

Nordic experience in social policy

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Overview

- Introduction
- Main elements of Social Policy Planning and Development in Norway
 - A brief overview of structures
 - Processes
 - Implementation mechanisms
- Analysis of good
 - Practice
 - Challenges
 - Lessons learned
- Questions for discussion
- Further reading and resources

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Introduction

– welfare state regimes and the Nordic model

- Esping-Andersen:
 - De-commodification
 - Social-democratic
- Castles:
 - Families of nations
- Pierson:
 - Path dependency
- Ginsburg:
 - Welfare states are uniquely shaped by their political, cultural, social, economic context

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The Norwegian model I

- Public dominance
- The municipal approach
 - Service delivery
- The role of NGOs and private sector
 - Marginal, but innovative
- Corporate social responsibility
- High level of trust in the state
 - Increase social capital (Rothstein 2003)

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The Norwegian mode II

- Universalism
- Equality oriented
- Rights based
 - Relatively generous universal and right based benefits
 - Relatively low means tested benefits
- Changes in the Norwegian model:
 - The welfare state is still growing
 - The “work-line”

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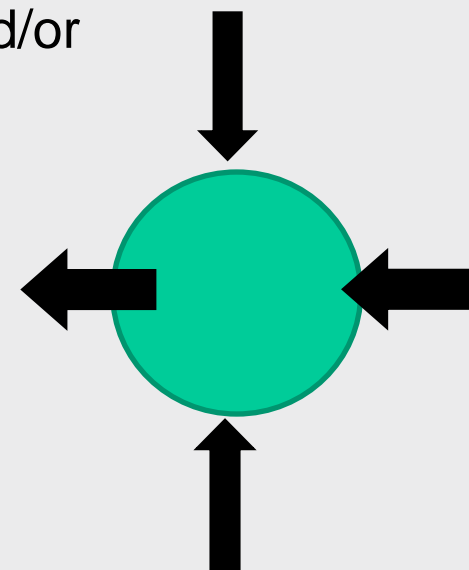
Basic legislation and basic elements of social policy

- National social insurance act (1967)
- Social service act (1991)
- Child protection service act (1992)
- Municipal health service act (1982)
- Pension
 - Universal public pension
 - Mandatory occupational pension
- Social assistance
 - Means-tested benefits
- (Almost) free access to health care

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Welfare under quadruple pressure?

- Is the welfare state too expensive?
- Do the programmes, benefits and services work according to their aims?
- Is the distribution just and do we trust the system?
- Is the handling of welfare issues too expensive and/or inefficient?



(The model of quadruple pressure is developed by my colleague Tone Fløtten – see <http://www.fafo.no/BalticWelfare/Baltikum-presentasjoner/final%20seminar%20programme.htm>)

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Where is the political focus on social problems?

- Poverty
- Persons with several diagnoses
- Youth and drugs
- Child in need (behavioural problems and inadequate care)
- Housing
- Integration of immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers
- People with disabilities
- Loneliness

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A time of reforms

- Labour market inclusion
 - Pension system
 - Qualifying programmes and “welfare contracts”
- Child day-care for all
- Strengthening the rights approach
 - Individual plan
 - Discrimination and accessibility
 - A new kind of cooperation with the user?
- From county to state (Centralisation)
 - Hospitals
 - Child protection
 - Treatment of drug users
- Decentralisation of services
 - From institution to community

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Action plan against poverty

- Work:
 - Capacity development/Qualifying programs
 - Rehabilitation of previously jailed persons
- Children and youth:
 - Support children at school
 - Increase the number of students that fulfill secondary school
- Living conditions:
 - Housing benefit
 - Support and treatment for drug users
 - Strengthen legal advice to the most vulnerable
- Strengthen the control function of local services from the county governor

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Decentralisation

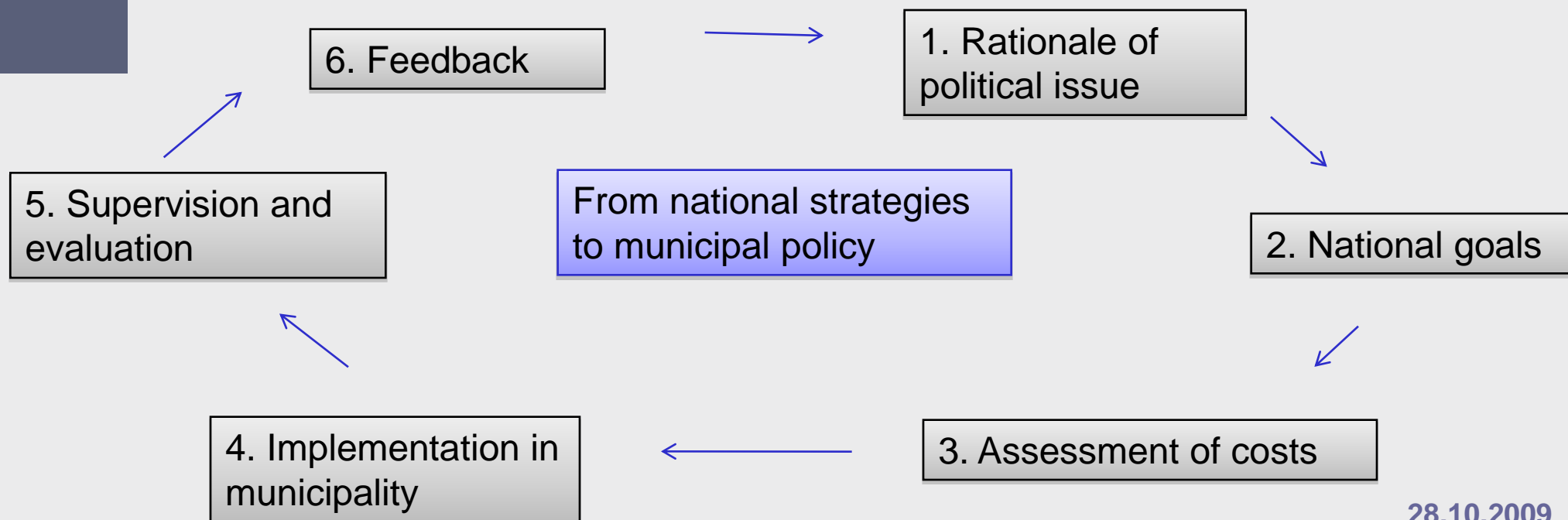
- From institutions to community
- Psychiatry
- Child care
- The special schools
- Care for the handicapped
- A municipal model?
- The municipalities are the main arena for social service delivery in the Nordic countries.
- The role of the municipalities is increasing

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Implementation mechanisms

Balance between the centre and the local level

- Central government in charge of developing goals and targets, allocates money to the local level (municipalities) who implement policies
- Grant based/project based - if successful incorporated into permanent structure in the municipalities



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Stability of delivery

- Money allocated from central to local level:
 - Unrestricted municipal revenues increased
 - Direct allocation to municipalities and to specific programmes (i.e. Qualification programme)
 - Grants through projects (i.e. urban grant scheme, combat poverty among children)
- Concern that municipalities will not be able to fund the increased costs if projects are to be incorporated into permanent structure without municipal revenues being increased

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Analysis of good practice

- Challenges
- Lessons learned

Research and evaluations

- Research and evaluations plays an increasingly important role
- Discussions about knowledge base and evidence base
- Quality control
- Ethical discourses

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A new welfare contract?

- The welfare state is steadily growing.
- Every individual should work for more years, and utilise their work ability as efficiently as possible.
- The employer should take active part, cooperate with public services, and take responsibility for social inclusion.
- The employees in welfare system should develop services that are adapted to the individual's needs.

■ (See: Fløtten et al. 2007)

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