

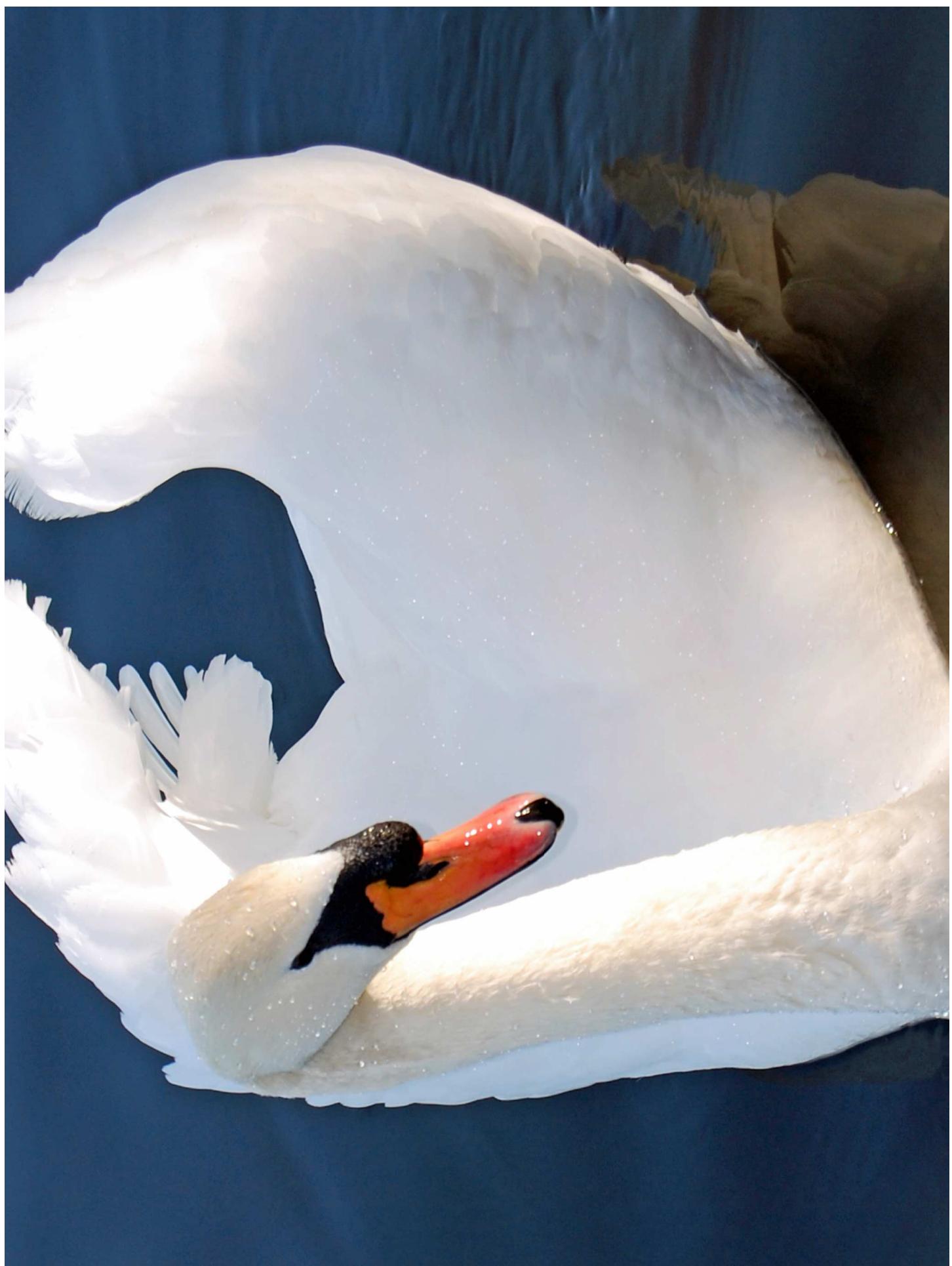


Social investments in a life course perspective: Nordic public policies, perspectives and experiences

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The Nordic model

- Equality has high priority
- Two career and single earner model
- Large state responsibility for welfare
- From cradle to grave
- Generous benefits and good benefits in kind
- Decentral delivery of benefits
- Financing models differ





The welfare bus: dynamic perspectives



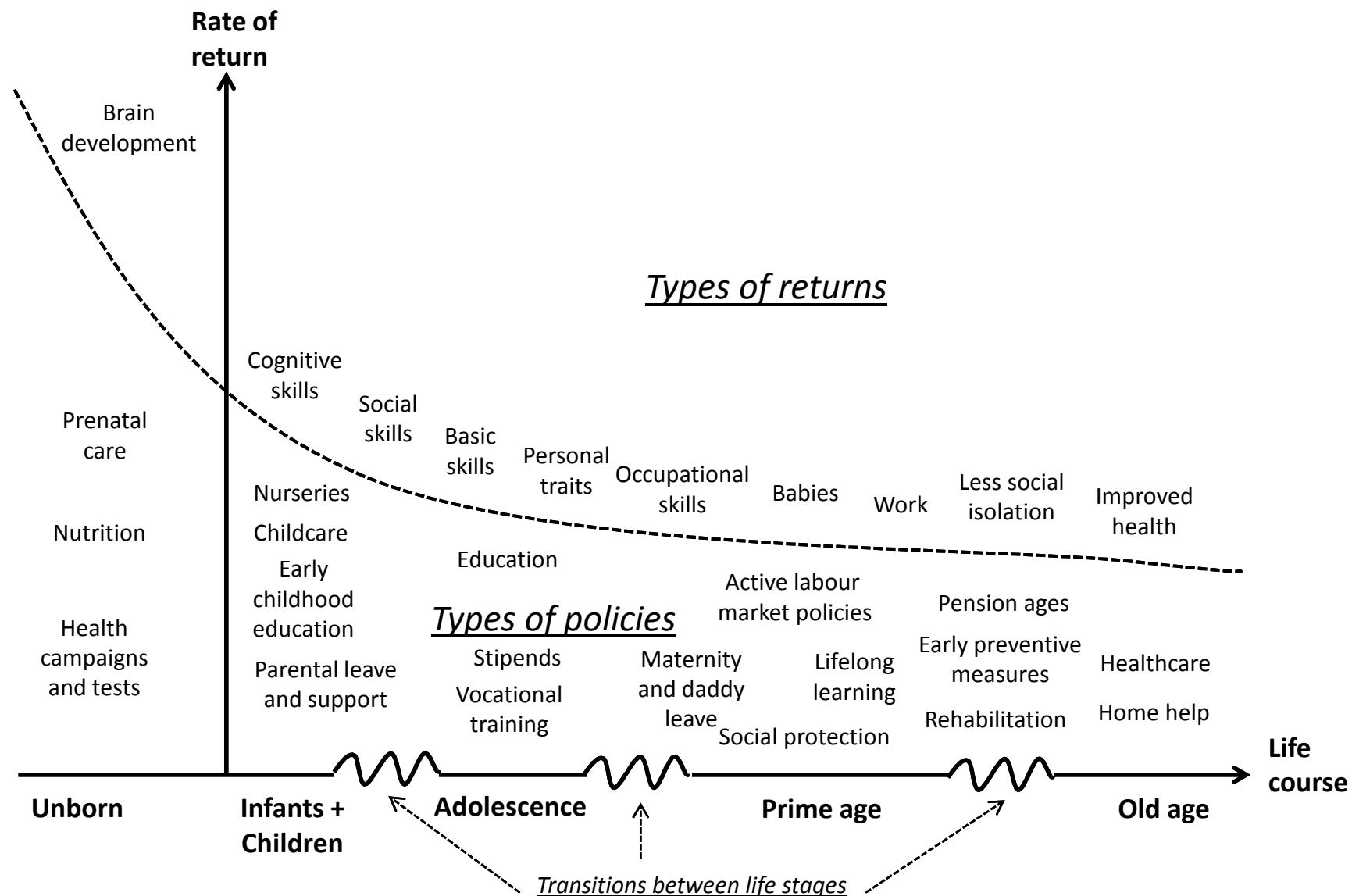
the bus is NEVER
going to come.

First perspective: Who are in the bus for how long?

Second perspective: Intergenerational risk transmission

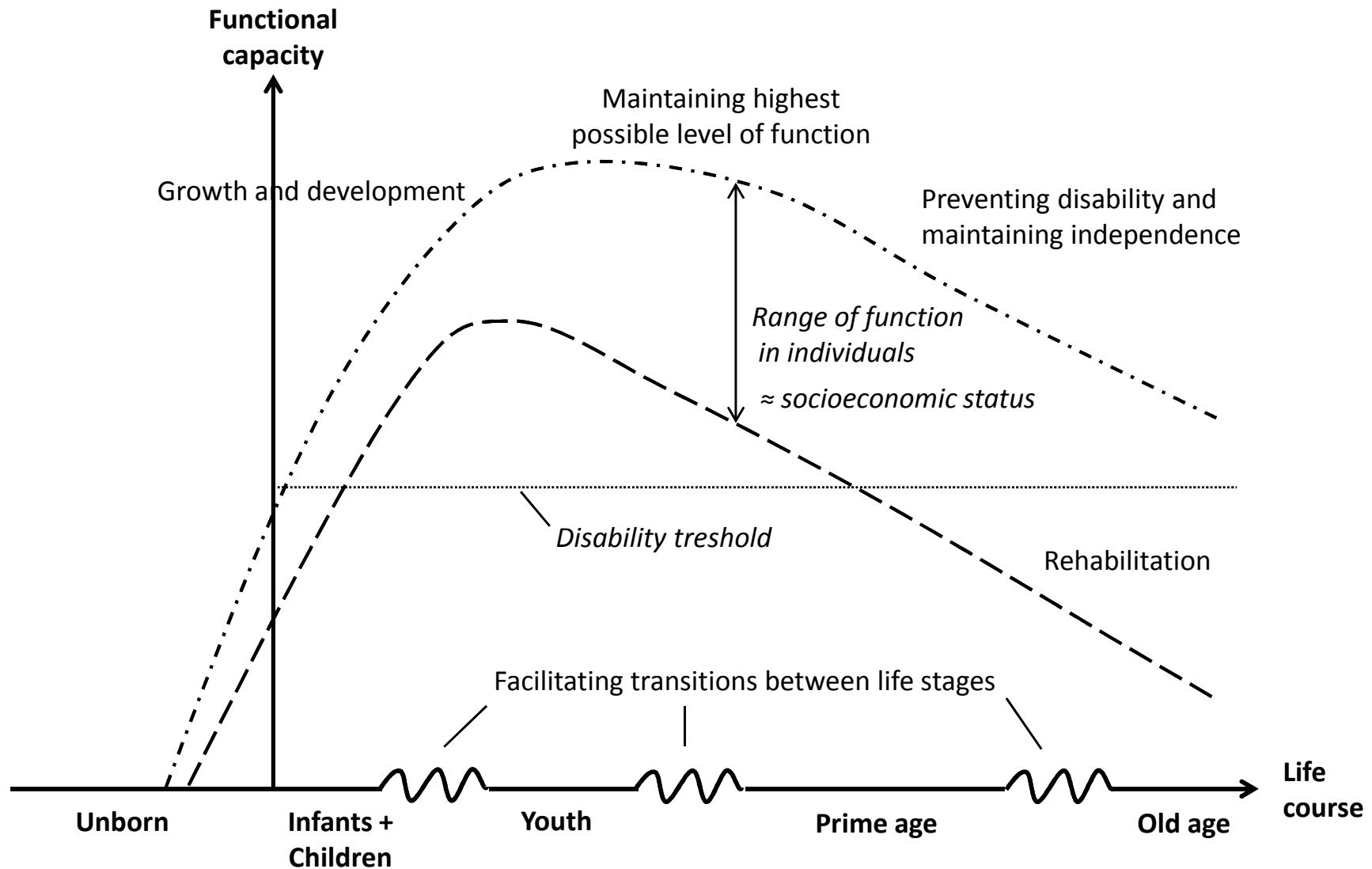


Social investments over the life course: Policies, returns and transitions



Source: Kvist, J (2015) A framework for social investment strategies: integrating generational, life course and gender perspectives in the EU social investment strategy, *Comparative European Politics*.

Social investments over the life course: Policies, functional capacity and socioeconomic trajectories



Not the usual suspects

- Housing policies
- Long-term care
- Minimum income protection
- Sickness benefits
- Disability benefits

Housing policy

- If housing policies would adopt a life course social investment approach what kind of policies would we expect?
- We would expect
 - a general housing policy that provide low income groups with affordable housing
 - special policies for socially disadvantaged groups
 - policies aiding youth make the transition from parents home to own home

Housing policy

- General generous housing allowances (1 in 5 households receive € 282 per month)
- (social housing)
- Disadvantaged groups: Housing First with evidence-based intensive support (i.e. Assertive Community Treatment, Critical Time Intervention, Intensive Case Management)
- Transition from parents to own home: Stipends, student housing, unemployment benefits for graduates

Long-term care

Expectations

- LTC be directed at supporting the autonomy of the elderly and thus postpone the transition from own home into institutional care
- Home help and rehabilitation that increase the functionings of elderly (besides preventive measures at earlier life stages)

Reforms

- De-institutionalisation (old)
 - Home help, personal and practical
 - Making own homes accommodate elderly
- Increasing autonomy (new)
 - Home help, mostly personal
 - Increasing functional capacities

Minimum income protection

Expectation

- policies and incentives that address the reasons – social, skills, health - for claimants of minimum income, especially youth and other special groups

Reforms

- Replacement of social assistance for persons under 30 years of age with educational benefit
- Obligation to list and apply for education
- Coordinated multi-disciplinary teams for persons with complex social, health and economic problems

Sickness benefits

Expectation

Quick interventions offering help and measures to maintain or prevent problem to escalate, especially for those most at risk of getting excluded

Reforms

Early intervention, follow-up, contract between sicklisted and employers about gradual return

Disability benefits

Expectation

- Comprehensive measures to control and reduce intake, rehabilitation and curative measures, targeting informed by evidence

Reforms

- Replaced disability pension with resource program benefit for persons below 40 years
- Repeated reassessments

Common traits

- Evidence-based
- Coordinated, multidisciplinary teams for specific groups (e.g. homeless, sicklisted, disabled)
- Supported by economic incentives (individuals and providers)

The Danish social investment model

- Nordic pedigree
- Maximise everybody's functional capacities and life chances
- Professionalised social services, education and health
- Local delivery
- Reforms of social services, education, health and employment policies
- Evidence-based turn in policies

Why adapt a life course perspective on social investments?

- 1 Enable engagement of many disciplines
- 2 Sensitive to social and structural change
- 3 Address population diversity
- 4 Acknowledge dynamic and multi-dimensional nature of social issues and of social investments
- 5 High on policy relevance: help identify where, when and what to do ☺

Thank you!

- European Social Policy Network (2015) Social investments in the EU, European Commission.
- Kvist, J. (2015) A framework for social investment strategies: integrating generational, life course and gender perspectives in the EU social investment strategy, *Comparative European Politics*.
- Kvist, J. (2015) Social investments as risk management. In: Bengtsson et al (eds.) *The Danish Welfare State*, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kvist, J. (2016) Social investments against poverty and social exclusion: *Policy review on 16 EU FP7 projects*, European Commission (*forthcoming*)

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The Nordic countries demonstrate four things

There is a case – economic and social – to be made for public policies

Nordic countries still have a long way to go – and they may not be going in the right direction

You do not need to embrace the social investment concept (or the state) to implement social investment policies

But – of course – social investments does not work for all socio-economic groups, risks and countries

