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Title: Situation of older generations based on EU-SILC in selected Central and Eastern European countries

Abstract: Although there are a lot of publications that focus on showing the socio-economic consequences of population aging in Europe, they are primarily about the industrialized Western countries of Europe. This paper offers a unique overview and joint comparison of some countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE): Poland, Lithuania, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Latvia, Estonia by presenting the socio-economic situation of older generations using the EU-SILC 2007 data. Information about the older generation could be presented using i.e. SHARE but only from the age of 50+, and we would like also to compare some of these results with younger generations (not only below 65 but also below 50 years old).

First, we provide a critical overview of available sources of secondary data that could be used for the analysis of the socio-economic consequences of an ageing population in some countries of Central and Eastern Europe which joined the EU in 2004 and in 2007. Even though there are Household Budget Surveys in many countries, they are based on different methodology. Also there is limited access for using this source of data. Recent SHARE data is also a good source of analysis of the population 50+ but again there is a limited source of comparison for all countries in the CEE as in Wave 2nd (2006) only the Czech Republic and Poland were included. Therefore, there is no one single source of good quality data for doing comparative economic analysis in this field for countries of our interest.

Therefore the aim of preparing this paper is to check if the EU-SILC survey could be used in an analysis of the situation of older persons and the consequences of population ageing. Currently, there are a lot of indicators by gender and by age (including different ages) available via EUROSTAT's web page. However, not all of them are interesting from the comprehensive analysis of the economics of ageing, so having the possibility to use individual data from EU-SILC 2007, there were more in depth analysis (including multivariate data analysis) performed. Based on individual data from *EU-SILC UDB 2007 – version 2, August 2009*, we performed an analysis to present the comprehensive issue of the situation of an ageing population with stress not only on just the presentation of some results, but mainly focusing on the missing gaps in data/information by offering an analysis of those gaps with recommendations for data collection systems to facilitate future international comparisons (including also in future Bulgaria and Romania for comparisons as this time it was not possible).

We focus on the income situation and living conditions of older persons (especially using housing components from a 2007 survey). Specifically, we are not only focused on income, poverty or living conditions, but rather on cross topics to show the results for the group of interest (with a comparison to the younger one) according to two approaches: 1) first, the presentation of the situation of a household with an older member (using the household interview), and 2) second, the situation of older persons (using personal interviews) by also showing additional aspects related to properly capturing the economic situation of older persons (including their labour market activity even if the majority of older generations in analyzed countries are receiving a pension after age 65). These two ways of using data could give a better understanding of current existing indicators such as material deprivation. In general we can find the indicator of material deprivation of households with at least one

household member aged 65+ and single household of a member aged 65+. We are also testing the living situation of households with one member aged 65+ but with other family members living within the same household, providing a multi-generational living situation which is still somewhat common in Central and Eastern European countries.

Additionally, empirical analysis of the economic situation of ageing populations in some countries of interest of this paper (such as Poland) is using data from the Household Budget Surveys (Central Statistical Office, Warsaw). In this paper there will be a comparison of data from the Polish HBS and EU-SILC 2007 data for those variables which could be found in both datasets as mentioned above (i.e. material situation – by indicator of “meeting ends”) as well as differences in sample errors with possible information for EU-SILC presentation of design effects.

It is important that this analysis provide a better explanation why for some countries like the Czech Republic and Poland, had low poverty rates for older persons 65+ (according to EU-SILC data) which is not so alarming compared to other countries particularly Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia. We also claim that the income only approach is not enough to see the productivity of older persons inside and outside the family. In this section of the paper, an analysis of regular inter-household cash transfer received and paid will be shown.

Differences in the results of the analysis are also due to the process of fieldwork, mode of interviewing and the length and content of the questionnaires. As an example some of the questionnaires (compared in their national languages) were limited to the minimum requested information by EUROSTAT (Czech Republic) and some questionnaires were much more extensive (Poland) in 2007.

In this respect, the whole analysis is crucial to assess not only the quality and usefulness of the Central and Eastern European countries’ contribution to EU-SILC, but also for the purpose of analyzing the changing socio-economic consequences of population ageing in the long term. For these countries it is a relatively young survey, and the analysis of the group of the older generation’s situation is quite specific, however, practical recommendations of what the future will hold should be asked in all countries, and where and why differences can be expected are possible.