child poverty in the welfare states is a result of the **economic globalisation** and has its effects on the achievements of the welfare state, traditional conditions of employment and traditional household constellations. In this sense the main reason for the increase in child-poverty rates in Germany is the discrimination of women, especially of single-parent females, by the labour market. As an element of **social globalisation**, Internet takes the place of territory as the place for social communication. In this sense, the chances of participation in social communication become more dependent on resources than was the case in former times. This means that "poor" children especially are excluded from social communication because of their lack of resources. The final consequence of this is that increasing child poverty threatens the reproduction of civilised society because of the exclusion of ever increasing numbers of the younger generation.

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## INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL EVENTS

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## FORTHCOMING

2<sup>nd</sup> Workshop:

**'WHICH ARE THE LEGAL PROVISIONS IN FAMILY LAW THAT FOSTER CHILDREN'S WELL BEING AND WHICH KIND OF REFORMS SHOULD BE ENVISAGED IN THIS RESPECT?'**

15-16 April 2005. Sofia (Bulgaria).

Organized by: Institute for Legal Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

See: <http://www.ciimu.org/wellchi/agenda/indexagenda.htm>3<sup>rd</sup> Workshop:

**'WORKING FLEXIBILITY AND CARING ARRANGEMENTS'**

2-3 September 2005. Rennes (France).

Organized by: École Nationale de la Santé Publique.

See: <http://www.ciimu.org/wellchi/agenda/indexagenda.htm>

## PAST EVENTS

1<sup>st</sup> Conference:

**'CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FACED BY EUROPEAN WELFARE STATES: THE CHANGING CONTEXT FOR CHILD WELFARE'**

7-8 January 2005. Oxford (United Kingdom)

Organized by: University of Oxford.

See: <http://www.ciimu.org/wellchi/reports/indexreports.htm>1<sup>st</sup> Workshop:

**'NEW PERSPECTIVES ON CHILDHOOD'**

12-13 November 2004. Leeds (United Kingdom).

Organized by: University of Leeds.

See: <http://www.ciimu.org/wellchi/reports/wsh1/wsh1.htm>

## INTERESTING LINKS

**Direct link with the projects of the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme, Priority 7 "Citizens and Governance in a Knowledge-Based Society"**

**PROFIT.** *Policy Responses Overcoming Factors in the Intergenerational Transmission of Inequalities.* Institute of Sociology (Poland). See: <http://www.profit.uni.lodz.pl>

**ESEC.** *European Socio-Economic Classification.* Office of National Statistics (United Kingdom). See: <http://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/esec>

**OSIS.** *The Interplay of Housing Systems with Jobs, Household Structures, Finance and Social Security.* University of Birmingham (United Kingdom). See: <http://www.osis.bham.ac.uk>

**KASS.** *Kinship and Social Security.* Max Planck Gesellschaft zur Foerderung der Wissenschaften E.V. (Germany). See: <http://www.eth.mpg.de/kass>

**LOWER3.** *The Insecure Perspectives of the Low Skilled in the Knowledge Society.* Universiteit van Amsterdam (Netherlands). See: <http://www.uva-aias.net/projects.asp?lang=en&id=116>

**EQUALSOC.** *Economic Change, Quality of Life and Social Cohesion.* Swedish Institute for Social Research (Sweden) (no webpage).

**LLL2010.** *Towards a Lifelong Learning Society in Europe: The Contribution of the Education System.* Institute for International and Social Studies Tallinn Pedagogical University (Estonia) (no webpage).

## OTHER FORTHCOMING EVENTS

## INTERIM MEETING. 'LISBON WORKSHOP ON CONTEMPORARY FAMILIES'

3-4 March 2005. Lisbon (Portugal)

Organized by: Instituto de Ciências Sociais. University of Lisbon. See: <http://www.ics.ul.pt/esa/>

## SEMINAR: 'SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY CHANGE'

16-19 March 2005. Mexico City (Mexico).

Organized by: ISA Research Committee on Family Research, RC06 - Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, FLACSO. See: <http://www.tu-chemnitz.de/phil/soziologie/nauck/rc06/>

## ISPA 2005 CONFERENCE: 'WELL-BEING AND SOCIAL JUSTICE'

27-29 June 2005. International SPA Association – Bath (United Kingdom).

Organized by: SPA – University of Bath. See: <http://www.ispaconference.com>

## CHILDHOODS 2005. 'CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN EMERGING AND TRANSFORMING SOCIETIES'

29 June- 3 July 2005. Oslo (Norway).

Organized by: University of Oslo, Norwegian Social Research and Childwatch International Research Network. See: <http://childhoods2005.uio.no>

## COLLOQUIUM 2005. 'PROMOTING THE WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH: A CHALLENGE FOR THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY, THE FAMILY SYSTEM AND THE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST'

13-17 July 2005. Athens (Greece).

Organized by: International School Psychology Association (ISPA). For more information, contact: [hatzichr@psych.uoa.gr](mailto:hatzichr@psych.uoa.gr); [ebesev@psych.uoa.gr](mailto:ebesev@psych.uoa.gr)

## 'RE-THEORIZING WELFARE STATES: RESTRUCTURING STATES, RESTRUCTURING ANALYSIS'

8-10 September 2005. Chicago (USA).

Organized by: ISA Research Committee on Poverty, Social Welfare and Social Policy, RC19 – Northwestern University. See: <http://www.ucm.es/info/isa/cforp289.htm>7<sup>th</sup> ESA CONFERENCE. 'RETHINKING INEQUALITIES'

9-12 September 2005. Torun (Poland).

Organized by: ESA - Nicholas Copernicus University. Sessions on childhood can be proposed and organised within RN on childhood. See: <http://www.valt.helsinki.fi/esa/conferences.htm>See: <http://www.valt.helsinki.fi/esa/newslet5.pdf>