

Milieus as framework to analyze welfare attitudes transnationally?

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Structure of my talk

1. Definitions
2. Explanations of milieus
3. Social class and lifestyle
4. Conceptual framework
5. Next steps

Definitions

Milieus are groups constituted by sharing a rather stable and group specific set of values and mentalities (Hradil 2012; Vester 2006) with an increased level of communication amongst group members (Schulze 2005).

Welfare attitudes are political attitudes with a welfare state relevant attitude object such as equality or redistribution.

The term transnational shall imply that variance inside countries across milieus might be larger than inside the same milieu across countries.

Two implied questions:

1. Can milieus (membership) contribute to a better understanding of how welfare attitudes are formed?
2. And can we use it for comparative research?

Explanations of milieus

Different explanations for social milieus:

1. Habitus theory by Bourdieu (economic, social and cultural)
2. Social identity theory (self-conceptualization by group membership)
3. Individualisation (Beck)

Alternative Concepts

Difference to social stratification (Hradil):

1. Subjective perspective instead of objective measures as social stratification
2. Development of mentalities is open and less deterministic while social stratification concepts mostly rely on occupation, income or education
3. Synthetic as milieus combine different dimensions and aspects

Milieus vs. Lifestyle:

- Lifestyle is about behavioral patterns
- Milieus are about values and mentalities

Conceptual framework

Sieben Meta-Milieus® in Westeuropa

Higher 1		Established	Intellectual	Modern Performing
Middle 2	Traditional	Modern Mainstream		Sensation Orientated
Lower 3		Consumer- Materialistic		
Social Status Basic Values	A Tradition <i>Sense of Duty and Order</i>	B Modernisation <i>Individualisation, Self-actualisation, Pleasure</i>	C Re-orientation <i>Multiple Options, Experimentation, Paradoxes</i>	

Sinus-Institut Heidelberg, 2011

Next step

AIM: Verify the milieu structure in different Western European countries and get a kind of fit measure for it.

DATA: ESS, ISSP, EVS

METHOD: Clusteranalysis (K-Means), LCA