

# CONTRADICTIONS AND CHALLENGES TO THE CREATION OF WELFARE STATES AND THEIR PUBLIC GOVERNANCE

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*In contemporary world, with the change of economic, social, political and cultural conditions, the expectations to the support or creation of welfare states are also changing. For the preservation or reinforcement of welfare states, elimination of the arising contradictions is necessary as well as positive, effective answers to the challenges raised to welfare states both in theoretic, ideological-value and practical sense. The aim of this article is to reveal and group the essential contradictions and challenges to welfare states and their public governance. This article is of a phenomenological, analytical-overview type.*

*In chapter 1, the authors provide the notions of contradiction, challenge, welfare state, governance and public governance; chapter 2 analyses contradictions and challenges to public governance of welfare states in international, state and local levels; in chapter 3, the authors analyse the challenges to welfare states in the context of the changes of the 21st century.*

## Introduction

Welfare states lived in their “golden age” in the second half of the 20th century, until its last decade. With unprecedented economic growth, in social sphere, the predominating was “the passive social policy” both in Europe and America, which was increasing the amounts of benefits in various cases of social risk. There were more elements of “active social policy” only in the countries of Northern Europe, first of all — in the area of social services, which was more directed towards a reconstructive, reintegrative state.

Hence, overall, the welfare state model of Northern Europe, “the Scandinavian” welfare state model is considered to be unsurpassed in the history of the world. Yet the economic crisis that emerged in the West, in mid 1970s, made everybody stay alert about the future of the welfare state. At the same time, the qualification conditions for receiving benefits were made stricter, and the new types of social services, for example, provision of care at home, were first started both with the aim to save funds and to reintegrate the residents. The processes in the economic

and technological areas that accelerated as a consequence of globalization were leaving less and less time for the formulation and implementation of social reforms. In the context of socio-cultural, technological, economic and political-administrative crises the understanding about welfare state is changing and a new understanding is being formed. New conditions are being created, under which it is becoming easier to change the idea of the existing welfare state and to implement another public governance than that to the “traditional” welfare state theory and practice. Most of the European Union countries, even after the end of the financial crisis of 2008 (and some state that the crisis was never completely over), are still facing with insufficient economic growth, budget deficits, growing debts, huge unemployment, increasing social, cultural exclusion. These problems get especially complicated in the context of migrant crisis, which is still difficult to control even in 2019<sup>1</sup>. To react to these crises, most countries had to address supranational institutions for financial assistance. Nevertheless, a question that has hardly been addressed — how the assistance of these institutions affect the idea of a traditional welfare state and its public governance, and what is their further possible development? In analysing international experience, it is noted that supranational institutions, such as International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, in providing financial loans, usually advocate for the ideas of neoliberalism, encourage the reduction of social protection system structures, state functions and the increase of the role of private business. But even these institutions, not to mention the International Labour Organization, the United Nations and European Union institutions, have recently become more socially engaged, especially with regard to Central and Eastern European countries. Yet in this context, with increasing economic risks, individualism and social in-

difference, it is becoming easier to backslide on the existing social structures. According to the authors, this trend may be seen as a challenge to the current and future idea of a welfare state<sup>2</sup>.

In the context of the crises of supranational institutions, under the conditions of neoliberalism, as the role of the state and trade unions is weakening, empowerment is achieved by influencing the public governance institutions, states are made to become dependent to the market, and the citizens get into the conditions of lowly paid, unstable work and loans of various kinds, which partly limit their career opportunities and the improvement of the social-economic state<sup>3</sup>. It is noted that even in Northern European countries, which are in the academic discourse often referred to as the role models of a welfare state, the support of the public to social-democratic parties and traditional ideas of universality and social solidarity is shrinking<sup>4</sup>. The aim of this article is to reveal and group the essential contradictions and challenges to welfare states and their public governance. This article is of a phenomenological, analytical-overview type, providing criticism of neoliberal individualistic nature.

In the analysis of the social-economic and political-administrative phenomena, the authors referred to gnoseological (cognitive) and axiological (value-based) approaches, which were provided from the holistic perspective. To achieve the aim, the authors used secondary statistical data, referred to the sources of academic literature and mass media, analysed on the basis of comparative and historic-critical analysis methods, used the methods of description and synthesis.

## Definitions of the concepts

To single out the contradictions and challenges to welfare states and their public governance, it is essential to understand the concepts of contradiction, challenge, welfare state, governance and public governance.

The reasoning or academic theories are not substantiated, where there are formal contradictions within them<sup>5</sup>. In such a case a law of non-contradiction may be formulated, according to which two propositions contradicting each other may not be true. A. Halder defines contradictions as: “a marginal case of contradictions in two concepts, statements, sentences, that makes it impossible for reasoning to combine them, synthesize, identify.”<sup>6</sup>.

Contradiction is a category of dialectics, which is related to the category of antithesis which means one of the contradicting sides. The unity of the contradicting sides and tendencies makes a contradiction, which is the driving force and source of objects and phenomena. The concept of contradiction may be used to describe the level of development or intensification of contradiction. Contradiction is not yet developed in diversity and to a large extent it exists in “itself”, whereas antithesis means a developed contradiction in a higher level of the phenomenon, which may be difficult to control, or absolutely out of control.

The contemporary, modern, recently often used concept is that of “challenge”. The primary meaning of a challenge is “a challenge to a duel”, when somebody challenges, and somebody accepts the challenge, after which the contest starts. A challenge may come from a single community, or one state may challenge another one — when successful or unsuccessful response of the other community or state is expressed. The concept of “a challenge” was introduced into the discourse of social sciences and made popular by English historian and philosopher A. J. Toynbee (1889–1975) in his *Study of History*<sup>7</sup>. The authors of this article use the concept of “a challenge” from the aspect of “an unsolved problem”, when a challenge is a relevant unsolved problem, which needs some kind of solution. Challenged in modern world may be economists, representatives of administra-

tion, mass media that follow individual theories and practices (for example, ideologists and practitioners that are followers of neoliberalism), individual states (for example, Russia in cases of aggression in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, North Korea with regard to tests of nuclear weapon), individual politicians (for instance, US President Donald Trump (born in 1946), etc.

A separate definition is needed to the term of “a welfare state”. If we were to look at the theory and practice of a welfare state in a precise and modern way, it includes the entire socio-economic and political “cross-section” of the Western states from the end of Second World War until nowadays. Welfare states are expressed by the activities of state and also non-governmental and private organizations that supplement them, by eliminating or mitigating social risks — disability, unemployment, accidents at work, illness, poverty, low income or no income, poor education, etc.<sup>8</sup> In most general terms, one may form such a definition of a welfare state in the modern world: a welfare state is a body of state and social policy and administration measures, first of all — in social protection, which is complemented by the measures of the non-governmental organizations and private sector by aiming not only at economic effectiveness, but also social justice towards the direction of sustainable state and development of the society.<sup>9</sup>

A definition of the terms “governance” and “public governance” used by the authors needs to be defined. The authors agree with the definitions provided by D. Gudelis (b. 1973) in *Viešasis valdymas* (“Public Governance”)<sup>10</sup>. Governance is the body of the processes, in which interested parties participate: state and municipal institutions, businesses, organizations representing business, communities, non-governmental organizations, mass media, individual citizens, which reflects the changes of the state of the society depending on them. Today the concept of

“public governance” includes the formation of public policy and public administration, reinforcement of the executive power, the influence of civil servants, citizens and their groups in the formation of the political and administrative decisions, public and private sector partnership, etc.<sup>11</sup>

### **Contradictions and challenges to public governance of welfare states on international, state and local levels**

An especially relevant contradiction in terms of welfare state governance on international and state levels is the contradiction between the market economy and social market economy, which sometimes is expressed in the short-term perspective, yet it is often marked with long-term residual phenomena. In this way, for example, influential business groups or organizations seek for exceptional rights in reducing the market regulation, and put themselves in front of the national government or municipalities which are aiming at implementing social tasks, but they totally disregard the interests of various less powerful and marginalized groups of the society. This contradiction is not valid for social businesses and business that takes social responsibility.

From the economic contradiction, which determines the contradictions of public governance and public administration, there is a contradiction of part of the states, for instance, the contradiction, resulting from the activities of US President D. Trump's administration, among the manufacturing and trade protectionism and free market of individual countries (or groups of countries). This contradiction in a more general sense, which often has a very concrete practical expression, is related to the contradictions of globalization and glocalization in international and national arena. While globalization is for the winners, glocalization is for the losers of globalization, when certain groups of population are settled

in a certain territory as excluded, suffer from the lack of movement, low income, poverty, lack of education, illnesses, disabilities, etc. and cannot benefit from globalization.

For most of the European countries, difficult contradictions arise with regard to the public governance, which sometimes remain unsolved. One should first of all draw attention to the political crisis of the United Kingdom due to the legal aspect of its exit from the European Union, i.e. its willingness to preserve the requirements of the common law in its territory, when it becomes clear that the United Kingdom will have unsolved, and, to be more precise, — not aligned with the administrative legal system of the European Union, which is natural for Germany and France that have followed it all the time but not the United Kingdom that has been referring to the common law, i.e. the same as to other Anglo-Saxon countries in the world. Certainly, this kind of presumption of the authors with regard to the relation of the legal systems of the United Kingdom and the European Union needs to be verified empirically, and upon completion of comprehensive research, either to confirm or to negate. The same adheres to the presumption with regard to the questionable relation of the Anglo-Saxon New Public Management with the more hierarchical public administration systems of the continental Western Europe, or the New Public Governance that promotes openness and social empathy, some of the features of which exist in the Scandinavian countries.

Another contradiction, arising to welfare states, or the countries creating it, is related to the relations of the centre and periphery in each individual country. Usually capital of states, or agglomerations of cities (continuous groups of cities, which are closely interrelated by industrial, cultural — household, transport ties), clearly surpass the peripheral territories of those countries according to a number of micro-economic and social-cultural indicators, and in terms of public administration

they are more effectively administrated. Good examples of this are the capitals of the Asian countries and agglomerations and the capitals of the Baltic States. A contradiction which is directly related with this problem in a number of countries between centralization and decentralization, when the so-called “centre” aims at increased centralization of governance, and the peripheral municipalities aim at greater decentralization.

An exceptional contradiction with regard to governance is related to national relations within the countries. Without solving them in a positive way, they may turn into conflicting national relations, which may affect the entire system of governance in a concrete country and on international level, for example, in the European Union, the United Nations, etc. (for example, the relations of Catalonia and Spain, the relations of the nations of the former Yugoslavia, etc.). Tense national relations have effect on everyday practice of public administration, when the decision making is protracted or interfered on the state or municipal level.

The issues relevant not only with regard to the cognitive aspect or practical activity but also due to its value aspects are those of conformity and compatibility between the relevant welfare states and public administration models. If some of the elements of a welfare state model are “connected” with the elements of the contracting public administration model, contradictions may form in the public administration and social system (for example, if one state can combine the adherence of the Anglo-Saxon type New Public Management model and the Nordic European countries’ universal-redistributive welfare state model? Or the New Public Governance and Southern European corporate “bismarckian” clientelistic model? Or the New Public Management and post-Communist Central and Eastern European corporate “bismarckian” clientelistic model?).

## **Challenges to welfare states in the context of the 21st century**

The first challenge for the development of a welfare state is related not only to the economic crises, but also to the implementation of the functions of a welfare state. The interrelation of the economic crises and welfare state is not one-way, it is much more complex. It is not only crisis that has a negative effect on a welfare state, but also lack of efficiency of a welfare state to contribute to governance and the formation of economic crisis. There are sometimes cases where lack of efficiency of the social service system, increasing expenditures, increasing bureaucratization fails to reduce poverty or social exclusion. Examples of this may be Baltic States and Balkan countries, such as Lithuania, Bulgaria, Albania, Greece. On the other hand, economic crisis and neoliberal programmes inevitably reduce the costs for social issues. Supranational institutions aim at increasing the competitiveness of the state with such expenditures and to reduce the debts of the countries. This situation was noticed in the countries of Southern Europe<sup>12</sup>. Yet the programmes of supranational institutions may be explained also by objective indicators. According to M. Vieira et al.<sup>13</sup>, in case of Portugal unemployment was one of the greatest in the EU, the average unemployment level jumped from 7.6 per cent in 2008 to 17.8 per cent in 2013, and the level of unemployment of youth was even 42.5 per cent. In Q1 of 2019 unemployment in Spain accounted for 14.7 per cent, and youth unemployment was 34.4 per cent.<sup>14</sup> Youth unemployment in Italy at the beginning of 2019 was 33 per cent.<sup>15</sup> The worst case was in Greece, where unemployment at the beginning of 2019 was the highest in the European Union, standing at 18.5 per cent, and among youth it was 39.6 per cent.<sup>16</sup> Reacting to these indicators, unpopular decisions and the cut of state expenditure were necessary. Liberalizing economy and

liberalizing public governance did not offer other options.

The second challenge to welfare states is economic globalization. Various trade agreements, capital freedom, pressure to governments to attract more capital, to reduce taxes for corporations, to amend labour codes in order to reduce the rights of the employees, inevitably limit the capacity of states to ensure budget funds for the development of the social protection system. Therefore, the change of the priorities of states is noted, the interests of the broader society are disregarded, and they are usually replaced by ensuring the needs of global business and political structures<sup>17</sup>. On the other hand, one can also detect other arguments, for example, F. Castles (born in 1943), in analysing various research, states that in the context of economic globalization political powers are aiming at intensively implementing various social programmes, to protect themselves from the negative impact of external globalization<sup>18</sup>. It is also likely that such a trend is related with elections and political populism.

The third challenge may be considered the paradox, which, on the one hand, is related to increasing needs of social services, and, on the other hand, with the remuneration that does not meet the functions. The budgets of these institutions and wages are cut or remain unchanged. In the context of inflation and demographic changes they completely fail to meet the ongoing or future changes, or the needs of the society<sup>19</sup>. One can presume that the career choices that are related with the provision of social services are marginalized also from the point of view of culture, since they do not meet the requirements based on post-modernism, individualism, hedonism, modern technologies and fast financial gain. On the other hand, these convictions may change with the change of the individual circumstances. Loss of job or unexpected illness may change the persons'

values with regard to the implementation of the functions of a welfare state<sup>20</sup>.

As the fourth challenge for welfare state may be considered the trends of immigration. Increasing immigration, especially from Muslim countries, encourage the confrontation of the society and politicians, nationalist parties gain more power, which aim at restricting the functions of a welfare state by using negative citizens' sentiments with regard to emigrants. These sentiments are usually related to the decreasing wages, worse work conditions, and greater burden for the social service systems. Such a phenomenon, when social welfare is intended for "own" citizens, and to give little, or nothing, to immigrants, is called "welfare chauvinism". By using these sentiments, the Danish new right has managed to change the social policy programmes, by implementing the principle of a specific period of staying in the country, which in many regards reduces the opportunities of immigrants born abroad to use the advantages provided by a welfare state.<sup>21</sup> The radical right parties of Sweden, Finland, Netherlands, France, Germany, Spain and some other Western European countries are aiming at the same. In some way, the ideology of "welfare chauvinism", with its own specificity, is characteristic of some radical right political parties of Central and Eastern Europe, for instance, Estonia, Hungary, Poland.

The fifth challenge may be considered to be the ageing of the population, which reflects unfavourable demographic trends, in most of the countries that have the features of the traditional welfare state. The countries belonging to the Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation (OECD) are facing a significant ageing of population. In 1960, people over 65 years old and older made approximately 9.5 per cent of the residents, and in 1995 these figures accounted for even 14.6 per cent. It is forecasted that in 2030 these figures will account for approximately 23.7 per cent. This means that

the need for social services will increase significantly, and so will the necessity to ensure the functions of a welfare state.<sup>22</sup> According to the data of the European Commission of 2009, the expenditures for pensions in the states affected by financial crisis should increase in 2040, for example, in Ireland, which has always had low social expenditures — by 6.4% of GDP, and to account for 8.6% of GDP in 2060, in Portugal — by 12.5% and 13.4 per cent, in Spain by 13.2% and 15.1%. These figures should increase to even 21.4% in Greece in 2040 and to 24.1% in 2060.<sup>23</sup>

The sixth challenge in the countries that support welfare states or that try to create them may be considered to be a low birth rate. The birth rates are decreasing from 1960, when on average the birth rate was 2.85, and in 1980 this indicator fell to 1.87, where in 1999 it accounted for only 1.56 children per one mother. Along with ageing, these indicators are rather threatening, since they may determine a shortage of labour force, they may have a negative impact on the growth of economy, collection of taxes, and to simultaneously create budget deficits, which would have a negative impact on the implementation of the functions of a welfare state.<sup>24</sup>

As the seventh challenge may be considered the practices and traditions of informal settlement, the values of the society, convictions and forms of conduct. These practices do not encourage the effectiveness of the services related to a welfare state, and, on the contrary, they create a parallel phenomenon, where both public funds and informal means of settlement are used. This is especially noticed in such developing countries and countries in the transition phase as Ukraine and Lithuania. Citizens in health care and education systems are more inclined to settle by presents, rather than rely on the wages paid by the state and the quality of public services ensured by it.<sup>25</sup>

As the eighth challenge for those that support or create welfare states may be considered the reforms of the modernization of public governance in the direction of implementation of the New Public Management. In the context of these reforms, the state social insurance pension systems were first started to partially be privatized. It should be noted that these trends were noticed even in such countries as Sweden and Germany, where a large share of the pension is made of benefits from private funds.<sup>26</sup> This way was also chosen by Lithuania in 2003, which introduced private pension funds in 2004, and in 2019 it made the private accumulation system mandatory to young people.

The ninth challenge in supporting or creating welfare states is the decline of the traditional political left or social-democratic parties in most of the European countries. It is directly or indirectly related to the loss of the identity of the left-wing parties and their unsuccessful search for a new, modern identity, and there is definitely space for the expression of social justice and solidarity aims in modern world. It would seem that, with the increase of social injustice in the world, and in some countries — poverty, the left-wing political parties could have a firm basis to act towards reduction of social exclusion and the solution of problems related to inequality, yet, apart from several countries, such as, Portugal and Sweden, their popularity continues to fall, and they are more seldom elected to rule.

The tenth challenge for welfare state and their governance is the decline of social dialogue in the West, and in other regions of the world, including Central and Eastern Europe, it is insufficient. Even in the countries of Northern Europe, where the social dialogue systems were strongly expressed for a number of decades, a decline of the role of trade unions and the number of members of trade unions has been observed. One of the reasons of this is the changes of the labour

market structure, where untypical labour agreements are becoming more popular and the precariat is increasing.

As the eleventh challenge to welfare states should be considered neoliberal ideology and practice that is expressed in a number of countries. For example, in Central and Eastern European countries, for instance, in Bulgaria and Lithuania, public opinion in mass media, often commissioned by business organizations, is actively formed by such think tanks as neoliberal Free Market institutes, and one could barely find any journalists in the media of these countries that would think in any other way than neoliberal. Apart from the already mentioned characteristics of the economic-social politics, such as privatization of state enterprises, strict fiscal policy, reduction of market state regulation, opening of the domestic market for foreign capital, restriction of state expenditures on social needs, neoliberalism is an antipode of such phenomena of cultural nature as holism, solidarity and collaboration. It provides absolute individualism, cultural-value nihilism and moral-psychological decline, which are to be associated with the post-modern values, and the political system is in fact simulacrum. Obviously, neoliberal policy is very favourable to the promotion of business and economics yet it is not sensitive to social, ecological and cultural issues of the society.<sup>27</sup>

As the twelfth challenge to welfare states should be considered disregard to long-term sustainable development goals in a large share of the countries of the world, including the large countries, such as the USA, China, Brazil, and Russia. Sustainable development is explained as an interplay and balance of three interrelated dimensions: economic, social and environmental dimensions, as a desirable sustainable result, by reacting to such problems as climate warming, air pollution, waste of resources, decline of ecosystems, wars, social injustice, unemployment, poverty, irresponsible consumption, health,

education problems, a moral-ethical crisis, which is filtered through various areas. Nevertheless, it is evident that most of the politicians of the world, as well as economists, representatives of administration totally or to a large extent ignore the sustainable development goals and tasks, and aim at short-term, clearly practically tangible economic goals.

The aforementioned contradictions and challenges are relevant both when clarifying the current, and, likely, future issues of welfare state. It is doubtful if all the contradictions of welfare states and their public governance may be eliminated in the future, but one should seek at least to define their reasons, and mitigate their effect. Adequate and proper response to the challenges arising under complicated conditions will also be necessary. Definitely, the very concept of a welfare state will change. One can already notice theories and practices, such as “developmental welfare”, which are used to describe the “use” of social issues exceptionally to achieve economic objectives. Eastern Asian countries, referring to this risky practice, have long not been giving proper attention to the solution of social and environmental issues. Later on, this attention increased, still not sufficiently, and there is still a necessity not to disturb the economic, social and environmental balance. Now a new theory and practice of “basic income” has been raised in the West, i.e. minimum income for all, which is also one of the possible alternatives of solutions of future problems, which would reduce the influence of the “traditional” welfare state by refusing or significantly reducing the significance of social insurance. Not all the experiments of application of “basic income”, for example, in Finland, were fully justified, but it is likely that their implementation will continue alone due to the fact that the technological revolutions of the 21st century may significantly reduce the labour supply. Most of the contradictions and challenges in social sphere are currently merely impossible to be foreseen,

yet it is necessary to observe the environment and prepare to overcome various crises and find solutions to complex social problems.

## Conclusions

In the context of socio-cultural, technological, economic and political-administrative changes a new understanding about welfare states is emerging, and the contradictions and challenges to the welfare states are being formed.

Among the economic contradictions it is useful to mention the contradiction between the market economy and social market economy and the contradictions between individual countries (or groups of countries) manufacturing and trade perfectionism and free market that is being formed. There are possible discrepancies and contradictions of the legal systems of welfare states between the requirements of common law and administrative law. This presumption is first of all valid in the case of United Kingdom, which had been following the common law, leaving the European Union. Other contradictions are related to the relations of the centre and periphery and to national relations within the states, which may turn into conflict relations, and affect the entire system of governance in a concrete country, and also its international status. The contradictions that are relevant to practise and values, are those of conformity between the models of welfare state and public administration models, which suggest that, in ideal cases, these models have to mark a logical compatibility to each other.

In support or creation of welfare states, they are influenced also by arising challenges; therefore positive theoretical and practical responses have to be put into. The first challenge for the development of a welfare state is related to the implementation of the functions of a welfare state. It is not only crisis that has a negative effect on a welfare state, but also lack of efficiency of a welfare state to contribute to governance and the formation of

economic crisis. There are sometimes cases where lack of efficiency of the social service system, increasing expenditures, increasing bureaucratization fails to reduce poverty or social exclusion. Another challenge to welfare states is economic globalization. Various trade agreements, capital freedom, pressure to governments to attract more capital, to reduce taxes for corporations, to amend labour codes in order to reduce the rights of the employees, inevitably limit the capacity of states to ensure budget funds for the development of the social protection system. The third challenge is related to increasing needs of social services from one side, and, from the other side, with the remuneration that does not meet these functions. The fourth challenge for welfare state may be considered the trends of immigration. Increasing immigration, especially from Muslim countries, encourages the confrontation of the society and politicians, radical right-wing parties gain more power, which aim at restricting the functions of a welfare state by using negative citizens' sentiments with regard to emigrants. Another challenge in supporting or creating welfare states is the decline of the traditional left-wing political parties in most European countries. It is directly or indirectly related to the loss of identity of the left-wing parties and unsuccessful their search for a new, modern identity, even though, logically, there is definitely space for the expression of social justice and solidarity aims to defend in the modern world. The sixth challenge may be considered to be the ageing of the population, which reflects unfavourable demographic trends, in most of the countries that have the features of the traditional welfare state. The seventh challenge in the countries that support welfare states or that try to create them may be considered to be a low birth rate. Another challenge to welfare states may be considered to be the practices and traditions of informal settlement, the values of the society, convictions and forms of conduct.

The ninth challenge to welfare states may be considered the reforms of the modernization of public governance towards the direction of implementation of the New Public Management. Another challenge for welfare states and their governance is the decline of social dialogue in the West and lack of it in Central and Eastern Europe. The eleventh challenge to welfare states should be considered the neoliberal ideology that is expressed in a number of countries, and practice, which is very favourable to the promotion of business and economics, yet which is insensitive to social, ecological and cultural issues of the society. The last challenge to welfare state, defined by the authors, may be considered to be disregard to long-term sustainable development goals, including the large countries, such as the USA, China, Brazil, and Russia.

The aforementioned contradictions and challenges are relevant both when clarifying the current, and, likely, future issues of welfare state. It is doubtful if all the contradictions of welfare states and their public governance may be eliminated in the future, yet one should seek at least to define their reasons, and mitigate their effect.

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## PRETRUNAS UN PROBLĒMAS LABKLĀJĪBAS VALSTU UN TO PUBLISKĀS PĀRVALDĪBAS VEIDOŠANĀ

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### Kopsavilkums

**Atslēgas vārdi:** *pretrunas, problēmas, labklājības valstis, publiskā pārvaldība, valsts administrācija*

Mūsdienu pasaulē līdz ar ekonomisko, sociālo, politisko un kultūras apstākļu pārmaiņām mainās arī izpratne par labklājības valstu atbalstu vai to veidošanu. Lai saglabātu vai nostiprinātu labklājības valstis, nepieciešams novērst augošās pretrunas, kā arī meklēt pozitīvas un efektīvas atbildes uz problēmām, ar ko sastopas labklājības valstis, gan teorētiskā, gan ideoloģiskā, gan praktiskā ziņā. Raksta mērķis ir atklāt un sagrupēt būtiskās pretrunas un problēmas, ar ko sastopas labklājības valstis un to publiskā pārvaldība. Raksts ir ar fenomenoloģisku, analītisku-pārskata ievirzi, tas sniedz neolīberālas individuālistiskas dabas kritiku.

Sociāli ekonomisko un politiski administratīvo parādību analizē autori atsauca uz gnoseoloģiskām (kognitīvām) un aksioloģiskām (vērtīborientētām) pieejām, kas sniegtas holistiskā perspektīvā. Lai sasniegtu šo mērķi, autori lietojuši sekundāros statistiskos datus, atsaukušies uz avotiem no akadēmiskās literatūras un medijiem, analizējuši, izmantojot salīdzinošās un vēsturiski kritiskās analīzes metodes, lietojuši apraksta un sintēzes metodes. Pirmajā nodaļā autori skaidro pretrunu, izaicinājumu/problēmu, labklājības valsts, pārvaldības un publiskās pārvaldības jēdzienus; otrajā nodaļā analizētas pretrunas un problēmas labklājības valstu publiskajā pārvaldībā starptautiskā, valstiskā un vietējā līmenī; trešajā nodaļā autori analizē izaicinājumus, ar ko sastopas labklājības valstis 21. gadsimta izaicinājumu kontekstā.

Sevišķi būtiska pretruna saistībā ar labklājības valstu pārvaldību starptautiskā un valstiskā līmenī ir pretruna starp tirgus ekonomiku un sociālo tirgus ekonomiku. Ekonomisko pretrunu vidū, kuras tieši ietekmē arī publiskās pārvaldības pretrunas, ir pretrunas starp atsevišķām ražotājvalstīm (vai valstu grupām), tirdzniecības perfekcionismu un brīvo tirgu. Ir iespējamās nesaskaņas un pretrunas labklājības valstu tiesību sistēmās starp vispārējām un administratīvajām tiesībām. Šis pieņēmums pirmām kārtām darbojas Apvienotās Karalistes gadījumā, kas uz vispārējo tiesību pamata pamet Eiropas Savienību.

Cita pretruna, ar ko sastopas labklājības valstis, vai kas tās rada, ir saistīta ar attiecībām starp centru un perifēriju. Tā sauktais "centrs" tiecas pēc lielākas pārvaldības centralizācijas, savukārt perifēriju pašvaldības tiecas pēc lielākas decentralizācijas. Nozīmīga pretruna pārvaldībā ir saistīta ar nacionālajām attiecībām valstu iekšienē, kuras var izvērsties konflikta attiecībās un ietekmēt visu pārvaldības sistēmu konkrētā valstī, kā arī tās starptautisko situāciju. Jautājumi, kas ir būtiski ne tikai kognīcijas un praktiskās aktivitātes, bet arī vērtību ziņā, ietver atbilstību starp labklājības valsts modeļiem un valsts administrācijas modeļiem. Tas nozīmē, ka ideālā gadījumā šiem modeļiem ir jāuzrāda loģiska savstarpēja atbilstība un saistība.

Šos modeļus ietekmē ne tikai pastāvošās pretrunas, bet arī radušās sarežģītās problēmas un izaicinājumi, tādēļ jāievieš pozitīvas teorētiskas un praktiskas atbildes reakcijas. Pirmais izaicinājums labklājības valsts attīstībai ir saistīts ne tikai ar ārējiem faktoriem kā ekonomiskajām krīzēm, bet ar labklājības valsts funkciju īstenošanu. Savstarpējā saistība starp ekonomisko krīzi un labklājības valsti nav vienvirziena. Ir ne tikai tā, ka krīzei ir negatīva ietekme uz labklājības valsti, bet arī tā, ka labklājības valsts nespēj nodrošināt pārvaldību un ietekmēt ekonomiskās krīzes veidošanos. Dažkārt, ja ir nepietiekama sociālo pakalpojumu sistēmas efektivitāte, palielinot izdevumus un vairojot birokratizāciju, neizdodas samazināt nabadzību vai sociālo atstumtību.

Otrais izaicinājums, ar ko sastopas labklājības valstis, ir ekonomiskā globalizācija. Dažādi tirdzniecības līgumi, kapitāla brīvība, spiediens uz valdībām, lai piesaistītu vairāk kapitāla, samazinātu korporatīvos nodokļus, veiktu korekcijas darba kodeksos, lai ierobežotu darbinieku tiesības, neizbēgami ierobežo valstu spēju nodrošināt budžeta līdzekļus sociālās aizsardzības sistēmas attīstībai. Līdz ar to var redzēt pārmaiņas valsts prioritātēs, plašas sabiedrības intereses netiek ņemtas vērā un to vietā parasti tiek gādāts par globālās uzņēmējdarbības un politisko struktūru interešu nodrošināšanu.

Trešais izaicinājums ir paradokss, kas, no vienas puses, ir saistīts ar augošo nepieciešamību pēc sociālajiem pakalpojumiem un, no otras, ar veiktajām funkcijām neatbilstošu atalgojumu. Institūciju budžeti un algas tiek apgrieztas vai paliek nemainīgas. Inflācijas un demogrāfisko pārmaiņu kontekstā tie absolūti neatbilst ne esošajām, ne sagaidāmajām pārmaiņām.

Par labklājības valstu ceturto izaicinājumu var uzskatīt imigrācijas tendences. Imigrācijas palielināšanās, sevišķi no musulmaņu valstīm, veicina konfrontāciju starp sabiedrību un politiķiem, radikālās labējā spārna partijas iegūst lielāku varu un tiecas ierobežot labklājības valsts funkcijas, izmantojot pilsoņu negatīvās emocijas pret imigrantiem. Šādu parādību, kad sociālā labklājība ir paredzēta "pašu" pilsoņiem, imigrantiem nedodot neko vai tikai minimumu, sauc par "labklājības šovinismu".

Piektā problēma varētu būt sabiedrības novecošanās, kas atspoguļo nevēlamas demogrāfiskās tendences vairumā valstu, kam piemīt tradicionālas labklājības valsts iezīmes. Sestā problēma valstīs, kas atbalsta labklājības valstis vai kas tiecas tās radīt, varētu būt zems dzimstības līmenis. Septītā labklājības valstu problēma varētu būt saistīta ar neoficiālas norēķināšanās tradīcijām un praksi, sabiedrības vērtībām, pārlicību un uzvedības veidiem. Šīs prakses neveicina ar labklājības valsti saistīto pakalpojumu efektivitāti un, gluži pretēji, rada situāciju, kur paralēli tiek lietoti gan valsts, gan neoficiālie norēķinu līdzekļi.

Labklājības valstu astotā problēma varētu būt publiskās pārvaldības modernizācijas reformas, tiecoties uz Jaunās publiskās pārvaldības īstenošanu. Šo reformu kontekstā valsts sociālās apdrošināšanas pensiju sistēmas sāka daļēji privatizēt. Devītā problēma labklājības valstu atbalstīšanā vai radīšanā ir tradicionālo labējā spārna politisko partiju noriets vairumā Eiropas valstu. Tas ir tieši vai netieši saistīts ar kreisā spārna partiju identitātes zaudēšanu un to neveiksmīgajiem centieniem pēc jaunas, mūsdienīgas identitātes, lai gan, loģiski domājot, noteikti ir vieta sociālā taisnīguma un solidaritātes mērķu aizstāvēbai un izpaušmei mūsdienu pasaulē.

Desmitā labklājības valstu un to pārvaldības problēma ir sociālā dialoga vājināšanās vai pat tā pilnīgs trūkums Rietumos un citos pasaules reģionos, ieskaitot Centrālo un Austrumeiropu. Par labklājības valstu vienpadsmito problēmu būtu jāuzskata neolibērālā ideoloģija, kas ir izteikta daudzās valstīs, un praksi, kas ļoti sekmē uzņēmējdarbību un ekonomiku, tomēr ir nejutīga pret sabiedrības problēmām sociālajā, ekoloģiskajā un kultūras jomā.

Par labklājības valstu divpadsmito problēmu varētu uzskatīt ilgtspējīgas attīstības ilgtermiņa mērķu ignorēšanu lielā daļā pasaules valstu, ieskaitot tādas lielvalstis kā ASV, Ķīna, Brazīlija, Krievija. Ir acīmredzami, ka vairums pasaules politiķu, kā arī ekonomisti un valdības pārstāvji vai nu pilnībā vai lielā mērā ignorē attīstības mērķus un uzdevumus un tiecas uz īstermiņa, skaidriem, praktiskiem un reāliem ekonomiskajiem mērķiem, kas ir pretrunā ar ilgtspējīgu attīstību.

Minētās pretrunas un problēmas attiecas gan uz pašreizējo, gan paredzamo situāciju labklājības valstīs. Jāšaubās, vai visas labklājības valstu un to publiskās pārvaldības problēmas nākotnē varētu tikt izskaustas, tomēr vajadzētu kaut vai censties noteikt to cēloņus, kā arī mazināt to ietekmi.