

INTRODUCTION

The topic of pensions is very broad and multidimensional in nature so it is of great interest to many scholars representing various fields of science. Pension systems all over the world have been continuously undergoing some major or minor reforms, which refer to the general model or design of old-age social security, or which aim to change some of its parameters, especially the pensionable age. These reforms have a common ultimate goal, which is to ensure adequate benefits in old age funded by financially and economically sustainable pension systems. Changes to pension systems refer to various pension plans: those organized by the state through the public institutions, those organized by employers in cooperation with financial institutions, or those organized solely by financial institutions and dedicated directly to individuals. Thus, the spectrum of problems worth addressing by scholars is very wide. In this book, pensions and their background are investigated from the perspective of the social sciences, primarily management, economics, finance, and law. We address the very relevant and current problems of pension systems, retirement, the demographical determinants of pension systems' adequacy and sustainability, and the political and legal aspects of pension reform.

The monograph includes 23 chapters addressing the problems of contemporary pensions from both a general and a national view, studied from a theoretical or empirical perspective. The book is structured as follows. First, the managerial, administrative and business aspects of retirement and pension wealth are discussed. The next five sections are devoted to very important and current problems of family and gender issues in the context of old-age social security. The subsequent six chapters refer to other social and economic aspects of pensions with some references to social security reforms. In the next three sections, some financial and actuarial issues are discussed and investigated. Finally, in the last five chapters, the authors address selected problems of pension reform with special attention paid to their policy and legal aspects. In these 23 chapters, issues concerning various countries are presented. In some chapters, a single-country empirical approach is employed (with reference to Poland, Spain, Turkey, Slovakia, Latvia, or Czechia, for example), whereas some other sections present multinational studies.

As the editors of this monograph, we would like to express our gratitude to all of the authors for accepting our invitation to contribute and for their time and effort in preparing the chapters. We also thank all of the reviewers for their valuable comments and suggestions which contributed significantly to the final version of the book: Joseph Friedman (Temple University, USA), Jose Enrique Devesa Carpio (University of Valencia, Spain), Jose Alvarez Garcia (University of Extremadura, Spain), Magnus Feldman (University of Bristol, United Kingdom), Sylwia Flaszewska (Lodz University of Technology, Poland), Agnes Orosz

(Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Hungary), Laura Milos (West University of Timisoara, Romania), Aleksandra Szpulak (Wroclaw University of Economics and Business, Poland), Patrycja Kowalczyk-Rólczyńska (Wroclaw University of Economics and Business, Poland), Sonia Buchholtz (SGH Warsaw School of Economics, Poland), Damian Walczak (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland), Radosław Kurach (Wroclaw University of Economics and Business, Poland).

Filip Chybalski, Edyta Marcinkiewicz