

Integrating Policies: The Lifecycle Approach

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What is the Life Cycle Approach?

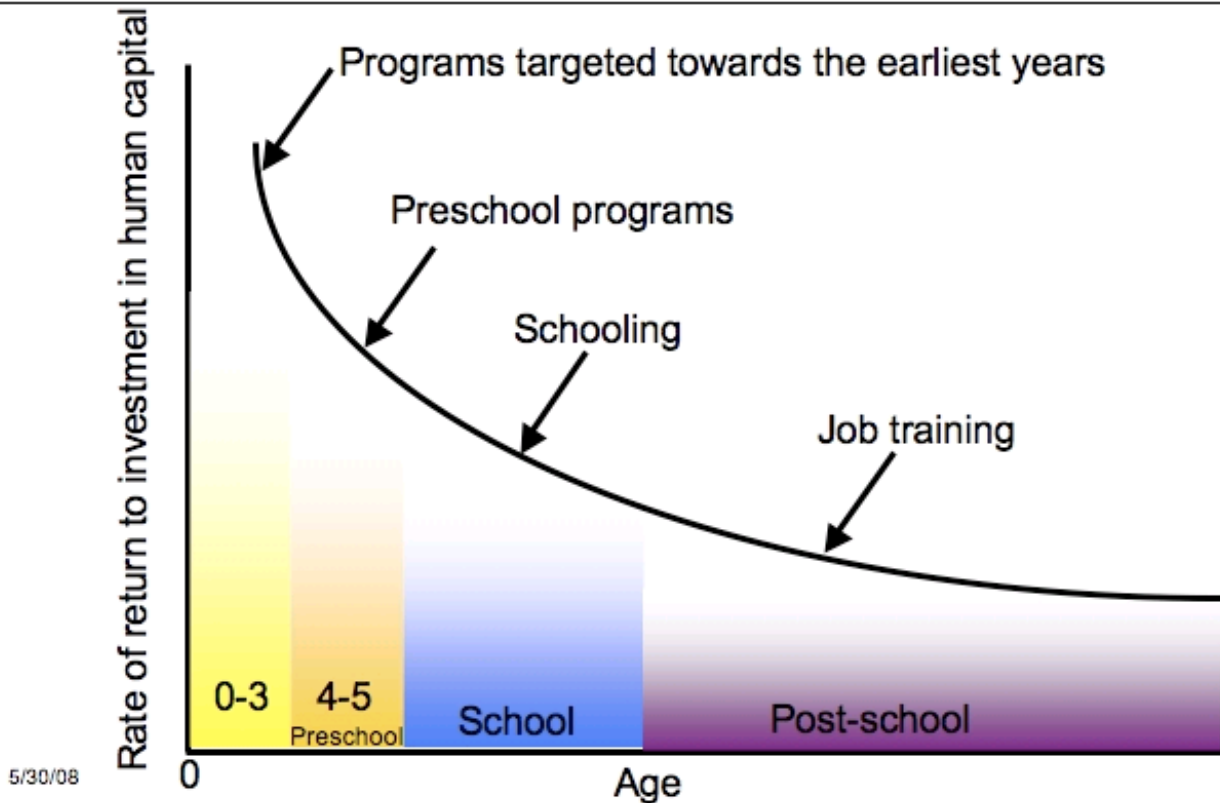
- 'Promotes the perspective of the citizen as the centrepiece of social policy' (T16)
- Implies an integrated policy approach over a person's life course - 'from the cradle to the grave'
- In Irish policy applied as:
 - Children (0-17)
 - Working age (18-64)
 - Old age (65+)

Rationale for Integrating Policies

- 'If the race is already halfway run even before children begin school, then we clearly need to examine what happens in the earliest years' (Esping-Anderson, 2005)
- 'Like it or not, the most important mental and behavioural patterns, once established, are difficult to change once we enter school' (Heckman & Wax, 2004)

Heckman Curve

Figure 9: Rates of Return to Human Capital Investment at Different Ages: Return to an Extra Dollar at Various Ages



Rationale for Integrating Policies

- **But Adversity in early life can lead to:**
 - Poor literacy and educational attainment
 - Anti-social and criminal behaviour
 - Substance abuse
 - Poor mental and physical health
 - Adult mortality
- **On the other hand ...**
 - 'widening access to pre-primary education can improve both overall performance and equity by reducing socio-economic disparities among students, if extending coverage does not compromise quality' (OECD Report on PISA Results, 2011)

How to Integrate Policies?

If people keep falling off a cliff, don't worry about where you put the ambulance at the bottom. Build a fence at the top and stop them falling off in the first place.

Source: Allen & Duncan-Smith, 2010
– report to UK government



How to Integrate Policies?

- Intervention / prevention
- Working together
- Person-centred
- Innovation
- Implementation
- Meaningful monitoring / review

The Developmental Welfare State

Services

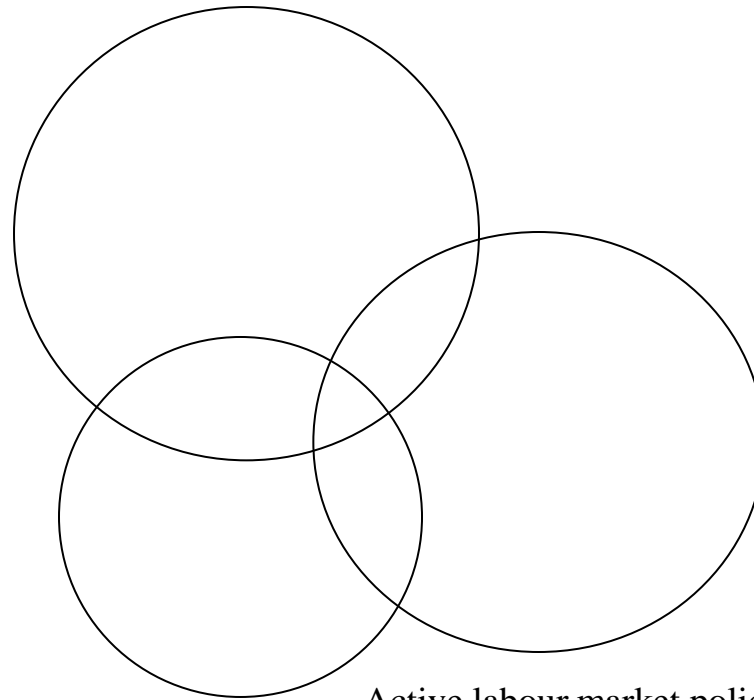
Education
Life-long learning
Health
Housing
Public Transport
Childcare
Eldercare

Tax/Welfare

Income
adequacy
Income for
participation

Active Social Policy

Active labour market policy
Social inclusion
Area-based strategies
Statutory-voluntary partnerships
Promotion of participation



Developmental Welfare State – Some Concepts

■ Tailored Universalism

- Where the vast majority of people use the same set of services (strengthening social cohesion) but mainstream providers adjust their services to accommodate a diverse public (services are ‘wrapped around’ the individual)

■ Accountable Autonomy

- More effective implementation which requires that local service deliverers and the central bodies monitoring their performance see themselves as jointly engaged in a social learning network and are committed to raising standards

Some Challenges



- **Structure of the system**
 - Overcoming departmental silos
 - Institutional mindset
- **Recession**
 - Availability of resources
 - But ... changing the way we do things?
- **Short-termism**
 - Political system
 - Difficulty of attributing long-term benefits
- **Giving priority to the early years?**
 - Seeing the light?

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