

## WELFARE AND EVERYDAY LIFE

[Maria das Dores Guerreiro, Anália Torres, and Luís Capucha (editors), 2009, *Portugal in the European Context*, vol. III, Lisbon, CIES, ISCTE-IUL, Celta Editora]

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This book contains a selection of texts which analyse some aspects of the quality of life from the sociological point of view. It is the third volume of the collected papers' edition *Portugal in the European Context* entitled *Welfare and Everyday Life*. It examines the quality of life looking at indicators such as income levels, housing and working conditions, professional qualifications, health and access to personal care, social integration and civic participation, family relations and conciliation of work and family, feelings of individual well-being and safety.

The book presents research results of a wide range of different projects which focus on people's everyday life, their lifestyles and living conditions. Portuguese society, its institutions and processes are analysed and put in the European context.

In the first chapter entitled "Changing families: configurations, values and recomposition processes", Maria das Dores Guerreiro, Anália Torres and Cristina Lobo focus on the family changes, using the national and Eurostat statistics as well as European Social Survey research data. Reconfiguration of family values is examined, family profiles in Portugal and the rest of Europe are compared, principal trends in marriage, cohabitation and divorce are analysed. The results show that the family has remained strong through years and perfectly capable of adapting to social, economic and cultural changes. However, a transitional reconfiguration of the family has been observed — a lower birth rate and smaller family, an increased number of divorces and children born outside marriage. The traditional picture of the family which emphasizes authoritarian, patriarchal and institutional patterns has been greatly changing. Things which are becoming increasingly important are loving, affective relations, personal fulfilment and well-being, along with gender equality and desire for children. Portuguese family is undergoing social processes of advanced modernity and is very similar to southern and eastern European extended families with more adult children who stay in family homes.

The second chapter "Do European values have a sex?", by Anália Torres and Rui Brites, shows that — according to the European Social Survey — behaviour, attitudes, opinions and values shared by men and women in Europe are a lot more alike than might be expected. Gender differences are considered in seven domains: family, friends, leisure, work, religion, politics and voluntary work. For both sexes their family, friends and leisure time are the most important aspects of life. There are no differences in social and political trust or civic values either, but in the political domain it can be noticed that women are more left-oriented than men and more distanced from political issues as well. As for religion, it plays a more important role in women's lives than in men's. Contrary to the past gender differentiation,

women are better educated than men today. However, Portuguese women are below European average when it comes to the number of years spent in education. All in all, this research denies sexual stereotypes and shows that education, class, age or economic and cultural conditions are more relevant than gender when we look at differences among the Europeans.

In the third chapter "Work and family: what quality of life? An exploratory analysis of the services sector", Maria das Dores Guerreiro and Eduardo Alexandre Rodrigues analyse the patterns of well being and quality of life of the Portuguese population in the service sector, using the findings from a recent questionnaire survey as a part of the European project Quality of Life in a Changing Europe. The survey associated working conditions with professional insertion, levels of life satisfaction and well-being and used factors related to different levels of life quality such as material conditions, housing, health, family and work. Higher levels of quality of work were found among the following employees: better qualified, older, male, with supervisory functions and higher incomes, having permanent contracts, flexible working hours and working more hours per week; who said that their job was sufficiently demanding, who had time to do their work and do team work. The analysis also focused on the satisfaction with the relations between work and family. Work satisfaction was higher among those who conciliated work and family sphere better and lower among those who had problems with their harmonization.

The fourth chapter "The changing everyday life of health", by Noémia Lopes and Felismina Mendes, is based on two surveys on self-medication and managing genetic risk of cancer carried out among the Lisbon respondents. The results show that today, when health is a moral imperative, the lay people are feeling increasingly insecure which leads them to becoming addicted to medical expertise and results in direct control over their health. This is the social process of medicalisation of everyday life which includes self-medication and genetic risk management using the expert knowledge.

In the fifth chapter "Drug addicts: socio-psychological trajectories and problematic ties", Anália Torres, Ana Marques Lito, Isabel Sousa and Diana Maciel present the results of an empirical study about the drug addicts looking for the answers to some fundamental questions related to addiction. The approach is multi-dimensional and correlates the social conditions, family patterns and mental processes of addicts. Centre for Drug Addicts (Lisbon) database and other methods (in-depth interviews) allow a typification of the drug addicts' situation. Although drug use is present in many social sectors, it is most common in the administrative and service sector; also in poor social contexts and violent family situations. Still there is no concrete family profile which leads to drug dependency. Most drug addicts are young males, poorly educated, unemployed, with married parents.

Luís Capucha, the author of the sixth chapter "Poverty and social exclusion", uses data from the European Household Panel. The main poverty indicators in Portugal are analysed from a dual perspective (data from 1995 to 2001 are compared) and compared with the EU15 member states. He uses the main indicators in the measurement of poverty, such as the risk of poverty before and after the social

transfers or the measurements of unequal distribution of wealth. Some of the most vulnerable categories are the low income workers, the “traditional” farmers, the long term unemployed, children and the elderly people, pensioners, large families, drug addicts, immigrants, etc. They all suffer from exclusion from citizenship rights and are thus humiliated and punished. It is essential to create a more positive and attractive environment for them which would result in better living conditions.

In the seventh chapter “Where is African immigration in Portugal going? Sedentarisation, generations and trajectories”, Fernando Luís Machado, Maria Abranches, Ana Raquel Matias and Sofia Leal use official statistical sources and the findings of various research projects and conclude that in the recent years African immigrants have been progressively settling in the country. Evidence for this is found in the data on the direction and flow of entry into and exit from Portugal, the regrouping of families, an increasing number of people who have been awarded Portuguese citizenship and mixed marriages. The authors discuss how this settling will affect the social integration of these immigrants into the Portuguese society. It is found that the integration of this population remains limited, although greater in the second generation of immigrants. The problem of social exclusion and poverty still remains.

The authors of the eighth chapter “Immigration and education: trajectories, daily life and aspirations”, Teresa Seabra and Sandra Mateus present an (empirical) analysis of the educational achievements and expectations of the pupils from the immigrant families. Despite certain common sense beliefs, they conclude that the immigrants’ children do not have less success at school than the others. Neither the pupils nor their parents show a difference in their expectations of the educational level which is to be attained. However, in comparison with their non-immigrant schoolmates, immigrant children feel they receive less support from teachers, are more displeased with their schoolmates’ behaviour and less critical of their school’s physical condition and the learning process.

Maria das Dores Guerreiro, Pedro Abrantes and Ines Pereira address the problems of the Portuguese young generation in the ninth chapter “Transition in youth: trajectories and discontinuities”. The paper is based on various national and international research projects. Studies have shown big changes in life patterns, paths and plans of the Portuguese youth. In short, Portuguese youth is divided between a traditional segment, that is traditional ways of life and value systems deriving from the unfavourable social origins where young people start active life at an early age, and a modern segment where the young prolong their student life, have a great diversity of cultural practices and more liberal value systems.

In the tenth chapter “Life patterns in contemporary society”, Susana da Cruz Martins, Rosário Mauritti and António Firmino da Costa present a panorama of the lifestyles of the Portuguese population in the European context today. They refer to the five main life patterns: *deprived*, *restricted*, *massified*, *established* and *qualified*. The *deprived* life pattern is characterised by the most profound deprivation with regard to education, work, consumption, etc., while the *qualified* life pattern is the best endowed with educational and cultural resources. Portugal is the country in the EU

with the greatest difference between the most affluent and the most deprived segment of population; also the country with the biggest difference between the *deprived* and the *restricted* life patterns on one side and the *established* and the *qualified* life patterns on the other. Therefore, Portuguese society turns out to be the most asymmetric one, at least on the economic level, and remains the most vulnerable one with regard to poverty.

This book encompasses a wide-ranging scope of subjects pointing to some general traits of Portuguese society after its integration in the European Union. Traditional patterns are changing into the modern ones in all segments of life — family re-composition, the changing role of women, paths and plans of the youth, the new approach to health care. However, some traditional problems still characterise Portuguese society today: vulnerability to poverty and a high presence of the deprived and restricted life patterns, lower levels of education of women than in the rest of EU, a growing number of immigrants whose integration in the society is limited. The book also opens a number of questions in the wide area of welfare and everyday life for future consideration and research.

On the whole, looking at the three key life quality dimensions, “having” (material resources and living conditions), “loving” (affective and family relations) and “being” (social integration, feelings of belonging, collective trust), this book greatly contributes to the sociological analysis of life quality, placing Portugal in the context of modernity, globalisation and Europe.

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