

The Ethics of a Seamless Service towards Economic Independence

Ludger Hofmann-Engl

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Notes

The general public appears to be uneasy about the government policy to get people into work.

Initiatives are seen as manipulative and conditions on how to obtain state benefits as punitive.

Clearly, if no one worked, we would have nothing and hence there is a need for at least some people to work.

Those three facts make it difficult to look at the issue from a different angle, however we will attempt to do just this.

Someone who has no choices might be lucky that everything is just right and no choices are required. This is, somehow this lucky person just receives everything this person wishes for, or perhaps this lucky person has no wishes. However, in reality this lucky person does not exist, and the only way to lead a fulfilled life is by having choices.

Real choices generally ask for real action and this requires resources, and resources can generally only be obtained via financial transactions. This is, someone who has the financial means can obtain resources according to her or his choices and lead a fulfilled life. Financial means are generally obtained through work and hence economic independence is at the root of a fulfilled life.

At present a large number of the population of working age (20.9%, that is 7.89 millions – August 2008) is inactive in terms of employment or self-employment. This means, that this part of the population has insufficient means, limited resources and constrained or no choices and hence leads a life of low fulfillment.

So here is the question: What can we do about it? And the answer is: A seamless service.

A seamless service is a service which reaches out and supports the service user along her or his way until this person has achieved her or his appropriate level of economic independence.

Such a service can be divided into three steps: Outreach, personal development and professional development with all steps overlapping.

Outreach is where a service provider goes into the home of the service users and helps the service user to develop a basic functionality dealing with issues such as mental health, housing and financial stability.

Personal development is whereby a service provider helps a service user to develop a set of basic social skills such as communication, interaction and informal learning.

Professional development can then set in, and it means providing the service user with the opportunity to develop specific skills which the service user can use within the workplace.

So where does Croydon Family Groups fit into this?

While organisations such as *Croydon Home Start* provide outreach, *Croydon Family Groups* (CFG) provide personal development and organisations such as *CALAT* and *Croydon College* provide professional development.

This is, *Croydon Family Groups* is part of the seamless service towards economic independence.