

What the conference is about

»Moving from Income Support to Work: Local Welfare States and Nonprofits in Transition«

Our research project analyzes the transformation of local employment and social policies in Berlin and Los Angeles in the face of policy changes at the federal level, in Germany and the U.S. Our assumption is that the future of local welfare states is at a crossroads. In this situation federal welfare reforms and devolution policies in both countries afford third sector organizations with a larger and ambivalent role in local employment and social policies. The way in which this role will be filled should have substantial impact on the structure of local welfare states as well as on the trajectories of third sector groups and nonprofits.

Mission of the Conference

The mission of the Conference is three-fold:

We are heading for a better understanding of the transformations of the respective nation states' social and employment policies. We want to focus on the new role of nonprofits that emerged within these changes during the last two decades, and we would like to discuss the challenges for and variety/diversity of nonprofits in structure and orientation in Berlin and Los Angeles at the local level.

First, we would like to highlight the broader socio-economic changes, focusing on both countries

and the respective cities to gain a closer understanding of the globally emerging workfare regimes and their impacts on the public, private and nonprofit production of 'welfare'.

Second, we want to look at nonprofits and their participation in a wide array of programs and projects that have been mushrooming during the last years in both cities, and we will examine in particular the administration's requirements that are so challenging to nonprofits in both cities.

Third, it is our aim to identify approaches of (self)organization and autonomous politics within the nonprofit-sector including those focusing on economic justice and coalition building as well as on those that try to establish economically sustainable projects. This will also imply investigation of the specific capacities of nonprofits to integrate (the management and implementation of) public programs within their own missions.

Subject of the Conference

In the US the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act signed into law by the Clinton Administration in 1996 devolved political and financial responsibility for social and employment policies to the state level. Federally administered programs that had ensured support to one category of "the needy" without time-limits were replaced by a system of federal block grants to individual states, the imposition of time limits on entitlements, and the requirement that

rising percentages of welfare recipients enter the labor market.

Germany remains oriented towards near-universal provision of social security, but recent federal legislation such as the *Arbeitsförderungsreformgesetz* (1997) and the so-called Hartz-Commission (2002/3) are beginning to change certain aspects as well. For example, legislation requires local administrations to actively transfer increasing numbers of welfare recipients into the labor market and to re-organize their local bureaucracies as well.

We assume that such changes are leading to both a proliferation and a heightened importance of local employment programs and local social policies. More and more non-public actors (non- and for-profit), with differing aims and organizational structures, become involved in these programs. The conference will identify various policy approaches and systems of cooperation between local actors in Los Angeles and Berlin and discuss their respective capacities and performance. In particular, we expect to learn about the specific strategies developed in the nonprofit-sector, how they contribute to the integration of so-called "problem groups", and how these strategies do or do not function under the current fiscal and legislative conditions.

Assumptions and Hypotheses of the Conference

We assume a reorientation of the German "universal" welfare system towards employment-oriented social policies, including the inspiration by American-style "workfare" components. The observable devolution process is associated with a new form of governance: in order to effectively deal with the complexity of contemporary social problems on the local level, stakeholders from all spheres of local society are brought to cooperate with municipal agencies and with each other. With the devolution of welfare production, we observe the blurring of borders between traditional policy fields such as labor-market policies, economic development policies and social policies. We also observe, in all the sectors involved with welfare production (i.e. public, private, voluntary and non-profit), shifts in values, habits, and organizational structures.

Thus, one of the challenges nonprofits face is an increasing market orientation, which might lead to diminishing social orientations of the respective organizations and to an increasing work-first orientation within the new case management. The German nonprofit sector's intensifying involvement in employment and social policies leads to professionalization and might make it less dispensable in the production and provision of welfare. This process goes hand in hand with the diversification of the German nonprofit sector and its increasing orientation, in several aspects, towards the US nonprofit sector. We observe that the typically idealistic mindsets of both traditional and alternative nonprofits in Germany (the latter having developed out of the new social

movements) are being replaced by a new pragmatism attempting to accommodate postfordist socio-economic imperatives.

contribute to sensitivity for locally specific path dependence as well as to potentials for mutual learning.

Whereas in the US, third sector cooperation with private and public entities is taken for granted, the role German nonprofits actually will take on in the so-called new welfare mix is still unclear. The conference is to examine the transformation of goals, motivations, and strategic behavior of nonprofits in both settings. The changing relationships will shape the conditions for cooperation within emerging governance systems dealing with local employment policies in different ways. For example, another challenge for nonprofits might be, as we have seen in some cases in Berlin, a growing competition among them leading to the evaporation of one of the most important advantages nonprofits might have as opposed to for-profits: their capacity for co-operation.

Also intriguing especially for German nonprofits is their approach to offer job training and job creation on a level that allows self-sufficiency for clients, which is challenged by a new federal and state policy that no longer takes standard wages and benefits into account. In Los Angeles we observe advocacy groups and nonprofits fighting for minimum wage and economic justice.

Thus, the Conference will illuminate new interdependencies in the fields of job creation, labor market integration and community development. By comparing different approaches in an American and German city, we seek to

Preliminary program

(as of April 3, 2003)

Friday, June 13		
	Speaker	Theme
03.00 pm	Margit Mayer, FU Berlin	Welcome and introduction to the Conference
03.30 pm	Nick Theodore, University of Illinois at Chicago	"Workfare States in International Perspective"
04.30 pm	Ann Withorn, University of Massachusetts Boston	"Non-Profits and <i>Homeland Security</i> : Welfare Reform in American Politics"
05:30 pm	Margit Mayer, FU Berlin	"The New Welfare Mix. The Changing Role of Nonprofit Organizations in Germany and the US"
06.30 pm		Discussion
07.30 pm		Dinner
Saturday, June 14		
10.00 am	Britta Grell, Volker Eick, Jens Sambale, FU Berlin	„From Welfare to Work. Nonprofits and Local Employment Policies. Comparing Berlin with Los Angeles"
11.00 am		Discussion
11.30 am	Geoffrey de Verteuil, University of Manitoba	"Welfare Reform in Los Angeles County: Implications for the Local Welfare State and Non-Profits"
12.00 am	Hilary Silver, Brown University	"National Contours of the Changing Welfare Mix : Local Insertion Nonprofits in New York and Berlin"
12.30 pm	Ingo Bode, Gesamt- hochschule Duisburg	"Work Integration. Social Enterprises in Berlin and Germany"
01.00 pm		Discussion
02.00 pm		Lunch
03.30 pm	Paul Tepper, Weingart Center (Los Angeles)	"Social Service Agencies in Los Angeles after the Welfare Reform"
04.00 pm	Kathryn Cooney UCLA (Los Angeles)	"Friends or Foes? Nonprofits between Social Work and Business Orientation. The Case of Goodwill Industries"
04.30 pm		Coffee break
05.00 pm	Ellen Reese, UCR (Riverside)	„Organizing for Economic Justice. New Alliances between Community Groups and the Labor Movement in Los Angeles"
05.30 pm		Discussion
07.00 pm		Dinner
Sunday, June 15		
10.30 am	Rudolph Bauer, Universität Bremen	„Nonprofits and Employment. Findings of Third Sector Research in Germany"
11.00 am	Norbert Wohlfahrt, Ev. Fachhochschule Bochum	"The Activating State in Germany. Beyond the Hartz-Commission"
11.30 am	Karl Birkhölzer, TU Berlin	"Can nonprofits strengthen "social" local economies? The case of Berlin"
12.00 am	Eric Shragge, McGill University, Montreal	Comments from a Quebec Perspective
12.30 am	Organizing Team	Summary and closing discussion
02.00 pm		End of Conference