
There is a social policy transformation underway in all industrial nations that profoundly impacts the lives of low income and marginalized populations. The departure from previous policies is multi-faceted and somewhat amorphous, making it difficult to encapsulate under a single, definitive conceptual framework. Despite its elusiveness, it disparate parts constitute the fundamental premise for social welfare benefits and services, permeating government and non-government programs at every level. Its scope and breadth comprises an historical landmark in which, except for very few exceptions, the social work profession in the United States appears to have a disturbing lack of interest, understanding, and involvement in the decision making process. This seems particularly true relative to significant initiatives at welfare restructuring undertaken by private foundations and government-supported local collaborations.

In this paper we will review the more prominent features of the transformation in social welfare systems in an international context with a particular emphasis on social capital. We will also present a conceptual framework appropriate for social work education and practice engagement in the transformation in the United States based on John Dewey’s theories of community and democracy.

As background to a discussion toward a conceptual framework, several inter-related and frequently utilized terms related to the transformation need to defined as they used in this paper. These include: social welfare systems, social services, social capital, devolution, social cohesion, social exclusion, and civil society.

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Social welfare systems in the context of this discussion refers to the aggregate of cash income transfers, health care, and social services benefits provided by government or non-government organizations (NGOs). The term “social services” is used in the context of the French “services sociaux” or the German “Sozialhilfe” which refers to services provided by a variety of government and NGOs, including for profit, as well as non-profit.

Social capital is defined here as “the norms and social relations embedded in the social structure of societies that enable people to coordinate action to achieve desired goals” (World Bank, 1999). The term has long been in use in economic literature, but has found its way into current the literature in sociology, education, anthropology and related disciplines stemming primarily from the writings of Robert Putnam (1993; 1995), Jane Jacobs (1961), Glen Loury (1977), James Coleman (1990), and Pierre Bourdieu, and Francis Fukuyama (1995). In North America the widely accepted definition of social capital is “the mutual relationships, interactions, and networks that emerge among human groups, as well as the level of trust (seen as the outcome of obligations and norms which adhere to the social structure) found within a particular group or community” (p.304) (Wall, Ferrazzi & Schryer, 1998).

The literature on social capital often refers to its role in promoting civil society harking back to linkages between civil interaction and democracy as first elaborated by Alexis de Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America*. De Tocqueville was most impressed by the propensity for civic association as the key to making democracy work (Putnam, 1995). His ideas have enjoyed a strong resurgence and have had a notable influence on proponents of devolution. For example, the concern of scholars over the nature of welfare dependency and loss of self-reliance such as John McKnight extol the virtues of de Tocqueville while arguing for a dramatic reduction in
government and professional social service involvement in the delivery of human services (1997).

One additional widely used term relative to the transformation in policy under discussion is that of devolution. In social work literature, analysis of the policy of devolution is typically limited to discourse on “welfare reform” which, in turn, is largely viewed as the shift from the policy approaches endemic to Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) to those incorporated in the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. Outside of social work literature, however, the process of devolution is viewed from a much more comprehensive perspective. It is typically characterized as a fundamental shift from national government dominated social welfare and social service programs to a more balanced mixture of public and private, state and local government, as well as non-government, community, and family responsibility.

Under the auspices of shared responsibility for social welfare in the process of devolution, two clearly distinctive trends may be ascertained. A trend that is widely recognized, is an increased reliance on community stakeholders (individuals, families, business, educators, local government, and non-government service providers) to assume more of the onus for creating and delivering social services and income protection. A second trend, which receives much less attention, but is gaining in recognition, is the interdependency between social services and income support systems in creating a comprehensive and sustainable approach to building family and community capacity for self-reliance. The parallel and sometimes overlapping development of these two trends reflect an important conceptual aspect of the transformation that support the notion that individual and family self-sufficiency is contingent on coordinated
community-based social welfare programs that are designed to address multiple and interdependent causes of public social welfare dependency and unemployment.

**Social Cohesion & Social Exclusion.** The emerging policies of transformation in welfare programs also reflect a changing perspective relative to social cohesion\(^2\) accompanied by the broadening of the concept of poverty from an income-based definition to one related to factors characteristic of social exclusion from mainstream society (Gilbert, 1998; Berghman, 1996). While there is no single explicit definition of social exclusion, the term is widely used in bureaucratic, academic and public forums as a more appropriate way of viewing poverty (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1998) and social solidarity (Silver, 1994).

A social exclusion conceptualization is intended to raise the public level of consciousness with regards to individuals’ restricted access to adequate employment, cash transfers and personal social services, as well as to avenues of participation in decisions about programs and policies that directly impact socially excluded individuals and families. In the 1988 European Community Social Charter and the 1989 European Community Council of Ministers, the term referred to the dynamic processes that form the basis of poverty (inadequate social programs, low wages, single parenthood, mental illness, drug and alcohol addictions and abuses,

\(^2\) The term “social cohesion” is used here to refer to the role of public and private sector organizations in promoting solidarity and social and economic stability (Leeuw, 1997; Miller, 1997; OECD, 1997a). In this use it has a broader context than when the term refers only to “reducing disparities” in the levels of social and economic development among various regions in the EU.
discrimination, inadequate education, and other factors that lead to marginalization). This dynamic process makes the concept more multidimensional than typical definitions of poverty and more attentive to the constantly evolving environmental factors that contribute to economic and social dependency (Berghman, 1996).

Three distinct, yet related, conceptual perspectives have provided an impetus for the transformation in the nature of policies and programs related to social welfare through the development of social capital.

This is reflected in emerging devolution of government social welfare programs that transfer a substantial portion of services and benefits to the private sector, local government, communities, and families (Chassard, 1996; Gilbert, 1998; Lazar & Stoyko, 1997; Michaelis, 1998; Michalski, Miller, & Stevens, 1997; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1997a).

There are four specific aspects of the shifting balance that impacts social capital: 1) factors influencing social welfare reforms, 2) key elements in reform initiatives, 3) the devolution of benefits and services 4) expectations from program reforms, 5) international initiatives, and 5) concerns related to policy.

**Factors Influencing Social Welfare Reforms**

Numerous forums on public sector social welfare systems have identified a variety of interrelated factors that foster efforts of welfare reform related to restructuring the balance of responsibility. Most of these are familiar elements that have been cited over the past several decades as reasons to modify social protection policies and programs, but they are gaining intensity in recent policy discussions. Selected characteristics of some of these factors are
briefly discussed below.

**Demographics.** The social welfare challenges presented by an aging population are compounded by dire forecasts of insufficient payroll contributions to fund the retirement and health benefits of retirees, especially in view of rising health care and reduced employment activity after age 60 (Chassard, 1996; Guillemard, 1997; Kopits, 1996). While, demographic considerations have long played a role in decisions about social welfare among policy makers, projections of growth in the proportion of older people over the next several decades have begun to make an impression on the population at large.

**Welfare Dependency.** A subtle, but powerful, influence on restructuring social welfare is based on the widely accepted notion of welfare dependency which presumes a direct correlation between the generosity of public welfare benefits and services and a lack of motivation of individuals to become self-sufficient. Indeed, it is often argued that generous social benefits may be the cause of a rising dependency on the welfare state. These and related concerns about the public social welfare sector are well known and have been widely discussed in multiple forums. These arguments, whether factual or perceived, have played a critical role in movements away from the traditional public sector instruments of the welfare state.

The issue of dependency, among related areas of concern, was recently stressed at a high level OECD conference, “Beyond 2000: The New Social Policy Agenda,” which noted that “cash transfers and the collective provision of essential services (particularly health care) ...... are not free goods, expandable indefinitely to meet needs. They influence labour market behavior, they strain the public finances, they can lead to passive dependence on public support, and yet they often fail to adequately help those in serious need” (Organization for Economic Cooperation
and Development, 1997a, p. 7). These concerns are certainly not new, but the nature of the discussions over their respective roles has taken on distinctive dimensions in recent years relative to restructuring public sector programs.

**Multiple Causes of Welfare Dependency.** A combination of multiple social and economic factors have surfaced in policy discussions over the past few decades that focus more attention on the inadequacies of the public sector to cope with rapidly changing social and economic conditions, as well as lifestyles (Drew, 1996). Traditional central government income supports for long-term and youth unemployment, for example, are cited as being inadequate to deal with problems that result from multiple social and economic origins that cash benefits alone are not designed to address (OECD, 1997a). Multiple causes for dependency and multiple barriers to paid work are, for example, a central feature in current discussions contained in a recent Green Paper on welfare reform in the United Kingdom (United Kingdom Government web site, 1998a) which calls, in part, for more social services, as well as new public/private partnerships.

Such discussions are related to a growing recognition of the need for preventative and early intervention programs which are more cost effective in the long term because they address the roots of social and economic issues. It has long been recognized that programs such as early childhood socialization, school-to-work, health care, substance abuse treatment, mental health care services, and healthy family and community functioning are critical to the reduction of poverty, as observed at the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995 (McCumiskey, 1997). Corresponding programs are gaining new appreciation in the face of political pressure for changes in the process for sustaining social cohesion in an era of limited
public sector programs and benefits.

**Recognizing Barriers.** Recognizing barriers to individual and family self-sufficiency is an important aspect in the design of policy to address multiple causes of welfare dependency. This takes many forms, many of which have been integral features of social welfare systems for years, including preventive health care, and social service programs, as well as cash benefits, such as family allowances. One recent example is the Australian Youth Allowance that is designed to remove the barrier of disincentives for young Australians to acquire the skills, training and education required for today’s labor market (Australia Government web site, 1998).

**Changing Family Structure.** Changes in family structures, including declining supportive roles of extended families, are often cited as impacting social cohesion and used as a justification for welfare restructuring. It is argued that it is the failure of both the family and the labor market to respond to the needs of changing family structures (single parent households, weakened family ties, reduced family support systems, and increases in two-earner households), accompanied by declining fertility rates that pose a serious threat to social stability.

**Economic Globalization.** Another element noted more and more frequently as a rationale for reducing public social welfare systems is the impact of economic globalization on employee and employer payroll contributions and unemployment rates. Implicitly, these are problems for which status quo public sector programs are not necessarily viewed as a viable solution.

**Public Management.** Confidence in public programs has clearly waned in many industrial societies in the face of a combination of steadily increasing program expenditures with little apparent impact on poverty, drug and alcohol abuse, child and domestic abuse, or crime.
(Organization for Economic Corporation and Development, 1997a). This has led to demands for establishing “best practices” through restructuring public sector social protection programs focusing on administrative and practice procedures that build confidence in the capability of public agencies to deliver effective and efficient programs. One example is a recent restructuring of the administration of the Social Security Agency in Ireland with more focus on human resources and assistance to job seekers, as well as partnerships with the private sector (United Kingdom Government web site, 1998b).

**Program Costs.** Another justification for welfare reform is aimed at controlling public program expenditures. This point has been strengthened in recent years due to growth in government expenditures and the strain that public social programs place on limited budgets and resources. This has also generated more widespread pressures for governments to address the potential problem in an effective and efficient manner, which, it is often argued, can best be achieved with more services and benefits delivered by the private sector.

**Key Elements in Reform Initiatives**

The general response to the factors that contribute to pressure for public social welfare reform has been to implement policies that tend to shift responsibility for social welfare from the public to the private sector. The key elements to the shift are: a) the primary objectives of welfare reforms, b) the philosophy of reciprocal obligations, c) benefit redesign to support work incentives, and d) the function of case management and social services. Collectively, these key elements reflect trends in changing perspectives that are not only relative to social welfare programs, but also to concepts about the respective roles of the public, private, community, family and individual sectors in sustaining social cohesion.
Devolution of Benefits and Services.

A series of interrelated complex policies that formulate a new approach to social cohesion has involved a process of devolving centralized government responsibility to multiple lower levels of government, as well as a public-private mix of non-government organizations, private industry, and consumers who participate in decision-making about social welfare programs and provisions. In many respects this trend towards devolution is also designed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of social welfare programs by a process of “new public management” which is based on market-type mechanisms and autonomy in decision making (Leeuw, 1997; Lazar & Stoyko, 1997; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1995). The intent is not to only make public sector organizations more accountable, but also to expect more effectiveness and efficiency from quasi-public sector organizations who assume many of the services that were previously primarily the task of the more centralized government.

Some of the more recent efforts to devolve benefits and services reflect a broad range of programme mechanisms aimed at changing the balance of responsibility. A major feature, of each of the initiatives is a focus on employment incentives, social security contributions, and social support systems to develop policies that reduce social and economic barriers to work (McCumiskey, 1997). This exhibits an expanding recognition of the multiple causation of unemployment and the interdependency of public and private programs.

Another common characteristic is to facilitate the development of social services that are provided by the private sector, including for-profit as well as not-for-profit community-based agencies. One important facet of such policies is for the public program to reduce or eliminate
the direct provision of services in favor of contracting with a private or community agency for services. This approach shifts the role of public systems from a provider to a contractor and leading to a greater dependence on partnerships with non-government agencies.

A third important facet is that cash benefits and services are not merely provided as rights to people in poverty or to extend solidarity, but also to engage people in social networks by requiring them to enter into a contractual agreement in order to receive any benefit. For example, this is characteristic of RMI in France (Spicker, 1997) and most state welfare reform measures in the United States.

**Public Sector as a Service Purchaser.** There are a number of examples of unfolding public-private collaborations which tend to place more of the burden for services and benefits on non-public agencies. One aspect of this trend that has become fairly widespread in many nations is the shift from the public sector as a provider of services to the public sector as a purchaser of services (Glennerster & Le Grand, 1995). In the United States a 1993 study reported that almost 80 percent of the state social service departments surveyed had expanded privatization of services in the previous five years (United States Government Accounting Office, 1997). This trend is likely to accelerate as the process of devolution increases.

Trends in devolution have led to the expansion of NGOs and quasi-market, quasi-public agencies who provide social welfare services. Contracting out certain services is particularly being used with regards to health care and support services for children and families, and is a major component of a number of recent reform initiatives, including private contracting for unemployment in Australia.
Community-Based Initiatives. An example of an initiative which is aimed at capacity building in low-income, high unemployment areas by shifting more responsibility to the community is the Community Development Programme (CDP) in Ireland. The CDP supports local resource centers that are focal points for community development activities in economically poor areas. In 1996 there were about 80 projects (McCumiskey, 1997). The projects are complementary to the Government’s Operational Programme for Local Urban and Rural Development that promotes local enterprise initiatives.

Economic Empowerment Zones. A similar emphasis on local enterprise development and community social services is found in rural development policies in the United States under the National Rural Development Partnership (NRDP) and the Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Community (EZ/EC) programs. The primary focus of these programs is clearly local economic development, but they also include a significant mandate for the development of community social service programs in recognition of the need for systems of local and regional social support.

Eligibility for these programs is based not only on economic criteria, but on the community’s ability to demonstrate a high level of cooperation and solidarity among all sectors of the community. A recent OECD has shown that EZ/EC programs demonstrate effective “complementarity between top-down and bottom-up strategies” (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1997b, p. 91).

Expectations from Program Reforms

There are a number of specific expectations or programmatic outcomes that have emerged from discussions related to controlling government program expenditures and
increasing public-private shared responsibility. While there is certainly a wide range of attitudes on welfare approaches (Taylor-Gooby, 1997), some of the more frequently mentioned expectations and assumptions related to specific policies are briefly noted below.

**Reductions in Payroll Contributions.** One anticipated expectation or desired outcome of policies that focus on limiting the scope of social security benefits is a reduction in contributory employee and employer payroll contributions which, in most industrialized countries, are perceived as having reached a point of saturation. While there are numerous examples, the recent discussions related to German Pension Reform 1999 to avoid any increase in payroll contribution rates is a case in point. In any case where a significant reduction in social security program expenditures, or payroll contributions, has not been politically feasible, there are expectations that the various limitations that have been imposed on cash income transfers and social service benefits will, at minium, keep payroll contributions from rising.

**Private or Occupational Supplementary Schemes.** Directly related to limiting payroll contributions are policies which seek to increase opportunities for individual choice and incentives that would contribute to both prosperity and social cohesion (Snower, 1997). Among various proposals are efforts to expand the role of private or supplementary schemes, as well as increased incentives for personal savings. This approach continues to be viewed by some as a viable alternative option with the capacity of offsetting a significant portion of program expenditure issues related to demography and labor market behavior. Discussions on the potential scope of occupational pensions, especially defined contributions and personal savings, reflect a wide range of opinions. These vary from those that encourage the use of the private sector as a supplement to public systems to beliefs that public schemes should supplement the
private sector. While there are various provisions for defined contribution schemes along with tax incentives for private savings in most industrial nations, this does not yet appear to represent a major policy approach (Steinmeyer, 1996). Nevertheless, some examples of established supplementary schemes in several industrial countries are worth noting.

**Income-Tested Benefits.** Another expectation stemming from the devolution of public social welfare programs partnerships is a greater reliance on benefits that are income tested (Eardley, et al; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1998). One assumption is that cash and in-kind benefits limited to those who can document a need based on their level of income or means will help control expenditures and reduce welfare dependency. While this approach has long been the subject of intense debate, there has been a clear increase in the significance that these programs play as a proportion of GDP in industrial nations (Ditch & Barnes, 1996). One rationale of proponents for such programs is that they are cost effective.

Opponents, however, note the high administrative costs inherent in most income-tested programs, as well as various problems associated with stigmatization. Other counter arguments are: that middle and higher income groups would be less willing to contribute to a system that protects only the poor; that such programs undermine the incentives for self-sufficiency unless the benefits are extremely low; and that children are made more vulnerable in at risk families who do not take-up income-tested benefits for numerous reasons (Evans & Piachaud, 1996).

Several Scandinavian nations and New Zealand have recently implemented a variety of modifications in social security that are aimed at restricting benefits to individuals that meet newly implemented income tests. These measures were part of comprehensive pension reforms that also more closely linked pensions to work history in Norway and coordination between
contributions and benefits in Sweden (Kuhnle & Eitrheim, 1997). It is important to note that the impact of more stringent qualifying conditions may be offset in Nordic countries by the integration of cash and social services in the system that enables early identification and referral of clients with related social problems (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1998).

**Informal Care.** Advocates of reduced public social welfare programs typically expect there to be a responsive increase in informal family care. This entails greater reliance on extended families for a wide range of social services. An underlying assumption is that families have the capacity and the willingness to take on more responsibility in caring for family members. It is believed that informal services can assume some of the services currently expected from public programs. One intent of emphasizing informal support is to reduce the need to increase cash benefit amounts and expand personal social services, as well as the revenue required to support them.

**Cash Benefits.** An important aspect of increasing informal care is establishing provisions in cash benefit programs that enhance family capacities. Some examples of recent developments include a Parenting Allowance in Australia which will help to reduce the stigma attached to single (lone) parents by recognizing that “all parents, regardless of their marital status, make a major contribution to society” (Australian Minister for Social Security, 1998). Another initiative is the cash benefit program development in Switzerland which in January 1997 introduced child-raising and caregiving credits, along with credit-splitting to its old-age pension system which will address issues of equity for the protection of women (Siegnethale, 1998). In addition, Germany is introducing a modification in its child care benefit by raising the
ceiling on “baby year” credits to 100 percent of average earnings, effective July 1, 1998 (Hinrichs, 1998; Scholz, 1998) which reduces penalties for families.

**Employment-Related Services.** While numerous government programs are currently in place to facilitate employment through special training, rehabilitation, sheltered workshops and the like, greater attention is being paid to expanding efforts to address a broader range of potential environmental and personal barriers faced by individuals who might be capable of active labor market participation. One important role of the private sector in this regard is social service assistance that enables more people to be actively engaged in the labor market. This includes collaboration among the public and private sectors in supporting: additional and new training programs that increase employment opportunities for the unemployed; enhanced school-to-work programs for young people; special work provisions for women and older persons that make it easier for full and part-time employment; more personal support and work opportunities for people with disabilities, mental illness, or dysfunctional family problems; improved fringe benefits for part-time workers that encourage entrance into the labor market at entry level jobs; and income protection and credit systems that assist individuals in making a living in the informal work sector.

**Program Accountability.** An important dimension receiving greater attention in program expectation in the process of developing a stronger collaboration between public and private sectors is that of program accountability. To a considerable extent, this is a response to a tacit acceptance of the assumption that local, private, or non-governmental implemented and managed programs are more accountable.
Public pressure to ensure program accountability in terms of a clear demonstration that programs address defined needs has given rise to a widespread standardized process of program accountability through a feedback loop of assessment consisting of various elements, including: 1) determining population or community income and social service needs with empirical data, including input from consumers, 2) establishing achievable program goals based on the available information, 3) setting measurable program outcomes, 4) using the information from the outcomes to refine the program by adding or modifying provisions and, if necessary, setting new goals and outcomes, and 5) simplifying the process of receiving services and benefits by providing a single point of entry into the system and coordinated services among various agencies. This process has generated various reductions in program funding along with administrative restructuring of public welfare programs.

Some recent illustrations of various aspects of this general approach include government initiatives in Australia’s Department of Social Security (Australia Ministry for Social Security, 1998, and Ireland’s Social Security Agency (United Kingdom Government web site, 1998b). Other examples include discussions on welfare reform in the United Kingdom’s Green Paper (United Kingdom Government web site, 1998a) and welfare reform in the United States.

**Community and Corporate Responses.** Another potential expectation of devolution and welfare reform is that of expanded corporate and local commitment and governance (Michalski, Miller & Stevens, 1997). This would entail efforts at getting commerce and community leaders to be more involved in decentralized local and community initiatives and decision making with regards to economic and social development. Such collaboration would presumably result in more coordinated and, hence, more efficiently financed local projects.
Clearly, the formulae for new mixes of private-public, state-local government, and community-family programs that contribute to social cohesion through effective and efficient income and social service policies and programs are complex and varied. Moreover, most of the emerging configurations are too new to provide accurate evaluation. Nevertheless, there is a wide variety of experiments underway that may provide some understanding of what works or, at minimum, provides some insight as to what is the “best practice” possible under social, political and economic circumstances.

Civil Society. There is also an expectation that social welfare reforms will combat social exclusion by improving social service inter-agency and inter-professional collaborations that also promote stronger social ties in families and communities (Cannan, 1996). These efforts are closely linked to civil society approaches to coping with social exclusion and poverty by building on “social capital” through increased organization and participation of those marginalized groups who are most affected by welfare policy reforms (White, 1997).

International Initiatives

While this paper is focused on the efforts among industrial nations to sustain social cohesion while restructuring social welfare delivery systems in their own nations, the awareness of the importance of social cohesion in economically developing nations has led to several major international initiatives. One such initiative is the UNESCO Management of Social Transformations (MOST) program which was adopted as the official priority of nations following the Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development. It promotes socio-economic cohesion, ethnic-cultural integration and poverty reduction through “best practices.” While focused on economically developing nations, it has many of the common elements related to
goals and strategies of partnerships and devolution in industrial countries.

Similarly the European Community’s PHARE grant programme has strong elements of social welfare through the development of NGOs and local community participation through expanded economic and social partnerships. Again, while primarily focused on Central and Eastern Europe, these projects have many of the elements characteristic of the efforts associated with devolution in industrialized nations.

Another example of international effort to build social cohesion through expanded social safety nets, social assistance, and the prevention of poverty is the STEP program of the International Labor Organization. The objective of this program is to improve the use of tax-based transfers for populations that are not traditionally covered through wages and work, such as the informal work sector. The intent is to develop ways for these populations to provide their own social welfare through non-conventional means, including family and community-based programs and projects that do not rely on work-related centralized systems.

**Concerns**

The desirable outcomes expectations anticipated from a shift in the balance of benefits and services from state government to local government, and from the community and the private sector noted above are tempered by a number of potentially negative consequences that may result from a reformulated approach to social cohesion. Some of the concerns that have been raised about actual and proposed changes are briefly noted below.

**Increased Poverty Rates.** One major concern is the potential for substantial increases in poverty rates, particularly among the elderly and the marginally employed. Social welfare currently provides a strong buffer against poverty in Europe (van Ginneken, 1996). Attempts to
make significant structural changes in the funding and delivery of income and social service programs may, however, place that level of protection at risk. Expanding income-tested benefits and services, for example, could reduce the safety net for those marginal low-income people who are near the poverty level, but do not meet the qualifying conditions. There are also major concerns expressed about the potential negative results of privatized pension systems with particularly threatening potentials for women with erratic work patterns and low wage employment (Luckhaus, 1996).

Social Exclusion. There is also concern that any excessive emphasis on program efficiency and effectiveness characteristic of support for programs such as income-tested benefits may divert attention from the broader issues related to addressing specific categories of need in the expectation that such programs are more cost effective (as the case is made for income-tested programs, for example) are less likely to succeed if provisions are not made for programs that expand, rather than restrict, the participation of persons who are socially, politically, or culturally excluded from the mainstream (Berghman, 1997). The concern over participation in program development and implementation by persons most impacted by decisions about income and social service programs.

1 November 1999