



## **Abstracts for the Workshop “Integrated employment and activation policies in a multilevel welfare system”**

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Activating employment policies has become a new paradigm for welfare and work. Labour market policies have shifted towards the aim to activate broader parts of society by facilitating the access especially of women, younger and older people, migrants, young mothers and unskilled and disabled people to the labour market. While the activation paradigm has thus been established as principal concept in labour market and employment policies, its implications reach far beyond the labour market. The activation paradigm implies also important challenges for related policy fields (training and education, social security and assistance, family and life course policy, health policy, migration, integration and even housing policies). Especially in times of crisis, employment-friendly reforms thus raise issues how welfare states integrate and (re-)align the different policy fields according to a coherent logic of activation. Taking up the issue of integrated employment and activation policies, this workshop will discuss the following questions: How are coordination demands of integrated policies handled in welfare states? What different forms of activation policies are pursued in different countries and how far have different strategies shaped other policy fields? What are the governance mechanisms, reform paths, patterns of change and conflict in related policy fields, when countries decide to reform their employment systems? And finally, what are the implications of integrated activation strategies in a multi-level welfare system including European influences and local implementation?



## **Cultures of activation? Comparing German and British discourses**

Patrizia Aurich

Since the 1990s the idea of activating the unemployed has had a prominent place in debates about reforming the welfare state. There are two strands in the literature, which discuss the effects of this idea on actual welfare state reforms: While some argue that structural differences between different types of welfare state regimes have preserved previous differences between welfare states despite a commonly shared activation agenda (Barbier / Ludwig-Mayerhofer 2004; Serrano Pascual 2007), others have emphasized the effects of policy learning and international exchange for path-breaking policy change (Heidenreich / Bischoff, 2008, Seeleib-Kaiser / Fleckenstein, 2007, Stiller, 2010). This contribution departs from the assumption that both views have some validity. It takes a comparative perspective on the role of welfare culture for the implementation of activation and investigates the degree to which old policy logics of welfare state regimes have been combined with newer, activating, ones. More specifically, it analyses the role of discourses in the implementation of activation in Germany (Hartz-IV) and in Great Britain (New Deal) on the basis of discursive institutionalism (Schmidt 2010). The empirical material includes an analysis of media coverage and parliamentary debates from 1995 until 2005. The article concludes that despite some considerable consensus about convergence between Germany and Great Britain through welfare state reform, the public representation of activation differs a lot between the countries. This concerns especially the understanding of activation as an integrated policy approach, combining work-first with needs-oriented enabling elements. Contrary to what could be assumed by common approaches of classifying activation policies (Barbier / Ludwig-Mayerhofer 2004; Serrano Pascual 2007) the German discourse is much more liberal and workfare-oriented than the British discourse, which emphasizes the need of individualized enabling policies. It is argued that historical patterns of argument were necessary in order to implement activation in each country, which led to a remarkably different model of activation in the German context compared to the British case.



## **Activation policies: towards the emergence of local welfare landscapes?**

*Duco Bannink, Hans Bosselaar and Willem Trommel*

### **Activation and the localization of welfare**

New activating welfare policy programs increasingly experiment with so-called enabling, empowering and other activating approaches. In this perspective, modern citizens are considered morally obliged to actively deal with life-course related risks, and to take care for themselves and their neighborhoods. Yet, this should not be taken for a return to pre-modern welfare times. Currently, public policy is applied in order to support these civic responsibilities and help build the required competencies. Activation is the application of public policy in order to support the active life of citizens. Examples include reemployment services, lifelong learning programs and public interventions in life styles. It is typical to these service-oriented policies that these require strong institutional and professional presence in the daily living environment of people. Therefore, place matters as it comes to activation. It are the local communities, families, civil society organizations, municipalities, local politicians and professional service providers who shape the supportive landscapes in which people are activated to live as responsible citizens.

In our paper we will summarize the findings of the research program Governance of Activation of VU University Amsterdam, which explored the characteristics and outcomes of this localized process of activating welfare policy making in The Netherlands. The localized implementation of activating welfare requires that policies and governance systems are radically changed. Although one might expect local government to play a dominant role in this process, empirical evidence, at least in the Netherlands, shows that many other organisations, with distinct histories and identities, are strongly involved in developing policies, provisions and modes of governance. Examples include local departments of labor unions and employer associations, housing corporations, schooling institutions, labour exchange agencies, health care providers, and reemployment agencies. So as a result of the focus on activation there is a lot of local activity contributing to the creation of local welfare. The central objective of our program is to describe and explain the practices that these actors employ, as well as the impact of these practises on the process of welfare localization. We investigate whether and how professionals, managers, interest groups, community organizations enter the stage of local social policy making as actors crafting their responses to the new challenges of the activating welfare paradigm. In the end distinct local landscapes of social welfare might emerge.

### **Do local welfare landscapes emerge?**

The process of crafting can be understood by focussing on three vital institutional elements which together define the possibilities for action. What can be done (crafting space)? How can it be done (crafting tools)? What should be accomplished (crafting challenges)? At the end of our study we conclude that local actors are indeed strongly engaged in the crafting of responses to the



challenges of activating welfare. These local actors do in fact apply local tools (engagement in local actor networks, insights in the local labor market and the local welfare clientele) in order to come up to this challenge. So, we do observe a localization of the welfare policy process. However, we observed that the localization of the policy process does not seem to result in local welfare policy landscapes. The space of crafting appears limited. Local political actors emphasize the budgetary constraints of the activation policy program and transfer policy-making responsibilities to the managers of implementation organizations. These constraints are ‘translated’ into municipal budgetary risks. These managers do indeed show different managerial strategies, but their space of action is limited by the same financial constraints and risks that local politics meet. Therefore they tend to implement (assumed safe) evidence based solutions, practiced in other communities, rather than the development of specific local strategies. So we do observe a localized policy process that adopts the language of new activating welfare and mobilizes parties with a stake in this new field of crafting local welfare, but the actual behavior of these actors is structured by the limited space for local policy making. The fact that localization is subject to the logic of the budgetary constraints of the national government, suggests that localization of activating welfare merely entails the transfer of national policy responsibilities and the associated policy intentions to the local level. However, although local crafting has not bred truly local welfare thus far, a new and meaningful reality might be emerging. Localization fuels crafting energy and agency, which might establish its latent logic: to revitalize community responsibility for local problems.

### **Methodology**

After building our research perspective (space, tools and challenges) we made intensive case studies of local crafting processes related to four explored challenges of localization of (activating) social welfare: the management of localized policy implementation, the building of local governance capacities, the formation of localized activation policy substance in street-level bureaucratic interventions and the normalization of varying views on activating welfare by implementation professionals. After that, we re-evaluated the extensive research literature on two Dutch cases of activating welfare policies (the Work and Social Assistance Act and the Social Support Act) in order to analyze the response to these challenges in the processes of local crafting and the resulting (limited) emergence of local landscapes. Our re-evaluation was to a large extent based on our evaluation of the new Work and Social Assistance Act<sup>1</sup> commissioned by Dutch Parliament and the evaluation of the Social Support Act conducted by the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, SCP), to which one of our researchers contributed intensively<sup>2</sup>. Both studies gathered, summarized and analyzed the results of the national evaluation programs on the implementation of the acts (f.i. the draft and implementation of municipal rules and regulations, the development of local commitment and culture change ‘from protection to activation’, the establishment of new local administrative organizations etc.).

**Fit to the general theme of the workshop**

The scholarly focus on the national politics of welfare reform towards activation tends to produce misleading insights, such as the idea that welfare states are immobile objects. The emergence of crafting communities point at mobility at another level of policy making, the local level. New welfare is crafted on work floors and might potentially move into opposite directions. However, ideologies and/or agendas of national politics seem to remain important when it comes to the emergence of new welfare ideas and practices. The space in which localized crafting of activating welfare occurs, allows localized policy making, but blocks the emergence of local welfare policy landscapes.

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## **Nordic activation policies in flux: a study of Swedish and Danish labour market policies**

*Mattias Bengtsson*

The Nordic countries have been defined as “an active corner” in Europe following a tradition of active labour market policies (ALMPs) and social policy arrangements emphasizing paid labour as a basic condition for economic benefits. ALMPs are one feature of the social democratic welfare regime and Sweden pioneered these policies (Bonoli 2010). So if Sweden once was famous for its ALMPs its celebrity status waned as the economic recession in the 1990s transformed a situation of de facto full employment to a post-full-employment situation. Instead, Denmark, the Scandinavian neighbour earlier seen as a laggard of efficient employment and labour market policies, has succeeded Sweden and overtaken its position as the European labour market/welfare model of the 21st century.

If the Swedish “Rehn-Meidner model” was launched as a 20th century middle road between capitalism and socialism, the Danish “flexicurity model” has been launched as a third way between more deregulated Anglo-Saxon countries and stricter employment protection regulation in southern European countries. This model has been seen as “the new incarnation of the age-old claim that we can have both high levels of social protection and social inclusion and a competitive capitalist economy” (van den Berg 2008: 1). Flexicurity is a new benchmark or blueprint in the European Union, a “catch all” concept for job creation and higher employment.

It has been acknowledged that the institutional configuration of the Danish flexicurity model has several components in common with the Rehn-Meidner model: “Swedish policy makers formulated a remarkably coherent combination of policies which amounted to nothing less than an integrated ‘flexicurity’ plan avant la lettre” (van den Berg 2008: 4). As ALMPs in the Rehn-Meidner model acted as an important mechanism to shift labour market risks from the individual to society through offering employment protection in times of manpower redundancies, it is interesting to analyze how contemporary governance structures, in a Swedish post-Rehn-Meidner era and in a Danish flexicurity era, has affected the direction, and intensity of changes, of labour market policies. The main aim of this paper is to compare the different forms of activation policies that are pursued in two countries categorized in the social democratic welfare state regime – more specifically to study Swedish and Danish labour market policies. One main data source that is used is public expenditures on labour market programs from the OECD database.

When studying activation, there are several activation approaches or ideal types that in different ways structure citizen-state relations depending on aspects such as the type of employment inclusion strategy, the contract between state and citizen, the degree of state intervention, the degree of passive or active measures, and the view of the client. There are those approaches that



do not want any or only limited state intervention, which are of minor concern in this comparative paper. Of greater interest are those approaches sharing a basic understanding of active state intervention to employ people, advocated by paternalism optimists and activation optimists. The paternalism optimists see the importance of state intervention to activate the “passive” benefit recipients. Force and discipline are said to be in the interests both of the unemployed and of the society. If the paternalism optimists stress individual responsibilities, the approach advocated by the activation optimists puts higher emphasis on the responsibility of the state to support the individual to re-enter the labour market through active measures, and that activities should take into account prerequisites and desires of the individual, such as human capital development. Accordingly, the benefit recipient is perceived as an active being, not as an idle being that needs to be disciplined (van Berkel & Hornemann Møller 2002; Johansson & Hornemann Møller 2009). Besides relying on these approaches, in order to study various active measures I will use a typology of ALMPs elaborated by Giuliano Bonoli (2009, 2010, 2012).

The results of the study show that there has been policy change concerning the amount of public resources invested in LMPs overall and in relation to various types of measures. In Sweden, the shift from a de facto full employment situation to a post-full-employment situation created space for alternative ideas about new governance structures, policy goals and instruments. The work strategy has been a main institution at the Swedish labour market for a long time but during the last decade, and specifically during the current centre-right government, the “work first approach” has been increasingly emphasized. Currently, major cuts in active measures and in economic compensations and benefits, as well as stricter work obligations, altogether work as activation policies to create stronger incentives for people to take up employment. In combination with other measures, one could talk of a policy change from a “high road” to a “low road” in the search for full employment and competitiveness.

Denmark does by international standards still invest extensive public resources in LMPs. However, as in Sweden, the Danish development seems to be heading in the direction towards governmental rationalities that aim to mobilize additional labour supply. In Denmark, the previous success of state interventionist policies seems to have lost pace with a change of policies and of steering processes with stronger elements of discipline and of negative motivation; activation has increasingly been transformed into an unattractive offer putting greater pressure on unemployed people to find a job themselves and thereby to instil a stricter work ethic. Harder sanctions or economic incentives have been introduced to counter what is perceived as motivational deficits among the unemployed. As in the Swedish case, commodification of labour has increased.



## **European comparison of national governance patterns of integrated social and employment policies**

*Thierry Berthet and Clara Bourgeois*

New modes of organisation regarding employment and social cohesion policies have rose during the last decade. Our analysis based on six national researches and on existing literature show that these patterns are still unstable and changing time to time according to both exogenous and endogenous factors. However, trends towards more cooperation and collaboration at different levels (local and national), with different actors (public or private) and involving different fields (social, housing, health, etc.) can clearly be observed.

Indeed, within the last decade, major changes have occurred in the field of employment and social cohesion policies. The promotion of a rising activation increased all through Europe. And lately, a so-called integrated approach was also encouraged by European and international organizations. These promoted trends question the way new challenges are dealt with and hence their governance schemes. How and why are different policy fields, different political levels and different actors regulated at the national level? This comparative work reveals that current promoted governance patterns are multi-faceted, which makes it very complex to implement. Thus, a gap between actual implementation and discourses can be noticed. Moreover, different economical and political changes have occurred over the last decade and the analysis of all these changes enabled us to compare fostered national patterns of governance of activation friendly integration policies.

The contribution will hence present the results of the first step of the Localise project, which aims to analyse the governance of integrated social cohesion and employment policies in six different European countries: UK, Italy, France, Sweden, Germany and Poland. The objective of this part of the project was to set up contextual comparative national elements for further empirical analyses. National reports based on the literature and on previous empirical researches were realised by each national research teams and enabled us to build a comparative analysis.

It is important to put the emphasis on the fact that this presentation represents a contextual part and not an exhaustive analysis on national governance schemes of integrated employment and social cohesion policies. It thus focuses on defining key concepts and especially the concept of 'integrated approach' in a time of fostered activation. Through the identification of common trends and specificities among the six studied European countries in terms of conditionality, cross sectoriality, individualisation, contractualisation and marketization, the evolution of what we call 'activation friendly integration policies' will be questioned. This will finally result in a dynamic analysis of change.





## **The activation of social assistance clients in Switzerland**

*Giuliano Bonoli and Cyrielle Champion*

Switzerland's social security system reflects the country's federal structure. Social insurance schemes (invalidity and unemployment insurance) are controlled by the federal level. Social assistance, instead, is regulated and financed by the municipalities or by the cantons. This rather peculiar institutional set up has turned out to be a formidable obstacle to efforts going in the direction of more activation in social assistance. In fact, in spite of a sharp rise in caseloads, no significant reform has so far been adopted. This is in contrast to both what has happened in other western European countries and, within Switzerland, in other social security schemes which have all been reformed towards more activation. In this paper, we present the limited measures that have been proposed and sometimes adopted in response to the increase in social assistance caseload. We understand the lack of a more fundamental reorientation as a consequence of the federalist structure of the country and of the lack of incentives for political entrepreneurs to pick up the issue at the federal level.



## **The Work Programme: a new public governance policy or a continuation of new public management?**

*Vanesa Fuertes and Ronald McQuaid*

Countries across Europe have dealt with the challenge of social cohesion through different state traditions and various modes public governance. Nelson and Zadek's (2000) definition of governance as "the framework through which political, economic, social and administrative authority is exercise at local, national and international levels" is adopted in this paper. The UK governance of public services has been categorised according to a typology: each model with specific characteristics regarding its core claim and most common coordination mechanisms (Osborne, 2010; Martin, 2010; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011). These models, broadly Public Administration (PA), New Public Management (NPM) and New Public Governance (NPG), are usually situated within a time-frame and the change from one to another is largely explained as a result of pragmatic (Osborne, 2010) or ideological (Clarke, 2008) reasons.

The governance of different parts of the welfare state has also seen a shift towards an increased activation-focused welfare system. Some of the reasons behind this shift include major challenges to tax revenues, public budgets and the influence of changing strategies, including the European strategy, which considers an "active employment policy" the core of an "active and dynamic welfare state" (Lisbon EU Council, 2000). These calls for activation are not new, the novelty is perhaps in the new balance of individuals' rights and responsibilities and the new set of conditionality and sanctions which are spilling into traditionally passive policies, including non-employment fields.

The focus on activation and economic pressures mentioned above, together with growing inequalities and the need to tackle often complex, multiple and cumulative problems, make an integrated welfare provision that aims to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery, ever more important (McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005). There is a need to implement joined-up, seamless, individualised and tailored services: this requires a greater role for the local level in policy development and implementation, and greater partnership working. These pressures together with, according to some authors, the incapacity of NPM principles –public spending control, private sector management practices, marketization of public services and minimisation of the state through contracting out (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011; Martin 2010)– to deliver the efficiency and effectiveness expected, have to some extent given way to a new form of public governance. This new form of governance has been described as the NPG (Osborne, 2010), the New Public Leadership (Brookes, 2011) or by other nomenclatures, while van Berkel and Borghi (2007) have suggested the development of a new 'hybrid model'.



The UK government maintains central responsibility for employment policy and unemployment benefits, and while integrated policies have been evident for many decades, flourishing at times of low unemployment, coordination between political levels, policy fields, and actors is still a challenge. Through the years a number of national welfare-to-work initiatives have been put in place, such as the New Deal for specific groups (e.g. New Deal for Lone Parents, New Deal 25+, etc.), Pathways to Work, Flexible New Deal, etc. The recent Coalition government in the UK has introduced significant reforms to the welfare system, such as the creation of a Universal Credit that will see almost all former benefits amalgamated into one, as well as the introduction of the national Work Programme for the long-term unemployed. This new national employment policy presents a number of possible opportunities and challenges.

#### Aim of the paper

The Work Programme and the Universal Credit are both in their infancy and discussions on the novelty, feasibility and benefits of both these changes are abundant. The first aim of this paper will be to ascertain to what extent the Work Programme is a completely new intervention or, on the contrary, bears much of the same characteristics of previous programmes. To do so, the paper will explore these programmes' similarities and differences with regard to six variables: groups targeted; integration of different policy fields; coordination of different actors; multi-level integration; marketisation; and contractualisation.

These analyses will allow us to explore where the Work Programme sits with regards to governance typologies, and to ascertain if, as Osborne amongst others have argued, the NPM has given way to the NPG or if, on the contrary, the NPM is still very much alive in employment policy development and delivery: has the Work Programme and other local services in Scotland made progress towards achieving joined-up multi-dimensional individualised services as suggested under NPG or is the talk of local responsiveness and partnership-working mainly rhetoric?; is the UK still dominated by an NPM model defined by top-down performance management, markets and contractualism, or has the interaction between NPG and NPM produced a new hybrid form?; what factors have shaped this interaction and how have the content and quality of services been affected?

#### Methodology

The aim of the paper will be achieved through the analysis of policy, academic and evaluation documents of previous UK national welfare-to-work programmes, and the recent Work Programme with regards to the six variables mentioned above, complemented with a small number of qualitative interviews with local stakeholders in Scotland. This and the analysis of academic papers on governance models (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011; Brookes, 2011; Osborne, 2010; Martin, 2010) will allow to situate the Work Programme within a governance framework.



Other literature, such as policy and academic documents, in the area of employment policies and public services' governance, determinants of active labour market policies, and activation trends (Bonoli, 2010; Lindsay and McQuaid, 2008; van Berkel and Borghi, 2007), will also be reviewed.

#### Relation to the general theme of the workshop

The paper touches a number of the workshop themes by describing the direction in which UK national activation programmes have moved in terms of integration, marketisation and contractualisation, and to what extent this is shaping services provision (localise, join-up and individualise), service providers (partnerships) and local worlds of social cohesion (social inclusion and well-being).

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## **Converging worlds of activation? Activation policies and governance in Europe and the role of the EU**

*Paolo Graziano*

This article examines the relationship between the emerging European activation policies and the evolution of domestic activation policies and its governance. Drawing on the emerging Europeanization debate and comparative literature on activation, the crucial research questions will be the following: is there an EU-induced convergence in domestic activation policies in the European Union? Following Bonoli's work (2010), the article unpacks activation in two dimensions (human capital investment and employment market orientation) and looks at the trajectories of 7 OECD countries. The article argues that there is only limited EU-induced convergence towards the employment assistance component of the EU hybrid model and similarly limited convergence can be seen with respect to the governance of activation policies. Although fully-fledged explanations of such limited convergence go beyond the scope of this article, we put forward two tentative explanations which should be tested with further research: first, the lack of convergence may lie primarily in the overall 'softness' of the European Employment Strategy (which means, among other things, limited resources), but the lack of knowledge may also lie in the lack of administrative capacities enabling member state governments to fully implement innovative activation policies. Keywords: Activation, Convergence, Governance, Employment policies, European Employment Strategy.



## **Promises and practices of personalisation: discursive trajectories in Norway's new work approach**

*Erika K. Gubrium and Ivar Lødemel*

Thematic focus and overview of methods: The language of labour activation has moved to a recent emphasis on personalisation. The EU showcases Norway as a leader in this direction. From Norway's position as the pinnacle of the personalisation movement, this paper employs a "mixed methods" approach to investigate the possibilities and limitations circumscribing this movement within the country. The country's new work approach for social assistance claimants has been touted for its successful use of a personalised approach to alleviate social exclusion and stands in contrast to other Western European schemes, which have moved in a direction of harsher sanctions and work first style programming. The paper contrasts the findings of two, related analyses. The first is a targeted policy analysis of national policy documents and media narratives to examine the development of the provisions attached to Norway's Qualification Programme from introduction to enactment. This analysis traces the extent to which this programme represents a move from a work first to a more personalised, human-capital orientation. More specifically, this section traces the ways in which the human-capital oriented promises attached to early policy proposals concerning the approach have translated into the realities of regulations, programmes and services.

While the shame experienced by persons in poverty has long been recognised, little attention has been paid to the implications of the poverty-shame nexus for the design of effective anti-poverty policy and related programmes. Drawing from Amartya Sen's contention that shame is an attribute of poverty in all societies, the second section of this paper takes a more reflexive stance in contrasting these findings with the accounts that are told via a series of 28 in-depth qualitative interviews with social assistance beneficiaries who have experienced the new approach first hand. The evidence from the conversations suggests a trajectory (and hierarchy) from marginality to "normal" in which claimant's motivations and individual choices are constrained or even opposed by a range of particularities. Regardless of whether or not the Qualification Programme better fits a human capital and work first ideal, both approaches are informed by the tenets of rational choice theory, and this strongly circumscribes the possible practices associated with programme provision. The data suggest that the one-size-fits-all rational choice assumptions informing the activation approach both are not a good fit for the particular needs of the claimant, and moreover, serve to heighten the shame that claimants experience within the context of an imposed welfare system identity. There is a need for policy making and social work to be flexible and account for these real-life nuances, as well as for the rational choice assumptions framing the design and provision of activation programming to be reconsidered. The methodological exercise of comparing and contrasting these varying datasets offers the potential to obtain a more nuanced understanding of the project of personalisation in Norway and beyond. With its focus on the role that shame and shaming plays within the context of activation strategies directed towards Norway's most



marginalised individuals, this paper fits well with the thematic section, “Activation and Inclusion of Groups Suffering from Multiple Deprivation”.



## Coordination in a fragmented welfare market

*Bastian Jantz and Tanja Klenk*

Since the early 2000s a reorientation towards activation has taken place in the labour market policies of most European countries. This paradigm shift has not only changed the objectives of labour market policy from income protection to labour market integration. In addition, the governance of unemployment policy has become a critical issue, too. While traditional welfare governance is structured along social risks – unemployment, invalidity, old age security etc. – social problems such as unemployment are today considered as ‘wicked issues’ which require the involvement of different actors and the close cooperation of different institutions of social policy. As a result, European welfare states have begun to improve coordination in their social security systems by merging agencies or encouraging collaboration. In Germany, the most striking example for such a coordination initiative is the introduction of the one-stop shop agency ‘ARGE’ (or now Gemeinsame Einrichtung) in which social assistance offices and the National Employment Service cooperate to offer improved integrated services for long-term unemployed.

This trend to increased cooperation, however, is challenged by a second major reform trend, namely the trend to privatization and contracting-out. Privatization and contracting-out, which shape the governance of unemployment policy in Germany in a decisive way, are based upon the idea that the competition between programme providers leads to more efficient and more flexible services than the provision through large public agencies. Privatization and contracting-out, however, lead also to an increased degree of fragmentation of welfare governance – and thus are inconsistent with efforts to improve coordination. The two major reform trends in German unemployment governance – overcoming traditional institutional segmentation to better deal with wicked issues and improving the efficiency of unemployment policy through market based governance – might have reverse effects.

While the creation of the one-stop agencies and its post-merger problems gain much attention in recent research on the German unemployment system, the question of coordination in the parallel established welfare market for placement and training services is mostly neglected. The paper will address this research gap by enquiring if and to what extent coordination demands are handled in this field of employment policy. Referring to Majone’s notion of the regulatory state, the basic assumption of the paper is that with the shift to a privatized welfare state, governments and public agencies develop from providers to moderators regulating and coordinating the private actors. These changes imply the evolution of new regulatory structures to allow governments to maintain control over service delivery systems in complex policy networks. Moreover, consumer policies are needed to provide the unemployed with market information and to empower them to competent consumers who can take advantage of their placement and training vouchers.





The aim of the paper is to map the rearranged organizational landscape of job placement and training services in Germany and to critically assess the coordination practices in this new market with regard to the three dimensions accountability, quality management, and consumer policy. Next to policy documents, qualitative semi-structured expert interviews with leading bureaucrats from the Federal Employment Agency and the responsible National ministry, with managers from private providers and with representatives from interest groups are used as empirical material. The results of the research show clearly that contrary to the expectations of those who predicted the end of the 'old' bureaucratic public administration, procedures, standards and regulations remain of importance. Rather than replacing one dominant type of governance with another, recent reforms have resulted in a hybridization of governance combining elements of bureaucratic, network and market governance.

Furthermore, a multiplication – or even an explosion – of the number of regulative authorities could be observed in the governance of placement and training services. The interviews, however, raise severe doubts if the new governance setting could be assessed as an efficient and effective way of coordination.



## Roots of Danish activation policies and the flexicurity model

*Per H. Jensen*

Danish activation policies form part of the Danish flexicurity model. The Danish flexicurity model stands on three legs: (1) no employment protection, (2) generous unemployment benefits, and (3) active labour market policies, which create a flexible labour market. The purpose of active labour market policies is to improve employment chances among the unemployed, and active labour market policies are composed by measures that stimulate geographical and occupational mobility. Educational measures are thus at the forefront of the flexicurity model, which is probably why a special feature of the Danish activation regime is that it pursues a human capital rather than a work first strategy.

The Danish activation policies and the flexicurity model have been praised by the European Union as a model for European employment strategies. To understand the transferability of the Danish activation policies and flexicurity model would, however, call for an investigation of the specific preconditions for the Danish model.

The aim of this paper is twofold: First, it scrutinizes the historical origins of the Danish activation and flexicurity regime. It is argued that the Danish activation and flexicurity regime has deep historical origins and that it emerged in an industrial society with a high union density and where the labour market was organized according to a craft principle that supported horizontal flexibility. There was no need for employment protection as long as workers could remain in these horizontal labour markets, thanks to generous unemployment benefits as well as continuous training and retraining. Second, the future of the Danish activation and flexicurity regime will be discussed. As we depart from industrial society, and as union density and craft unionism decline, the Danish activation and flexicurity model tends to explode from within. This is probably why we see a move from a human capital to a work first strategy in Danish activation policies.



## Activation as a new filter for minimum income schemes in continental European welfare systems

*Sebastian Künzel*

The aim of this paper is to understand changing patterns of social and labour market policy in continental European countries as a reaction to increasing claims on originally residual minimum income programmes in these welfare states. The rising number of benefit recipients of minimum income schemes in continental European countries can be conceptualised as a problem of typical Bismarckian institutions of welfare and work requesting new filter functions against the risk of minimum income receipt. The traditional 'division of labour' of Bismarckian institutions between labour market policy for 'workers' and family welfare or passive social policy for weaker and more vulnerable groups is decreasingly proving as robust option. New economic and social risks have increased claims on means-tested minimum income schemes, which had been originally installed as a disparate, residual benefit programme for those 'extreme outsiders' which were not 'filtered' by the Bismarckian welfare state institutions of family welfare, socially secured employment or generous higher-ranking social protection programmes. The rise in the numbers of minimum income beneficiaries, however, has turned this fragmented and passive filter of the Bismarckian welfare state into a problem requiring new solutions especially for the inclusion of weaker and vulnerable groups.

In response to this challenge, reforms in continental European countries led to a very specific institutional remodelling. As will be shown in the paper, the reform trajectories taken by continental European countries like Belgium, France, Germany, and the Netherlands suggest that these welfare states tend to react to increased social and labour market problems of long-term unemployed, weaker groups of the labour market and low-skilled unemployed by establishing a particular regime for the activation into employment. The principle argument of the paper is that the particular constellation of Bismarckian institutions frames reforms in such a way that 'activation' is institutionalised as a new and specific Bismarckian institutional filter for minimum income schemes. It introduces flexible labour markets, notably low paid employment, and puts a stress on work incentives and services. Hereby, the new institutional filter is targeted at the labour market inclusion of weaker groups of the labour market, low-skilled unemployed and persistently unemployed. Summarising the nature of these important and selective social and labour market policy changes in continental Europe, Bismarckian institutions change to the extent that they can function as employment-centred filter against minimum income receipt: employment, social services and workfare elements are replacing family welfare, male-breadwinner family salaries or generous social protection as a new and specifically Bismarckian institutional filter against risks of minimum income receipt of weaker and more vulnerable groups. To put it in a nutshell, activation in continental welfare states evolves as a new institutional filter to reduce the burden of still residuary minimum income schemes.



## Interpreting the marketisation of employment services in the UK and Denmark

*Flemming Larsen and Sharon Wright*

Institutional reforms of employment services have been sweeping across the OECD countries since the late 1990s. In this paper we focus on one of the major international trends in the delivery of employment services; that is the contracting out of Public Employment Services. The advocates of contracting out argue that a quasi-market will deliver more efficient, effective and de-bureaucratised employment services. In this paper we test these assumptions by comparing the experiences of marketising employment services in the UK and Denmark. Our hypothesis is that quasi-market models in employment services have difficulties in living up to both the preconditions for a well-functioning market and the stated political expectations about increased efficiency, innovation, higher quality, and less bureaucracy than the public services they replaced. On the other hand, we consider the alternative hidden and unstated effects (which are often overlooked or dismissed as simply ‘unintended’) of marketising employment services. Our focus is on the implications of marketisation in shaping a new set of conditions for subsequent policy directions, on the premise that reliance on a quasi-market model creates new conditions for steering and governing both the labour market and employment policy, which in turn has significant effects for citizens. Clouded in the ‘technical’ language of improved efficiency and effectiveness, such changes are often neglected and depoliticised. Hence, the paper tries to bring these changes to light making a very first attempt to describe how contracting out may change the nature of employment policy itself.

We aim to compare the governance of activation in the contrasting welfare contexts of the UK and Denmark, traditionally classified as archetypal liberal and social democratic regimes respectively. It might be expected that welfare states established and reformed on such different principles and values, might react to international trends in governance and activation policies to different extents or in different ways. We aim to investigate the extent to which common traits can be identified in the organisation of employment services, despite the obvious differences in the underlying welfare systems. Furthermore, we aim to establish how such similarities and differences in marketization have impacted on the content of policies. Do ‘international’ tendencies in use of governance modes also result in similar types of implementation and can more convergence in the content of the services be observed? We will first draw on literature and policy documents to examine the last 10-15 years of developments in institutional and contractual arrangements for quasi-markets in employment services in the UK and Denmark, within the context of reform of social security and employment policy. Second, we will review the conceptual literature on quasi-market analysis (including different approaches to understanding ‘types’ of governance as distinct and in combination) in order to interpret the meanings and significance of changes and to consider their impact on employment policy. Third, we will test the assumptions of the quasi-market approach through a comparative analysis of research evidence (including publically available official



evaluations and information about the conditions, contracts and successful bidders for the current contracting of employment services and activation programmes in the UK and Denmark) in the two countries. Finally, we will make an original assessment of how this type of governance substantially affects the nature of employment policy and the dynamics of accessing support for service users.



## **Experiencing precariousness in European cities: the young between risks and opportunities in times of crisis**

*Lara Maestripieri, Stefania Sabatinelli and Manuel A. Hendrickson*

Young generations excluded from labour market participation, stuck in precarious jobs or in long-term unemployment, or even in inactivity (the NEET phenomenon), have come to represent one of the main concerns in European countries. The waste of young generations' potential indeed threatens the sustainability of the European social model, and its objective to keep together competitiveness and social cohesion. The current crisis in Europe exacerbates these risks, and may also increase the distance in the degree to which these emerge in different countries and cities. As a matter of fact, the growing relevance of local levels in welfare provision (but also in industrial relations), and the way this combines with national regulations, makes the comparative overview of social protection more complex, and only partly corresponding to the taxonomies based on national welfare models.

Based on 120 interviews with young persons in 20 cities of 10 European countries, carried out in the framework of the 7th FP WILCO project (<http://www.wilcoproject.eu/>), the paper aims at comparatively analysing their experience in precariousness and unemployment. Interviewees were selected according to the following criteria:

- age between 18 and 33;
- being currently unemployed or in truly precarious employment conditions;
- either already living autonomously or still being in their parents' household because of severe economic difficulties due to their employment conditions;
- having an educational level of ISCED 3 or 4 maximum (no university degree and not studying at university).

The interviews' analysis is embedded in the comparison of the changes in the labour market dynamics (particularly at the local level), also tackled in the research design, as well as of the role of urban policies aiming at supporting citizens (particularly the young) in their search for a job (information centres, matching of supply and demand, subsidized jobs, etc.), enhancing their employability (professional training, coaching and counselling, etc.), and/or intervening in terms of income support.

Stemming from an investigation of both individual and social factors at the basis of such experience, the analysis will focus on the ambiguous character of precariousness that can represent both opportunities and constraints for different or even for the same persons, but it is most likely to become a trap for the weakest profiles. We will examine how the different forms of socio-economic integration – such as redistribution (public welfare), market exchange (for profit



provision), reciprocity (family and primary networks) and mixed ones (third sector initiatives) - contribute to shape the framework of resources and constraints within which young precarious move. In this frame of analysis, we will focus particularly on education as the key factor to activate social mobility.

More than the traditional concept of unemployment, defined as the absence of work, in most of the cases our interviewees are confronted with precariousness: a continuum ranging between standard employment and unemployment, a complex grey zone composed by fixed term and/or part-time contracts, episodes of occasional jobs, unregulated occupations (i.e. with no job contract), internships and training and education initiatives. From this point of view, the agency of the young is one of the key factors to avoid such a risk. The relation that the young have with various types of resources will be disentangled, searching for differences and similarities between countries and cities. Particular attention will be devoted to the role that local activation programmes, matching services, training courses, subsidized jobs and income support measures have had in the path of young interviewees searching a way out of unemployment and precariousness. The hypothesis is that the specific urban context and the local configuration of public, private and third sector activation interventions contribute in a relevant way to shape the framework of risks and resources that the young face due to their precarious conditions.

The experience of precariousness will also be looked at in its links to other domains of life (exiting the parental household, family formation, education achievements, career development, etc), in its impact on the overall living conditions of the young and on their capacity to develop transversal life strategies. In fact, in almost all of our cities young interviewees express clear feelings of distress linked to their situation of precariousness and/or unemployment. Such feelings include anxiety, sadness and loss of confidence and self-esteem, leading to and being reinforced by difficult family relations and health problems (e.g. depression, obesity).

In our paper, we will mainly focus on the following points:

1. Although our preliminary results show that the actual systems are only partly coherent with taxonomies of welfare models, the national (and regional) levels of labour market and welfare regulation seem to be more relevant in this field than in other ones. As a matter of fact, the countries considered in our study differ in terms of the degree of development and consolidation of both passive policies and activating measures. In this framework, some cities have developed specific municipal employment services, even though they do not have the institutional obligation to do so. Yet, their actions often reach a reduced number of unemployed, and/or act more as a sort of protection against the instability beyond the labour sphere, rather than being effective in actually reducing the mismatch between demand and offer on the job markets. They undertake actions such as helping people with basic expenditure and reducing the descent towards extremely precarious situations, as it is



the case in Nantes, Zagreb and the Medway area, where job contracts often last just few months. In the Southern contexts, where national policies are particularly inadequate to protect the younger unemployed (because of the strong contribution-based access, and of the lack or weakness of both universalistic unemployment benefits and of minimum-income schemes), also the role of local welfare system seems to be residual, just reduced to counselling and orientation, and leaving all responsibilities in terms of economic support and information access (besides emotional sustain) to families and peers.

2. Families and peers intervene in supporting the young when services aren't able to meet their demands and needs, giving information, but also economic and emotional support. In Southern European cities, their important support helps explain the tendency of the young in procrastinating the creation of new households, and the stronger dependency on their parents' help also afterwards, as well as other forms of inter-generational solidarity (e.g. the role of grandparents).
3. Education is still considered the key factor for accessing permanently the labour market, even if not all the interviewees are aware that their unstable condition might be caused by their weak professional profile. Still, many of them are involved in new educational project in order to improve their chances of being hired in better positions. In some cases it is the suggestion of coaching and counselling operators to use these months in order to get trained or re-trained, so to be better equipped and more competitive once the economy starts to recover. Yet, training often has a cost that the young unemployed cannot meet.
4. A recurrent overall strategy to cope with their situation is the postponement of steps towards autonomy and adulthood (exiting their parents' household, living in couple, getting married, having children) or even, for some of them, taking a step backwards, giving up living autonomously and going back to live with their parents. Even more widespread is the severe reduction of expenses. This means not only renouncing to everything that is not indispensable, but also cutting on basic expenses, and/or bearing debts (on utilities, dwelling rent, car insurance etc.).

In conclusion, our paper will fit into the general theme of the workshop by showing if and how the current local welfare systems are working in order to activate younger people, especially those who are more at risk of unemployment because of their lower education skills, and if and how these local services (where they exist) do represent resources for the young, and are part of their agency framework to tackle their precarious employment condition.





## **One stop-shops in Europe. The coordination of social and labor market policies from an organizational and labor market perspective**

*Renate Minas*

Activation policies and programs are one of the main instruments to promote the transition from welfare to work and to (re)integrate people depending on social insurance benefits or social assistance into the labor market. However, to make labor market integration sustainable, disadvantaged people need to be supported with sufficient resources, such as personalized employment, social services and other services to enhance their employability. All over more attention is given to disadvantaged peoples need to be supported with resources bridging over different policy domains.

Under the term service integration, many countries undertake efforts to combine social and employment services in more or less integrated services (one stop-shops). The starting point for these reforms is that integration is expected to increase the employability of people with difficulties in accessing the labor market. The growing need for coordination can also be seen as a result of modern welfare states far-reaching specialization of protection.

The paper analyzes the currently largest national labor market reforms in Europe that aims to coordinate labor market policies with social and other (eg health-related) support targeted to people far from the labor market. The reforms studied are Jobcentre in Denmark, LAFOS in Finland, UWV WERKbedrijf in the Netherlands, NAV reform in Norway, Jobcentre Plus in the UK and Hartz reform in Germany.

The establishment of one stop-shops challenge the distribution of responsibilities across policy areas often located at different territorial levels. On the one hand, we have the macro-nature of unemployment policies and, on the other hand, the local level of activation services; as well as, in most countries, local social assistance versus national unemployment benefits schemes. The approach of this study is to analyze this challenge by using an organizational perspective, and also studying the implications of one stop-shops for labor market policy as a policy area. The paper is based on policy documents, country studies and evaluations.

The organizational perspective is based on Askim et al's (2009) effort to conceptualize one stop-shops by relating these to similar concepts such as cooperation, coordination and partnerships. A set of variables is supposed to catch the models' organization such as tasks undertaken, actors involved, proximity to citizens, the organization's autonomy and steering instruments. The second approach is based on Clasen and Cleggs (2011) analysis of the contemporary labor market reforms in Europe. This part throws light on one stop-shops in a broader context and understand the implications of integrated services for the development of



labor market policies as a policy area. Variables used here are e.g. homogenization of unemployment benefits, new risk categories and activation.

A main result is the identification of two types of one stop shops: one narrow and one broad type. Jobcentren in Denmark, Jobcentre Plus in the UK and the CWI in the Netherlands can be characterized as solutions of one stop shops belonging to the first type. These one stop shops are mainly specialized on a single service, namely labor-market services. The merger did not result in collaboration across sectors and for support of such social problems clients still have to turn to other places. This type of one stop-shops underlies stronger central steering than the second type. NAV in Norway, LAFOS in Finland and the common/specific activities in Germany could be qualified as a broad variant of one stop-shops. The task profile bridges social support, help with unemployment and also other necessary support and cooperation takes place across sectors. New forms of governance such as negotiations, networks or partnerships can be found in this type of one stop-shop.

In general, the establishment of one stop shops is one part of larger labor market reforms. A stronger work-first orientation encompassing a larger group of unemployed however, is a clear implication in the narrower type of one stop-shops, as a merger of client groups and partly a merger of active and passive labor market policy. A homogenization of benefit systems occurs only in one country.

This paper touches upon several of the indicated themes of the workshop. It is about welfare states handling the demands of integrated services, patterns of change, reform paths and governance mechanisms.



## The changing governance of activation: a comparative study

*Amílcar Moreira and Ivar Lødemel*

This paper reports on the findings of a comparative study (covering the US, the UK, Norway, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal and the Czech Republic) on reforms in activation policies targeted at minimum income recipients, in the first decade of the 21st Century. For the sake of clarification, by activation we mean the policy of structuring benefit rules and employment/training services with the view of moving unemployed income benefit recipients into work. This is not to be confused with workfare. Unlike workfare, activation is not solely restricted to individuals on social assistance (Lodemel and Trickey 2001: 9-11), and applies to various types of income benefits – such as unemployment insurance, unemployment assistance or, in some cases, disability benefits (Eichhorst et al 2008a: 7-8). Moreover, unlike workfare – which is mostly about work or, at best, work-for-benefit (see Lodemel and Trickey 2001: 6-7) -activation considers a broader variety of options for retuning benefit recipients back to work, including training and education. This is also not to be confused with active labour market policies (ALMP). Whilst being part of the policy-mix used to activate MI recipients, ALMP do not involve eligibility conditions on the right to income protection, and have a broader aim of dealing with more structural imbalances in the labour-market -such as structural unemployment, assisting debilitated industrial sectors or geographic areas, etc. (Hvinden 1999: 28-29; Kildal 2000: 5).

The paper is structured as follows. First, we show that reforms introduced during this period can be seen to form what we call a ‘second generation of activation reforms’. Whereas the first generation of activation reforms – that took place during the last decade of the 20th century -is marked by the introduction of activation requirements as a condition to an entitlement to minimum income protection, and by the introduction of activation programmes for minimum income recipients, this second generation involves a strengthening of the focus on work in the activation of MI recipients, and the adoption of new forms of service delivery – fundamentally inspired by New Public Management (NPM) thinking.

Then, making use of the heuristic potential of cluster analysis, we show how the reforms introduced in this period change the landscape of activation in Europe and in the US. More specifically, this section will look at whether developments introduced during this period signify a process of policy-convergence, or if they signify instead a process of reconfiguration of the different models of activation of minimum income recipients. For this purpose, we rely on information collected by our project partners on how the activation of minimum income recipients is governed, namely: the type of minimum income scheme, the model of benefit administration, the aims of activation, the model of sanctioning, the role given to training and education, the model of financial incentives adopted, the level of integration of benefit and activation services, the role of private providers, and the level of customer-focus in the delivery of services.



Reflecting on the previous paragraphs, we feel that the paper proposed above can make a significant contribution to your workshop, namely in discussions about the different forms of activation policies that are pursued in different countries, and on the governance mechanisms, reform paths, patterns of change and conflict in related policy fields, when countries decide to reform their employment systems.



## **'Jobs First' for people with learning disabilities? Exploring the boundary between support and activation**

*Martin Stevens*

Increasing employment and personalising public services have been two key aims of social and government policy across Europe and many other countries (Powell, 2011). The paper will explore the policy context and implementation of Jobs First, a national 'demonstration site' project initiated by the English Department of Health (HMG, 2009), that aimed to combine both of these elements. Jobs First was designed to test out the use of personalised funding provided to adults with learning disabilities, who were assessed as eligible to receive publicly funded social care services, to purchase employment related support and also deemed to be able to get paid jobs. A key part of the project was to explore the use of public funding from multiple sources, controlled by different English government departments: the Department of Health, which has lead responsibility for learning disability services, and the Department for Work and Pensions, which is responsible for welfare benefits and employment.

The paper will draw on the implementation element of a mixed methods evaluation of Jobs First, also funded by the English Department of Health, being undertaken by the Social Care Workforce Research Unit, based at King's College London. This element of the evaluation took a broadly grounded theory approach, in which the aim has been to develop theoretical understanding of how social care and other professionals have worked to increase the employment chances of people with learning disabilities, using personalised funding and how this has been experienced by people with learning disabilities and their families. Semi-structured interviews (n=130) were undertaken with a wide range of actors, including social services managers, people with learning disabilities and their families/carers.

Jobs First will be presented as a particular kind of activation policy. These have been distinguished in a number of ways, mainly depending on the balance of compulsion and support. For example, in the UK, people who have been unemployed for certain periods are being required, on pain of losing benefits, to take part in job seeking and participate the Work Programme, a scheme involving compulsory activities aimed at getting people back into work. Newman (2007) associates this balance of approaches with three forms of governance and thereby, forms of identity and subject positions. More coercive approaches are linked to hierarchical governance (and also neoliberal states), involving a rule based bureaucratic mode of power, and associated with rights to services, but also withdrawal of rights for certain groups. This requires individuals to become active and responsible citizens. More collaborative or supportive approaches are related to self-governance, in which citizens are encouraged and empowered to adopt the aims of government as personal goals. Activation policies, are also associated with developing markets of independent sector organisations providing services. Newman argues that this involves managerial governance, in



which power is exercised through incentives, and associated with consumerism and instrumental thinking. Consequently, Newman argues, Activation Policies, which tend to mix collaborative and coercive elements, create different and potentially conflicting identities and subject positions.

Three key subject positions or identities are seen as important: consumers of independent sector services, which relates to a managerial form of governance; collaborators with those services in the aims of getting work, representative of a stress on self-governance; finally as actors responding to new incentives and sanctions, which is linked to hierarchical forms of governance. The paper will use this framework to examine Jobs First, as a particular kind of activation intervention and compare it with interventions aiming to support and coerce non disabled people and those with less serious disabilities into getting paid work. It will examine the kinds of subject positions and identities this makes possible for people with learning disabilities, pointing to the different forms of governance this represents.

In summary, this will initially involve examining different drivers for the development of Jobs First. First, we will explore links with a family of policies to reduce welfare spending, through increasing pressure on unemployed people to be more active in seeking jobs through conditional entitlement to reducing levels of benefit (Houston and Lyndsay, 2010). A separate but linked factor is the reduction in public spending on supporting disabled people, which was also an element behind the promotion of employment for people with learning disabilities. Furthermore, higher eligibility criteria for publicly funded social care services and financial benefits based on disability mean that more people may be defined as non disabled and therefore potentially subject to some element of coercion. However, Jobs First was also driven by normalisation and social role valorisation, ideas that have dominated policy and practice relating to people with learning disabilities over the past 40 years (Johnson et al, 2010). For the Jobs First cohort, engagement with job focused support has, as yet, not become a condition of benefit receipt. It will be argued that implies a particular and separate view of identity and available subject positions for people with learning disabilities as consumers and collaborators, but not as subject to the sanctions applied to less and non-disabled unemployed people. We will explore this difference in relation to the continuing influence of the 'learning disabled' identity, which is argued to act as a limitation on their life choices (McVitie et al 2008).

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## **Changes in the relationship between work and welfare. The activation of unemployment policies in Portugal**

*Carla Valadas*

Welfare states are currently undergoing major challenges that derive from globalization processes, population ageing, rising inequalities, changes within the labour market. The later in particular put (traditional) welfare regimes under pressure. Persistent mass unemployment combined with more precarious forms of work put at risk the sustainability of welfare states. With the aim of increasing the employment ratio and of reducing the number of people receiving income transfers, active labour market policies are disseminating among EU countries (Amparo Serrano, 2007; Bonoli, 2010). Activation measures are strongly embedded in a new understanding of social rights and of individuals' responsibility for their integration into society (mainly through their participation in the labour market). They are also characterized by distinguished elements, such as limiting eligibility criteria, stricter conditionality rules, and use of sanctions. These are adopted by different countries as a result of mutual learning processes (e.g. change of good practices among EU countries) and under the influence of international agencies – such as the OECD and the EU – orientations regarding employment policy.

How do these policy orientations incorporate people's new needs in terms of work and welfare support? Admitting that the challenges posed namely by globalization, new family structures and the need to reconcile family and work responsibilities' entail new, more flexible social policies capable of responding to several new risks, in what way do new activation policies entail new relationships between work and welfare, e.g. individuals forms of integration in the labour market and the configuration of social protection systems? Moreover how (and how effectively) do active labour market policies take into account the characteristics of particular groups (e.g. women, lone parents, workers with low qualifications, disabled, ethnic minorities) as well as the requirements of highly unpredictable and competitive labour markets? How do these new goals and policies' orientations translate into the role and practices of government agencies (e.g. Public Employment Services)? These are some of the research questions we aim to address.

We concede that the specific configuration and outcomes of these processes varies according to countries' historical background, institutional configuration, and socioeconomic conditions. Adopting sociological institutionalism as our theoretical framework, the research focuses on the analysis of the development of active labour market policy in Portugal within the last twenty years. Considering that there may be different types of reform (Barbier, 2009), is Portugal following the liberal type? Which is its specific configuration? What kind of administrative and procedural reforms can we witness? Which are its consequences from the point of view of citizens, particularly, for the beneficiaries of social protection measures? What exactly are the forms of participation into the labour market? What kind of work/employment is considered?





These research questions are addressed through complementary methodologies that consist on in-depth interviews with institutional actors (e.g. representatives of governmental agencies, experts, social partners' representatives). Another methodology is statistical data analysis focused on 1) development of precarious forms of work; 2) the recent evolution of unemployment and 3) the number of people involved in activation measures.

Since the paper aims to understand how activation is translated into actual policies in one European country, Portugal, and more specifically how and to which extent this translation process is related to new forms of governance and citizenship, in our view it fits into the theme of the workshop.



## **The Politics of in-work benefits: the case of the ‘Active Income of Solidarity’ in France**

*Tim Vlandas*

The determinants of Active Labour Market Programs (ALMPs) have recently become the focus of a large amount of literature (Rueda, 2005; Armingeon, 2007; Huo et al, 2008). But aggregate figures on ALMPs spending puts together policies which are often explicitly distinct, while implicitly ignoring the reforms that introduced these programs. Thus, this literature is both too broad in its aggregation of different programs and too narrow in its disregard for relevant factors.

This paper aims to contribute to a better understanding of the political economy determinants of ALMPs by analyzing a specific type of ALMPs, in-work benefits, which have gained particular prominence in the past two decades. I focus on the Active Income of Solidarity (Revenu de Solidarite Active – RSA) which was introduced in 2008. I argue that France is a least likely case for in-work benefits. This program departs from the contributory nature of Bismarckian welfare regimes. It also targets labour market outsiders, which have a priori few channels to push for their interests. France’s notoriously low trade union density rule out direct representation of outsiders through unions. Well protected workers in full time employment may have little incentives to support such programs. Last but not least, the French political system is mostly majoritarian which is not conducive to the representation of minorities.

Following an inductive ‘least likely’ single country case study methodology, France serves an explorative role to better understand the political determinants of in-work benefits in Bismarckian welfare regimes.

The perspective adopted in this paper follows a historical institutionalist perspective with a focus on actors’ choices against the background of various features of the French political economy. More specifically, the paper demonstrates that the positioning of actors, the convergence of partisan ideologies, the institutional structure of the electoral processes and of the corporatist arrangements are all required to come to a full understanding of how the RSA came about in France.

To support the argument, various data are analysed, including parliamentary debates of the introduction of in-work benefits in France, the position of unions as documented on the European Industrial Relations Observatory (EIRO). In addition, further evidence is based on 13 semi-structured interviews carried out with French trade unions, employers’ organizations, and the ministries of work and employment. Thus, focusing on a specific type of ALMPs is necessary to come to a full understanding of the drivers of a reform but sheds important theoretical insights into the political economy of welfare state reform.