Policies to Enhance Active Ageing in Germany

Presentation at the International Workshop „Well-being in Ageing Societies: Perspectives from China, Germany and Japan“
23 – 25 October 2013, Beijing

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As an introduction: Active Ageing Index

4 domains, each with several indicators:

(1) Employment of older people

(2) Older people's participation in society

(3) Independent, healthy and secure living

(4) Capacity and enabling environment for active ageing

Developed by: UNECE, European Commission and European Centre for Social Welfare Policy, 2012
Active Ageing Index: Ranking

The basic idea: policy matters!

Employment and social participation (volunteer work) are important aspects of active ageing
What is the presentation about?

Investigate the role of policy in two domains of active ageing (the German case)

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<th>Employment of older people and transition into retirement</th>
<th>Volunteer work</th>
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Policies on employment of older people and on transition into retirement

Paradigmatic change in the 1990ies: From early retirement to longer working lives

Some landmarks:

- **1973:** Introduction of flexible retirement age from 63
- **1984:** Introduction of state subsidies for early retirement from age 58
- **1986:** Extended unemployment benefit for older workers
- **1992:** Decision to raise standard pension age to 65; deductions for retirement before 65
- **Since 1996:** Several acts to raise the standard pension age of various pension types
- **Since 2006:** Several initiatives to raise labour market participation of older workers
- **2007:** Decision to raise the standard pension age from 65 to 67

Change in pension policy

Change in labour market policy

1970ies 1980ies 1990ies noughties
Empirical trend: Employment rate of older workers is rising

Persons in employment as a percentage of the population of the respective age group.

Data Source: Federal Statistical Office, Microcensus
Empirical trend: Retirement age is rising

Average age of retirement (of the persons drawing old age pensions).

Data Source: German Statutory Pension Insurance
Empirical trend: Planned retirement age is rising

Persons in each answer category to the question “At what age do you plan to stop working?” as a percentage of the population of the age group 40-49.

Data Source: German Ageing Survey
Policies on volunteer work

Since the end of the 1990ies:
Development of a distinct policy field „Enhancement of volunteer work“

- Volunteer work is more and more prominent on the political agenda
- Responsibilities and tasks have been assigned to political actors
- Increasing volunteer work has been established as an overall policy goal
- Interventions and instruments to promote volunteer work have been developed: reports, campaigns, initiatives, programmes
- Several programmes have been launched to promote volunteer work of older people
Other policies with an effect volunteer work

In addition, and maybe even more important, there are certainly effects of

- health policy: The cohorts that have moved up into old age in the last 15-20 years are healthier than previous cohorts.

- educational policy: The cohorts that have moved up into old age in the last 15-20 years are better educated than previous cohorts.

- pension policy: The cohorts that have moved up into old age in the last 15-20 have good pensions.

Factors that make volunteer work more likely
Empirical trend: Rates of older people doing volunteer work are rising

Volunteers as a percentage of the population of the respective age group.

- **40-54 years**
  - Men: 44, 37, 38
  - Women: 43, 39, 39

- **55-69 years**
  - Men: 39, 28, 35
  - Women: 42, 40, 40

- **70-85 years**
  - Men: 26, 17, 19
  - Women: 30, 23, 23

Data Source: German Survey on Volunteering
Empirical trend: Older people‘s potential for volunteer work is rising

Persons who answered with “yes” to the question “Are you interested to take up volunteer work today or in the future?” as a percentage of the population of the respective age group.

Data Source: German Survey on Volunteering
Discussion

(1) The effect of policy is more obvious regarding the employment rates and the retirement age of older people than regarding the volunteering of older people.

(2) It seems that policies in several policy fields have to concur and have to go hand in hand to have an effect.

(3) Future interaction between domains of active ageing? E.g.:
   - will rising employment rates and rising pension age be obstructive or supportive to volunteer work?
   - will lower pensions be obstructive to volunteer work or will more poverty in old age generate more volunteer work?
Thank you
Active Ageing Index

Overall Index

- Employment
  - Employment rate 55-59
  - Employment rate 60-64
  - Employment rate 65-69
  - Employment rate 70-74

- Participation in society
  - Voluntary activities
  - Care to children and grand children
  - Care to older adults
  - Political participation

- Independent, Healthy and Secure living
  - Physical exercise
  - Access to health services
  - Independent living
  - Financial security (three indicators)*
  - Physical safety
  - Life-long learning

- Capacity and Enabling Environment for active ageing
  - Remaining life expectancy at age 55
  - Share of healthy life expectancy at age 55
  - Mental well-being
  - Use of ICT
  - Social connectedness
  - Educational attainment

Actual experiences of active ageing

Capacity to actively age
Volunteer work and satisfaction with life

Mean values of life satisfaction of those who volunteer and those who don’t volunteer, in the respective age group.

Data Source: German Ageing Survey
Empirical trend: More people work during retirement

Persons in employment as a percentage of the population of the respective age group.

Data Source: German Ageing Survey
Status just before retirement

![Graph showing the status of retirement in Germany from 1996 to 2011 for men and women, with different categories such as active insurance, passive insurance, unemployed,Others, and occupational status.]

### Policies on volunteer work

Since the end of the 1990ies:
Development of a distinct policy field „Enhancement of volunteer work“

Some landmarks:

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<td>1999</td>
<td>Appointment of the committee of enquiry „The Future of volunteer work“</td>
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<td>First German Survey on Volunteering</td>
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<td>2002</td>
<td>The Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women &amp; Youth is appointed to be the responsible ministry for volunteer work</td>
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<td>2002</td>
<td>Foundation of the National Network for Civil Society</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>Introduction of a parliamentary commission on volunteer work</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>The Ministry appoints a commissioner on volunteer work</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>A national strategy to enhance volunteer work is developed</td>
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<td>2011</td>
<td>European Year of Volunteering</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>The first National Report on Volunteer Work is published</td>
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