Lucile BODSON
Junior researcher
CEPS/Instead
Differdange, Luxembourg

TEL/ 00.352.58.58.55.502
FAX/ 00.352.58.55.60
Email: lucile.bodson@ceps.lu

The determinants of poverty in household with children (ECHP, 1997-2001)

Abstract

The abstract given below is excerpt from a paper submitted for the recognition of the IMPALLA master (the International Master in Social Policy Analysis by Luxembourg, Leuven and Associate Institutes), July 2004.

The paper focuses on the determinants of poverty in households with children, within a cross-national perspective. Poverty is defined as 60 percent of the median income of the household.

Four European countries are studied, two conservative-corporatist regimes, France and Luxembourg, with two social-democratic regimes, Belgium and the Netherlands.

The study is based on the ECHP database (European Community Households Panel), waves 1997 through 2001. Given a small sample size, the five waves were pooled. The period studied is 1997-2001.

The analysis starts with a comparison of the child benefit packages available in the four countries, based on the MISSOC. A distinction is made between 2 parents' families and single parents' families.

The 'size' of the child benefit package is compared to the poverty rates during the same period.

Logistic regressions having the poverty status as dependant variable are run, comparing type of household (1 or 2 parents' families) and nationality (Belgian, French, German and Luxembourgish). The variables included in the models stem from the demographic and social information available in the ECHP.

The last part of the paper consists of a transitional analysis. Two questions are answered:

-       Is the risk of poverty higher when falling into single parenthood?
-       Is the risk of single parenthood higher when couples entered poverty?

The method is the logistic regression using as dependant variable a computed variable of transition.

For the EPUNet conference, I propose to focus on 2 methodological aspects of my work:

-       the data pooling, when facing small population,
         and its disadvantages, and

- the casual analysis, using variables of transition.