**Review on
“Cercetarea
politicilor sociale.
Aspecte
metodologice”,
authored by Ana
Maria Preoteasa,
LUMEN Publishing
House**

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Abstract: The volume proposed by Ana Maria Preoteasa, *Cercetarea politicilor sociale. Aspecte metodologice* (Research on Social Policies, Methodological Aspects), published by LUMEN Publishing House in 2019, aims to highlight the influence of social research on social policy decisions, being constructed – ultimately – a proper methodology for social policy research.

Keywords: *Ana Maria Preoteasa; social policies; poverty; quality of life; employment policies.*

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Introduction

The study of social policies represents a topic of cross-disciplinary interest, both for the sociology of quality of life, the research of public policies, social work, public administration, but also for the political sciences in general.

In general, the approach of social policies was carried out evaluatively (Preoteasa, 2019, p. 9), from the perspective of their efficiency for the targeted populations and for reducing the problems that were the basis of their formulation and less the methodology of building such public policies.

The volume proposed by Ana Maria Preoteasa, published by LUMEN Publishing House in 2019, aims to highlight the influence of social research on social policy decisions, being constructed – ultimately – a proper methodology for social policy research.

This volume is part of a series of volumes in the field of social policies, such as Cătălin Zamfir (1999) with *Paradigma Sociologică a cercetării politicilor sociale* (*Sociological Paradigm of social policy research*) or Robert Drake (2001) with the *Approach to the Principles of Social Policies* – whose contribution the author mentions in her work and in which direction the volume of this book is inscribed.

Social Policies - Operational Dimension of the Welfare State

The author aims to define the concept of *social policy* within the broader concept – *public policy*, from an interdisciplinary perspective that brings together economics, administrative sciences, public management, decision theory and sociology (Preoteasa, 2019, p. 18).

The purpose of social policies is the accomplishment of the values considered by the governors to be the most important, first of all those related to the welfare and quality of life of the population. The political ideology aimed at the construction of a political system committed to respecting human rights, especially through coherent social policies to increase the quality of life, was called in the political literature the *Welfare State* – as opposed to that of the *Power*, exemplified by the state built by the 3rd Reich (Preoteasa, 2019).

Social policies are not the exclusive preserve of the welfare state. The state fulfils its social mission through redistributive social policies.

The volume presents an incursion into the main types of social policies and types of financing used in their implementation, being exposed

concrete examples of such social policies and the political design that was the basis for their implementation. The volume reviews a number of models of sociological analysis of social policies, evoking the institutionalist perspective (Preoteasa, 2019, p. 38), the analytical one (Preoteasa, 2019, p. 41), the research of social policies as a product (Preoteasa, 2019, p. 44) and social policies as performance (Preoteasa, 2019, p. 45).

An Epistemological Perspective on Social Policy

The framing of social policies as a particular area of interest of the social sciences is done through an epistemological digression in which the author explicitly shows that the field cannot be integrated as a sub-discipline of these, and autonomous as a complex discipline with an interdisciplinary character.

In the author's vision, the analysis of the public policies, implicitly of the social ones, concerns both a cognitive side, correlated with the knowledge, explanation and understanding of the phenomena that require the appearance of some public policies, as well as of the effects generated by the respective policies in terms of social phenomenon. Also, it is possible to observe a prospective side of the social policies that starts from the concrete analysis, of sociological type, of some social phenomena, or of the situation in which certain categories of population are and projects a series of answers of the company to the indicated problems, anticipating their evolution following the implementation of the necessary corrective policies.

The techniques and working tools used in the research of social policies are of sociological inspiration, in their design taking into account the particularities of the applied research and how they can be implemented in the context of evaluating sectoral public policies.

Instead of Conclusions

The volume *Research on Social Policies, Methodological Aspects*, by Ana Maria Preoteasa, published by LUMEN Publishing House, is a pertinent introduction to the theory and methodology of social policies, being easily accessible to students from specializations such as sociology, political science, public administration, economics, and professionals in the field, who want to update their theoretical and methodological knowledge.

The research of social policies represents an invitation to a different policy in the Romanian society, based on evidence and scientific research and outlined through projects and programs, through sectoral policies built on scientific and not ideological bases.

Last but not least, the volume is an invitation to all those involved at different levels in the construction of local, national, general or sectoral public policies, to use sociological research as a fundamental knowledge resource, thus maximizing the potential for increasing the quality of life that every public policy can have.

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