



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

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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 labor 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 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. 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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New Risks, New Welfare: The Transformation of the European Welfare State From Oxford University Press Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #3870425 in Books
- Published on: 2005-01-13
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 6.10" h x .60" w x 9.10" l, .89 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 262 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"...one should congratulate the [contributors] for their effort to present unusually well informed portraits of risk development and welfare state adaptation. [The editors] provide an excellent bird's-eye view synopsis of EU-level policy making and raise the interesting hypothesis that member countries seek to push responsibility for the new risks toward EU institutions." -- *Perspectives on Politics Book Review*

About the Author

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