

# TRENDS IN ACTIVE INCLUSION POLICIES IN SPAIN AND ITALY<sup>i</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

Since the Lisbon Summit in 2000, the idea of State Social Active (SSA) has inspired active employment policies. The concept of SSA born inspired by social democratic ideas, but it has gradually become an idea with neoliberal connotations after the failure of the objectives set in Lisbon Summit. The economic crisis and the high rate of unemployment have contributed to the empowerment of neoliberal orientations and mechanisms of 'activation' in the labour market. The Recommendations of European policy to implement "active inclusion with an adequate income" has also sought to rely on the Social Dialogue in accordance with the original social democratic Active Social State inspiration. This activation discourse has been relevant in the debate on the labour market reforms (COM 2012a; 2012b; 2012c).

The aim of this paper is to analyse the importance of the Social Dialogue as a mechanism for the Active Social State: What role is played by the Social Dialogue in the implementation of adequate income and active employment policy? The European Union recommendations about Active Inclusion revolve around three key stones: Pillar I) adequate and sufficient income; Pilar II) accessible labour markets; and Pillar III) quality of services.

Our findings underline that the discourse of activation has spread in Italy and Spain among social actors. This discourse is followed with a new trend in order to centralise employment policy through a sophisticated system to control employment policy and unemployment benefits. Besides that, in both countries there is a trend in order to decentralise social protection to regional and local level. Thus, there are two trends: centralisation of mechanism of social discipline and decentralisation of solidarity. The activation discourse acquires increasingly neoliberal moods as an instrument of discipline, particularly blaming the unemployed people. The unemployed are increasingly considered as individually responsible of their training and their long-term employability. The social-democratic orientation that reminded during the origin of the principle of activation is disappeared due to the lack of social transference, economic redistribution, articulated social policies, unemployment protection and social dialogue in active policies. The meaning of activation's discourse is associated with discipline, active job search, mobility and the individual availability in the labour market.



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