

Future Challenges for the Nordic Model: Caregiving

- ▶ Renaissance of the Nordic welfare model
- ▶ Informal caregiving in Sweden among different groups of carers
- ▶ The panorama of care: are carers alone in their commitment?

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Reasons to why the Nordic model is interesting to politicians around the world (the Economist, February, 2013)

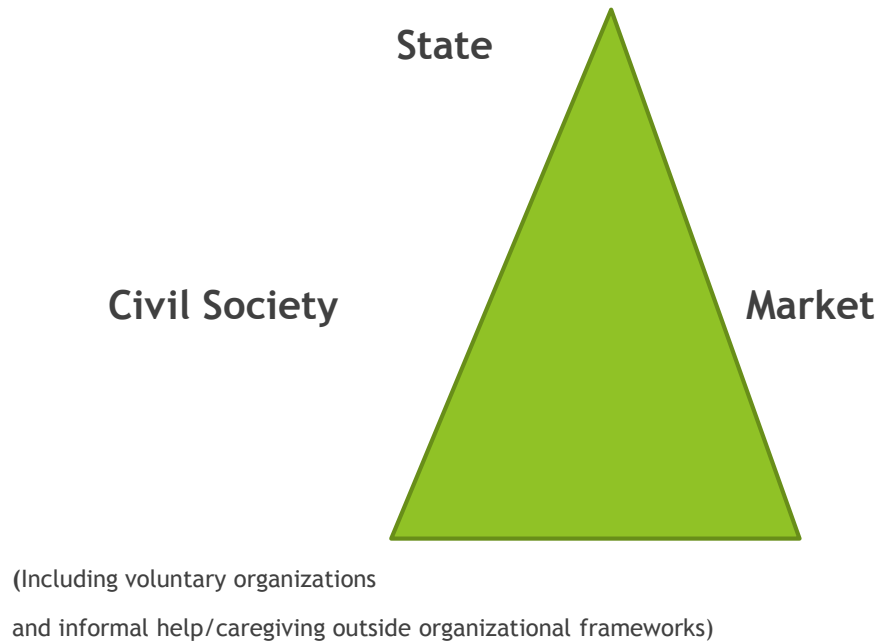


Some developments in Sweden

(the Economist, February, 2013)

- ▶ Sweden has reduced public spending as a proportion of GDP from 67 % in 1993 to 49 % today
- ▶ Still considered to be a 'generous' welfare state, 30 % of the labour force work in the public sector
- ▶ Continues to believe in open economies with public investment in human capital
- ▶ It begins with fiscal responsibility: all four Nordic countries have AAA ratings

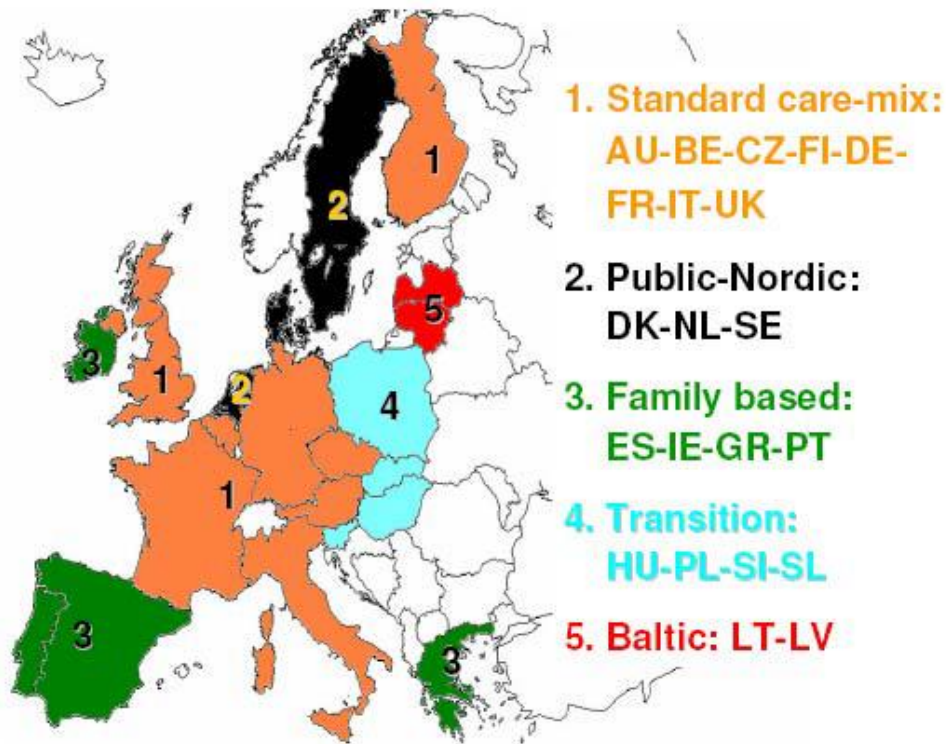
Actors in the Welfare Society



Clustering of elder care countries across Europe

Source: Lamura *et al.* (2007). In Glendinning *et al.*, (2009)

Elder care country-clusters



Informal caregiving in Sweden 2009

Based on a nationally
representative survey study
2009 carried out by the
Department of Civil Society
Studies at Ersta Sköndal
University College, Sweden

Informal help & caregiving

Step 1:

- ▶ Do you provide help, on a regular basis with activities such as housework, transport, personal care, gardening or looking after or keeping an eye on them, for a next of kin you do not live with or neighbours, friends or colleagues?

Step 2:

- ▶ Is the person you give help to in need of special care? We refer to extensive help for someone who is old, sick or disabled.

Step 3:

All respondents were asked whether they, on a regular basis, helped someone in the same household who was sick, disabled or elderly with special care needs.

Characteristics of carers, by type of household and by care needs of cared-for persons.

	Different household, <i>no</i> need of special care (n=280) (49%)	Different household, <i>has</i> need of special care (n=227) (40%)	In same household, <i>has</i> need of special care (n=63) (11%)	All carers (n=570) (100%)
Sex:				
Men	51%	38%	54%	46%
Women	49	62	46	53
Age:				
16-59	77	67	56	71
60-74	20	28	20	23
75-84	3	5	24	6
Married/Cohabiting:				
Yes	71	67	83	70
No	29	33	17	30

Characteristics of carers, by type of household and by care needs of cared-for

	Different household, <i>no</i> need of special care (n=280)	Different household, <i>has</i> need of special care (n=227)	In same household, <i>has</i> need of special care (n=63)	All carers (n=570)
Economic status:				
Employed	64%	67%	38%	63%
Retired	13	16	38	17
Other situation	23	17	24	20
Hours of help given/month:	14	19	70	22

The panorama of care provision , by household type and care needs.

	Different household, <i>no</i> need of special care (n=280)	Different household, <i>has</i> need of special care (n=227)	In same household, has need of special care (n=63)	All carers (n=570)
Cared-for person got additional help from:				
Relative/-es	45%	59%	37%	52%
Neighbour/friend	33	31	24	32
Voluntary org.	2	4	2	3
Municipality	9	53	29	28
For-profit agencies	<1	3	3	2
None of these options	34	10	41	25

Summation and Discussion

- ▶ Informal caregiving is extensive in Sweden
- ▶ Older people are active as informal caregivers in Sweden, and not only as cared-for persons or care recipients themselves???

Summation and Discussion

- ▶ For the large majority of informal carers, it is not a solitary undertaking, it is rather a commitment shared with others
- ▶ Public services from the municipality seem to be relatively often provided to cared for persons with special care needs
- ▶ It was rare in all three groups of informal carers that the cared for person got help from voluntary organizations or for-profit agencies

Summation and Discussion

- ▶ The findings challenge theories about ‘Care Cultures’ and simplistic representations of welfare societies
- ▶ The panorama of care analysed here suggests that informal care plays a major role in Sweden, a country with an extensive public sector
- ▶ The ‘welfare paradox’ here seems to be that Sweden has a relatively extensive public sector *and* an extensive provision of informal care

Summation and Discussion

- ▶ Is Home Help for older people with care needs the best form of (indirect) support for carers?
- ▶ The importance of 'minor' services
- ▶ There does not seem to be any contradictions between having a 'well-developed' welfare state and extensive informal caregiving
- ▶ Or does it??