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Theme 1: employment policies/ ALMP

Labour market policies in Poland: amidst a change of the paradigm.

The last 20 odd years since the systemic transformation in Poland is marked with various tendencies aiming at building a civil society. Numerous policies, also those related to the labour market, are set in this framework where imperative and bureaucratic decision making is being replaced by the participatory decision making involving actors in the processes. In Poland, similarly to other EU countries, the labour market policies and social policies are linked, not only policy-wise but also institutionally, as they are governed by the same ministry, at present the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Affairs.

The analysed period can be characterized by a number of shifts reflected in the regulatory and architectural framework, addressing both the situation in the labour market, in the economy at large, but also responding to the parties' ideological standpoints. This was a period where the bureaucratic processes of centralised decision making processes were reduced and much of decision making was moved into the local and regional levels, making these in-field institutions real actors in play from design into implementation phases. Moreover, social policy, even though far from perfect, seemed to take into account the situation of adults in the labour market and targeted the families in need. As such it was considered to be a policy assuring some levels of social integration. At present, a new reform of the regulatory framework guiding the labour market policies is expected which follows ideological right wing positions. The scope of changes is unknown, yet some changes have been already made into social policy with a more general approach supporting families possessing children.

The paper is designed into 3 sections. The first part will address the ideological standpoints since fin de siècle up till now. The second part shows the development of the labour market policies with main regulatory changes. It will also look on the interplay with other policies,

namely the social policy as well as architectural change. Finally, the present changes, to the degree known will be analysed with their potential consequences.

Keywords: labour market policies, social policy.

Bio:

Dr. Ewa Ślęzak is Reader of Global Political Economy in the Department of Economics, Cracow University of Economics. Her research interests focus on evaluation, welfare state, migrations, social exclusion, shadow and black economy, ageing society, labour market. She has participated in a number of research projects, including those co-financed by the European Commission, dealing with information society, informal work, social economy, evaluation of programmes and support to the elderly. She is a member of ESPAnet and the Polish Economics Society. Authoress and co-authoress of a number of papers in Polish and English. Alumni of the ERSTE Stiftung of Vienna, the European University Institute in Florence, the Central European University in Budapest, the University of Limerick and the European Consortium of Sociological Research. She regularly cooperates with various institutions of both public and private sectors, national and international ones, including the European Commission and the European Parliament. These comprise of work as an expert in the area of evaluation, adult learning, traineeship arrangement and employment agencies.