

WIC Colloquium

Vienna Institute of Demography
Welthandelsplatz 2 / Level 2
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Thursday, 1. August 2019
15:00-16:00

"Happiness Inequality in Post-Socialist Countries: Levels, Trajectories and Determinants"

This study has investigated how (un)happiness in post-socialist countries has been influenced and structured in post-communist countries by using a longitudinal comparative perspective. The present work set out (1) to describe and monitor the distribution of subjective well-being during the course of market transformation and to explain the macro level determinants of happiness inequality across post-communist countries; (2) to shed new light on the social cost of market transformation through suggesting life satisfaction as an alternative tool to examine the dynamic and complex structure of distribution of well-being among different socio-economic groups, thereby overcoming the limitations of using the dichotomy of 'winners and losers'; (3) to understand the relationship between transition legitimacy, i.e. attitudes towards economic and political liberalization, and people's subjective well-being in post-socialist countries. The study followed a quantitative cross-national comparative research design, using World Values Survey (WVS), European Values Study (EVS) (1982 - 2014), Life in Transition Survey (LITS) (2006 and 2010). In general, regarding overall distribution of well-being inverse V-shape trajectory has been observed as against to well-known V-shaped pattern of happiness in post-communist countries particularly. This result suggest that different post-socialist pathways regarding the structural legacies, timing, speed and intensity of the transition reforms might explain the reasons for observing different trajectories of happiness inequality across transition regions.

About the presenter

Hilal Arslan is a lecturer at the Department of Social Research Methodology at Institute of Population Studies, Hacettepe University and currently working as researcher for Turkey Demographic and Health Survey (TDHS 2018). Hilal Arslan graduated in 2004 from Middle East Technical University (METU), Department of Sociology with minor degree in Statistics, and completed her master's degree at the same department. She completed her Ph.D. study in Sociology in Bremen International Graduate School of Sciences (BIGSSS) at Jacobs University Bremen. Her research interest areas are quality of life, subjective well-being, social welfare and social indicators, human development, social inequalities, transition to market economy, monitoring gender equality. Besides her academic work, she worked in several research projects funded by national and international organizations such as "Enhancement of Participatory Democracy in Turkey: Monitoring Gender Equality" (2019, funded by EU Delegation), "Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey" (2014, Ministry of Family and Social Policies and Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies); "2006 National Human Development Report (NHDR) of Azerbaijan on Gender Attitudes" (UNDP Azerbaijan); "Quality of Life in Eurasia: The Cases of Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan" (2007, Center for Black Sea and Central Asia (KORA) at METU, TÜBİTAK).