

German Social Policy 4
Edited by Lutz Leisering

Manfred G. Schmidt · Gerhard A. Ritter

The Rise and Fall of a Socialist Welfare State

The German Democratic Republic
(1949-1990)
and German Unification
(1989-1994)

 Springer

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Manfred G. Schmidt • Gerhard A. Ritter

The Rise and Fall of a Socialist Welfare State

The German Democratic Republic
(1949–1990)
and German Unification
(1989–1994)

Translated from the German
by David R. Antal and Ben Veghte

 Springer

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Preface to the Book Series “German Social Policy”

The welfare state originated as a project of nation states, with roots in the nineteenth century. This book is part of a book series about the German tradition of social policy, which is one of the three paradigmatic European traditions of social policy besides the British and the Swedish traditions. The book series covers modern social policy in Germany from its beginnings under the early modern state to its breakthrough in the nineteenth century to the present day, ranging from poor relief to Bismarckian social insurance to the post World War II “social market economy” and the current crisis. The series provides even more: it also locates Germany in the wider context of a comparative study of European welfare traditions, complemented by a study of the USA and the Soviet Union proposed to be non-welfare states (volume 5). Furthermore, volume 4 contrasts a democratic welfare state with a communist “welfare state”, namely the Federal Republic of Germany with the German Democratic Republic which resided side by side 1949–1990, followed by an analysis of the transition to the new unified Germany in 1990.

Beyond the empirical case of Germany, the work yields insights into general issues of social policy which have been addressed in German discourses in-depth and at an early stage. This includes the distinction “state versus society” which is essential for a theoretical understanding of the welfare state; the meaning of “the social” and the “social question”; the identification of what a “welfare state” is compared to non-welfare states; and social policy issues arising during the transition from communism to democratic capitalism.

The unique quality of the book series derives from its authors. The grand old men of German scholarship on social policy, coming from diverse disciplines, have rendered their legacy to the scientific community and to politics: *Franz-Xaver Kaufmann* (sociology) writes on the history of the idea of “social policy” in German politics since the nineteenth century (vol. 1); *Michael Stolleis* (legal history) presents an overview of social policy in Germany from the middle ages to 1945, with an emphasis on the years after 1871 (vol. 2); *Hans F. Zacher* (constitutional law) investigates the history of the German post-war welfare state and its normative

foundations (vol. 3); *Manfred G. Schmidt* (political science) analyses communist East Germany, the German Democratic Republic (GDR, 1949–1990), followed by *Gerhard A. Ritter’s* study of German unification (1989–1994) (vol. 4); and *Franz-Xaver Kaufmann* provides an international comparison of welfare states (and some non-welfare states) (vol. 5). All authors take a distinctly historical approach to their subject, elaborating the formative forces of social policy in Germany.

The book series is a translated, revised and up-dated version of the first of the 11 large volumes of the “History of Social Policy in Germany Since 1945”.¹ While two contributions of the first volume have been left out, a study of German unification by Ritter (based on his award-winning study of the subject) has been added to the English version. The 11 volumes of the German work add up to the most ambitious and comprehensive study of the history of German social policy ever published. The work not just displays the state of the art but includes original studies which draw on historical sources that have not been accessible before. Especially for this work the government lifted confidentiality from many documents. Volume 1, which underlies this book series, provides a general framework for the more specific volumes 2–11 that cover 17 fields of West and East German social policy chronologically. The work was initiated by Chancellor Kohl in 1994. The idea was to take stock of the German social policy tradition at a historical moment: the Iron Curtain over East Europe had fallen, the Treaty of Maastricht had created the “European Union” (1992/1993) and German politics had eventually realized that the “golden years” of the post war welfare state had come to a close. At the same time, the new challenges of globalization and demographic change had become apparent. In the early 1990s, German politics was only just beginning to face up to these challenges while the authors of volume 1 of the German work were already sensible of the inherent tensions and uncertainties of the advanced post war welfare state.

Translating, revising and extending the original German “History of Social Policy in Germany Since 1945” was not an easy task. It required a joint and protracted endeavour of a number of persons and a considerable sum of money. I am indebted to Richard Hauser for bringing up the idea of a translation (and joining, with Werner Abelshauser, my application for funding with the Volkswagen Foundation); to Franz-Xaver Kaufmann for continuously supporting the project in many ways and with verve; to Thomas Dunlap, David Antal and Ben Veghte who translated the demanding texts with admirable skill and care; to Günter H. Ast formerly Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, who acted as operative editor of the texts with unceasing commitment and patience; to Werner A. Müller, Katharina Wetzel-Vandai and Irene Barrios-Kezic from Springer publishers who supported the project with diligence; and, last but not least, to the authors for their support and patience.

¹Geschichte der Sozialpolitik in Deutschland seit 1945. Edited by the Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs (*Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales*) and the Federal Archive (*Bundesarchiv*). 11 volumes, Nomos publishers, Baden-Baden. 2001–2008. The book series is based on a translation of the first volume, *Grundlagen der Sozialpolitik*. (See footnote on p. 137 or 276).

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Lutz Leisering

²Lutz Leisering (2003) Nation State and Welfare State. An Intellectual and Political History. In: *Journal of European Social Policy* 13, pp. 175–185.

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List of Abbreviations

ACDP	Archiv für Christlich-Demokratische Politik der Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
AdsD	Archiv der sozialen Demokratie der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AG	Aktiengesellschaft (public limited company)
BGBI.	Bundesgesetzblatt (Official Statute Register of the Federal Republic of Germany)
BMA	Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Sozialordnung, see note on page 137 or 276
BMF	Bundesministerium der Finanzen (Federal Ministry of Finance)
BRD	Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Federal Republic of Germany)
BTDrs.	Bundestagsdrucksachen (parliamentary papers and documents, including bills). Published by Deutscher Bundestag (German Federal Parliament). Example: “BTDrs. 12/7560”: The first number denotes the electoral period of parliament, the second number is the number of the document. Available online since the 8th electoral period (beginning 14 December 1976), see “Deutscher Bundestag/Drucksachen” and “Plenarprotokolle online”) Bundestag/Drucksachen” and “Plenarprotokolle online”)
CDU	Christlich-Demokratische Union (Christian Democratic Union)
COMECON	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Rat für gegenseitige Wirtschaftshilfe, RGW)
CSCE	Konferenz über Sicherheit und Zusammenarbeit in Europa (KSZE) (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe)
CSSR	Tschechoslowakische Sozialistische Republik (Czechoslovak Socialist Republic)
CSU	Christlich-Soziale Union (Christian Social Union)
DDR	Deutsche Demokratische Republik (German Democratic Republic)

DA	Demokratischer Aufbruch (Party Democratic Rising)
DAG	Deutsche Angestelltengewerkschaft (German white-collar union)
DBD	Demokratische Bauernpartei Deutschlands (German Democratic Agrarian Party)
DGB	Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (German Federation of Trade Unions, FRG)
DM	Deutsche Mark (German Mark)
DSU	Deutsche Soziale Union (German social union)
DVA	Deutsche Versicherungsanstalt (German Insurance Agency, GDR)
EC	Europäische Gemeinschaft (European Community)
ECU	European Currency Unit
et al.	et alii (and others)
e.V.	seingetragener Verein (registered society)
EU	Europäische Union (European Union)
FDGB	Freier Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (Free German Trade Union Federation, GRD)
FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei (Free Democratic Party)
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GBl.	Gesetzblatt der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik (Official Statute Register of the German Democratic Republic)
GDR	German Democratic Republic
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GG	Grundgesetz (Basic Law)
IG	Industriegewerkschaft (Industrial trade union)
ILO	International Labour Organization
KPD	Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands (Communist Party of Germany)
KPdSU	Kommunistische Partei der Sowjetunion (Communist Party of the Soviet Union)
LDPD	Liberal-Demokratische Partei Deutschlands (Liberal-democratic Party of Germany)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDPD	National-Demokratische Partei Deutschlands (National Democratic Party of Germany)
NRW	Nordrhein-Westfalen (North-Rhine-Westphalia)
NVA	Nationale Volksarmee (National People's Army, GDR)
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PDA	Pressedienst der Deutschen Arbeitgeberverbände (German Employers' Associations' press service)
PDS	Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus (Party of Democratic Socialism)