

Towards Inclusive Employment and Welfare Systems: Challenges for a Social Europe

9-10 October 2014, Berlin

Since the onset of the financial crisis, European integration has come under pressure economically, politically and socially. As a result of rising unemployment and deprivation, divisions have deepened not only between countries but also between well-protected labour market insiders and precariously employed or unemployed labour market outsiders. As a solution to these worrying problems, the European Commission launched a social investment package in 2013 that propagates the more effective provision of employment services (including education, training, life-long learning and other preventive measures) as well as social services (such as housing, healthcare, childcare and care for the elderly) as a means for increasing employment rates while simultaneously reducing poverty, deprivation and eventually public expenditures. In this vein, the social investment agenda can be seen as a continuation of the active inclusion strategy of 2008 but also marks a new turn in European social policy because the goal of social cohesion (which lay at the heart of active inclusion thinking) has at least rhetorically been replaced by a stronger focus on economic performance.

In order to examine current social trends in Europe as well as the impact of social investment or active inclusion-oriented policies – where they exist – on the well-being of classic labour market outsiders such as women, single parents, young people, disabled people, or immigrants, six research projects issued under the 7th European Framework programme (COPE, FLOWS, IMPROVE, INSPIRES, LOCALISE and WILCO) invite contributions to the conference “Towards Inclusive Employment and Welfare Systems: Challenges for a Social Europe” to be held in Berlin on 9-10 October 2014. The conference is open to all researchers in the fields of comparative social policy, social inclusion, welfare governance and other areas of research related to the theme of the conference. Some of the main questions that will be addressed during the workshop sessions are:

- Which inequality, poverty and social exclusion trends can currently be observed in Europe, and (how) are they addressed politically at the European, national, or local level?
- Is the integration of policy fields such as income protection, employment, education, and care an empirical reality? If so, what are the effects of policy integration?
- Which governance challenges does the provision of social and employment services hold for the organizations and individuals administering these services in a multi-level context?
- (How) do the discourses of social investment and active inclusion shape the state-citizen relation in theory and practice?

Keynote speakers

Colin Crouch

Bruno Palier

Chiara Saraceno

Submission of abstracts

Prospective participants should send their abstracts via e-mail to the conference organizers and the workshop convenors, indicating for which workshop they would like to apply. All applications should include the title of the proposed paper, the name, affiliation and contact information of the author(s), as well as a short description of the content of the paper (maximum $\frac{3}{4}$ - 1 page). Graduate students are welcome to apply.

Deadline for applications: 31 March 2014

Successful applicants will be informed by 30 April 2014. The full version of the papers must be submitted on 15 September 2014 at the latest. All papers must be submitted in English and must not exceed 8,000 words all inclusive. Longer submissions can unfortunately not be considered.

Timeline

31 March 2014	Deadline for abstracts
30 April 2014	Notification of acceptance and opening of online registration
15 September 2014	Deadline for paper submissions and closing of online registration
9-11 October 2014	Conference

Contact details

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Workshop 1: Non-Public Actors	Håkan Johansson Franca Maino	<i>hakan.johansson@soch.lu.se</i> <i>franca.maino@unimi.it</i>
Workshop 2: Local Activation Governance	Martin Heidenreich Deborah Rice Katharina Zimmermann	<i>martin.heidenreich@uni-oldenburg.de</i> <i>deborah.rice@uni-oldenburg.de</i> <i>k.zimmermann@uni-oldenburg.de</i>
Workshop 3: Social Innovation	Taco Brandsen	<i>t.brandsen@fm.ru.nl</i>
Workshop 4: Resilient Labour Markets	Menno Fenger	<i>fenger@fsw.eu.nl</i>
Workshop 5: Gender Parity & Social Cohesion	Per Jensen	<i>perh@dps.aau.dk</i>
Workshop 6: Social Policy Paradigms	Bea Cantillon Tim Goedemé	<i>bea.cantillon@ua.ac.be</i> <i>tim.goedeme@ua.ac.be</i>

Workshops

1. *The changing role of non-public actors in active inclusion policies*

Chairs: Håkan Johansson, Lund University & Franca Maino, University of Milan (COPE)

Although the full impact of the 2008 financial crisis and its aftermath is yet to be seen, the crisis has certainly influenced the delivery of public services, as there is a growing tendency towards retrenchment, austerity measures and less resources for welfare policies and social services for vulnerable groups in many European welfare states. With public welfare organizations having fewer possibilities to fulfil their part of the social contract, greater expectations are placed on civil society organizations and associations (e.g. third-sector organizations, non-profits, and voluntary associations) to assist public actors in envisaging and institutionalizing new welfare policies as well as alternative approaches in social service delivery.

This workshop seeks to explore if, how, and to what extent we can identify a new or renewed role for civil society organizations and associations in the European welfare systems. The workshop seeks to answer two main questions:

1. Why, under which conditions and to what extent have civil society associations and organizations been engaged in delivering services and support to citizens, e.g. in key welfare areas such as minimum income schemes and poverty relief, activation services and social services?
2. What kind of governance arrangements (e.g. partnerships, performance contracts, quasi-markets) do public agencies deploy in relation to civil society associations and organizations, and what implications do such arrangements have for these organizations?

The workshop also encourages analyses of collaboration, coordination and competition between civil society associations and organizations as they face not only new governance arrangements but also on-going processes of privatization and market competition in welfare policy delivery.

The workshop particularly welcomes comparative papers (e.g. between countries, political and administrative levels, policy areas, or types of non-public actors) that foster our understanding of changing forms of welfare mixes in European welfare states.

2. *The local governance of integrated social and employment policies*

Chairs: Martin Heidenreich, Katharina Zimmermann & Deborah Rice, University of Oldenburg (LOCALISE)

The majority of the EU member states have introduced activation reforms in the last decades, with the aim of increasing employment rates by integrating formerly excluded groups such as long-term unemployed, women or migrants into the labour market. In order to tackle the multiple problems of these groups, the link between core labour market measures and social services like childcare, health support, counselling or housing has been strengthened in many countries. However, such policy integration comes along with a number of organisational and programmatic challenges. These challenges affect especially the local level, since it is here where activation policies are put into practice – often against the backdrop of nationally formulated employment policies yet locally designed social support. Workshop 2 invites theoretical and empirical papers dealing with the governance of activation, especially at the local level. Also the role of the national and European context in shaping the delivery of integrated activation measures is a focal topic of the workshop.

3. *Social innovation and urban governance*

Chair: Taco Brandsen, Radboud University Nijmegen (WILCO)

Social innovation as a remedy for current societal problems has moved to the top of the agenda of policy-makers and policy experts in Europe and worldwide. Unfortunately, the real world has always been more complex and multi-faceted than handbooks on social innovation and social entrepreneurship. The results of the research project "Welfare Innovations at the Local Level in Favour of Cohesion" (WILCO) show a differentiated picture of how social innovations either emerge and flourish or, on the contrary, struggle and never succeed. A key factor for a successful rolling out of social innovations is the urban governance context in which the innovative idea emerges and develops into either a non-profit organization or a sustainable governance arrangement.

Against this background, this workshop addresses the research question: How do social innovations emerge at the local level of governance? Which urban governance regimes facilitate social innovation? And on the contrary, which arrangements hinder social innovation or make innovative co-operation impossible? Drawing not least on the results of WILCO, the workshop will investigate different cases of urban governance and their relation to social innovation.

4. ***Policy learning for inclusive and resilient labour markets***

Chair: Menno Fenger, Erasmus University Rotterdam (INSPIRES)

European countries show remarkable differences in their vulnerability to the economic crisis. These differences can be observed in diverging unemployment figures between countries as well as within countries for different vulnerable groups on the labour market, i.e. older workers, youth, migrants and the disabled. Workshop 4 invites papers that contribute to our knowledge of the factors that positively or negatively affect resilience and inclusiveness, and papers that seek to explain differences within and between countries or within and between different vulnerable groups on the labour market. Also papers that deal with case-studies of innovative policies aimed at inclusion and resilience are invited.

5. ***The impact of social investment on gender parity and social cohesion***

Chair: Per Jensen, Aalborg University (FLOWS)

Social investment and life-cycle approaches to work are based on the assumption that welfare provisions such as childcare, lifelong learning and elderly care contribute to economic and employment growth while also supporting women's labour market participation, which in turn is expected to strengthen social cohesion.

The effects of social investment approaches, however, are a highly under-researched area. Promises have not been tested empirically. Very little empirical knowledge exists about the extent to which social investments, e.g. in the form of lifelong learning, actually contribute to economic growth or female labour market integration. And even less is known about the extent to which (and under which conditions) social investments have contributed to strengthening social cohesion. These research gaps have to be filled in order to clarify whether social investment approaches are pure ideology, or whether social investment approaches can actually be seen as promising practices worth following. In this workshop, papers are welcome dealing with empirical evidence on the effects of social investments in a gender and social cohesion perspective.

6. ***Which social policy paradigm for the 21st century?***

Chairs: Bea Cantillon & Tim Goedemé, University of Antwerp (IMPROVE)

In the EU policy discourse, three dominant social policy paradigms can be discerned: the classical paradigm of social policy as institutionalised macro-interventions aiming at guaranteeing social rights in the realms of work, income, education, housing, health and welfare (the Elephants); social policy that is focused on enabling strategies, social investment and equal opportunities in order to prepare people for functioning on changing labour markets (the Lions); and social innovation as bottom-up responses to unmet needs by civil society actors, social entrepreneurs and/or local governments (the Butterflies). In this session, we aim to put these paradigms in context and relate them to each other. We invite papers that describe the potential interactions and trade-offs between the paradigms, both in theory and in practice. We particularly welcome papers that assess the interaction between social policy, social investment, and social innovation empirically (qualitatively and/or quantitatively) and papers that critically reflect on the three paradigms from the perspective of (potential) social policy initiatives at the EU level.