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303 The European Strategy of Employment : Between Fighting against Precariousness among the Youth and Producing more Flexibility
[F] | Franz Schultheis

The contribution gives an overview on the conclusions of a research project that undertook a comparative analysis of the European strategy to combat youth unemployment, which was initiated at the Luxembourg E.U. summit and consolidated on the occasion of the Amsterdam summit. The picture shown by this sociological analysis of the emerging European employment strategy proves to be highly ambivalent. The European employment strategy, which claims to be motivated by socio-political considerations (the struggle against the exclusion of a particularly vulnerable group of the population) turns out to be closely related to a neo-liberal agenda of European economic policy. It is obviously oriented towards a "new spirit of capitalism" following the guiding principles of increasing the employability and flexibility of human capital, and applies consistently and uncritically the instruments of benchmarking and best practice first developed in the same spirit by economic management as instruments of political evaluation and regulation. In the process the contours of a hybrid European welfare culture is already emerging for which the seemingly paradoxical label "social-liberal" appears fitting. It tries to combat social exclusion and precariousness with the means of a neo-liberal economic policy and the instruments of modern management methods, a strategy which might turn out to be a fundamental contribution to the "depoliticization of the political" (Bourdieu).

319 Swiss Unemployment Policy: An Evaluation of the Public Employment Service [E] | Giovanni Ferro Luzzi, Yves Flückiger, José V. Ramirez and Anatoli Vassiliev

This paper addresses the issue of measuring the performance of regional employment offices in integrating unemployed workers into the labour market. The necessity of measuring this performance is explained and the objective of performance evaluation is discussed. A schematic representation of the activity of employment offices in Switzerland is presented, and efficiency measurement models are constructed which are based on this representation. The empirical results are then used to infer valuable recommendations so that employment offices can improve their performances. This improvement could be achieved within the Swiss placement system by having the more efficient employment offices exchange their experiences with the offices proved to be performing well. Regarding the organisation of the employment system, its degree of centralisation is shown to have an influence on the performance of individual offices.

339 Consultation and Control. A Typical Dilemma for the Activating State [G] | Chantal Magnin

With the fundamental reform of the unemployment insurance in Switzerland in the middle of the nineties, the principle of activation was introduced and consequently carried out. This principle states that a person will only receive benefits in return for a service, and was recommended by the OECD for all social security systems. New regulations for the rights and obligations of the beneficiaries were carried out, with the aim of improving their employability. In addition, regional employment centres were created. This new institution is not only responsible for the consultation of unemployed persons, but also for the execution of the law and its regulations. In this paper the consequences of this new policy on reducing unemployment are being questioned, on the basis of a research project that investigated advisory practices in regional employment centres.

363 Labour Market Policy Implementation and Regional Power Structure: The Impact of Political and Social Networks [F] | Monica Battaglini and Olivier Giraud

This article focuses on the disparities in the implementation of labour market policy by the Swiss cantons. The Swiss federal law (LACI) sets different goals to its action against unemployment. A typological analysis shows that some cantons address simultaneously all objectives, while others set a higher priority on the one or the other objective. Case studies conducted in six Swiss cantons show that most differences between the implementation modes can be explained by the structures of the regional political networks.

381 The Roles of Social Actors in the New Employment Policies [F] | Philippe Badan, Jean-Michel Bonvin and Eric Moachon

The activation of social policies coincides with the growing trend to give all local actors more freedom of action in the implementation of the public policy process. This contrasts with the previous top-down vision where local actors were considered as mere executive tools in the hand of the central government. The correlated objective is the setting up of a genuine local employment service that would, it is claimed, be able to tackle unemployment more efficiently. The paper examines if Swiss labour market policies stand up to this challenge.

397 Effects of Employment Programmes for Long-term Unemployed
[G] | Daniel C. Aeppli

The two main questions addressed by the project were: Do the employment programmes constitute a suitable instrument for long-term unemployed, who have exhausted their unemployment benefit rights, towards their professional reintegration? Do they constitute a suitable instrument towards a social reintegration of the long-term unemployed? The survey area comprised the canton of Basel-City, the canton of Geneva and the city of Zurich. We used different quantitative and qualitative methods, the most important one was a telephonic survey. The central result was: The effects of the analysed programmes differ very much between the three survey areas. These impacts depend on the different legal foundations and on the different organisation and carrying-out.

421 Welfare States, Political Opportunities, and Mobilization of the Unemployed: A Neo-institutionalist Approach [F] | Michel Berclaz, Katharina Füglister and Marco Giugni

This articles deals with the relationship between the conceptions of the welfare state and the political mobilization of the unemployed. The idea that we put forward is that the dominant view on the welfare state specific to a country shapes what we may call the « contentious politics of unemployment », that is, the public debates and collective mobilizations on the issues related to the management of unemployment, including the mobilization of the unemployed. In this neo-institutionalist perspective, the dominant conceptions of the welfare state define a structure of political opportunities that enlarge or restrict the options for the activities of the collective actors in this field. We propose a typology of conceptions of the welfare state based on the intersection of two analytical dimensions: the formal criteria of eligibility to social security and the obligations attached to it. We then try to operationalize this typology by means of a set of indicators bearing on different aspects of social security. We finally advance a number of hypotheses concerning the impact of the conceptions of a welfare state on the structuring of public debates in the field of unemployment and, in particular, on the political mobilization of the unemployed.

441 The Experience of Unemployment : Elements for a European Comparison
[F] | Serge Paugam and Duncan Gallie

The article analyses the experience of unemployment in European countries by taking into account the particular welfare arrangements as well as the role of the family. It is shown that in modern societies the individual consequences of unemployment depend on the offers of the welfare state as well as on the material and monetary support of the familial network. Three models are differentiated: the familialist model (Southern European countries), the individualistic public model of the Scandinavian countries and the model of divided responsibility (e. g. Great Britain, Germany and France). Empirical analyses on the basis of the European household panel indicate that the tendency to a cumulation of risks (poverty and social isolation) is highest in the last mentioned model.

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