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Áine Ní Léime, Jim Ogg, Martina Rašticová, Debra Street, Clary Krekula, Monika Bédiová, Ignacio Madero-Cabib (editors), *Extended Working Life Policies. International Gender and Health Perspectives*, Springer Nature Switzerland AG, 2020

The volume *Extended Working Life Policies. International Gender and health Perspectives* published by the Springer Open and edited by distinguished professors Áine Ní Léime, Jim Ogg, Martina Rašticová, Debra Street, Clary Krekula, Monika Bédiová and Ignacio Madero-Cabib, enrolls as a pioneering work, multidisciplinary within socio-human sciences, international scientific collaboration.

This book is the outcome of the COST Action IS 1409 collaboration, involving experienced researchers and it offers a cross-national compendium of extended working life policy.

The work has an original structure, summarizing in a coherent and unified approach, the diversity and the complexity of social, economic, political phenomena and possible scientific methods of analysis and interpretation, enriching international literature in sociology and not only.

The content is organized into two sections. The first section focuses on challenges and opportunities for an extended professional life and includes a series of five articles.

Jim Ogg and Martina Rašticová examined the influence of the labour market on the employability of older workers in the context of economic digitalisation. The labor market has various features and dysfunctions, which must be taken into account when making decisions on the adoption of extending working life policies. In their opinion, unsustainable pension systems need to be reformed and public spending reduced or contained while policy initiatives should be a priority for governments and employers in the years ahead (p.3).

In chapter two, Clary Krekula and Sarah Vickerstaff offers a critical discussion of the level and nature of political debate on the issue of extending working life (p. 29). The authors emphasize the idea that working life agenda is a top-down process and a globally spread implementation of an economically based political project. Extended working life policies often „ignore the realities of the aging population and often reinforce patterns of social insecurity and precariousness in society” (p.31).

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Tindara Addabbo, Michaela Gstrein and Renata Renata Siemienska, in chapter three, presents a series of available databases and indicators of a quantitative nature, focusing on longitudinal data sets with indicators on relevant lifecourse events covering child care activities, workforce participation and employment history (p. 47). The authors makes maps of national and international databases for people aged 50 and over, following: appropriate measures sensitive to gender factors, indicators for health and socio-economic well-being, creative use of existing data. The following data sets were investigated: SHARE, EU SILC, STREAM, TILDA, DEAS, EQLS, EWCS, HWR, ESWT, LFS, ECHP, NKPS, Country HR SL, ALSA, ELSA, IT\_SI, IT-Health, ECS, GGP, VOW / QFT, ELES, JPI, LIDA, VOW / QFT, ELES, JPI, GENTRANS, NoWork, IGDC, EUROMOD, EHSIS, EHSIS / EDSIM etc., these being specific, revised data sets.

The authors also reviewed country and group indicators widely available in Eurostat or in the OECD databases. Are highlighted specific and common elements of these methods, and proper techniques for their application. The authors presented indicators built from existing data that measure different dimensions of well-being and their interaction with extended working life. It is suggested that „certain gender-relevant variables (such as time spent on unpaid care and housework) should be integrated into existing income and working conditions reports” (p. 67).

Also in the first section of the volume *Extended Working Life Policies. International Gender and health Perspectives*, we will discover studies and analysis about:

- *a conceptual framework of policy toolkits on employment and ageing.* Nata Duvvury, Jonas Radl, E. K. Sarter, Simone Scherger and Jeroen Spijker present definitions and examples of policy tool kits, such us: Good practice, Social indicators, Programme evaluation and Forecasts, projections and simulation, all of these providing useful information, that can be used as a guide in different stages of policy design. The authors also describe „the underlying relationship between research and policy-making”, and provide a synthetic overview of toolkits available for „ageing-related issues in the area of employment and pensions” (p. 69).

- *problems and prospects for current policies to extend working lives.* Debra Street and Áine Ní Léime detail the central „problematics associated with ageing populations and the policy initiatives taken so far to extend working lives” (p. 85) through different levels of analysis: macro, meso, and micro. Increased participation of older workers in the labor market is essential given that the dependency rate of older people is expected to double by 2050 and that the replacement rate for pensions will be drastically reduced for both men and women. One of the major problems raised by the employment of older workers is the remuneration system.

During the second part, the authors, using data from 34 countries (mainly in the EU), suggest that over time, policies on extended professional life will

acquire new valences and amplitudes, will deepen and increase in significance, will always remain current and will be, with each coming year, more generous. As a result of demographic, social and economic developments, the competent institutions consider necessary the following priority directions for action to improve working life: labor and work environment tailoring, adequate ergonomic design of equipment, creation and strengthening of partnerships, support and cooperation networks, with relevant actors in the labor market, in the social assistance system, in education or in the administration; the application of flexible policies to adapt institutions to an aging population; increasing the level of education and experience on the labor market of people from vulnerable groups; financial support for the implementation of active aging measures; capitalizing on the competences of older workers through mentoring programs, knowledge transfer, recognition of skills acquired in an informal and non-formal context etc. However, „because delaying retirement rather than extending work policies dominate the political landscapes of most of the country-specific cases considered in this volume, many countries’ current policies have the perverse effects of reproducing (at best) or exacerbating (at worst) gender inequalities and health risks for vulnerable older workers” (p. 86).

There are *Country Experiences* presented and analyzed on ten pages usually, underlying the national frame of the labor market, gender, age and retirement in the context, existing researches on older workers and extending working life, working policies after retirement. Each of the 34 chapters from this second part of the book invites the reader, at the end, to critical debates and perspectives. For European Region, in alphabetical order we may find about extended working life policies from: Albania (Merita Vaso Xhumari), Austria (Barbara Haas, Michaela Gstrein and Roland Bildsteiner), Belgium (Nathalie Burnay and Patricia Vendramin), Bosnia and Herzegovina (Nurka Pranjić and Maja Račić), Bulgaria (Tihomira Trifonova and Kamellia Lillova), Croatia (Siniša Zrinščak, Maja Vehovec and Drago Čengić), Cyprus (Petroula M. Mavrikiou), Czech Republic (Martina Rašticová, Monika Bédiová, Jana Mikušová, Aneta Krejčová and Jiří Černý), Denmark (Per H. Jensen), Estonia (Marge Unt, Margarita Kazjulja and Viivi Krönström), Finland (Laura Salonen, Antti Kähäri and Ilkka Pietilä), France (Julie Rochut and Jim Ogg), Germany (Laura Romeu-Gordo and E. K. Sarter), Greece (Antigone Lyberaki and Thomas Georgiadis), Ireland (Áine Ní Léime, Dinali Wijeratne and Nata Duvvury), Italy (Tindara Addabbo), Lithuania (Jolanta Pivoriene and Kristina Ambrazeviciute), Netherlands (Maria Fleischmann and Thijs van den Broek), Poland (Renata Siemieńska), Portugal (Paula Albuquerque, Sara Falcão Casaca, Heloísa Perista and Pedro Perista), Romania (Daniela Șoitu and Conțiu Tiberiu Șoitu), Serbia (Mihajlo Jakovljevic, Mirjana Jovanovic, Olivera Milovanovic and Svetlana Radevic), Slovakia (Anna Pilková and Juraj Mikuš), Slovenia (Tanja Renner and Ana Kralj), Spain (Jeroen Spijker, Juan Manuel García González and Dolores Puga), Sweden (Lars-Gunnar Engström, Satu Heikkinen and Clary Krekula),

Switzerland (Nicky Le Feuvre, Maurice Avramito and Valérie Hugentobler) and United Kingdom (Laura Airey and Jakov Jandrić).

The volume help the reader to have a global perspective and find out more about *Extended Working Life Policies* from other regions: United States (Debra Street), Australia (Elizabeth Brooke), New Zealand (Judith A. Davey, Hannah Phillips and Fiona Alpass), Chile (Ignacio Madero-Cabib, José De-Amesti and María-Soledad Herrera), Israel (Orly Benjamin, Sarit Nisim and Dikla Segel-Karpas), and between two continents: Turkey (Murat A. Mercan),

The *Lists of figures and tables*, the *Glossary* and *Index* are helpful tools for the reader. The volume is available for readers on Springer Open.

This comprehensive overview of the latest guidelines in the areas of extended working life policies, with the aim to stimulate interest in a reflection on current issues and the role of sociology, economy, political sciences in its analysis is a very useful tool for all those concerned with knowledge of social life. The achievements and failures of these policies will certainly be scientific temptations to which researchers will not be able to resist.

