

Andrea Leitner

Wohlfahrtsstaaten und die Balance von Arbeit und Beruf: Politiken zur Förderung von WLB in internationaler Perspektive

Within the European Employment Strategy benchmarking and learning from good practices are the main mechanisms to improve national performance. This is also the case for WLB-strategies, which are reinforced because of economic reasons to increase employment and population growth. The paper asks for the main criteria for public policies to promote WLB and whether or under which conditions such policies are transferable between the successful Nordic countries and the less successful conservative countries like Austria and Germany. Denmark and Finland are used as „good practice“ examples.

The analysis shows that childcare leave regulations are an important instrument to encourage mothers for continuous working careers. But the consequences of these regulations concerning employment turn out to be quite different, even in measures with similar orientation. What we can learn from the Nordic countries is that the consistency of welfare state regulations and institutions are an important precondition for a successful WLB. This calls for an interplay of different fields and means that the imbalance of family and work and family reconciliation can hardly be solved by flexible working contracts or longer parental leave possibilities.