

Social Cohesion in Canada and Europe: The Same or Different?

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Presented at Queen's University

14 May 2002



Background

This presentation was prepared as a Faculty Presentation to the Intensive Seminar, *Social Cohesion in a Globalising Era*, in the Canada-European Community Programme for Cooperation in Higher Education and Training, School for Policy Studies, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario.

May 14, 2002



Outline

- How do Canadians and Europeans think about social cohesion?
- Are there consequences for thinking about the citizenship regime?
- What is the citizenship regime over time?

European and Canadian Thinking About Social Cohesion

- Like John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, the absence of social cohesion is deplored
 - Alaluf, Mateo. 1999. *Demographic Trends and the Role of Social Protection: The Idea of Social Cohesion*.
<http://www.ulb.ac.be/project/tef/cohsocen.html>.
- A critical concept, although not necessarily a forward-looking concept
 - May be linked to a longing to “re-establish a social harmony presumed lost”
 - And, may be a “nostalgia for something that never existed”
 - Or, may be seeking new patterns and innovation



One European Example

Commissariat général du Plan, France (1997)

“Social cohesion is a set of social processes that help instill in individuals the sense of belonging to the same community and the feeling that they are recognised as members of that community.”



European Thinking About Social Cohesion

The Council of Europe and European Union (and OECD)

These organizations “view unemployment, poverty, income inequality, social exclusion and exclusion from the Information Society as threats to social cohesion. ...In general, the consensus on economic and social threats appears to be stronger than on political and cultural ones.”

Sharon Jeannotte, available on

<http://www.fas.umontreal.ca/pol/cohesionsociale>

BUT - the Council of Europe also has focused on questions of cultural cohesion and diversity



Canadian Thinking About Social Cohesion

Government of Canada's Policy Research Sub-Committee on Social Cohesion (1997)

“The on-going process of developing a community of shared values, shared challenges and equal opportunity within Canada, based on a sense of trust, hope and reciprocity among all Canadians.”



A More Recent Canadian View

- First, social cohesion appears to be based on the **willingness** of people in a society to cooperate with each other in the diversity of collective enterprises that members of a society must do in order to survive and prosper. Willingness to cooperate means they can, and do, freely choose to form partnerships and have a reasonable chance of realizing them, because others are willing to cooperate as well. This, of course, implies a **capacity** to cooperate. ...
- Socially cohesive societies **incorporate diversity** and use it, not exclude it.
- The third component then is an affinity between social cohesion and **liberal social values**.

Dick Stanley, Department of Canadian Heritage



So-o-o, What *IS* Social Cohesion?

- 1 Social cohesion is a process
- 2 Social cohesion involves a definition of who is in the community
- 3 Social cohesion involves shared values and also good conflict management in a pluralist society
- 4 Social cohesion involves expressions of solidarity within a community

Therefore, social cohesion is built in part by good citizenship practices.



Citizenship: What is it?

- A status
- But also a relationship - between state and citizens
 - ...in constant redefinition, following from recognition practices and claims-making
- It is always about inclusion / exclusion
 - boundaries of those “in” and those “out”
- Giving content to citizenship is a state activity
 - citizens make claims
 - BUT
 - states make citizens

These actions of redefinition result in a changed citizenship reform.



Citizenship Regime

- By the concept of *citizenship regime* we mean the institutional arrangements, rules and understandings that guide and shape concurrent policy decisions and expenditures of states, problem definitions by states and citizens, and claims-making by citizens.
- A citizenship regime encodes within it a paradigmatic representation of identities, of the "national" as well as the "model citizen," the "second-class citizen," and the non-citizen.
- It also encodes representations of the proper and legitimate social relations among and within these categories, as well as the borders of "public" and "private."



The Citizenship Regime is Changing

Two ideal types

From a “social rights” citizenship regime

- Here-and-now
- Industrial economy - rights and responsibilities distributed according to relationship (or not) to labour force
- Concerns about distribution of income
- Group-based for access
- National for belonging
- **Fordism**

To a “social investment” citizenship regime

- Future-oriented
- KBE - rights and responsibilities focused on human capital
- Concerns about inclusion and capacity for rights and responsibilities
- Localized/community driven for access
- Geographically decentred for belonging
- **LEGO**



Why LEGO?

- Children are our role models because they are curious, creative and imaginative. They embrace discovery and wonder. They are natural learners. These are precious qualities that should be nurtured and stimulated throughout our lives.
- ...the LEGO brand represents much more than just play. "Play" in the LEGO sense is learning. By helping children to learn, we build confident, curious and resourceful adults. For their future. And ours. Just imagine...
- The company and its products adopted the name LEGO, formed from the Danish word "LEg GOdt" ("play well"). Later, it was recognized that in Latin the word means "I study" or "I put together."

<http://www.lego.com>.



	Fordist Citizenship Regime	LEGO Citizenship Regime
<i>Representation of Principles</i>		
Time perspective	present focused – avoiding the past of depression and war by improving the present	future focused – improving the present so as to prepare the future
Key social cleavage	class and hierarchical social relations	inclusion / exclusion
Location of wealth production	goods production – the industrial economy	knowledge production – the service economy
Vision of citizens' rights	equality in the here-and-now	equality of opportunity for future success

See Denis Saint-Martin and Jane Jenson, various papers, on <http://www.fas.umontreal.ca/pol/cohesionsociale>



	Fordist Citizenship Regime	LEGO Citizenship Regime
<i>Definition of Social Citizenship</i>		
Major risk for individuals	lack of income due to a life-risk (unemployment, childbirth, old-age, etc.)	lack of skills and exclusion (long-term poverty, out-dated skills, criminality, etc.)
Goals of public spending	equality in the present , via redistribution of wealth and access	Inclusion in the present and equality of opportunity for the future
Social benefits accrue ...	to the citizen worker and his/her dependants based on relationship to the labour force	to those preparing for citizenship – children or those engaged in improving their “employability”
Form of security promised to individuals	income security against life-risks	trampoline into the labour force

	Fordist Citizenship Regime	LEGO Citizenship Regime
<i>Representation of State Interests</i>		
Major risk for states	economic cycles and downturns generating consumption and spending shortages	an economy which can not compete in global markets and a society facing threats to social cohesion
Macro goal of public spending	counter-cyclical spending for equilibrium	economic competitiveness and enhanced social cohesion
Instruments to achieve equality	full employment; redistribution of income	services to enhance human capital (e.g., early childhood initiatives, education) and employability (e.g., training, active labour market policy, workfare)

Conclusion

- Concerns about social cohesion:
 - Employment
 - Inclusion - economic and cultural
 - Pressures on social citizenship
- Have led to new citizenship regimes:
 - Changes in time perspective
 - Changes in space perspective
 - Changes in definition of content of social citizenship