



57th ICCFR Conference
WORKSHOP 8

Outline & Working notes

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**EMPOWERING FAMILIES AS SUSTAINABLE PARTNERS IN SOCIAL
POLICY - ICCFR 57th International Conference**

Workshop 8 (13 March 2010)

presented by **Fred Deven PhD.** (*scientific director*),
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1. Title. **Family Policies as a cornerstone of social policy across Europe. The interplay of public authorities with other stakeholders.**
2. Main aim. To reflect and discuss about the question whether knowledge of family policy processes can help to improve the quality of welfare services as well as to support stakeholders in their efforts to enhance the well-being of families, especially those at risk of poverty?
3. Workshop format.
 - First, an introductory presentation will highlight the main issues at stake in dealing with family policies: concepts, objectives, instruments, actors and perspectives
 - Next, a number of participants give country-specific accounts of relevant experiences of exchange and cooperation between various stakeholders.
 - The workshop presenter then highlights the main results and conclusions of international comparative project work (see below).
 - Finally, the workshop participants consider whether this kind of information and knowledge about to family policy processes can bring them to some recommendation or can be instrumental for their own professional work.
4. It is felt that one can hardly talk about 'family policy' around Europe but rather about family policies as subgroups of countries differ to some extent in target populations, funding mechanisms, vehicles for delivery, and the overall impact of policy on family life.

5. Objectives. They tend to be manifold, they can shift over time, they may strengthen each other but they can also contradict one another. Often referred to are various types of financial support and of service provision, as well as measures to strengthen family life, to increase the birth rate level, to reconcile work and family life, or some protective legal measures.

6. Instruments. Public authorities in European countries increasingly rely on three major types of instruments: benefits in cash (e.g. family allowances), benefits in kind (e.g. childcare services), and time management (e.g. parental leave).

7. Actors and stakeholders. Especially at regional and local level, public authorities increasingly consult and exchange with other stakeholders (e.g. family organisations, service providers, professionals) to develop focused policy measures and services to empower and help families.

Interactive Part 1

8. *A number of workshop participants analyse and briefly describe the family policy in their country in terms of major objectives, instruments, stakeholders and processes.*

9. Following these accounts the main findings of international comparative work on Family Policies (2007-2009), mainly a data collection and a database established among the Member States of the Council of Europe, with a number of case studies focusing on developments and dynamics.

see a pdf doc under Family Policy in Council of Europe member states:
http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/youthfamily/Source/Family_Policy_in_Council_of_Europe_member_states_en.pdf

10. Especially at regional and local level, public authorities increasingly consult and exchange with other stakeholders (e.g. family organisations, service providers) to develop focused policy measures and services to empower and help families.

11. Some stakeholders increasingly became more prominent (e.g. employer, social partners) whereas the impact of other stakeholders decreased or faded out in some European countries.

Interactive Part 2

12. *All workshop participants reflect on the main question: can knowledge of family policy processes help to improve the quality of welfare services as well as to support stakeholders in their efforts to enhance the well-being of families, especially those at risk of poverty?*

13. Following this final round of exchange workshop participants consider whether such information and knowledge about to family policy processes can bring them to some recommendation or can be instrumental for their own professional work.