

Stealthy, Covert and Uninvited? Commission's "Activism" in the Implementation Convergence of Social Services of General Interest in the European Union

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The broad aspirations of social policy in the European Union continue to be the preserve of the Member States as the particular histories, ideas, and institutions upon which national social policies are based remain quite heterogeneous. A process of convergence is nevertheless discernible in respect of policy implementation. The reasons for this relate to the nature of the European integration pro-

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cess but should not be confused with the broad adoption of a notional European Social Model, the harmonisation of national policies or, more generally, with the classical approach to EU policy making in the social field. This paper instead explores how the implementation typology on Social Services of General Interest produced by Humer et al. (2013) can be understood in relation to the way in which the European Commission has continued to act as a “purposeful opportunist” by employing “policy entrepreneurship” in the context of the various ‘new governance’ approaches associated with EU social policy.

Key words: services of general interest, social services of general interest, social services

1. Introduction

Although it was little more than a footnote in the Treaty of Rome of 1957, Services of General Interest (SGI)¹ is now a key EU policy area.² Indeed, SGI, and Social Services of General Interest (SSGI), its social sub-category, have attained a level of recognition at the EU level that remains puzzling. Unlike SGI and Services of General Economic Interest (SGEI) however, SSGI currently supports no legally binding definition (Szyszczak, 2013: 317) – there is no Treaty basis for SSGI and the Member States (MSs) cannot agree on its boundaries (Bauby, 2013: 50-51; van de Gronden, 2011: 150–151). It can however be viewed as a useful device for the Commission of the European Union (CEU), acting as a “purposeful opportunist” in its attempt to shape the policy process, as ambiguity

¹ While the notion of Services of General Economic Interest (SGEI) was contained in Article 86 of the Rome Treaty, 25 March 1957, the broader notion of Services of General Interest (SGI) was only developed in relation to the Treaty of Amsterdam, 2 October 1997, while the term Social Services of General Interest (SSGI) only emerged in the Presidency Conclusions of the Laeken European Council meeting 14–15 December 2001.

² This work draws on the findings of previous contributions focusing on the EU as a regulatory state, using “stealthy” (Majone, 2009) “covert” (Genschel, Jachtenfuchs et al., 2014) and “uninvited” (Greer, 2006) methods to further its preferred policy goals often in opposition, though rarely directly so, to the stated interests of some member states. The authors are grateful for constructive comments from Prof. Hellmut Wollman, Prof. Gerard Marcou and Dr. Alois Humer as well as from the two anonymous reviewers of the journal on a previous version of this paper.

often protects the CEU's preferred policy alternative from outright MSs opposition. The notion of "purposeful opportunism" refers to organisational activity which displays inherently flexible methods in the pursuit of set overall objectives and/or goals.³

In broad terms, SSGI are seen as measures addressing risk and vulnerabilities in life (EC, 2007: 7–8), which facilitate social inclusion and the safeguarding of fundamental rights (EC, 2010: 16–17). The notion of SSGI has, in part, been used by the CEU as one of a number of tools and/or strategies designed to "shape" the policy making environment in the EU Social Policy field – a field in which EU institutions ostensibly have only limited powers *vis-a-vis* the MSs (Bauby, 2011: 34–35). Similarly, the focus on "implementation" (in relation to low level day-to-day politics) rather than on the often rarefied arena of policy making as inter-state bargaining provides another mechanism through which the CEU is able to exert broader "policy goal" influence (see for instance, Cram, 1997: 61–97).

This paper seeks to provide an explanatory framework for the results produced by the Humer et al. (2013: 150–154) dataset. The initial point focussed on understanding how much "convergence" was occurring in terms of SSGI implementation. The second step sought to problematize the typology results by questioning why, in a context where institutional MSs' dominance prevails in the broad EU social policy field, "implementation convergence" in terms of SSGI nevertheless occurs. The third step identifies a suitable theoretical approach to understanding the mechanisms involved while the fourth step attempts to confirm its appropriateness.

Section one draws a distinction between the underlying assumptions of traditional social policy typologies and the Humer et al. (2013) approach, turning the focus away from "ideal" types and the policy-making level to consider instead "real" types and policy implementation. While the dataset itself is not a time series and thus only shows a "snapshot" of what

³ See Cram (1997) and originally Klein and O'Higgins (1985). The CEU is able to do this through its power to shape agendas and frame policy developments, packaging *its* policies and selecting the way in which they will be presented in the least conflicting manner possible. With the limited resources available to it, it also seeks to mobilise or create its own constituency of support through the sponsoring and promotion of research and learning functions while preparing the field for future action – seed funding, soft law measures etc. Action is always rationalised in accordance with topical situations while continual low-key attempts are made to stretch the current legal basis for action. Finally, strategic learning and flexibility are key as events are allowed to run their course in the expectation that new policy windows of opportunity will present themselves. Adept, flexible, and goal-oriented, the CEU plays the "long" game.

may be occurring, historical and institutional analysis is used to “fill the gaps” and therefore supplements the overall picture provided. The results suggest that the traditional welfare clusters – when viewed through an implementation prism – are becoming less distinct. Moreover, they are attracting the NMS into their orbits and consequently, no new “Post-Communist” cluster is discernible. Therefore, there is a convergence of sorts taking place.

Section two situates these findings within a historical and institutional EU context – specifically in relation to the development of EU social policy competences and debates. The notion of social policy is used here as a framework within which to discuss SSGI. This is necessary because of SSGI’s lack of legal standing in the EU framework. It is however important to take account of the broader EU debate on “services”/SGI and the fraught definitional relationship between SGI/SSGI.⁴ This is manifested particularly strongly when discussing the clash between EU Competition Law, where the various mechanisms of the internal market are seen as the driving force of integration and, as such, given primacy over national law, and historic and continuing MS dominance in the social policy field limiting the utility of further harmonisation measures via the traditional “Community Method”. If integration is unable to occur in the traditional way, and convergence seems to be occurring nevertheless, how can this be explained?

Section three is tasked with outlining a suitable theoretical framework to situate the questions arising from sections one and two. The broad framework chosen was that of historical institutionalism (Steinmo, 2010; Hall, Taylor, 1996; Stone et al., 2001; Pierson, 2004). This was preferred over traditional state-centric Integration Theory approaches and specifically over the Liberal Intergovernmentalism of Moravcsik (1998) primarily because of the way in which “institutions” are viewed by each approach – as potentially active or passive structures.

Following Knill (2001: 4–5) a second layer of analysis is also included to deal with the traditionally perceived deterministic and conservative bias within HI as an explanatory approach. As such, the notion of “agency” is operationalized with reference to the CEU’s “purposeful opportunism” and its ongoing role as a “policy entrepreneur”.⁵

⁴ The work of Neergaard (2009: 20; 2013: 210) provides a useful overview of how the different sub-categories of SGI are related to each other while Hatzopoulos (2010: 42–47) and Szyszczak (2013: 318–20) also provide useful summaries.

⁵ Radaelli and Dunlop (2013: 935) also point to the possible fruitful combination of HI and PO.

Referencing the secondary literature, the fourth section confirms support for the notion of CEU's "purposeful opportunism" and policy entrepreneurship in respect of SSGI implementation. This is followed by a brief concluding section.

While the notion of an emerging European welfare state coalescing around the outputs of European social policy and informed by reference to the "European Social Model", has been extensively discussed (Adnett, Hardy, 2005; Kleinman, 2002; Cousins, 2005; Ferrera, 2005; Hay, Wincott, 2012; Taylor-Gooby, 2004), the "institutionalisation" of SSGI, particularly in relation to service implementation, is a subject that has not received much attention. Similarly, while the legal literature on SGI/SSGI is already voluminous, little attempt is made therein to conceptualise the "motivations" of the institutions involved. This paper intends to address these gaps in the literature and extols their virtue as much neglected central pieces in the EU social landscape.

2. A Typology of SSGI Implementation

The typology produced by Humer et al. (2013: 156) sought to investigate two perceived gaps in comparative European welfare research. First, the paucity of investigation into process as opposed to outcomes or ideals; specifically, welfare services and their modes of production, financing, organisation, and delivery. A real-type analysis, which focuses on the implementation⁶ of welfare, will produce a different result to that of an ideal-type analysis, focusing on policy formulation and theoretical policy visions.

The second identified gap focuses on the limited availability of data on welfare regimes beyond the "traditional" EU15/EFTA research area, suggesting a lack of comprehensiveness, and a reliance on selective case studies rather than a comprehensive approach. In the extended version

⁶ A different approach here would have been to focus on the notion of "street level bureaucrats" (Lipsky, 1980) which suggests that the way in which public policy is implemented and administered is the primary factor in its success. Implementation then is not just a technical matter but is primarily constitutive of how the policy in question is produced, received, and understood. Our focus on institutions, namely the CEU, is congruent with this approach. Though obviously pitched at a different scale it nevertheless shares a discourse centred around the impact of concepts such as "governance", New Public Management (NPM), and neo-liberalism.

of Esping-Anderson's typology, presented by Ebbinghaus (2012: 14) for instance, Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia are the only NMS included, together with Germany and Austria.

Humer et al. (2013: 161–162) chose to operationalize the implementation of SSGI in terms of process – the provision of services (in a spatial context). The typology addresses policy modes and territorial organisation for SSGI encompassing 31 European countries (Table 1) with the focus on *implementation* – not policy formulation. This typology focused on *real-type* social phenomena rather than Weberian *ideal types*. A database was created by means of primary data collection. National experts in the 31 studied countries were consulted on (sub-) national organisational matters in respect to nine key welfare services related to education, health and care, labour market policy, social housing and social transfer schemes.

The level of service organisation was expressed in relation to four attributes – two social and two territorial. From a socio-political perspective, the production and financing modes of a certain welfare service provided the primary focus of attention. The experts had to decide whether a particular service was provided and/or financed by state institutions, market mechanisms, or civic/familial engagement. From a territorial perspective, the responsible governance level and the degree of involvement in service provision by the spatial planning agenda, broadly defined, were the main attributes. The experts identified whether service responsibility was located at the national, regional, or local government level or – where no state responsibility existed – at the “individual level”. The level of influence of spatial planning programmes and instruments on service provision illustrates whether service delivery is, in effect, territorially organised. In some cases, planning policies are explicit in designating locations or routes for service provision, while in others they impact on service provision only implicitly. Some countries simply do not address service provision matters in their planning instruments. Moreover, the character of a service, for example, social transfer schemes, often makes it unnecessary *a priori* to tackle with territorial policies.

The collected expert data was sorted by means of a quantitative multivariate method of cluster analysis focusing on the “furthest neighbour” approach. The analysis for the abovementioned 31 European states resulted in a typology consisting of three grand types comprising two to four types. The decision to divide the European states into types and grand types is statistically supported by what is termed the “elbow-criteria” (Ketchen, Shook, 1996).

Given that Belgium and the Netherlands cluster very late, we consider them outliers and will not discuss them further at this time. The problems associated with classifying the Netherlands and its welfare system have, for instance, been identified in previous research (Esping-Andersen, 1990, 1999; Hicks, Kenworthy, 2003). Table 1 shows the division of European states into several clusters and their characteristics.

Table 1: Types of Welfare Service Organisation in Europe

Political-territorial typology of SSGI organisation							
Types		Tendency regarding social welfare aspects		Tendency regarding administration and planning		Grand types	
		Production "P"	Financing "F"	Level of responsibility "R"	Territorial organisation "T"		
11	HR, LU, PT, SI	fragmentation		national	implicit	1	hands-off/ passive
12	ES, IT	fragmentation		regional	implicit		
13	CY, MT	mainly public		national	implicit		
14	BE	non profit		regional	explicit		
21	DK, LV, NO, RO, SE, SK	mainly public		local	explicit	2	hands-on/ active
22	BG, CZ, EE, FI, IS	mainly public		national & local	implicit		
23	AT, CH, DE, FR, LT, PL, UK	mainly public		regional & local	explicit		
31	GR, HU, IE	mainly public		national	explicit	3	all-or-none/ ambivalent
32	NL	private influence		national or none	explicit		

Source: Modified from Humer et al., 2013

The first type contains eight countries⁷ and is characterised by an implicit territorial organisation in respect of SSGI. In the smaller countries, responsibility for SSGI is located at the national level while in the larger countries it generally lies at the regional level. Effectively, this means that

⁷ Croatia, Luxembourg, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Italy, Cyprus, and Malta.

the controlling administrative unit is, in population terms, rather similar. With the exception of Cyprus and Malta, the production and financing of SSGI is “fragmented”, i.e. there is no logic or system in the production and financing. In Cyprus and Malta, responsibility for production and financing remains public, probably for reasons of scale. A second type contains only three countries (Greece, Hungary, and Ireland) and is characterised by the explicitly territorial organisation of SSGI. Here the national level exercises responsibility for SSGI delivery with production and financing being public. The final type contains the remaining 17 countries⁸ and is characterised by the strong territorial organisation of SSGI. Responsibility is located at the *local* level with both the production and financing of SSGI being predominantly public.

Eight of the thirteen New Member States have adopted a similar approach to that of the grand cluster; Hungary is the only NMS in the smallest cluster while four NMS (Croatia, Slovenia, Malta, and Cyprus) show similarities to the “Mediterranean” cluster. This is not, however, to suggest that convergence at the policy formulation level has taken place in the analysed countries.

Although Ebbinghaus (2012) focused on ideal-types while Humer et al. (2013) focused on real-types, with the exception of Hungary, the expectation that the four NMS he discusses would gravitate towards Germany and Austria appears to have been confirmed. Interestingly, Draxler and Van Vliet (2010: 19) argued that the NMS show no signs of convergence to the west. Their study however focuses on policy formulation and ideal-types while their analysis relates only to the period 2000-06. It is perhaps optimistic to assume policy formulation will change radically after such a short period as institutional inertia will inevitably slow the process. Contrary to Draxler and Van Vliet, the results uncovered by Humer et al., indicate that “something” has happened in relation to SSGI implementation.

The countries in the grand type 1 are, with the exception of Spain and Italy, small (Croatia, Slovenia, Luxembourg, Cyprus and Malta) to medium-sized (Portugal) geographically. The territorial organisation of welfare services is implicit in all the countries in this grand type 1, i.e. welfare services are only loosely or indirectly tied to a certain territory or

⁸ Denmark, Latvia, Norway, Romania, Sweden, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Austria, Switzerland, Germany, France, Lithuania, Poland and the United Kingdom.

geographical unit. At first glance, the level of administrative and planning responsibility for welfare appears heterogeneous. This needs some clarification.

In Cyprus, Malta, Croatia, Luxembourg, Slovenia and Portugal, all relatively small countries in population terms and geographically, responsibility remains at the national level. In Spain and Italy responsibility lies with the relatively autonomous and, in some cases, independent regions. The size, population-wise and geographically, of e.g. Navarra or Trentino-Alto-Adige is about the same as Croatia or Slovenia. Thus while the level of administrative and planning responsibility for welfare here is heterogeneous *de jure* this is not necessarily the case *de facto*. In Spain, Italy, Croatia, Luxembourg, Slovenia, and Portugal, the level of private influence in the production and financing of social welfare is marked. For the two smallest countries, Malta and Cyprus, production and financing is mainly through public sector institutions. One plausible explanation for this may be the desire for economies of scale.

The 17 countries in grand type 2 come from across Europe. The financing and production of welfare services in these countries is mainly undertaken through public financing. The local level generally plays a key role here and exercises administrative and planning responsibility for social welfare. With the exception of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, and Iceland, welfare services are explicitly tied to a certain territory or geographical unit. In those countries where this is not the case, welfare services are loosely or indirectly tied to a certain territory or geographical unit.

Grand type 3 contains three countries: Greece, Hungary, and Ireland. Here, welfare services are explicitly tied to a certain territory or geographical unit and the national level has administrative and planning responsibility for social welfare. The financing and production of welfare services is undertaken mainly through the public purse in Greece, Hungary, and Ireland.

At first glance, it appears reasonable that Greece, Hungary, and Ireland have clustered. All three are “over-centralised” (Tsekos, Triantafyllopoulou, 2015: 22; Horváth, 2015: 11; The Irish Times, 2015). However, the socio-economic problems in Greece, Hungary and Ireland, exacerbated by the financial collapse of 2008, are numerous and multifaceted. It is clear that these countries are effectively experiencing an economic transition process that has been interrupted. Thus, they are now waiting in a “half-way-house” between welfare regimes (Hay, Wincott, 2012: 156–

157; Matsaganis, 2011: 510; Strathopoulos, 1996: 136–137; Ferge, Tausz, 2002: 180; Horváth, 2015: 17–19). Clearly, this has also manifested itself in terms of their implementation of SSGI.

Although the “Mediterranean” cluster appears disparate, the discussion here has shown that from an *implementation* perspective these countries have many commonalities. While the smallest cluster, containing Greece, Hungary, and Ireland, initially appears rather odd, the discussion has shown that these countries also have – from an implementation perspective – many commonalities. Furthermore, the big cluster, including countries from all but the Mediterranean part of Europe, has many commonalities implementation wise. It thus appears that the SSGI implementation typology by Humer et al. (2013) is robust and reasonable.

3. Social Policy and the EU

As noted previously, SGI has moved from anonymity to centre stage in the EU’s legal and political debate (Neergaard, 2009: 17) even though the broad notion remains routed primarily in EU Commission’s “soft law” documents.

The basis of the legal settlement between the MSs and the supranational institutions is that the economic constitution of the treaties – primarily competition and internal market rules – only apply to *economic* activities, public services of a non-economic nature are thus not captured by these rules. This was meant to provide a clear demarcation between the MSs and the EU – with social policy clearly in the MSs realm with the EU economic rules set aside in the general (state level) interest. However, technological advances, regulatory experimentation, political pressure from the CEU and judicial engagement on the part of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) have all conspired to destabilise this original assumption particularly with respect to what qualifies as a non-economic service and where social policies such as healthcare fit into this ever-changing schema (Hatzopoulos, 2012: 38) leading Neergaard et al. (2013: 8) to note that “liberalisation has broken down or blurred traditional boundaries of the state provision of goods and services in the social sector”. Ongoing attempts at the national level to reduce public expenditure and powerful changes in Europe’s demographic patterns as well as shifts in consumer tastes in respect of public service provision have all combined to produce a situation where traditional approaches to welfare provision are seen as

increasingly under threat (Szyszczak, 2013: 320). It is in this context that the EU social policy and SSGI implementation must be viewed.

At the national level, social policy has historically functioned as an integrator effectively helping to cast European states in their current form, as such it is clearly constitutive of their national sovereignty. Indeed, Martinsen is unequivocal on this point, noting, “In its gradual development, welfare came to constitute a decisive means of national integration, where material rights and obligations linked the state and civil society together” (2013: 54; see also Ferrera, 2003, and Giddens, 1994). While similarities exist between national welfare institutions and philosophies and “family relationships” can be drawn, at root each is path-dependent, based on specific national histories, ideas and institutions. With national security and macroeconomic policy increasingly impacted by decisions and agreements (and/or social, political and economic forces) *beyond* the control of individual sovereigns, the desire to maintain control over welfare and re-distributional issues *within* individual states is clear and is fundamentally linked to the continuing political legitimacy of and democratic solidarity within national level structures – producing social citizenship – and the power to set rights and obligations and define *who* is to be protected. Moreover, it is clear that state-level welfare provision has expanded exponentially in the half century since the European integration process began (Ferrera, 2005: 171; Hay, Wincott, 2012: 99; Pestieau, 2006: 78–90).

The original six EU members intended welfare to be produced by economic growth not regulatory intervention. Thus, with exceptions relating to market-making measures such as Equal Pay and the removal of barriers to Labour Mobility, supranational competence in the social field was severely restricted as social policy was deemed to lie outside the economic constitution of the Treaty. While significant economic powers were ceded to supranational institutions, particularly in relation to the single market, in the social field the subsidiarity⁹ “formula” emerged, stipulating that competence to decide on the content, scope, and organisation of welfare policies remains within the realm of national competences – as long as the exercise of that competence does not contradict EU law.

With the “social space” colonised by the MSs and with economic and commercial policy the primary focus of integration, this formula proved a

⁹ Note however that, since the late 1990s, the meaning of the term has undergone a subtle change, from the notion that there is a clear dividing line between governance levels to one where there is a necessity for supple co-ordination across various levels of governance (see De La Porte, Pochet, 2003: 32).

workable compromise, but over time, with enlargement introducing new members with increasingly divergent welfare systems and philosophies and the CEU's desire to promote cohesion by promoting "a level playing field", the EU has effectively created a framework where the MSs are now *forced* to rationalise century-long practices, often dictated by ill-defined interests and regulatory capture (Hatzopoulos, 2012: 95).

However, the welfare systems of the original EU members did clearly converge initially. Between 1958 and the early 1970s, national social models in Western Europe shed many of their most obvious differences and a roughly similar model came to be accepted *as desirable*. Enlargement, the economic crises of the 1970s, and the "restructuring" that followed made direct harmonisation increasingly difficult as, at the national level, the functionalist consensus over welfare provision convergence in Western Europe was decisively broken by the disparate approaches taken to addressing the economic impact of the "oil shocks" of the mid to late 1970s (Hemerijck, 2013: 89), while within the EU, the impact of these massive structural economic changes brought to a decisive end, in the MSs' favour, the long running debate over the desirability of a supranationally "harmonised" system of social security (Hay, Wincott, 2012: 159–160). Convergence, meanwhile, had occurred across the EU in some areas but this was generally only at a synthetic level in terms of the recognition of the need for universal and comprehensive service coverage. At both the ideological and the service provision and delivery levels significant differences remained.

Nevertheless, once the basic asymmetry between economic and social integration was recognised, the EU found itself increasingly engaging in the social policy field, for instance, when the desire for economic and monetary integration led to the recognition that employment and social policy had to be addressed at the EU level. Indeed as Martinsen notes, "the market building process of the EU implies considerable social integration through the abolition of national barriers to the internal market. Free movement principles and Competition Law are thus fundamental challenges to the traditional logic of "closure" [of the social space] to the Member States" (2013: 67). As the Single Market was consolidated "social" questions (social dumping, exportability of benefits, etc.) inevitably re-emerged, not only in relation to the legal aspects of social externalities produced by economic integration but also on the political level as elites became aware of the political need to "bind" economic integration within an overarching social framework in order to maintain the legitimacy of the project. This inevitably challenged once again the notion of the national embedment of welfare policy.

Thus although it was widely acknowledged that the Single Market raised the issue of the need for EMU which itself made “Social Europe” both possible and necessary, the problem was how to achieve this within an EU social policy environment where the CEU did not have the right of initiative enabling it to control the policy process.

Beyond the constricted areas in which the CEU has a policy initiation role and the “negative integration” effects of the abolition of barriers under the internal market rubric, the EU can promote an integrative social policy in two ways; judicial policymaking through the ECJ and so-called “soft law” measures which came to be associated with the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) (Terpan, 2015: 72).¹⁰ As the former is beyond the current scope of this paper it is to the latter we now turn.¹¹

By the beginning of the 1990s, the Member States had faced something of a “double bind” (Ferrara, 2005; Hemerijck, 2013) in terms of dealing with social questions in an EU context. At the EU level, states were committed to the promotion of market integration which often significantly impacted traditional approaches to domestic level social intervention, while at the domestic level, they were severely constrained in terms of political legitimacy and support in the face of any curtailment of welfare provision across the policy spectrum from health care for the elderly to the quality of postal services.

The need for a recalibration of welfare systems across Europe, leading to welfare retrenchment, combined with the social policy impasse at the EU level was the driving force behind the adoption of the policy coordination

¹⁰ Policymaking through the ECJ is considered “hard law”, while the OMC is considered “soft law” Terpan (2015: 87–88) presents a useful overview of which EU policy areas can be considered to be governed by “hard” and “soft” law. Szyszczak (2013: 323–27) on the other hand, outlines a useful guide to the form and content of “soft law” in this context. In the European Studies literature, Wallace (2005: 79–89) provides an outline of the range of “governance methods” used in the EU context – Classical “community method”, EU regulatory mode (single market/competition policy), EU “distributional mode” (cohesion policy and structural funds), “Intensive transgovernmentalism” (immigration, asylum and security policy) and finally, “policy coordination” (soft law and OMC), while Büchs (2007: 4–6) notes that significant differences exist *within* the policy coordination sphere, both between the broad notion of “soft governance/soft law” and OMC and within the application of OMC itself in the various spheres in which it is (or has been) used, namely, monetary policy, employment, pensions and social exclusion.

¹¹ For a fuller discussion of the ECJ’s role in this process, see Greer (2006). Although his paper focuses on the ECJ and traditional neofunctionalism as a theoretical explanation rather than on the CEU and historical institutionalism, our conclusions on the impact of EU institutions on social policy are broadly similar.

logic behind the OMC. Both the CEU and the MSs sought to benefit from this new arrangement. The CEU was keen to address the negative perception that a neo-liberal EU was driving welfare retrenchment and thus sought to correct the perceived imbalance between negative and positive integration, while the MSs sought to confirm their preeminent position in social policy making, affirming their control of the process by noting that the harmonisation of so many diverse systems was impossible. In this context the adoption of the OMC made sense as convergence occurred around the position that OMC represented a “middle way” solution (Büchs, 2007: 11) to the “double bind” facing social policy in the EU. The MSs thought they had regained control of the process, while the CEU also saw opportunities to further its own agenda.

The CEU capitalised on this “window of opportunity” by adopting the notion that economic and social policy must be viewed as interdependent and that the EU had to be about more than just “markets and money” to succeed. Indeed on this point, and specifically in relation to SSGI, Szyszczak (2013: 320) notes that from here on, the CEU assumed a central role in driving forward the EU agenda on the modernisation of SSGI ensuring in the process their compatibility with EU law and policy, “Europeanising” SSGI by means of the tools associated with new governance and soft law. In order to placate the MS, the subsidiarity principle was reaffirmed, as was recognition that MSs’ diversity was a strength not a weakness. In concrete terms however, the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) saw a new method of coordination developed, in relation to the launching of the European Employment Strategy (EES), based on the promotion of broadly formulated common social policy goals combined with iterative and mandatory learning. This strengthened the role of EU institutions in goal setting and benchmarking while decision-making, *stricto sensu* remained within the competence of the MSs.

By the time of the Lisbon Agenda in 2000 this informal “soft law” (Ferreira et al., 2003: 366) approach to policy coordination had been officially recognised as the OMC. In its ideal form the OMC approach begins with the Council of Ministers agreeing on a common set of objectives, including indicators and benchmarks, where appropriate, drafted by the CEU. Using this list of benchmarks and indicators the MSs then translate the CEU’s guidelines into domestic policies subsequently reporting their progress on both the policies implemented and those planned. The CEU then evaluates these efforts and identifies best practices formulating new recommendations for each MS. Peer review exercises involving the MSs as well as regional, municipal, and non-governmental actors provide the

opportunity for feedback into the further development of national policy feeding into the process of guideline reformation. The results are published in joint reports, which the Council must approve, with the MSs then expected to implement the policy (Versluis et al., 2011: 62).

In this context, the CEU's authoritative leading role is seemingly replaced by that of the MSs' representatives; the Council becomes the primary venue while the CEU effectively takes on the role of facilitator in terms of ideas, networks, etc. Policy made in this way is not legally binding, depending instead on the MSs refining and implementing the proposals, though the CEU is also tasked with monitoring the MSs' outputs (Ladrech, 2010: 30). However, what actually tends to happen is that the CEU acts as a "purposeful opportunist" or as a "policy entrepreneur" (Majone, 2009: 42) – a political subject willing and able to opportunistically exploit its own limited resources in order to drive forward the creation of new and desirable policies (Cram, 1997: 155) – structuring the decision agenda and engaging in "idea promotion". After Lisbon, this model was rolled out beyond the EES to include social inclusion (2000), pensions (2001) and healthcare and long-term care (2004).

The reality this produces is perhaps best expressed by Ferrera with his characterisation of European welfare states as "semi-sovereign" with their national welfare systems effectively "nested" within the wider notion of Social Europe (Ferrera, 2005: 119).

The MSs have historically been able to shield their social systems from the EU's scrutiny by arguing that such interactions in public service systems should be exempt from internal market considerations. Since the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) however, the ECJ and the CEU have stipulated that while MSs' welfare "systems" remain sacrosanct, the *inputs* into these systems – labour, capital, machinery, drugs, etc., – arrive via market mechanisms and, as such, are captured by internal market mechanisms (Greer, 2006: 145).

Legally then, social policy remains firmly in the national domain, though policies on gender equality, social inclusion, migrants etc., have emerged at the EU level (Hay, Wincott, 2012: 147). The attempts of the EU to address core social welfare issues – for instance, through the promotion of the "European Social Model" notion (Hay, Wincott, 2012: 152–154; Adnett, Hardy, 2005) – have generally failed in the face of firm MSs' resistance. In reality, however, the CEU has promoted a number of ideational attempts to reinvigorate traditional *engrenage* through, for instance, the mechanism of the "social exclusion process" providing something of a

model for the “purposeful opportunist” approach. The CEU is thus able, for instance, to finesse its coordinating role in the OMC process or to leverage its regulatory authority to structure debate in the direction it deems most appropriate, exploiting windows of opportunity to purposefully pursue its own cohesion agenda while at the same time avoiding direct confrontation with the MSs.

4. Institutions and Institutional Theory

Mainstream state-centric integration theory views institutions as instrumental tools in the hands of their creators (Moravcsik, 1998: 18). This conclusion reflects rather poorly on how the EU is now broadly understood to function within the context of multi-level governance (Hooge, Marks, 2001).

The EU is the most densely “institutionalised” networked system of states in history. Institutional theory thus seems to be an appropriate choice of theoretical framework.¹² Although institutionalism has many variants (Peters, 2012; Lowdes, Roberts, 2013), historical institutionalism has been identified as having the best explanatory value for our purposes.

Institutions matter because they determine the roles and capacity of groups and individuals in policy making thus influencing actors’ abilities to attain their policy preferences. Institutions are both tangible and intangible. While “formal rules, compliance procedures and standard operating procedures” (Hall, 1986: 9) remain important, both formal and informal rules shape actor behaviour. An institution then is a complex mix of rules and procedures governing a given set of human interactions (Stone, Sweet, 2001: 6).

States are bounded rational actors but intensive interaction creates interdependence making unilateral state action increasingly inefficient. Government action by MSs is central to this process and “hard bargaining”

¹² Institutional theory has a long standing in political science. The New Institutional variant discussed here – historical institutionalism – was a core part of the so-called “comparativist turn” (Rosamond, 2000: 106) in EU studies which pivoted away from traditional international relations concerns with binary questions of “state(s) v superstate” and “heroic set piece advances through historic moments of inter-state bargaining” towards a concern with day-to-day politics, administrative routines, position formation and policy implementation across the entire EU governance system. In the integration theory literature then the concern with “institutions” is comparatively novel.

over preferences occurs, but states are neither unitary actors nor they are the only actors. Thus, despite Moravcsik, EU institutions¹³ must be viewed as independent of member state control. Moreover, contrary to functional theory, institutions cannot be designed simply to perform the duties and roles set out for them by their creators in principal-agent terms because their creators generally work with short-term horizons and rarely take account of the potential long-term results of institutional choices which can often have unintended consequences. In addition, institutional arrangements are often difficult to amend because of the obstacles to change created by the presence of veto-holders, multiple veto-decision points, super-majorities or prohibitive procedural decision rules. Institutions are therefore often referred to as “sticky”.

Over time, various “externalities” emerge from institutional design and practice. Governments are generally forced to adjust their preferences and behaviour to avoid high transaction or compliance costs. This preference shifting or “shifting of loyalties and expectations” (Haas, 1958: 16) can thus be seen rather as the unintended result of a series of incremental decisions to shift competences from the national to the European level, motivated by the inefficiencies exposed in previous integration steps where other choices were perceived to have been more costly in the short term (Leuffen et al., 2013: 66).

The notion of “path dependence” is the core of historical institutionalism. Past decisions and/or outcomes can have a defining impact on present or future outcomes. Once a decision is made to move down a particular path, it becomes sub-optimal to go back and start again. Instead, a series of compromise decisions are integrated into the system in an attempt to correct the flaws or change the outcomes. In this way, rules and procedures become “locked in” as actors prefer to adjust their strategies to accommodate the status quo rather than trying to affect significant structural change in the system. This is perhaps best expressed by Pierson (2004: 164) when he notes that “agents of change may play the starring role in the dramatic conclusion, but their appearance in the final chapter is often heavily dependent on preceding developments occurring over an extended period”.

Institutional forms are then frequently quite resilient for a number of reasons. Institutional rules are often hard to change; deliberately so because

¹³ It is important to distinguish between everyday usage of the word “institutions” as in “the institutions of the EU” and its more intangible usage in neo-institutional theory.

they are designed to promote stability and predictability. Moreover, actors are usually intimately aware of the “sunk costs” in the creation of an institution and of the side costs of unravelling the initial “bargain”. Finally, as individual institutions are usually embedded in wider systems of institutionalised networks and rules, institutional change may precipitate changes in other connected institutions or, render the institution in question incompatible with other associated parts of the network.

While this framework is good at explaining why national level structures are often difficult to change, why MSs’ opposition to EU-level social policy is so extensive and why EU social policy has developed in the way it has, as Peters (2012: 77–83) notes, while HI can explain the persistence of institutional patterns it is rather less good at explaining – primarily by means of the notion of punctuated equilibrium – how change occurs. By focusing on the institutions themselves as the sole explanatory factor, it lacks a robust endogenous understanding of agency.

This problem was addressed by Knill (2001: 4–5) who argues that we need to be able to determine when a purely “institutional” explanation is sufficient and when this has to be supplemented with reference to the strategic agency of the actors involved. Institutional explanations suffice when European policies do not appear to directly challenge the core institutional patterns of national administrative traditions or require only relatively small adjustments within the institutional core.¹⁴ If a European-level policy is seen to be in direct opposition to these core national structures and institutions, and the CEU does not have the right of initiative in the policy area concerned, then an institutional explanation for the inevitable domestic opposition is likely to suffice. If, however, such a policy is deemed not to challenge core national administrative traditions the process of domestic adaptation is not so easily addressed by institutional explanations alone. Non-institutional factors have to be considered, thus reintroducing the notion of agency.

¹⁴ Administrative traditions are defined by Knill (2001: 4) as “general patterns of administrative styles and structures which are strongly embedded in the macro-institutional context of the state tradition, the legal system and the politico-administrative system of a country”. This focus on the pivotal role of “core state powers” was subsequently taken up by Genschel and Jachtenfuchs (2014).

5. The CEU's Role in Social Policy Making: Stealthy, Covert and Uninvited?

As an institution, the CEU has quite limited power resources.¹⁵ Administratively, it has developed in a rather different way from that of the MSs. It has a limited capacity for day-to-day management and a power of initiative which is constrained in many areas. In addition, its redistributive powers remain quite weak. Its powers as a regulator and its “ideational” power are formidable, however. As such, its real power is in the area of “agenda shaping” (Majone, 2009: 42–63) and in adopting the role of “purposeful opportunist” – where it tries to maximise its autonomy within the agent-principal relationship it has with the MSs – in exploiting policy “windows of opportunity” as they arise. Success, however, remains highly differentiated across the various sectors within which it is involved, primarily because of the historically path-dependent character of the distribution of power, resources, and institutions in each sector.

In this context, social policy remains an interesting research field precisely because of the MSs' strong opposition to further integration and thus provides an interesting test case on the extent of the Commission's power and influence, primarily in the regulatory and ideational realms. Intergovernmentalism and inter-state bargaining alone cannot easily explain the development of EU social policy to date. Rather, “it is now increasingly accepted that much of the movement towards integration has resulted from the gradual bureaucratic pressure from the Commission” (Cram, 1997: 157).

How else then can we seek to understand and explain current developments in EU-wide SSGI implementation and in EU social policy more generally? As has been noted, initially by Majone (1996, 2009) and latterly by Greer (2006) and Genschel and Jachtenfuchs (2014), the process of European Integration is essentially a “stealthy” one. The CEU must work within certain preordained boundaries, avoiding opposition from within the Council and moving primarily by means of various “soft law”

¹⁵ Given the space constraints applicable here, the fact that the Commission is not a unitary actor has not been explicitly addressed. In reality, however, agency and preference formation in the Commission follow various “logics” at different times and can be motivated either by technocratic problem solving, ideologically driven policy seeking or a desire to maximise organisational competences (whether at the DG level or in terms of the Commission as a whole) *vis-a-vis* the Member States or the European Parliament (Hartlapp et al., 2014: 5–7).

mechanisms, regulatory usage or the creation of relatively small scale expenditure programmes, for example, through the building of “ideational networks” (such as e.g. ESPON).¹⁶ Minimum standard and goal setting is the name of the game here with the CEU endeavouring to “create a role for itself” in a broader standard-setting process. Szyszczak confirms this noting that “Commission”’s actions created a debate around SSGIs that has allowed for Europeanization processes to permeate into an area of competence traditionally, and jealously, protected by the Member States (2013: 320)”.

Moreover, Terpan (2015: 74–76) explains how soft law should be considered in this context, relating it to the nature of the *obligation* and the *enforcement mechanism*. The nature of the obligation to implement “soft law” in the MSs may be viewed by them as compelling (hard), illustrative (soft) or as deriving no obligations at all. The enforcement mechanism in terms of a “hard” obligation in relation to the implementation of “soft law” is either soft or none, a soft obligation is hard, soft or none, while the enforcement mechanism for no obligation in terms of “soft law” is soft enforcement. To meet the requirements for “soft law” implementation, formalised organisational structures and procedures are required.¹⁷

The norms determining “soft law” are usually similar to those for hard law norms. However, they are quasi-legal as they are given a form that clearly resembles hard law. “When the source is quasi-legal, there is a strong probability that an enforcement mechanism is provided, through procedures, information diffusion, bureaucratic operations, and delegation of authorities to enforce and implement rules” (Terpan, 2015: 75). How “soft law” is

¹⁶ The ESPON (European Spatial Planning Observation Network) Programme aims at supporting the reinforcement of EU Cohesion Policy in 28 Member States. It was originally set up in 2002. It is funded by the EU Commission, the 28 Member States and the Partner Countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland with additional co-financing from the European Regional Development Fund. ESPON is an independent research fund controlled by the EU Commission and the participating countries. The Managing Authority has its seat in Luxembourg. The predecessor to ESPON, the European Spatial Development Perspective, was born at an Informal Ministerial Meeting in Potsdam in 1999. The key policy orientations were outlined for the entire European territory: (1) balanced and polycentric development, (2) good access to regions and services and (3) intelligent management of natural and cultural resources. When the ESDP programme was finalised, ESPON essentially replaced it.

¹⁷ Büchs (2007: 20) conceptualises this OMC “mode of operation” around Robert Putnam’s theory of two-level games (1988). A discussion of this point, however, merits an article of its own and thus the decision was made to restrict the discussion here to institutional theory.

considered in different MSs may actually then, to some extent, be related to what institutional capacity the MSs have to implement it.

The CEU's regulatory power helps it to shape agendas enabling it to deliver its preferred policy outcomes while attempting to avoid direct confrontation with the MSs over core state functions. Soft law tools such as the OMC, combined with the creation of new arenas for disgruntled national-level actors, venue-shoppers, academics or technical bodies slowly adjust the decision calculus at the national level where "windows of opportunity" for the CEU's intervention eventually emerge, enabling it to play a facilitating role. The ECJ also plays an important role here in consistently ruling against the MSs in relation to the applicability of internal market rules in the social policy and healthcare fields.¹⁸

Drawing on the work of Klein and O'Higgins (1985) on the NHS in the UK and on Majone, on the CEU as a regulatory polity and on its desire to expand its own power resources, Cram (1993; 1997) distilled the notion of the CEU as "purposeful opportunist". Examples of CEU activism in the social policy area are, for example, addressed in the work of Valadas (2006) on Territorial Employment Pacts (TEPs) in Portugal, and Greer (2006) on the impact of the Working Time Directive on the UK NHS. The volume edited by Genschel and Jachtenfuchs (2014) takes this research one stage further by noting that while the CEU itself is not a unitary actor and the mechanisms and strategies used by individual DGs differ, the initial barrier to the encroachment into the realm of core state powers has now been removed as integration expands into the fields of fiscal, military procurement and administrative policy. This conclusion clearly supports our contention that this stealthy or covert approach to integration is now

¹⁸ Case law is reasonably clear on this issue. The primary cases cited are: Case C-120/95, *Nicolas Decker v. Caisse de maladie des employes privés* [1998] ECR I-01831 and Case C-158/96, *Raymond Kohll v. Union des caisses de maladie* [1998] ECR I-01931. While the particulars of each case are not at issue here given space constraints – the facts of the cases are covered in Ferrera (2005: 128–131), de Búrca (2005: 6–7) and Martinsen (2013: 54–55) – their outcomes demonstrated that while the Member States remained notionally "sovereign" in the social policy field, this did not give them a blanket exemption from competition or internal market rules, thus allowing national level welfare policies to remain "islands beyond the reach" of EU law. Three further cases served to decisively impact this decision still further: Case C-157/99, *B.S.M Geraets-Smits v. Stichting Ziekenfonds VGZ and H.T.M. Peerbooms v. Stichting CZ Groep Zorgverzekeringen* [2001] ECR I-05473; Case C-368/98, *Abdon Vanbraekel and Others v. Alliance nationale des mutualités chrétiennes (ANMC)* [2001] ECR I-05363; and Case C-385/99, *V.G. Muller-Faure v. Onderlinge Waarborgmaatschappij OZ Zorgverzekeringen UA and E.E.M. van Riet v. Onderlinge Waarborgmaatschappij ZAO Zorgverzekeringen* [2003] ECR I-04509.

also discernible in the implementation of Social Services of General Interest in the European Union.

6. Conclusion: Modest but Discernible Convergence

This paper has sought to draw together the social policy, European studies, spatial planning and European law literatures on European social policy and SSGI in an attempt to better understand the dynamics of SSGI implementation and convergence.

Given the results produced by the Humer et al (2013) typology on SSGI implementation, how can we best understand the social change processes it describes? The typological trends suggest that a change in emphasis and a new set of lenses will produce a rather different picture to that delivered by traditional social policy typologies. In implementation terms the view is much more dynamic with transitions more clearly discernible.

In the typology, the NMS (with the exception of Hungary) adhere to the primary geographical pattern dividing the Mediterranean and North-Central European spheres rather than generating a new explicitly East European or post-Communist cluster of their own. Moreover, one of the clusters clearly predominates, attracting countries from across all areas of Europe except the Mediterranean. This suggests that something important in respect of SSGI implementation convergence is happening.

In our qualitative analysis of the typology advanced by Humer et al, we can clearly identify two clusters and one “repository for failures”. Cluster 1 – including *Bismarckians*, *Nordics*, *Anglo-Liberals* in Esping-Andersen’s terms – most likely “clusters” because of their high absorption capacity and their strong administrative capabilities. Whatever the political philosophy behind their welfare trajectories these states can generally “deliver” change. Cluster two – *the Mediterranean countries* – “clusters” because their states are much less adept at implementing change and administratively they still rely on key individuals and clientelism etc., to deliver any sort of change, which even if successful will likely be uneven. Cluster 3 is more a transient “waiting room” for transitioning states than a cluster in a positive sense. Though Ireland may be able to escape, the prospects look bleak for Greece and Hungary, both of which continued, during the 1990s–2000s, to implement costly clientelistic welfare policies that they could not afford. This came to a juddering halt with the financial crash.

Viewed in the context of continuing *de jure* MS dominance over social policy in the EU, these findings become rather problematic. Initial attempts at harmonisation in the social policy field soon ran into MS opposition and thus in the end rarely went beyond a demand for universal and comprehensive service coverage. At both the ideological level and in terms of service provision and delivery, national differences remain significant, reflecting the reality of the continuing influence of separate histories, institutions and the path dependencies they create. Consequently, harmonisation has long ceased to be an effective mode of integration, so why then is convergence occurring?¹⁹

Historical institutionalism was used to provide the theoretical context for social policy developments at the EU level. It captures well the reasons why bureaucratic and administrative changes are difficult and why formal MSs' dominance in the social policy field exists at the EU level. Institutions, however, rarely function as initially intended by their creators, they seek active engagement and often attempt to break out of the "principal-agent" framework upon which they were originally based in order to develop some measure of decision-making and policy autonomy.

Moreover, HI also provides a plausible account of why convergence occurs. Institutions shape political behaviour in three ways; through rules, practices, and narratives. All three can be seen to have had an impact on the particular ways in which SSGI have been implemented in the EU context. Rules (Single Market) set the framework; practices (OMC/"soft law") are the enablers while the narratives are provided by the policy entrepreneurs.

The efforts of historical institutionalism to explain major change as the notion of "punctuated equilibrium" do not go beyond an endogenous explanation of change thus necessitating a turn towards agency. It is here that we find a plausible explanation for SSGI implementation convergence in the activism, or "purposeful opportunism" of the CEU. Crucially, this explanation more accurately reflects how the day-to-day politics of the EU actually function.

This is usually discussed in the context of ongoing processes of Europeanization. This reflects the CEU's "activism" in forwarding its own policy agenda through the promotion of "soft law" instruments – including Green and

¹⁹ It is interesting to note that Commissioner Thyssen has recently been quite vocal in "flying a kite" for the notion of harmonising social benefits levels across the EU (Remarks by Commissioner Marianne Thyssen: Policy Orientations for a Social Europe, 9th June, 2015, Press Release STATEMENT/15/5150).

White papers, Communications, Staff Working papers, FAQs, reports and guides, and Commission's comments on the documents of other organisations or stakeholders – as well as the co-option of national-level protagonists involved in “venue shopping” exercises; the promotion of interest group and academic research networks and the exploitation of certain “windows of opportunity” arising from day-to-day politics. This notion was conceptualised by the term “purposeful opportunism” where the CEU attempts to promote its own policy agenda in areas where it does not have the “right of initiative” but in so doing attempts to avoid direct confrontation with core MSs' interests, hence the labels, “*stealthy, covert and uninvited*”.

The data uncovered by Humer et al. suggest that SSGI can be added to the list of areas where integration is being driven by the CEU in a manner which was not originally envisaged and which may lack transparency and democratic accountability. The MSs are not mere bystanders in this process though they do seem to have been comprehensively out manoeuvred in relation to expectations over the utility of the OMC process.

In conclusion, given the analysis above, how then can we characterise this ongoing process in respect of SSGI implementation? The key issue here is how institutional change takes place *within* the MSs in a policy area where they – not the EU – are sovereign. The CEU's ideational power, expressed in terms of rules, practices and narratives seems adept at reshaping national and sub-national level institutions dealing with SSGI implementation – either directly through benchmarking and evaluation practices associated with the OMC approach or indirectly through the creation of new policy arenas and venues not controlled by the MSs. This is not, *per se* a grand, explicit and political refocusing of elite loyalties at the MS level as neo-functionalism argued, but rather an incremental process of administrative experimentation prompted by the CEU and designed to promote its own power.²⁰

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²⁰ The creation of a typology of CEU influence on state and sub-state level SSGI implementation practices represents a fruitful pathway to develop this work further.

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STEALTHY, COVERT AND UNINVITED?
COMMISSION'S "ACTIVISM" IN THE IMPLEMENTATION
CONVERGENCE OF SOCIAL SERVICES OF
GENERAL INTEREST IN THE EU

Summary

The broad aspirations of social policy in the EU continue to be the preserve of the Member States as the particular histories, ideas, and institutions upon which national social policies are based remain quite heterogeneous. A process of convergence is nevertheless discernible in respect of policy implementation. The reasons for this relate to the nature of the European integration process but should not be confused with the broad adoption of a notional "European Social Model", the harmonisation of national policies or, more generally, with the classical approach to EU policy making in the social field. This paper instead explores how the implementation typology on Social Services of General Interest produced by Humer et al. (2013) can be understood in relation to the way in which the European Commission has continued to act as a "purposeful opportunist" by employing "policy entrepreneurship" in the context of the various "new governance" approaches associated with EU social policy.

Keywords: *services of general interest, social services of general interest, social services*

POTAJNO, PRIKRIVENO I NEPOZVANO?
AKTIVNOSTI EUROPSKE KOMISIJE VEZANE ZA
KONVERGENCIJU SOCIJALNIH SLUŽBI
OD OPĆEG INTERESA U EU

Sažetak

Opće karakteristike i težnje socijalne politike u Europskoj uniji ostaju u nadležnosti država članica budući da su povijesni razvoj, ideje i institucije na kojima se temelje nacionalne socijalne politike i dalje vrlo raznoliki. Primjetan je, međutim, proces konvergencije kad se radi o primjeni socijalnih politika. Razlozi za to povezani su s prirodom procesa europske integracije no ne treba ih miješati s općim usvajanjem nacionalnog »europskog socijalnog modela«, harmonizacijom nacionalnih javnih politika, ili, općenitije, s klasičnim pristupom kreiranu javnih politika EU na području socijalne skrbi. Rad se bavi načinom na koji se implementacijska tipologija Humera et al. (2013) primijenjena na socijalne službe od općeg interesa može shvatiti u odnosu na činjenicu da se Europska komisija nastavlja ponašati kao »promišljeni oportunist« koristeći »poduzetništvo u javnim politikama« u kontekstu različitih pristupa »novog upravljanja« koji se povezuju sa socijalnom politikom EU.

Ključne riječi: službe od općeg interesa, socijalne službe od općeg interesa, socijalne službe