

# The Impact of the EES on Italian and German Labour Market Reforms and first results for OMC/Inclusion and the Italian Welfare Regime

Sascha Zirra

Workshop

"Comparing the EES and OMC/Inclusion in Germany, Italy and France"

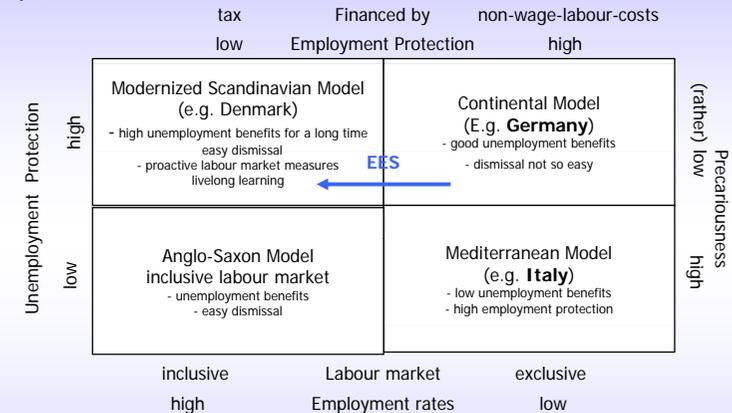
Ires Lucia Morosini

Torino, June 2006



## Four models of welfare capitalism

(own adoption, cf. Estevez-Abe et al. 2001: 154)



They suffer the Continental dilemma: (...) passive labor market policies are used to take workers out of work to alleviate labor market disequilibria, the higher the social security cost pressures that in turn lead to higher labor costs and thus yet more pressure to shed labor. (Ebbinghaus, 2005, p. 18)



## Labour market institutions

- institutions of the employment system are
  - merely provisional compromises between conflicting interests
  - thus, in principle, alterable at any time
- German labour-market regulation institutions
  - are subject to particularly strong inertia.
  - comprehensive involvement of the social partners, regions and communes
  - moderating role of the federal state in labour market policy
  - contributed to a system of consensual conflict regulation, allowing only incremental changes.
  - new problems are increasingly challenging this traditional model based on
  - integration of all relevant stakeholders



## Labour market reforms and EES

- In recent years, extensive labour market reforms
  - Aiming towards empowering and integrating employment regime
  - coincide in many aspects with the demands of the European Employment Strategy (EES)
- EES
  - coordinating pending reforms within the member states
  - ensuring a coherent, common European model
  - benchmarking processes rather than by centralizing legislative competences
  - But institutional inertia of continental employment regulations,
    - → debatable whether the EES is capable of fundamentally changing them.
      - too strong to grant the EES decisive influence (cf. Scharpf, 2002)
      - advent of a new attitude which is subtly transforming national systems (Jacobsson, 2003).



## Need of new approach

- Linked increasingly disputed
  - So far, beyond a contextual affinity, no causal connection found
  - suggests that the classic concepts of political science insufficient to grasp the mechanisms of this “new mode of governance”
- little known about the domestic mechanisms
  - Lack of understanding of the domestic appropriation of this transnational process,
    - takes into account institutional inertia
    - the results of individual learning process on the part of the actors involved in the EES.
  - → necessity to introduce a third, intermediate level
    - between the individual learning processes
      - of the civil servants involved and
      - institutional changes
- → national organizational fields.
  - explain why the EES only successful in labour market policy
  - why broad aspects of its labour-market reforms are now regarded as having failed.



## Policy transfers within EES: Individual Learning vs. Institutional Learning

- learning between nation-states.
  - also: individual learning processes
    - expansion of organizational decision-making repertoire
  - → dominance of cognitive convergence
  - not sufficient to assert the success of EES
    - “at best, a learning process for a limited community of labour market technicians and experts” (Casey and Michael Gold, 2005, p. 37).
- institutional learning
  - actual impact of learning processes.
    - actual institutional and programmatic changes in national policy and policy-making processes
  - → fail to take into account the developmental context and the attendant conflicts of the institutional changes.



## EES as organizational learning

- transnational learning within epistemic communities.
  - But agreements among technical experts must be implemented and accepted at a domestic level.
- Is the EES effective beyond the borders of a narrow circle of technical experts and can it actually influence the national employment regulations?
- methodical dilemma of effect analyses:
  - While individual learning approaches fail to explain how learning individuals overcome domestic institutional inertia, institutional approaches have yet to be able to describe the processes which lead to the observed changes.
- → consider organizational learning processes.
  - organizations actors within the present domestic field
  - involved in the bargaining processes within EES.
  - organizational learning not merely the sum of individual learning.



## The field of labour market policy as a learning forum

- to assess impact of the EES on domestic institutions
- need to take into account national employment systems.
  - domestic regulatory ideas are
    - strongly institutionalized
    - Deeply rooted in domestic, autonomously evolved structures,
    - developed according to their own internal logic
    - shaped by institutionalised beliefs
  - developmental path neither linear nor predictable or teleological
    - influence of present institutions shapes,
    - but do not determine, further developments
  - → external developments incapable of directly affecting national employment regimes
  - taken account of and processed according to internal criteria



## labour market policy as organizational field

- Organizational fields
  - characterised by autonomous regulatory patterns
  - provide orientation for the actors in the field.
- organizations affiliated with the domestic regulatory system constitute an organizational field
  - based on interactions which are oriented towards each other according to their significance, sanctioning potential and power relations.
  - here national employment systems are reproduced in ways which are not identical.
- employment policies environments
  - European context
  - diverse national environments
    - receives its legitimation
    - decisions have a direct influence.



## The field of labour market policy in Germany

- Field of labour market policy in Germany has specific characteristics.
  - strongly institutionalized
  - linked to other social domains
  - → German "consensus model", since the
    - → reforms had never overextended the compliance of the ministries involved, the federal states, municipalities, companies and social partners and thereby guaranteed the efficacy of the reforms.
    - → specific combination of social closure and openness.
- range of regulation
  - Negotiations among unions, employer associations and the state ultimately concern each employee and each employer
  - → decisions inevitably rely on their social acceptance.
  - Europeanization of employment policy may disassociate the organizational actors involved from the national context and, consequently, result in a decreasing acceptance on a national level.



## Consequences for Efficiency and Sustainability of EES

- until recently
  - all relevant actors have participated in national reform projects,
    - → reforms becoming effective without later cutbacks,
- reforms initiated by "Europe"
  - threatened with either remaining timid and fruitless or
  - facing fierce opposition.
- → efficiency vs. sustainability
  - the more domestic veto-players are excluded from European discourse, the more domestic opposition there will be.
  - Success becomes all the more unlikely the less national provisos and peculiarities are taken into account:
  - a threat which becomes greater the more these reforms are justified by reference to European structures and decisions.
  - The coherence which has hitherto been guaranteed by the relative closure of the field of domestic labour market policy and its concurrent openness toward participation by a broad spectrum of various actors and social levels would then be at stake.
  - → the reforms agreed upon within the policy areas influenced by European discourse can only be implemented insofar if social norms and concepts of society change at the same time.



## Hypotheses

- The EES is being recognized and incorporated only within the framework of the present field of labour market policy (Hypothesis 1).
  - In order to test this hypothesis, we need to reconstruct the domestic coordination of the EES.
- The EES does not have any direct capacity to steer national labour-market policy.
  - The national labour market reforms react to national perceptions of problems, discourses and power relations. However, the actors interested in change may legitimize their position by reference to the EES (Hypothesis 2).
  - In order to test this hypothesis, we need to reconstruct the development of the current labour market reforms and the contribution of the EES to this process.
- The European influence on national labour-market policy produces increasing tensions between new and old concepts of society (Hypothesis 3).
  - In order to test this hypothesis, we need to reconstruct individual reforms and their respective success and failure. Apart from our own interviews, we refer to the evaluation report on the Hartz reforms published by the Federal Government at the beginning of 2006 2 .



## Co-ordination within Domestic Fields Learning within the Confines of Labour Market Policy

- EES much broader approach than conventional labour-market policy in Germany
  - Only three of the ten 2004 guidelines on employment policy refer to labour-market policy
  - The remainder deal with family, education and taxation policy.
  - According to this arrangement, states with successful employment policies are those investing in education, offering efficient childcare, financing social security contributions through taxation and favouring low-income earners with a low rate of taxation.
- Significantly, the EES in Germany is predominantly implemented within the framework of labour-market policy.
- The employment strategy affects domestic policy mainly through the annual National Action Plans (NAP) drafted by a department of the Federal Ministry of Economy and Employment (FMEE) and intensely co-ordinated particularly with social partners



## The co-ordination of the NAP

- domestic practice of EES
  - institutional consolidation of present patterns of communication,
  - field has not been broadened by including further actors in consultations.
  - Conceptualised within the present confines of the organizational field of labour-market policy
  - coordinated within a narrow epistemic community of experts from the organizations involved
- Employment policy is still coordinated within the confines of the domestically evolved field of labour-market policy
  - Consultation with actors from outside the field remains an exception.
  - municipalities unable to provide the high organizational capacity necessary for participating in the processes
  - EES leads to a reduction of veto positions, instead of involving a wider circle of actors in the sense of a broad employment strategy.



## New Frame of Reference for Domestic Discourse

- FMEE labour-market department dominant actor in the field
 

We as policy advisors, which is what we are, in a ministry, also relay these new insights. We write reports, draft bills, propose something and, on the other hand, participate in shaping the process within the EU (Interview3).

  - responsible for the coordination of the NAP
    - focal contact for the social partners and the other actors
  - represented in the relevant European committees of the EES
  - participates in all labour-market reforms
  - → guidelines used to fortify own position within the domestic discourse

Well, there are a number of topics where this is used as an intensifier in order to show, what we want and that this is in unison with the European employment strategy. (Interview 2)

- do only work if discussion is before
- → EES not able to independently affect domestic institutions.
  - But used to influence the course of ongoing reform debates.
  - → *EES relies on a responsive domestic arena where it can be taken up by "agents of change" and actively used as a supportive argument. It is used within the field as an argumentative – legitimatory assistance as a guiding model and in order to emphasise the urgency of announced reform intentions.*



## The Hartz-Reforms: Dissatisfied Ambition within the Field

- JobAQTIV law 2001
  - used in to testify to the success of the EES in Germany
  - reorient passive labour-market policy to preventive and enabling one
    - intensifying advisory services for jobseekers and
    - development of individual strategies for job placement.
- "laws for modern services in the labour market"
  - (Hartz Gesetze) in 2003
  - Especially Hartz I and II: continuation of the JobAQTIV law.
  - In summary of the law: direct reference to EES



## Success of and failure of EES related reforms

- EES guideline on active labour-market policy
  - received the greatest approval
  - rethinking towards preventive and enabling approaches
- promotion of young people's integration into the labour market

The development that we now say, we need to find ways for better advisory services for young job seekers. The official-customer ratio which now is codified in the SGB II 1:75, this is, for example, also a development which became clear in the employment policy thanks to the EU. (Interview 3)

- Improved in JobAQTIV law and the Hartz reforms
- important role within the EES
  - intensification of support accompanied by
  - increased responsibility of young people
    - might be refused benefits altogether if refuse
    - job offers or participation in training schemes.
- weakness in the domestic adaptation of EES
  - While the employment strategy aims at a comprehensive concept of "support and responsibility", only the demand for more individual responsibility can be implemented within labour-market policy. The complementary measures to empower jobseekers and enable people to participate in the labour market often do not lie within the competence of the field of labour-market policy.



## Lifelong learning and gender mainstreaming fragmented national competences

- guidelines on lifelong learning and education

If I approve something from Brussels, I bring it along and I know it's going to be very, very hard to achieve this domestically, because there are too many players. And, above all, there are too many players on whom I have no influence, where I no longer have the final word domestically. There are too many topics over which others have the competence here on a national level, early school leavers for example. (Interview 1)

- demand to actively seek a job
- closely aligned with necessity to train young people
- prevent early school leaving.
- but competence of the federal states
- gender mainstreaming.
  - law on the expansion of day care
  - law on the promotion of job rotation
- improve ability to combine family and career
- → need of superior child-care
  - responsibility for effectiveness within the municipalities or the federal states.
- Job rotation
  - Sabbatical, one year of ayed off time,
  - job is taken over by long term unemployed
  - competence of the social partners

A really bad example (...) was the example of "job rotation". In Denmark for example, job rotation is a great success, and is still practiced and carried out successfully. We in Germany adopted it during the course of the Hartz-reforms and it has been a complete flop. Because there is no culture and no internal structure to accomplish "job rotation" at all. (Interview 7)



## Threat of alienation

A really bad example (...) was the example of "job rotation". In Denmark for example, job rotation is a great success, and is still practiced and carried out successfully. We in Germany adopted it during the course of the Hartz-reforms and it has been a complete flop. Because there is no culture and no internal structure to accomplish "job rotation" at all. (Interview 7)

- reforms of recent years predominantly concerned narrower sphere of labour-market policy and hardly affected the complementary, supportive areas
- Reforms only in the field of classic labour market policy
- Best-Practice-Concepts
  - "taking the pick of the bunch" failed
  - Did not take framing institutions into account
  - → alienation of labour market actors from their institutional environment as they become engaged in European networks.



## Conclusion

- Greatest success
  - rethinking from "passive" to "active" labour-market policy
  - special focus on young people
  - has taken place over the last few years. The JobAQTIV-Law, as well as
- but entirely coherent, inclusive employment policy
  - Needs to include educational, family and fiscal policies
- change remained restricted to the field of labour-market policy.
  - Here, the guidelines and recommendations are assimilated and used by actors interested in reforms as legitimating perspectives in the current debates.
  - We have also illustrated that the isolated reform measures, approved by a consensus of the actors of labour-market policy, have not penetrated the actual institutions of the labour market, and thus cannot be connected to the present institutions.
  - However, the "alienation hypothesis needs further testing.



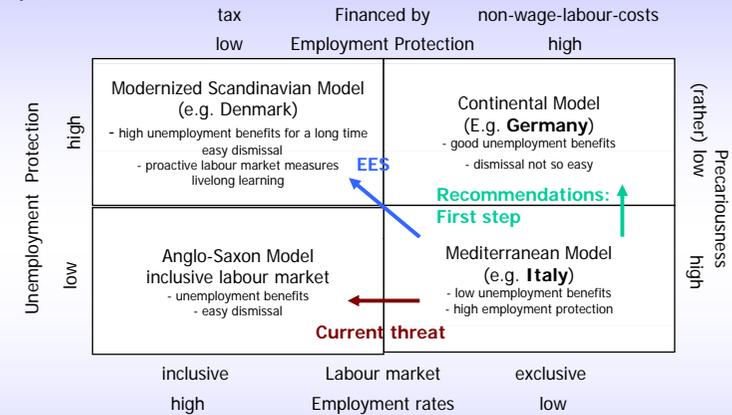
# The Impact of EES on Italian Labour Market Reforms

Sascha Zirra  
Turin, June 2006



## Four models of welfare capitalism

(own adoption, cf. Estevez-Abe et al. 2001: 154)



We argue that while Italy for long was characterized by the first model, without further reforms it is now in the threat of falling into the third model with low employment protection and low unemployment protection



## Biggest challenges

- high formal rigidity is mitigated by high flexibility on the margins
- → EU and OECD
  - further flexibilisation of the labour market is not the top priority
- Biggest challenge
  - strong segmentation of the labour market
  - lowest employment rate for women, young people and for older workers of all OECD countries.
    - 2004 the employment rate for women was only 45%,
    - young workers only 27%
    - of older workers 31%
- OECD recommendations
  - improvement of support for jobseekers
    - with activating and empowering measures
  - need to improve the social protection for jobseekers.
    - national system of financial benefits for jobseekers.
- Commission
  - Already in 2002 warns that further flexibilisation of the labour market, without complementary improvement of the social protection system could lead to a further disadvantage for marginalized groups, like women, young people and overall those of these groups in southern Italy.
  - apart from a strategy to combat the high regional and gender disparities, requests better performing qualification measures of the Public Employment Services (PES) and a better social protection.



## Legge Biagi

- White paper on the labour market in 2001
- most important law the law 276/2003,
  - also called legge 30 or legge Biagi.
  - systematised former reform
  - introduced some further reaching instruments.
  - Amongst others the law introduces
    - private intermediation in the labour market,
    - reformed part time jobs and
    - Job sharing models.
    - reformed apprenticeship
    - contratti di inserimento
    - regionalisation of the PES started in 1999 enhanced.
  - prevailing topic Contratto di Collaborazione di Progetto (CoCoPro),
    - further flexibilisation of flexible contracts like the former Contratto di Collaborazione Continua (CoCoCo)
    - A social mitigation of the flexibilisation however was not foreseen.
- Article 1 of the legge 30 states that the whole law would be approved on the basis of EES guidelines.
  - Many parts of the reform actually correspond to European guidelines and ideas, but neither to the recommendations by the Commission nor to the recommendations agreed on in the joint employment report.



## Italian labour market reforms and EES

- Clear division of policy advisors and technical experts
- Importance of “consiglieri”, and commissions
- Since 2001 Professor Marco Biagi
  - advisor of the minister of labour.
  - member of EMCO,
  - economic advisor
  - head of the reform commission on the labour legislation.
- secretariat of the minister stresses importance of European guidelines
  - had helped to focus national reform discussions
  - and to give them objective.
  - overall objective of the reforms is to raise the employment numbers.
    - leading objective for the legge Biagi,
    - the reform of the education
    - and the reform of the pension system.
    - Looking around Europe, according them helped to learn what to do:  
To open the labour market to private intermediary and to render contracts more flexible.
- However, referring to the recommendations to Italy these were not the main objectives in line with the EES. What Italy should have done was
  - to improve the service of public employment services,
  - to render them more active,
  - To improve lifelong learning and last but not least
  - to introduce a functioning system of unemployment benefits for all workers.



## Flexibility without Security

- The actors on administrative level of the ministry are very aware of this one-sidedness of the recent reforms.

La struttura della riforma del mercato del lavoro, la legge sul mercato del lavoro è stata fatta da questoministero, è stata fatta però più da persone, consulenti... in particolare Biagi che poi... La direzione in quanto tale ha applicato la riforma, non ha preso parte alla scrittura dopodiché ne ha applicato e ne ha implementato le linee che sono presenti. Questo ha consentito in ogni caso al mercato del lavoro italiano sicuramente di flessibilizzarsi, (...) Quello che noi stiamo facendo in questo momento è capire la qualità dell'occupazione ed eventualmente capire quali possono essere gli strumenti di sostegno e di ammortizzatori sociali. Perché una parte della riforma pensata comunque da questo governo non si è riusciti a farla e sono gli ammortizzatori sociali, l'altro pezzo della flessibilità. (Interview1)

- So far promises to reform the security side given in every NAP/inclusion since the beginning were reneged. The inclusive approach by most interviewees was designated as not very successful in Italy. The change of the philosophy would have been limited to the high administrative level. To proof this they refer to implementation problems of the reform. What
- what Italy did implement was the flexibility part of flexsecurity, which was not on the top agenda of neither the OECD nor the EES. The improvement of the security, employability as well as active and preventive measures, which were strongly recommended, was not tackled.



## Obstacles for the reforms

- actors within domestic discourse make use of European guidelines to legitimise and foster their own position.
- can only do so within the existing institutional framework and as far as their competences reach.
- political interest
  - foster reforms in favour of the strength of employers in labour relations.
  - by blaming the EU as responsible they themselves denied any accountability.
  - to tackle rights of the core labour force more unpopular.
  - Maybe hoping on the long run the marginalisation of the margins would weaken the power of the organisations of the core labour force as well.
- structural reasons
  - reform the public employment services
  - constitutional reform of 2001 and devolution.
  - completely delegated the competency to Regions and provinces.
  - Without reforming them in advance.
  - Especially active labour measures referring to the PES is within the competences of the regions, the implementation within the competence of the provinces.
  - The same applies to welfare benefits
- → selective perception of the EU strategy according to the interests of the skilled actors which cannot be influenced by the EU level.



## Indirect effects of EES Evaluation capacity and ESF

- As cognitive coupling did not work, as well due to high fragmentation of responsibilities, EU relies on framing forms of strategic coupling
  - development of evaluation and administration capacity within the ministry of labour (cf. Ferrera and Sacchi 2005).
    - monitoring unit of the labour ministry installed in 2000
  - most powerful arm of EES European Social Fund (ESF)
    - many regions rely heavily on Structural Funds
    - ESF main pillar to render labour market policies more active and preventive.
      - reorganisation of the PES is financed to a great extent by ESF all over Italy. In the north the ESF co-financing amounts 25% in the south of Italy up to 75% of the respective measures.
- but most money, especially in the south, actually is used as social benefit, not to finance activation measures



## Conclusion

- main challenge for Italy: segmented labour market.
  - European Commission request Italy
    - to stabilize the contracts of precarious workers at the growing margins of the labour market
    - to carefully flexibilize the contracts of the core labour force
    - more effective and better social protection for jobseekers
    - empowering measures by the PES.
  - Legge Biagi
    - further flexibilisation of hitherto flexible contracts, touching neither the rights of the core labour force nor the social protection system
    - However there are very strong organisational and contextual references to the EES
  - European guidelines are accommodated very selectively by skilled actors within the domestic discourse to further and legitimise their own interest.
  - Different impacts of EES and OMC/Inclusion in Italy due to different policy agendas



## Further Agenda for Italy

- the recommendations for 2004 remain more or less the same than already in 2002.
  - address the imbalances between permanent and non-permanent contracts, to counter the segmentations of the labour market and to remove the obstacles to part-time work,
  - further reduce the non-wage labour costs, especially for the low-paid and to transform undeclared work into regular employment,
  - improve the level, coverage and effectiveness of unemployment insurance, develop efficient employment services,
- The Italian government were very skilled to blame the EU for unpopular reform measures without actually responding to the exigencies pronounced by the EES. However they did not tackle the main institutional characteristics of the Italian labour market regulation but rather decide to deepen the segmentation of the labour market.



## The OMC Social Inclusion in Italy: Structural Reforms, cultural and programmatic Stagnancy

Sascha Zirra  
Turin, June 2006



## Characteristics of the Italian welfare state

- Continental-European Model.
    - institutional structures that favour those who profited in the past
    - in a system of incorporated interests.
    - Their means are trade unions, inherited principles and the catholic social doctrine with its familism and its request for subsidiarity (cf. Ostner und Saraceno 1998)
  - The three main characteristics of the continental model:
    - privilege of the elders,
    - high youth-unemployment and
    - centrality of the family
- the family serves as agency of reallocation of various money incomes (...). One lives whether unmarried in the family one originates, or is married and then as well included in the labour market. (Ostner und Saraceno 1998: 190, own translation)
- disadvantage of the young people
  - precariousness of social protection
  - critical attitude towards the state,
  - fragmentation and a great variety of instruments (cf. Ferrera 1996).
  - For the development of these characteristics the concepts of the Catholic Church were very important
- The most obvious deficits are
  - The lack of a legal, individual claim on social benefit payments ("reddito minimo")
  - The lack of a legal and universal unemployment insurance



## Structural Welfare-Reforms in the last decade

- In the 90s attempts to modernize the Italian welfare system
- commissione Onofri
  - submitted far-reaching proposals to the first Prodi government between 1996 and 1997.
  - They proposed a major reform in three areas (cf. Turcio 2004).
    - necessity of a universal-individualistic entitlement to financial welfare benefits (reddito minimo),
    - a reorientation towards an active and preventive social policy
    - a concept for a federal reorganization of the competences in social policy
  - With this approach they have been very much in line of the requests of the OMC/inclusion.
- Berlusconi government,
  - Only the last one became effective



## Structural Welfare-Reforms in the last decade

- two major welfare reforms,
  - welfare reform in 2000,
  - reform of the federal system in 2001
- The law 328/ 2000
  - close to the proposals of the Onofri-Commission
  - framework-legislation of the state
  - National planning-structure on a three-year basis.
- constitutional reform of 2001
  - obstructed these aspects.
    - The state now does neither have the competence of framework-legislation nor a saying on the usage of the money transfers to the regions, but it is rather the regions that now have legislative competences and the communes that are still responsible for delivery.
- After a decision by the constitutional court in 2005
  - state now has merely a moderating function by which joint national standards should be developed.



## National OMC in Italy

- To coordinate these social standards
  - round table of ministries, the regions, provinces and the communes.
  - so far no consensus
  - reddito minimo still discussed
  - but formal and financial obstacles prevented from an implementation
- while the welfare system in Italy is traditionally very fragmented the recent reforms did not change this but rather deepen the decentralisation and fragmentation of the welfare system.
- While the reform of 2000 tried to rationalise the system, the constitutional reform of 2001 did the contrary.
  - vast structural reforms but main challenges not adressed
    - inherited poverty of poor families in the south,
    - the poverty of immigrants and
    - poverty due to new live course concepts in the centre-north the problem of precariousness especially of young people
  - Thus many interviewees state, that concerning its social policy Italy now stands where it was 10 years ago.



## The domestic organization of Social Inclusion

- OMC ignored by the political level
  - only staffed with technical administrative and external experts
  - Therefore there is no powerful dominant coalition that could foster a reform process.
  - In both previous NAPs Italy promises to introduce a reddito minimo, so far not even a real political discussion did take place and there is no concept where the money should come from
  - While the technical level that drafts the NAP experiences harsh critique by the Commission and other member states they do not have the competence to change the policy.
  - So while there might be a cognitive coupling between the EU and the technicians involved they do not have the power to influence national discourse.
- Internal OMC did not succeed
  - → no coherence of quality of social services
  - political and structural reasons
    - political level did not have an interest in implementation
    - the national level does not have the competence
  - → regions developed their own models
  - differ regarding the goals, measures and actors of social policy.



## Three welfare models within Italy

- regions of the north-east
  - welfare provision by private, economic actors.
  - traditionally have a strong affinity to markets and civic liberties.
  - Here the particularistic tradition of the republican cities survived in a strong and powerful bourgeoisie.
- centre of Italy
  - state provides in close cooperation with the NGOs many high-quality services
  - high emotional and factual affinity between the citizens and the state.
  - huge variety of small, local but very active NGOs.
  - Here the provisions of the state are perceived as my provisions.
- mezzogiorno is widely considered as failed
  - structures of the state never penetrated these regions
  - Neither is there a powerful economy with an active civic society nor is there a functioning public administration and a broad civil society that would be able to provide social services
  - family and strong, traditional networks deliver social welfare
  - Here local loyalties as well as the Catholic Church still play a major role.
  - While most interviewees regard these regions as particularly problematic the representative of the Caritas praises the interesting new (familial-communitaristic) forms of social welfare networks that would develop



## Lack of a national strategy

- Biggest problem
  - lack of a national strategy
  - common national minimum standard
  - Only Caritas stresses importance of subsidiarity
- Interested actors try
  - And the OMC/ inclusion should provide argumentative support

Io credo che la cosa fondamentale sia che al di là dei governi che cambiano il nap crea almeno a livello nazionale il livello minimo, tu non puoi non rispettare gli obiettivi o gli standard minimi che la commissione ti richiede. È questa un'ottima cosa che ha creato l'europa, cioè su tutti i livelli tu hai degli standard minimi che anche se cambia governo tu devi rispettare. (Interview1)

- Did not succeed



## First improvements

- European action program to fight social exclusion
  - Commission tries to influence policymaking at its grassroots.
    - EU money is used to organize conferences,
    - to support new initiatives at local level.
    - helps to coordinate the diverse landscape of NGOs
    - helps to develop a functioning civil society.
    - is considered as a first success that actors, horizontally as well as vertically, get into contact
  - → it facilitates the building of institutional capacity to cope with the increasing responsibilities of the third sector
- building of a national evaluation capacity (cf. Ferrera
- and Sacchi 2005). increases steering capacity



## Conclusion

- very narrow circle of directly responsible actors within the administration and NGOs deal with OMC/social inclusion
  - great success, that by the OMC/inclusion they have a forum through which they can communicate and exchange knowledge
- Besides the structural reforms, the welfare policy within recent years was not considered on political level
- In large part the Italian society does not consider it a role of the state to provide social welfare
  - To a much wider degree it is considered as the task of the state to provide and secure jobs.
  - the concept of "social cohesion" is completely unfamiliar to the Italian system.
- increasing precariousness of young people and new forms of working poor,
- But national mainstream sticks to a family-centred concept of poverty and accentuate the importance of social and territorial subsidiarity.
- despite major reforms within the last decade, Italian social policy did not change. The dysfunctions and problems persist.
- As the cognitive coupling due to the fragmentation of the Italian field could not work, the complementary instruments of strategic coupling, i.e. enforcing local initiatives and direct financial donations, become more important.
- As long as the national conception of the mission of social welfare does not change, Italy will not be able to modernize its welfare system and regional disparities will become ever more problematic.

