

EDITORIAL

This issue of *European Societies* has been devoted to the issue of labour market activation policies. The topic is of great recent importance as more and more countries have introduced activation policies. However, as we shall see, there are great differences in what this actually means between countries. Jean-Claude Barbier and Wolfgang-Ludwig Mayerhofer have collected a range of papers that compare pairs of countries in terms of these policies. As they point out in their editorial, the issue of labour market activation policies spreads beyond the labour market and into social policy and welfare regimes more generally. Hence this is one very important way of looking at European societies in comparison and one that complements other papers and debates that have taken place in the journal, including those presented in the last issue, 6:3, which was mainly devoted to issues of family, labour market and social policies.

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