

SOCIAL SCIENCES

Social sciences include great variety of disciplines and research topics ranging from psychology to political sciences. Three articles chosen to the 2002 issue of *MCFA Annals* reflect well this diversity of approaches and research methodology.

The paper by Judit Pont-Boix, Evanthia Lyons, and Glynis M. Breakwell reports a study of collective action among older people by using two social psychological theories, i.e. Identity Process Theory and Social Representations Theory. The aim of the study was to investigate the social issues, which older people are concerned about and participate in, and to examine perceived barriers influencing their participation in collective action. Based on focus group and questionnaire studies conducted in UK, it was found out that older people perceive a need for social change in for a wide variety of social issues. The article emphasises the need to investigate the collective action among older people in the level of an individual, group and society.

In Andreas Hoff's study, single mothers' use of informal and formal social support in UK and Germany was investigated. The cross-national comparisons between these two countries are particularly interesting because of differences in the formal support systems. On the other hand, it was found that single mothers' need for support as sole breadwinners and caretakers of the family is the same in the two countries investigated. The paper concludes that the provision of social support can improve the general circumstances of lone mothers and provide opportunities for their children.

Didier Chabanet and Richard Balme's paper investigates the interest mobilisation in European Union level. The authors present four models of Europeanisation of action, i.e. internalisation, externalisation, transnationalisation and supranationalisation, which have influence on European governance. The article concludes that the overall socio-political configuration now emerging appears fragmented and marked by persisting national styles of interest organisation and a mode of functioning that put compromise first.

These three papers published in the present issue of *Annals* are good examples of studies in the field of social science. They demonstrate how social science research can be theoretically sound and highly relevant in solving everyday problems met in our societies.

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