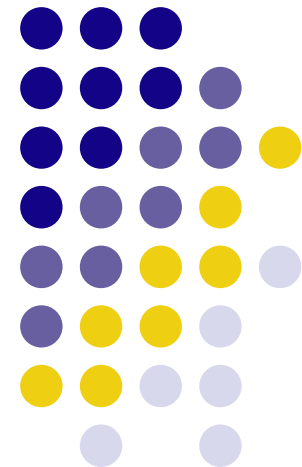




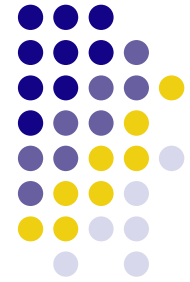
representing lone parent groups in ireland

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*The Developmental Welfare  
State – a glass half empty ?*

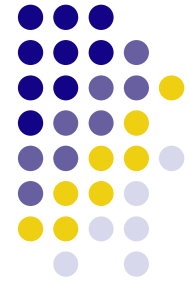


# DWS - a glass half empty?



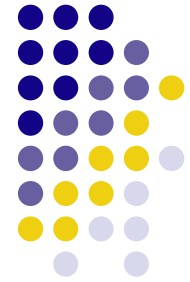
- Problem definition: social policy not sufficiently aligned with economic policy
  - Social policy about more than economics – but report says little about this
- Irish social welfare system seen as strength, despite
  - High rates of relative income poverty
  - Over reliance on means testing
  - Very poor public service provision – education, housing, health, childcare, transport
- Total lack of gender or race analysis

# Working age population



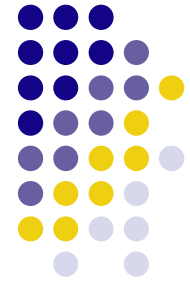
- Social inclusion = labour market participation
- Despite advocating ‘Nordic’ style system, no explicit linking of higher conditionality with better payments
  - More stick than carrot
- Labour market focus particularly problematic given lack of gender analysis, particularly re services
  - Will *increase* mothers’ workload
- Failure to recognise ‘socially necessary labour’
  - Or for ‘rare cases’ unable to generate market based income?

# Supportive conditionality or punitive workfare?



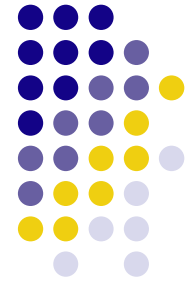
- Irish NEAP focused on:
  - Job search rather than upskilling
  - ALMPS highly targeted and segregated
  - Inadequate welfare payments
  - Active use of sanctions
- Flexicurity type systems focus on:
  - Education and training to upgrade skills
  - General labour force, not just welfare recipients
  - Relatively high rates of payment
  - Provide legal guarantees against futile work for the sake of it

# Core services - threats



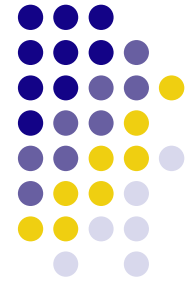
- Core services “single most important route to improving social protection”
  - For “vast majority” to increase social cohesion - implies service orientation towards middle classes?
- Tailored provision – but how?
  - Few examples of this in current *mainstream* provision e.g. very disadvantaged individuals don't achieve positive outcomes under NEAP
  - How are service providers incentivised and penalised re service quality?

# Incomes - threats



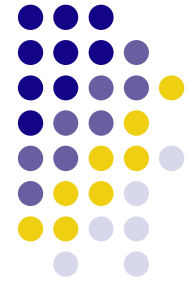
- Minimally adequate income, with tailored top-ups
  - Supplements a problematic element of current system – create welfare dependency and embody significant discretion
- Conditionality unevenly applied
  - Exercising choice or welfare dependency? e.g. QAs, Widows, to be abolished on assistance, but not insurance payments
- Passive income transfers ‘preferable’ for those whose productivity after retraining remains low
  - Preferable, or just cheaper?

# Activist measures - threats



- One-off programmes responding to unmet need
  - Why is there unmet need if ‘tailored universalism’?
    - Tension with social cohesion objective?
  - Key design elements mainstreamed
    - Poor experiences in this regard to date
  - Where ongoing need, become ‘niche services’
    - Or cheap residual pilot services for disadvantaged groups?
  - Creeping managerialism? Managing dissent?

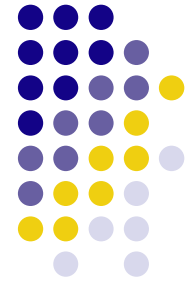
# DWS – a glass half empty?



- Contingency-based system problematic because:
  - Contributes to lowering peoples expectations of *themselves*
  - Contingency is basis of income security i.e. ‘inability’ to work
  - Payment systems don’t include assessments of *individual’s* ability to benefit from services or regular contact to advise of options
  - No regular review of the “extent to which recipients best interests are being facilitated by the arrangements governing their *access to an income*”
- Is this analysis accurate?

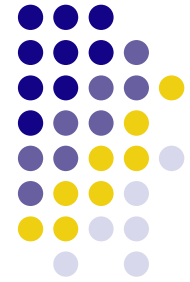


# DWS – a glass half empty?



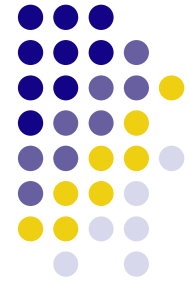
- Is the problem the ‘welfare dependent’ individuals, or ineffective, monopolistic services?
  - Where services meet needs, are generally over-subscribed e.g. lone parents & CE
  - Lack of participation may reflect poor quality or inaccessibility of available options e.g. FÁS Specific Skills
  - ‘Creaming’ – even programmes designed for marginalised show preference for less disadvantaged
- Little income security to low paid workers
  - Contingencies & access to secondary benefit retention

# DWS in action? Supporting lone parents



- Undermining of contingency
  - End of cohabitation bar
  - Parental Allowance for *all* low income parents
  - But no proposals to meet particular needs of lone parents
- Conditionality for parents on means-tested payments, but
  - QAs, Widows remain in social insurance

# DWS in action? Supporting lone parents



- Gender roles
  - Positive in terms of recognition of part-time working, acceptance of separate payments, but
  - Reintroduction of limitation after age 8
- Vague and unspecific in relation to
  - Labour market services
  - Education, training and ALMPs
  - Childcare
  - Making work pay

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