



Array

The political economy of household services

Analysing the political economy of household services in Europe

Organised by Clément Carbonnier (University of Cergy-Pontoise and Sciences

Po, LIEPP) and Nathalie Morel (Sciences Po, LIEPP)

October 3rd-4th, 2013

Sciences Po, 98 rue de l'université, 75007 Paris

Room Georges LAVAU

Attendance is free, but interested participants must register with

liepp@sciencespo.fr by September 30th at the latest

Since the 1990s, a number of European countries have set up policies to promote the development of household services through schemes designed to both lower the cost of labour and to subsidize the demand for household services, especially for childcare and elderly-care, through the introduction of cash subsidies or different socio-fiscal measures (social contribution exemptions and/or tax reductions). Some countries have gone even further in that they also subsidize non-care related household services such as cleaning, ironing, gardening, house-repair, etc. It thus seems warranted to speak of a 'political economy of household services', the delegation of household work and the development of household services being encouraged and structured through policy measures.

The aim of this seminar is to analyse this political economy of household services in Europe, looking both at the drivers behind this policy orientation of subsidizing the demand for household services and at its impact on labour markets and welfare states. Indeed, looking at the policy outcomes on labour markets and welfare states seems particularly warranted in light of the policy discourse and orientations that have been set at the EU level: since the early 1990s, the European Commission has been encouraging member countries to develop policies to foster employment in household services with the triple aim of reducing the cost of low-skilled labour, of reducing the scope and cost of public care services, and of 'freeing' the productive potential of the more highly-skilled. At a national level, job creation and responding to care needs have most often been used as justifications by the governments who have implemented policies to promote household services, although the specific policy objectives and framing of arguments may well vary between countries.

Consequently, this seminar will be organized around three main sets of research questions. First, analysing the politics behind the policies for supporting household services. Second, analysing the impact of these policies on labour markets. Third,



analysing the impact of these policies on welfare provision. These questions will be developed from the point of view of Economics, Legal Science, Medicine, Political Science and Sociology.

Pour en savoir plus