

Challenges to social policy development / Les défis à une politique sociale efficace

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11 January 2001

to

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Challenges are multidimensional

- for choices about goals for the *social policy mix*
- for relations of *citizenship*,
 - that is, patterns of inclusion and exclusion
- for forms of *governance*,
 - that is, intragovernmental, intergovernmental, and across sectors

Three *new* contexts exist

Each has consequences for the mix, for citizenship and for governance

Context 1 - a new fiscal situation

The corner has been turned on deficit-fighting

- social policy is no longer hostage to macroeconomic targets
- targetting is not the only imaginable policy style

Context 2: new ideas

- Neo-liberalism
 - cutbacks in social spending
 - demand for distributional decisions located more in markets and less in state
- New values of individualism
 - scepticism about “bureaucracy”
 - “fiscal reasoning” and benefit delivery by the tax regime

Contexte 3- économie restructurée

- Une mondialisation qui rend les frontières plus perméables
 - Une demande pour la main-d'œuvre qualifiée et non-qualifiée
 - Une polarisation des revenus :
 - entre régions, y compris dans les villes
 - entre générations
 - entre catégories sociales
- ➔ les emplois qui ne soutiennent plus une famille, même à deux salaires
- ➔ les enjeux de l'employabilité



Et pour l'avenir ?

- Parce que ces contextes sont nouveaux, le retour au passé est impossible.
- Néanmoins, il y a une leçon clé à tirer de ce passé.
 - À savoir, les réussites du passé dépendaient d'une *alliance* ...
 - La cohésion a été créée autour d'une politique à quatre versants

What was this previous coalition?

A coalition of support around four elements designed to foster national well-being, inclusion and fairness.

1. Keynesian counter-cyclical spending
 - UI
2. anti-poverty commitments
 - CAP and CPP/QPP
3. citizenship rights
 - family allowances and universal health care
4. federal leadership
 - pan-Canadian norms

What happened to this coalition?

#1 disappeared with globalisation and the permeability of frontiers, despite the fact it was in many ways the “glue”.

3 was undermined by fiscal crises and deficit fighting, as well as by the new ideas.

#4 was shaken by unilateralism, and especially the CHST in 1995.

this leaves #2 still in place

- But fighting poverty is not necessarily done via “social policy”
- It could, and is, provided by other methods, such as charity



Donc, voici le vrai défi pour une politique sociale du 21^{ème} siècle

- il s'agit de créer à nouveau un engagement envers *une politique sociale*
- ***le défi est de récréer une alliance de soutien***
- Pour se faire, il faut répondre à deux questions. La politique sociale est axée :
 - sur quels objectifs ?
 - et avec quel partage des responsabilités entre secteurs (public, privé, tiers) ?

Possible goals?

- national well-being
- equality of opportunity
- help for the disadvantaged

Division of responsibility ?

- what is the role of private sector (markets and voluntary sector) ?
 - As decision point?
 - As distribution point?

Help for the disadvantaged

- Can be achieved by targetting:
 - elderly
 - children
 - those with disabilities
 - the “employable”
- The goal of inclusion is pushing a category over a line. Directed only to those who are “different”.

Advantages:

- might achieve a reasonable mix
- leaves markets to distribute success and failure; the voluntary sector fills the gaps

Disadvantages:

- **threat of tax revolt because little “buy in”**
- little cohesion, beyond charity



Another - equality of opportunity

- Seeks to compensate for unequal structuring effects of markets. Instead, collective choice and *citizenship* take precedence.
- *Inclusion* is based on a notion of general need and common circumstances.
- It requires programmes for those who wish to use them.

Advantages:

- no invidious cut-offs or stigmatisation
- clear identification of “citizen dividend”, that is benefit of being part of the community. Therefore voluntary sector also important.

Disadvantages:

- might cost
- certain limits on markets



A third - national well-being

- Seeks to build a strong Canadian society, fostering social cohesion
- That is, it builds on the observations that “equality pays” - societies with flatter income equality gradients prosper.

Advantages:

- social policy “pays”
- makes visible a time line which focuses on investments in the future as well as the present

Disadvantages:

- costly
- why bother...?

La “gouvernance” devient la clé

- Si les marchés ne décident pas tout, quels rôles peuvent jouer les institutions ?
- Quelles institutions ?
- Quels rapports entre elles ?



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