
Update No. 19 – September 21, 2001

Inclusion, Work and Prosperity

Résumés

SEDEC Network. 2000. "Comparative Social Inclusion Policies and Citizenship in Europe: Towards a New European Social Model." Coordinator: Dr. Maurice Roche, Department of Sociology, Sheffield University, UK. <http://www.shef.ac.uk/~perc/sedec/FINREP.pdf>

SEDEC stands for "Social Exclusion and the Development of European Citizenship." As the Network's name suggests, it is concerned with exploring the developing connections between: (1) social exclusion problems and the social inclusion policies to address them in European societies; and (2) citizenship and social rights in European societies, both at the national and also at the European level. This connection provides the general intellectual context for this report on comparative social inclusion policies. The particular concerns of this study are problems of work, income and recognition among young people, the development of inclusionary and activating policies, and the ethnicity/migration aspects of contemporary social inclusion problems and policies in Europe. The project studied social inclusion measures in 12 European Union member states in the period 1998-2000. Among some of the general findings, the study found that most European states have been attempting to promote greater cohesion by making their social policies less 'passive' and more 'active.' It was also found that few social inclusion policies made systematic or positive use of atypical, flexible forms of employment and informal economic activity. The more successful programs appeared to be those aimed to address people as citizens and as bearers of social rights and responsibilities. Such programs were mostly found in countries associated with the changing 'social democratic' model.

Vanlerenberghe, Pierre. 2001. "Social Cohesion and the New Labour System," in "ISUMA" Vol. 2, No. 2 (Summer).

<http://www.isuma.net/v02n02/vanlerenberghe/vanlerenberghe.pdf>

The last 30 years have seen major changes in the nature of work, with much greater participation of women, more part-time and irregular work, and far greater job turnover. This has changed the nature of work-related risk, but social policies in Europe and France, in particular (e.g., unemployment insurance, health insurance, pensions), continue to be based on more traditional

employment norms. Those policies need to be rethought to promote social inclusion, by eliminating policies that trap people on welfare, or others, like early retirement, that force them out of the workforce. Social policies need to make individual career paths more secure with things like transferable personal training entitlements, without hindering businesses' ability to adapt to changing conditions.

Dayton-Johnson, Jeff. 2001. "Social Cohesion and Economic Prosperity." Toronto: James Lorimer & Company Ltd., Publishers.

This book seeks to offer a new way to think about why some regions and countries are more prosperous than others. Economists traditionally claim that free markets are the key to economic growth. Now, according to the author, they are coming to realize the importance of the relationships that underpin all social activities - including the marketplace. Social cohesion, the term used to describe these relationships, is created in many ways. When people join voluntary organizations, do community work, or participate at a local level, they create social relationships that are economically beneficial. Paradoxically, social cohesion is often undermined by cutbacks in government activities justified by an economic rationale. Dayton-Johnson looks at the ways in which the Canadian social fabric is being frayed by rapid economic changes and cutbacks. He also examines the evidence for the role of social cohesion in creating a prosperous society, and explores the measures needed to protect and promote greater social cohesion.

What's New?

Canadian society is currently undergoing profound transformations that are being played out in communities everywhere. In a world where the pace of change is accelerating, links within and among communities take on renewed importance. Existing links are under pressure as communities adapt and respond to shifting circumstances, while new links are emerging. "Bringing Communities Together" is the theme of this year's National Policy Research Conference, to be held in Ottawa on December 5, 6 and 7, 2001 at the Westin Hotel and Congress Centre. To learn more about the conference:

<http://policyresearch.schoolnet.ca/NationalConference/2001/whatnew-e.htm>

The Flemish Minister of Education and Training is holding an international conference of experts on "Participation, Social Cohesion and Citizenship" on November 28, 2001 in Brussels (Egmont Palace). The conference is open to experts from the education sector, policy makers and researchers from the EU Member States, and delegates from international and European organisations. To learn more about the Conference, contact Kaat Huylebroeck, Ministry of the Flemish Community, at: kaat.huylebroeck@ond.vlaanderen.be Or visit the Conference Web site at: <http://www.eu2001.be/Main/Frameset.asp?reference=24-01.01-06.10-01.09-01.05-01.01-01&lang=en>