



Engendrer la cohésion sociale Fostering Social Cohesion

Working Paper # 1

FOSTERING SOCIAL COHESION: A COMPARISON OF NEW POLICY STRATEGIES

Project Proposal – October 1999

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The project *FOSTERING SOCIAL COHESION: A COMPARISON OF NEW POLICY STRATEGIES* has the support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). For other papers in the project see

http://www.cccg.umontreal.ca/Engendrer%20la%20cohesion_FR.html

CONTEXT: SHIFTING PERCEPTIONS OF SOCIAL CITIZENSHIP

Social cohesion always comes to the forefront of public debates at times of rapid social change. New choices are made about the social rights and obligations of citizens that shape policy actions for the long-term. Our era of globalisation is such a time (Jenson, 1998). Therefore, in collaboration with our partners - Canadian Policy Research Networks, Inc. and the Conseil québécois de la Santé et du Bien-Être - this project will uncover and make explicit some of the choices about managing challenges to social cohesion. At a time when public policies and delivery systems are undergoing important transformations, we will conduct a comparative case study, with the objective of specifying and explaining variation in new policy strategies for responding to perceived threats to social cohesion. By assessing these strategies and weighing their applicability to the Canadian context, our analysis will permit policy-makers to identify the "range of the possible".

Social cohesion after 1945 was promoted through a citizenship regime constructed around the paradigmatic figure of the "citizen-worker": countries judged their capacity to manage challenges to social cohesion in terms of institutions' ability to integrate citizens into employment and to manage life-cycle risks associated with non-employment. "Falling out" of the labour force, because of childcare responsibilities, age, job loss or accident and illness constituted the principal risks addressed by social citizenship. Full-employment policies and job creation were central policy goals. Unions and employers were important agenda-setters in many jurisdictions. Not surprisingly, social indicators of a society's well-being focused on growth in GNP, employment and unemployment rates, wage rates and other labour market measures, while income security programmes were delivered in accordance with adults' relationship to the labour market.

The paradigmatic figure of the citizen-worker is now under stress because of labour market restructuring which increases non-standard employment, income polarisation, and poverty, while even a full-time job is less likely to bring earnings high enough to raise a family above the poverty line (Tremblay, 1994; Betcherman and Lowe, 1997; Cases, *et al.*, 1996; King, 1995). The policy response has been to raise as rallying points for social cohesion two new figures, alongside and perhaps in competition with the once-hegemonic figure of the self-sufficient worker, namely, the child, and the poor person (for example, Thomas, 1997; Castel, 1995).

For example, fewer Canadians receive employment insurance, but parents of children, employed or not, now receive the Canada Child Tax Benefit and a widening range of provincial benefits delivered in the form of tax deductions and credits. New Labour in the UK has instituted a children's tax credit, raised child allowances and child benefits and focussed on child poverty. In addition, young people unable to enter the paid labour force have generated even more attention to poverty, as France's employment policies focused on young people exemplify. As more people are cast out of the loop of employment only to face cutbacks in social spending, both relative and absolute poverty are becoming more visible (e.g. homelessness). At the same time, responsibility for service delivery is decentralised to the local level where the "third sector" is drafted into

partnership arrangements to address the threats to social cohesion coming from exclusion (Hirshhorn, 1998; Letablier, 1996).

A central claim of this project is that in our new times - whether those of Canada's Social Union, Tony Blair's UK or Lionel Jospin's France - efforts go to rebuilding social cohesion around the child and the poor person (Boismenu and Jenson, 1998; Giddens, 1998; Commaille and Jobert, 1999). This process is observable in the policy ideas being put forward, in the development of new social indicators that tend to focus on "social capital" in addition to labour market issues, in new policy designs such as active labour market policies and a renewal of family policies, and in new, decentralised, community-based modes of service delivery. We hypothesise that these represent both a response to, and stimulus for the retreat of the citizen-worker model and "private" family and community strategies for building social cohesion. Our objective is to explore this hypothesis and its significance for Canadian policy-making in the era of globalisation, by specifying and explaining variations in national, infra-national and supra-national strategies and in linking these variations to the particular social and institutional conditions in which they are embedded.

RESEARCH PLAN: MAPPING CHANGES

The formulation of our general objective derives from our commitment to a theoretical approach to comparative analysis that generally goes under the name of historical institutionalism (Hall and Taylor, 1996; Bradford, 1997). This method directs analytic attention to ideas, interests and institutions, identifying the policy process as the location for resolution of differences among actors, connected in policy networks, with different interests and ideas about how to achieve them. In turn, these networks act within a context of institutional legacies, derived from past decisions, patterns of conflict resolution and policy goals. This theoretical stance organises the three "mapping operations" of our research design: mapping the policy networks, policy orientations, and change over time. We analyse actors, embedded in networks, struggling under changing socio-economic and institutional conditions (that is, seeking to exercise influence and power) to prevail over policy. These analytical steps will account for the process as well as direction of change in our cases.

We hypothesise that there has been a paradigm shift in societal strategies for building cohesion via the rights and obligations of social citizenship, with less emphasis on the citizen-worker and more on the child and the poor person. These can be labelled paradigm shifts because they are fundamental, long-term policy changes in the underlying beliefs, values, and attitudes towards the nature of public problems and the solutions to them on the part of policy-makers (Hall, 1993). To test our hypothesis we will compare policies dealing with the interface between labour market participation and income security in Canada, France, and the United Kingdom. Multi-layered comparisons are featured. In addition to cross-national analyses, we will compare within countries and supra-nationally. We will focus on the interface between labour market participation and income security as our test case because it is the intersection point at which social citizenship is constructed. In particular, we will examine the treatment of "non-workers" (e.g. youth, welfare recipients, single mothers), preparation for labour market participation (e.g. employability enhancement), as well as policies designed to protect against traditional employment risks.

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The specific objectives of our data collection are to identify, in each of our case sites, the actors constituting the social policy networks and their relative positions in relation to agenda-setting and decision-making. We map the ideas they promote and the invention and use of social knowledge underpinning these policy ideas. As Max Weber (1958) well understood, ideas act as the “switchmen” determining the “tracks along which action has been pushed by the dynamic of interest”. We also analyse policy design and delivery mechanisms following from them, leading to identification, for example, of the respective roles of the public, private and voluntary sectors, and the centralisation or decentralisation of decision-making.

Mapping policy networks over time: We define a policy network as a set of actors involved in a policy domain and the fluid ties and connections (direct and indirect) between them. Our view and analysis differ from the mainstream, structural view of networks, since we are interested in their evolution over time, but our research nonetheless benefits from the long history of network analysis in sociology (Granoveter, 1983; Marsden and Lin, 1982; Wellman and Berkowitz, 1988; Knoke, 1990) and more recently, political science (Coleman and Skogsted, 1990; Marsh and Rhodes, 1992; Keck and Sikkink, 1998). Networks are carriers of ideas, both political and technical. Policy networks not only account for the movement of ideas within a policy domain but also for processes such as “contagion”, or the adoption of similar ideas by people in equivalent positions in different networks (Burt, 1999), and the emergence of “epistemic communities” (Haas, 1992), processes that can unfold internationally.

We will conduct an analysis of the socio-centric networks working at the interface of labour market participation and income security, taking a snapshot of actors and their ties at several points in time from the 1970's to the present. The exact starting point and further observation points will be case-specific. Thus, a set of maps of network membership will be generated by identifying organisations active at this interface in each site, locating them through policy documents, appearances or mentions in the news media, participation in government hearings as well as lobbying activities. These data will be expanded through snowballing techniques, especially but not exclusively for the most recent observations, whereby identified actors indicates their key contacts and the ties that exist between them. Interviews will also be used to ascertain both network structure at different points in time (Box A) and members' strategic resources (Box B) (Dowding, 1995).

<p><u>BOX A - Network Structure</u> Number of connections Centrality Inclusiveness Rules of interaction Strength of ties</p>	<p><u>BOX B - Actors' Strategic Resources</u> Knowledge / Information Financial resources Legitimacy / Reputation of leadership Contacts outside the network Ability to change others' incentive structures</p>
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Mapping actors' policy orientations : A simultaneous operation involves linking network members to their functions within policy domains, and recording their policy

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ideas and actions with respect to three fundamental issues for social citizenship: Who deserves aid? Who should provide it? How should it be organised? We do so, as Table 1 shows, for four elements of the policy process.

Table I

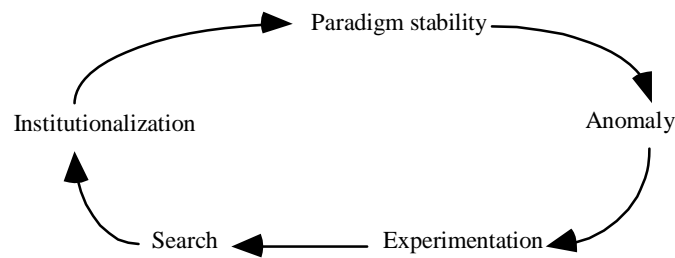
Issues for Social Citizenship	Problem Definition	Social Knowledge	Policy Design	Delivery Mechanisms
Who needs and deserves aid?	representations of social fault lines, and economic and social challenges	clusters of social indicators	decisions about targeting or universality, categories judged deserving or not	choices about rationing
Who should provide aid?	representations of individual/collective responsibility, family and community, public and private	community participation in or expert definition of indicators	decisions about jurisdiction, centralisation or decentralisation	choices about mix of public or private delivery, role of commercial and 3 rd sector agencies
How should it be organised?	representations of activities of the state, market, community	evaluation studies	decisions about active or passive measures, taxes or services	choices about partnership, accountability and responsibility

The table is the basic grid that will guide data collection for each site team. Some suggestions of the kind of data sought are listed in each cell. In all cases, we will be dealing primarily with discursive data, that is, actors' ideas and interests expressed in policy documents, public statements, legislation, and so on. The grid will be applied to all major policy network actors in each site, at each point in time. Sources of data will be similar to those used for mapping policy networks (documents, press review, government records, interviews, etc.).

Mapping policy change:

Since Thomas Kuhn (1968) introduced his powerful notion of "paradigm" we have understood that change in policy as much as intellectual traditions follows from the accumulation of anomalies which can not be dealt with by the reigning orthodoxy. Recognition is followed by a time of experimentation and opening of policy windows. These may give visibility to policy advocates previously peripheral, drawing them closer to the centre of the policy network where they have greater access to and influence on the policy-making process. As experiments are institutionalised, a new paradigm emerges. Our data collection is designed to follow this process over time, using the information from Box A and B and Table 1 to follow the process described in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Process of Policy Paradigm Shift



Comparative analyses: Each site team will contribute to the construction of the comparative analyses. These will be of three types. The first is comparison across time, for each case. The second is across space, comparing the policy stories for several jurisdictions, treated as pairs, triplets, and so on. Our case selection is Canada (focusing on Ontario and Quebec, as well as the federal level), France (including regional authorities) and the United Kingdom (focusing on England, Scotland, Wales and N. Ireland). We will also assess the contribution of the European Union. Thus we have multi-level governance patterns in all cases (Leibfried and Pierson, 1995). These comparisons are designed to uncover variation in policy ideas, systems and networks due to the historical and on-going influence of religious traditions, and national and other identity conflicts, as well as political traditions and policy legacies. These affect not only policy design but also delivery, including the place and role of third sectors. A third comparison, "reading down" the columns of Table I, will permit analyses of cross-jurisdictional learning and co-ordination of ideas, social knowledge and policy design.

TEAM AND COLLABORATIONS

The core team involves senior and junior researchers in political science, sociology and public administration based in three Canadian universities. We also have collaborators from three other countries and Canada, both university-based and in the public sector. All are bilingual. Although everyone has previously worked with at least one member of the team, in various combinations and contexts, this team has been newly constituted for this major international project.

While each co-applicant will have primary responsibility for supervising data quality in one particular case-site, at the level of data analysis each will work mainly on questions of particular interest to them, through diverse collaborations amongst team members. Five all-team meetings (at months 1, 6, 12, 20 and 30) plus more frequent meetings of the core team are budgeted, in order to ensure coherence of theoretical approach and data collection.

Jane Jenson, **principal investigator**, is a political scientist who has worked on issues of social citizenship and social cohesion, making both theoretical and empirical contributions. Her major publications in these areas, as well as her experience with international research and project direction, underpin her role in this project. In addition to co-ordination, she will work on several cases.

Co-investigators: Paul Bernard is a senior sociologist who has published in numerous areas related to this project, is currently a preeminent participant in the movement to develop new social indicators and measures of well-being. He will take

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primary responsibility for the social knowledge dimension, coordinating the data collection and analysis across cases. A young political scientist, Alexandra Dobrowolsky has focused on social movements and constitutional change in Canada, with a particular interest in non-governmental actors in the policy process. Her SSHRC post-doctoral fellowship allowed her to extend her expertise to the UK. She will take primary responsibility for that case, working with Jennie Popay and Gareth Williams and George Ross for the European dimension. Denis Saint-Martin is young scholar of comparative public administration. With a SSHRC post-doctoral fellowship he extended his research on the processes of policy reform in the UK, France and Canada. He will take primary responsibility for the French case, working with Claude Martin, Jane Jenson and George Ross. Deena White is a sociologist whose principal area of research has been social policy reform processes, focusing on the relation between government and third sector actors and the changing role of the third sector. She will take primary responsibility for the Canadian cases, including the Ontario and Quebec comparisons, working with Sharon Jeannotte among others.

Collaborators: Sharon Jeannotte, a senior policy analyst at Canadian Heritage, works with the Social Cohesion Network within the Policy Research Initiative of the federal government. She will contribute to the policy network mapping for Canada, and help assure policy relevance. Claude Martin is a political scientist with CNRS. He is an expert on the redesign of French social policy, and has been involved in evaluation studies of programmes in several regions. He will contribute to the analysis of policy change in France. George Ross is a sociologist and political scientist at Brandeis University in the USA and Director of the European Union Center at Harvard University. An expert on social policy and the European Union, he will participate in analyses EU initiatives and networks around social cohesion issues. Jennie Popay and Gareth Williams are with the Institute for Public Health Research and Policy in Salford, England. The Institute is currently carrying out a major U.K. demonstration project exploring the extent to which public policy can foster social cohesion. Both will contribute to network mapping and policy change analysis in the U.K.

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