
Preface

This book provides the first encompassing inventory of how European Welfare Systems (EWS) have developed since the outset of the financial crisis in 2007. In contrast to its predecessor, “The Handbook of European Welfare Systems” (edited by Klaus Schubert, Simon Hegelich and Ursula Bazant in 2009), it does not give a general overview on current EWS, but focuses on three aspects, i.e., (1) the financial crisis, (2) the demographic change, and (3) how EWS deal with these challenges by adopting social policies of risk prevention and opening up opportunities.

The first part of this book consists of in-depth national country studies of all member states of the European Union (excluding Slovakia) as well as EU candidate countries (excluding Albania and Montenegro). The structure of the chapters is basically the same, thereby focusing on the three aspects named above while at the same time also leaving room for national specifics. In order to ensure comparability, with very few exceptions, the same Eurostat data will be used.

Building on the country studies, the second part consists of comparative chapters on (1) the balance of preventing risks and opening up opportunities, (2) the demographic change, (3) public debt, and (4) the role of the European Union in the context of EWS.

In sum, 59 (!) experts from all countries under investigation contributed to this volume. It is self-evident that a huge project like this cannot be undertaken without the support of many colleagues. First of all, we would like to thank the authors of this book for their high commitment and cooperation during the 2 years of this project by contributing not only individual country chapters but also by participating in our internal review procedure. Their patience and willingness to respond to our often far-reaching suggestions are also greatly appreciated. Simon Hegelich of FOKOS, Siegen/Germany, hosted our kick-off conference “Challenges to European Welfare Systems” in Siegen (Germany) in March 2013 which paved the way for the present volume. Special thanks go to Manuel Clemens, Lukas Jerg and Johannes Keil for valuable support, especially for their editorial work. Last but

not least, we would like to thank Cathryn Backhaus for continuously helping to move this project ahead and particularly also for her indispensable language assistance.

Münster, Germany
Madrid, Spain
Summer 2015

Klaus Schubert
Paloma de Villota
Johanna Kuhlmann

Challenges to European Welfare Systems

Schubert, K.; de Villota, P.; Kuhlmann, J. (Eds.)

2016, IX, 863 p. 175 illus., 2 illus. in color., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-3-319-07679-9