



# New Risks, New Welfare: The Transformation of the European Welfare State

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## Abstract

This book introduces the concept of new social risks in welfare state studies and explains their relevance to the comparative understanding of social policy in Europe. New social risks arise from shifts in the balance of work and family life as a direct result of the declining importance of the male breadwinner family, changes in the labour market, and the impact of globalization on national policy-making. They differ from the old social risks of the standard industrial life-course, which were concerned primarily with interruptions to income from sickness, unemployment, retirement, and similar issues. New social risks pose new challenges for the welfare policies of European countries, such as the care of children and the elderly, more equal opportunities, the activation of labour markets and the management of needs that arise from welfare state reform, and new opportunities for the coordination of policies at the EU level. The book includes detailed and up-to-date case studies of policy development across these areas in the major European countries. These studies, written by leading experts, are organized in a comparative framework which is followed throughout the book. They highlight the way in which national welfare state regimes and institutional arrangements shape policy-making to meet new social risks. A major feature of this volume is the analysis of developments at the EU level and their interaction with national policies. The EU has been largely unsuccessful in its interventions in old social risk policy, but appears to have more success in its attempts to coordinate policy for new social risks. Experience here may provide lessons for future developments in EU policy-making. The comparative framework of the book seeks to inform an understanding of the development of new social risks in Europe and of the particular political opportunities and challenges that result. It provides an original analysis of pressing issues at the forefront of European welfare policy debate and locates it at the heart of current theoretical debates.

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standards and regulations of welfare policies are other common challenges across the continent. First we have many historical works about welfare state genesis, expansion and transformation without quantification of it, but many researchers want to be more scientific. The measurement of complex socio-political phenomena is of course very difficult and controversial task. When researchers agree on comparative indicators they have chance to gather empirical results for different countries. This is base to infer empirical classifications of the welfare state. The most famous of them is proposed by Gosta Esping-Andersen: three worlds of welfare capitalism. History, indicators and classificat New social risks pose new challenges for the welfare policies of European countries, such as the care of children and the elderly, more equal opportunities, the activation of labor markets and the management of needs that arise from welfare state reform, and new opportunities for the coordination of policies at the EU level. The book includes detailed and up-to-date case studies of policy development across these areas in the major European countries. These studies, written by leading experts, are organized in a comparative framework which is followed throughout the book. This book develops understanding of current welfare state transformations by directing attention to the new social risks that result from the transition to post-industrial society.