

Abstracts

Széman, Zsuzsa: Who are Elderly? – Different Criteria of Ageing

The study focuses on the interpretation of ageing on the labour market. Drawing on an analysis of past trends in the European Union and recent Hungarian empirical studies, it presents the negative processes arising from the conflict of interests between employers and national/EU goals. In contrast with the upward push of the demographic concept of ageing this results in a downward shift: ageing on the labour market begins early in the life cycle resulting in a gap of up to 30 years. The analysis reveals the causes of the discrimination against employees aged 40, 45 and over 50.

Takács, Judit; Mocsonaki, László; Tóth, Tamás P.: Social Exclusion of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) People in Hungary

This paper – empirically based on the analysis of 150 personal accounts of discrimination and an original survey research (N = 1122) conducted by the Institute of Sociology, in cooperation with the Háttér Support Society for LGBT People in Hungary and the Labrisz Lesbian Association, between August-October 2007 – will focus on the various forms of social exclusion experienced by Hungarian LGBT people. Our research findings indicated that considering the main agents of socialization Hungarian LGBT people are subjected to the functioning of structural oppression (Young 1990), manifested mainly in forms of heteronormative cultural imperialism and systemic violence.

Tóth, László: Attitudes on Homosexuality

The paper detects the attitudes on homosexuality in the Hungarian society in the last twenty years. First it makes a draft about those social historical characteristics of Hungary, which form the attitudes of the different social groups and the ideological tendencies in which the opinions evolve. The attitudes on „otherness” and especially on homosexuality changed strongly positively in the beginning of the '90-s, but the changes stopped afterwards. In the group of young Hungarians – and especially in the future „elite” – the attitudes on homosexuality are strongly friendly nowadays.

Németh, György: Redistribution – a Key Notion of Social Policy

The author criticizes the mainstream economic thought that stipulates income redistribution as a factor acting against competitiveness and economic growth. He points out that, with the exception of some extreme cases, the level of income redistribution has no effect on the performance of the economy, thus the social-political space available to governments is larger than is stated by mainstream economics. The author defines the notion of solidarity in terms of economics based on the economic notion of redistribution and in order to do so, he differentiates between redistribution in the accounting and redistribution in the economic sense. He then surveys the different social insurance systems from the vantage point of redistribution which systems he defines as being mixes of insurance and redistribution elements. Finally, the author emphasizes that a mandatory health insurance scheme can only operate as an insurance-redistribution mix while the main direction in the development of social insurance based pension systems is aimed at decreasing the duration of redistribution.

Varga, István; Udvari, Kerstin: The Means Test or the Dilemmas of the Invulnerability of Privacy

The authors use the phrase 'means test' not only in the meaning of income test, asset test, test of resources but also in the broader sense of 'study of living conditions' and aim at investigating the kind of authorization that forms the basis of the means testing procedure intervening privacy. The presence of means tests can be estimated to the early, poor policy period of social policies. One of the most important duties of social work is to collect available information then to ponder those pieces of information. Home visits have developed from the early stages of means tests. Today, however, means tests and family visits merge with one another. The concept of a means test is mentioned by several laws, however, none of them describes special formal and content requirements of this procedure. Firstly, the means test always precedes social benefits; secondly, it helps to make a decision on social benefits. This is done by insulting one's privacy. However, the main point of the means test (like property or income) could similarly be clarified by completely different sources (such as the income-tax return or the real estate register). Means tests are official procedures but it has not been clarified yet who is the right person to carry them out with what kind of qualifications. Because of the negative traditions of means tests the authors suggest using the notion 'professional opinion' for this purpose. As we see it, social workers should first of all be the professionals since they are in possession of the required knowledge to prepare professional opinions.