TR –DESIGN OF GENERAL CRITERIA FOR POLICY MAKING

CULTURE-CENTRED POLICIES FOR ADDRESSING THE CRISIS.
WHY CULTURE MATTERS AND HOW TO TAKE IT INTO ACCOUNT

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1   Executive summary

The present document provides the theoretical and methodological framework for setting the criteria guiding the design of policies that are both **culture-sensitive** and able to address the current **socio-institutional crisis scenario**.

In recent years, a more realistic understanding of human behaviour and decision-making has challenged the implicit assumptions about people on which policies were often conceived. From the individual rational choice-based citizen, many scholars moved to a bounded rationality perspective. A further step, outlined by the Re.Cri.Re. project, is to take the **interpretative and cultural nature of human behaviour** into account as a fundamental element to be considered at the stage of both policy design and implementation.

This step is consistent with the growing recognition of the relevance of culture in the social sciences and more specifically in policy-making and politics. **Culture is the on-going dynamics of sensemaking through which people interpret the world** - and in terms of which they feel, think and act. This on-going dynamics is channelled by generalized meanings (symbolic universes) embedded within the cultural milieu and working as affective-laden systems of assumptions.

In accordance with this view, the Re.Cri.Re. project carried out a systematic analysis of the cultural milieu of European societies, aimed at getting a better understanding of the current socio-political and institutional crisis scenario. The purpose of this analysis was to establish the criteria orienting and supporting policy makers in their effort to design and implement policies that are congruent with the challenges of the crisis.

This approach does not concern all kinds of policies; policies that are inherently universalistic do not have to consider differences within the population. However, most policies operate either within one specific cultural milieu - policy within culture - or by means of the activation of cultural elements (e.g. values, beliefs, social scripts, discursive practices) as drivers of the interventions (e.g. think of policies fostering ecological behaviour like recycling; or respect among ethnic or cultural differences) - policy through culture.

The document offers several **methodological suggestions** aimed at supporting policy makers in designing policies that have to work within a given cultural milieu and therefore have to take the target population's culture into account and/or are aimed at promoting cultural resources (i.e. *policy through culture*) – e.g. *Cultural segmentation, Demand at the core of policy, Pluralism*.

Taken as a whole, these suggestions outline the general view that policies cannot be implemented regardless – or even in spite of – the ways they are interpreted by the target population; on the contrary, the impact of the policy depends on how meaningful the content is and how consistent it is with the target population's culture. Moreover, these suggestions give the idea that policy making can make the target population's culture a resource insofar as the people's ways of feeling and thinking are not regarded as noise, but as the "fuel" fostering the population's commitment to the intervention. It follows that the valorisation of the target population's culture requires a policy able to design and implement meaningful frames of involvement, where both policy and target population can develop through their dynamic interaction and reciprocal engagement.

Finally, the document provides analyses of the crisis scenario as well as **methodological suggestions** and **exemplificative interventions** designed to support policy-makers on the issues requiring a direct approach to cultural change (i.e. *cultural development policy*). This approach is relevant when the cultural milieu is in critical shape, thus becoming a problem in itself.

In previous reports, Re.Cri.Re. analysed the European societies' cultural milieu underpinning the current scenario of crisis. The analysis highlighted two main factors: a) **the lack of semiotic capital** – i.e. the cultural resources enabling the internalization of the systemic level of social life; b) the spread of a critical form of belongingness (defined: paranoid belongingness) that sees the world as an active threat, and leads to the **enemization of the other** (whoever the "other" is – e.g. "bureaucrats in Brussels", the political caste, refugees, Romani, homosexuals, Muslims...).

The Re.Cri.Re. analysis suggests that the demand for sense underpinning phenomenologies of intolerance and distrust is at the same time a **demand for protection and empowerment that requires demand-centred policies**.

The lack of semiotic capital and the spread of the enemization of the other should be the concern of specific policies of cultural development. **Policies can and must sustain the socio-cultural producers of semiotic capital.**

On these grounds, the current document proposes some methodological tenets – e.g. *Performativeness, Identity, Blurring boundaries* – and areas of intervention – *New institutional deal, Meaningful economics, Vital Welfare* – meant to support policy makers in designing policies to promote semiotic capital.

Taken as a whole, these proposals are designed as examples of interventions aimed at promoting social practices favouring the vital experience of the political and institutional system as a live subject involved in supporting the individual/local projects as well as in protecting them from the most disruptive impacts of globalization.

Policy makers can decide how to translate this methodological perspective into concrete objectives, policies, and actions in terms of the contextual conditions as well as their political and axiological orientations. It is hoped that they may find in the proposals and analyses in the current document a conceptual and methodological framework supporting them in the hard task of designing strategies to cope with the current challenging socio-political scenario.

The crisis requires a deep cultural innovation in policies and politics – a kind of **anthropological drift** is occurring before our eyes, in the way people think of themselves and the world. To counteract such a drift, institutions have to restore their function of designing and guiding societies towards possible worlds.

Institutions have to re-introduce the future as the core parameter of policy making; only viewed in the long term can the current dramatic turmoil be addressed and a creative synthesis among current conflictive interests, demands and dynamics be envisaged.

What is needed is a new institutional culture – the **politics of desire**. On the other hand, it is not a real innovation, but a way to return to the future – today the EU exists because it was dreamt of by decision makers endowed with the strategic capacity of making dreams realizable.

2   Focus and aims

Social and political scientists have recognized more and more that **culture plays a major role in policy making and politics**.

The Re.Cri.Re. project carried out a systematic analysis of the cultural milieu of European societies, designed to get a better understanding of the current socio-political and institutional crisis scenario. The purpose of this analysis was the definition of **guidelines** supporting policy makers in their effort to design and implement **policies that take into account the culture of the target population in order to be congruent with the challenges of the crisis**.

The present document outlines why and how to design culture-sensitive policies (for details and more depth, cf. TR 5.1, retrievable at www.recrire.eu)

3   The participatory cycle leading to this document

In accordance to the project design, the elaboration of the guidelines was carried out through a recursive participatory process involving the guidelines' expected targets (policy-makers, experts, researchers, stakeholders) over 12 EU countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Spain). This process was divided into two steps[1].

A first version of the Guidelines (Draft 1) was completed. Draft 1 was elaborated on the grounds of, on the one hand, the empirical analyses and findings produced in the first stages of the research programme (i.e. the analysis of the cultural milieu and the case intensive analysis of policies; cf. Deliverable 3.1, 3.2, 4.1; cf. www.recrire.eu.), and, on the other hand, of a preliminary round of discussion of these findings with potential users/interlocutors - to this end, several seminars, interviews, workshops were carried out over 13 EU countries [Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Spain, UK], with the aim of analysing the implications of Re.Cri.Re findings for policy-making (cf. Annex 1).

Further interlocutors were asked to provide feedback on Draft 1. Annex 2 gives the list of interlocutors involved in this second round of the participatory cycle as well as the main issues that emerged.

On this basis, a second version of the Guidelines were defined (Draft 2). With respect to the first formulation, Draft 2 is more synthetic than the previous version.

In turn, Draft 2 was subjected to a third round of discussion with further potential users/targets/stakeholders. Also in this case interlocutors were involved in seminars, workshops, interviews and focus groups carried out in 12 EU countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Spain). The aim of this round of

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[1] It has to be highlighted that the procedure carried out is slightly different from the one planned by the original programme. Indeed, whereas the original programme envisaged domain specific guidelines, (e.g. health, education, job market) to be included in Draft 2, due to the time limits they were actually introduced in Draft 3.

discussion was twofold: on the one hand, to collect further feedback on Draft 2; on the other hand, to gather indications enabling the general guidelines to be contextualized to the socio-political-economic situation of the different geographical EU areas. Annex 3 contains an overview of these actions and reports the main issues emerging. On the basis of the feedback thus collected, the final version of the Guidelines was completed (i.e. the current document). More specifically, taken as a whole, the main feedback concerns the following issues:

a) The clarification of some aspects of the culture grounding the research programme and the proposed Guidelines;

b) A clearer reference to the evidence produced by the Re.Cri.Re. analysis grounding the proposed interpretations and suggestions.

c) The simplification of the language adopted.

Compared to Draft 2, the final version contains various improvements/developments (Annex 4 outlines the changes made):

- Comments aimed at clarifying important points that the discussion indicated could be misunderstood have been added to the text, as boxes.

- Integrations of the text were carried out, in order to clarify specific aspects of it

- A paragraph on criteria for the territorial contextualization of the General Guidelines has been added

- Some paragraphs have been added, each of them devoted to the domain-specific guidelines – domains considered: health, education, labour market.

- Moreover, a "light" version of the Guidelines has been planned, using audio-visual devices, in order to improve the capacity of the core messages to reach policy makers as well as public opinion. This was decided in view of the fact that the present version of the Guidelines has to be considered a technical document, addressing scientists, researchers and experts mainly. The light version will be added to the subsequent version of this document (Guidelines_Update.1).

The current version of the Guidelines will be subjected to the next step of validation planned by the project (WP6). Should relevant issues emerge during that stage, they will lead to further modification of the document, to be found in Guidelines_Update.1)

Part I. Framework

4 Why culture matters. What Re.Cri.Re. findings highlight

4.1 From homo economicus to homo semioticus

In the past years, the dominant model in the world of policy making was that coming from economics: the *rational choice model*.

The validity of the rational choice model to explain human action and its use in all aspects of social and economic life has been strongly criticised. This led to the rational choice model of *homo economicus* being replaced by the research in behavioural economics. Behavioural economics is a new combination of psychology and economics that studies deviation from standard assumptions of rational choice (i.e. bounded rationality), grounding the understanding of human behaviour on cognitive psychology instead. The contribution of behavioural economics led to the definition of *homo behaviouralis*, a model of the human being that includes rational decision-making but also the use of mental shortcuts (heuristics) and the presence of systematic errors or bias of judgment. Sociological and psycho-social critiques of the cognitivist/behavioural shift, while recognising the value of the critique of rationalism and cognitive individualism (i.e., view of the actor as a solitary agent thinking and appraising usefulness as if he was Robinson Crusoe) of standard economics, hold that it still searches for the micro-foundations of a 'universal nature', and that it is inspired by a cognitive universalism that neglects synchronic and diachronic social and cultural differences.

The sociological and psycho-social approach reminds us that we also think and cognitively process stimuli as **members of particular communities**. Cognitive schemas are grounded and embedded in culturally, historically, and sub-culturally specific traditions and worldviews.

According to the Re.Cri.Re. framework, **culture is the on-going dynamics of sensemaking** through which people interpret the world - and thus feel, think and act. This on-going dynamics is *channelled/mediated by generalized meanings* - named **symbolic universes** - embedded within the cultural milieu and working as affect-laden systems of assumptions.

The focus on culture leads to the foregrounding of *homo semioticus*, namely the view of people engaged with the need to make experience meaningful – i.e. justifiable, thinkable, reasonable (*tenet of the centrality of sensemaking*).

This on-going activity of sensemaking is inherently social and situated - it is performed within and through the cultural milieu of which the sensemaker is part (*tenet of cultural embeddedness*).

The interpretation of experience is not a neutral process, but an affirmation of identity: through how people feel, think and act, they strive to make their social life a lived reality fulfilling the sense of who-one-is (*tenet of subjectivity*).

4.2 Re.Cri.Re. findings and their implications

Based on the homo semioticus assumptions, the extensive Re.Cri.Re. analysis of the European societies' cultural milieu has produced several sets of findings (cf. Re.Cri.Re. reports TR 3.1 and TR

3.2, retrievable at http://www.recrire.eu/documents/; the main results have been, or will be published in scientific journals: Ciavolino et al, 2017; Salvatore et al, 2018; Salvatore et al, submitted; Sammut et al, in press; Veltri, et al, submitted. Taken as a whole, these findings provide evidence supporting three fundamental facets of the cultural dynamics that have relevant implications for policy-making.

A) Cultural mediation
B) The actor's interpretative autonomy
C) Affective sensemaking

4.2.1 Cultural mediation

People do not represent and respond to reality as it is - i.e. in terms of objective, same-for-all states of affairs. Rather, each person interprets reality using a system of implicit, only partially conscious, generalized assumptions that provide a consistent snapshot of how the world is/ought to be and what one's position towards it is. Each system of generalized assumptions is a global, affect-laden worldview (*symbolic universe* in Re.Cri.Re. terms) comprising the actor's personal and social identity. It works as a lens through which any element of experience is filtered and thus made meaningful (which is the mediational role).

Re.Cri.Re analysis of the cultural milieu identified 5 Symbolic Universes.

Symbolic Universe 1. *Ordered universe*

This worldview is characterized by two important facets. On the one hand, a generalized positive attitude toward the world (institutions and services, the people, the place where one lives, the country, the future), considered trustworthy, receptive of the efforts to engage with and improve it. On the other hand, there is identification with transcendent values and ideals (e.g. justice, morality, solidarity; rejection of opportunism, conformism and power) that foster the commitment to making things better - where such commitment is seen as a value in itself: the way of making life meaningful, rather than of pursuing material interests. The combination of these two facets outlines what we interpret as the basic assumption substantiating this symbolic universe: **faith in the inherent ethical order of the world**. Rightness, morality and efficacy go together, what is just is also efficacious in making things better, because the universe follows its own harmonious design. Behaviour has to conform to and reflect this universal order and in so doing one can trust in being on the right side of history.

Symbolic Universe 2. *Interpersonal bond*

This symbolic universe comprises a group of responses detecting a positive, optimistic vision of the world, as a place that is meaningful and fulfilling. On the other hand, the world these responses refer to is not the universalistic one of the previous symbolic universe; rather it is **the vital world of interpersonal, emotional bonds**. To be part of such a world is an end in itself: sacrifices (in terms of adaptability and conformism) are needed for it and are repaid in terms of safety and fulfilment, as well as in promoting a moderate sense of agency, trust and openness to the new. The line from the famous song – *all you need is love* – depicts the basic assumption of this symbolic universe.

Symbolic Universe 3. *Caring society*

This symbolic universe is characterized by a **vision of society and institutions as trustworthy providers of services and commons** (e.g. education, health, security, development). Society is receptive to the demands and needs of people. This vision fosters a generalized feeling of confidence in life, optimism in the future and a sense of agency – what one has to do is to stay within the rules of the game, there being those who take care of handling it for the best. It is worth noting how in the case of this symbolic universe, the trustworthiness attributed to institutions does not mean passivity and dependency. Rather, it works as grounds for a sense of agency: people who identify with this symbolic universe feel able to pursue goals because they feel part of a system that supports and allows their efforts.

Symbolic Universe 4. *Niche of belongingness*

This symbolic universe shares a similar anchorage to the primary network characterizing *Interpersonal bond*. Yet, in this case, such an anchorage is combined with a negative generalized connotation of the world outside the primary network – in terms of pessimism about the future, fatalism, untrustworthiness of agencies and institutions. In such a context**, the primary network is a necessity responding to the need to find shelter from and survive the anomic, threatening outside world,** rather than a matter of pleasure or an end in itself. Consistently with such a feeling, the primary network is connoted in terms of familistic power.

Symbolic Universe 5. *Others' world*

This symbolic universe outlines a fully **negative, even desperate vision of the world** – generalized untrustworthiness, sense of impotency, lack of agency, anomie. The world belongs to those who have power – the defeated have only the chance to try to survive day-by-day, surrendering to those with the power to lead the game. Morality and values are a luxury one cannot afford when the only possible concern is to limit the damage.

It is worth highlighting that these generalized meanings do not lie in people's heads. Rather, they are embedded within the cultural milieu; people are exposed to them and thus they interiorize them.

Moreover, Re.Cri.Re. analyses have shown that symbolic universes are not only ideas about the world. Rather, they proved to be **embodied modes of being-in-the-world**, which channel/affect a person's way of life – i.e. the way of feeling, thinking, acting, and making decisions. More specifically, this conclusion is based on the following findings.

- UK regions with a high proportion of leave votes at the Brexit referendum differed from the regions with lower levels of leave votes in the combination of a high incidence of the following three symbolic universes: *interpersonal bond*, *niche of belongingness* and *ordered universe*.

- People identified with symbolic universes regarded as cultural resource (*ordered universes* and *caring society*) are characterized by functional forms of thinking (risk propensity, flexibility), openness to experience, commitment to relating, positive feelings, valorisation of otherness.
- The latter symbolic universes seem to feed an explorative embodied attitude, as shown by the fact that people characterized by them, when asked to look at a picture (a photo showing a group of European politicians), spent more time in the visual exploration of the peripheral part of their attention focus.
- The symbolic universes are also salient at the level of how important topics (immigration, Islam, homosexuality, health, participation and democracy, subjectivity) are addressed by the media.

4.2.2 The actor's interpretative autonomy

Secondary elaborations on the Re.Cri.Re. findings (reported in the publication: Ciavolino et al, 2017, retrievable at http://siba-ese.unisalento.it/index.php/ejasa/article/view/18160/15516) have supported the interpretation of symbolic universes *as a-semantic generalized, affect-laden worldviews*. More particularly, it has been shown that:

- Each symbolic universe is a system of meanings consisting of a network of less generalized meanings that are linked in accordance to their affective valence, regardless of their semantic relationship. We use the term "a-semantic" in order to highlight that the generalized affect-laden meanings are the expression of a level of sensemaking working in accordance to a different – but not fully alternative - logic from the rational one, namely, the logic of emotional, affect-laden daily thinking.
- The generalized meaning plays a higher-order, regulative function in sensemaking. As indicated above (cf. § 4.1.1), it works as an embodied system of assumptions that channels how the less generalized meanings are used, in so doing guiding the way of feeling, thinking and acting.
- A generalized meaning exercises its regulative function over the sensemaker's field of experience as a whole, rather than merely over single parts of it (i.e. specific events and objects). This means that it works as the *universe of sense* in which individuals are completely embedded.

Due to these characteristics, symbolic universes must be conceived as the **basic system of assumptions framing the way experience is interpreted.** This means that they are not changed by experience; rather, experience is shaped by them. It follows that any person feels, thinks and acts from within his/her own symbolic universe, and in so doing she/he tends to reproduce it[2]. This is what interpretative autonomy consists of: whatever the external input addressing the actor may

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[2]. It is worth specifying that this does not mean that the people are unable to change their worldview as a result of experience. Yet this process of learning from experience unfolds over the long term

be, the latter will not incorporate its objective content, but will interpret it in terms of her/his inner system of assumptions.

This means that the policy-maker cannot assume that the policy is interpreted by the population as she/he means it. In other words, the policy is unable to "impose" its own meaning from the outside - people will attribute significance and value to any aspect of interventions on their own. Needless to say, this does not mean that people interpret policy in irrational terms; rather, it means that policy makers cannot assume a universal normative criterion of rationality – of which they are the depository – and have to recognize that the plurality of significances the population attributes to the policy – and therefore their responses to it – emerges from the contingent balancing between the cognitive constraints of reasonableness and the demand for identity inherent to any act of interpretation

4.2.3   Affective sensemaking

One of the Re.Cri.Re. findings supports the psychodynamic/psychosocial hypothesis that the more uncertainty and instability the person has to address, the more the person interprets experience in terms of identity-based, affect-laden generalized, standardised meanings.

This finding comes from the comparison of how different social issues (Islam, homosexuality, migration, health, democracy and participation, subjectivity) have been represented in the press across several European countries (Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta, Rumania, UK), over a period of 16 years (2000-2015). The comparison showed that the more the topics involved an exposure to otherness (e.g. "Islam" implies a higher level of exposure than "health"), the more similar the semantic structures were (i.e. how the topic is represented by newspapers) among the European countries. In other words, the more the topic destabilizes the sense of identity, the more it triggers generalizing, standardising basic affect-laden interpretations, which by their nature, are similar across the European countries.

The nexus between uncertainty and affective sensemaking can be understood if one takes into account that the affective meanings comprising the symbolic universes work as **stabilizers of experience** - each symbolic universe provides a powerful symbolic framework in which the person is enabled to assimilate breaches of the canon, and therefore to make what is unfamiliar familiar. Thus, the more challenging the system of assumptions is, the more the individual and social group's sensemaking becomes enslaved to the need to defend/restore their identity, namely their system of assumptions. This means that the more there is the need for rational, analytic and creative thinking (as when major changes require innovative approaches), the less it is available in the cultural context.

4.3   Synthesis
- Culture affects ways of feeling, thinking and acting (cultural mediation).
- It cannot be bypassed by referring to an abstract framework of rules defining what is right, just, functional (actor's interpretative autonomy).
- The greater the uncertainty and instability, the more people feel, think and act in terms of affect-laden generalized meanings that defend the sense of identity but provide simplified

maps of the world, therefore making available few resources for understanding problems and finding ways to cope with the challenging changes (uncertainty-affective sensemaking link).

Accordingly, culture - and more in general the basic mechanisms of sensemaking (i.e. how people feel, think and act) - has to be recognized as a dimension that cannot be reduced to other aspects (e.g. to the economic and legal factors), but needs: a) to be taken into account in policy-making and b) to be considered as a specific goal of policy-making.

Comment 1. Culture is not identity

Re.Cri.Re. sees culture as symbolic universes – therefore, culture is not (ethnic, religious, territorial, ideological) identity. Symbolic universes are more general and fundamental than identity. They ground and shape identity. Seen in this way, culture can be used to understand identity, the inherent variability within any social group.

The project adopts a specific definition of culture, which is provided by the Semiotic Cultural Psychology Theory (SCPT; cf. Deliverable 3.2, § 3.3, at www.recrire.eu; see also Salvatore et al, 2018).

SCPT conceives of culture in an abstract and fundamental way – i.e. in terms of symbolic universes and their capacity to shape the way people interpret experience. Symbolic universes are **hyper-generalized, affect-laden, embodied, global worldviews**, rather than specific sets of ideas, statements, norms, representations of discrete objects; symbolic universes are forms of life, modes of being in the world. Due to that, they lie at a very basic level, transversal to socio-economic, political, ethnic differences (even though the distribution of symbolic universes may vary over countries, ethnic, geographical and social contexts).

This remark is relevant because it implies that, as intended by RE.CRI.RE., culture does not consist of the identity that any person expresses as a result of her/his being part of a certain social group/community of practice and therefore of his/her sharing the institutions (i.e. language, norms, values, ideologies, religious credo, traditions, rituals, myths and the like) of that group. Indeed, each social group can reveal a plurality of symbolic universes (though in different proportions). This means that it is not identity that defines the culture, but the opposite: culture – intended as symbolic universes – shapes the identity. In other words, seeing culture in terms of symbolic universes enables us to recognize and understand better the variability in any social group. Thus, despite the tendency to stereotype identity as if it corresponded to a clear-cut profile of characteristics (e.g., the German character, the Islamic people), any ethnic/social group is inherently pluralistic as a result of different symbolic universes being active within its cultural milieu. For instance, whereas one can speak of Neapolitan traditions and identity (i.e., that socio-territorial group's whole set of symbolic and material products, practices, sense of belongingness, and so forth), one has to recognize that a Neapolitan who identifies with a specific symbolic universe (say: *ordered universes*) interprets her/his identity differently from a Neapolitan who identifies with another

symbolic universe (say: *others' world*). Accordingly, this variability can be accounted for on the basis of the different symbolic universes underlying group identities.

A fundamental theoretical, methodological and practical advantage of the Re.Cri.Re. definition of culture is that it enables us to address the criticism of those who regard any statement of the importance of culture in the socio-political and institutional field as a more or less intentional recognition of the fact that policies should be shaped by and aim for the defence of identity. On the contrary, the Re.Cri.Re. approach "disentangles" culture and identity, framing the latter in the former. In so doing, the demand for identity is not eliminated but considered an important component of the socio-political scenario: something to be interpreted, and dealt with, rather than the fundamental, primitive rule to which institutions should be enslaved. In short, the Re.Cri.Re. notion of culture outlines a "third way" between two opposing approaches – one that negates identity issues in the name of universalistic tenets, and the other that calls for identity to be placed at the core of policy. According to Re.Cri.Re., identity is a relevant issue, but as a more or less critical phenomenon to be addressed in the light of the more fundamental, universalistic framework provided by the notion of symbolic universes.

Comment 2. Culture is not contained within a space – it *is* a space

Culture is not within the population. Instead, it is the dynamic communication network that envelops populations. As a result, the difference among populations can be seen as part of a common framework.

The common view of culture sees it as something that belongs to/characterizes a certain social group, in the sense of a collection of individuals having something in common (territorial space, language, organizational membership, and so forth). By contrast, Re.Cri.Re.'s "technical" - abstract and processual - definition of culture does not involve this tight bond to a given social group. Indeed, according to the Re.Cri.Re. definition, culture is not an entity. Rather, culture is the ongoing dynamic network of acts of interpretation exchanged among individuals. Any act of interpretation (a claim, a decision, a feeling) triggers a plurality of further acts from the whole network of communication exchanges. Now, in the hyper-connected contemporary society, it is hard to think of such a network as confined within the social group. In fact, communication exchanges are global and transversal: they define a single cultural environment – a semiosphere, to use the term proposed by the Russian semiotician Lotman - that envelops societies just as the atmosphere envelops territories. In this sense, culture has to be considered a specific form of space, rather than something contained in the material space defined by the geographical space of a certain social group. More specifically, culture is the abstract space of the whole set of possible relations between acts of interpretation – its extension covers the whole communication network among human beings.

Needless to say, as the whole atmosphere is characterized by micro-climates, the idea of a global cultural environment is consistent with the recognition of local cultural milieus, whose

specificity results from the higher density of the communication network within the social groups than among them.

Convergent findings from the Re.Cri.Re. project provide support to the validity of the processual, global view of the cultural space (cf. Deliverable 3.1; www.recrire.eu): a) the 5 symbolic universes identified in the cultural analysis covering 11 European countries proved to be transversal to those countries; b) further analyses focussing on single countries (Estonia, Greece, Italy, UK) mapped symbolic universes that were consistent with those identified in the whole set of 11 countries; c) the semantic structure underpinning the way relevant social objects are represented by newspapers (Islam, Immigration, Homosexuality) proved to be very similar across different countries (Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta, Rumania, UK)

This is important because it allows us to avoid the pitfall of associating culture with a given population/territory. Accordingly, the Re.Cri.Re. project analysed the global cultural space of European societies. The very fact that Europe is a common space of communication was enough to ground the decision to consider it a cultural space. Further development of the analysis involves its extension to extra-European countries (e.g. Brazil, Japan), in order to test the hypothesis of the universalism of symbolic universes.

At the same time, the abstract, processual notion of culture adopted by the Re.Cri.Re. project, means that the focus on Europe as a whole did not imply the obliteration of the cultural specificities of local contexts– i.e. the cultural milieu characterizing countries and regions within the EU. Such "micro-climate" specificities of cultural milieus was evident in the different distributions of the same symbolic universes among countries and regions.

Comment 3. Culture is everything, but not everything has to be considered culture

Culture is an important aspect of socio-political phenomena. This does not mean that other factors (power, interests, environmental resources) are less important. On the contrary, the Re.Cri.Re. view of culture leads to a focus on the recursive interaction between symbolic universes and other contextual (and psychological) factors.

A central issue that is associated with any kind of statement that culture matters is the relation it has with other dimensions of political and social life - economic conditions, norms, technologies, forms of territorial space; but also ethnic identity, religious credo, and so forth). The debate about this issue has philosophical and theoretical roots and implications that make it somewhat difficult to resolve – different paradigmatic views are at stake and there is no crucial empirical evidence that can lead to choose one over the others.

Taking that epistemological framework in mind, and due to the practical – besides theoretical – purposes pursued, Re.Cri.Re. project adopted a pragmatic approach to this issue, in order to reduce the dependency on any philosophical claim about the ontological relation among the different dimensions. Needless to say, this does not mean that these assumptions are not relevant – but the Re.Cri.Re. project provides a formulation of the analyses and guidelines that is open enough to be consistent with different theoretical assumptions (once the fundamental assumption

that culture and sensemaking play an important role in social life is accepted). Such an approach can be synthetized in the following three statements.

A) The dynamics of sensemaking is ubiquitous: as people breath, they interpret.

B) The ubiquitousness of culture does not mean that everything has to be considered as a cultural phenomenon, as if economic, ethnic, political and institutional dimensions were void of autonomy.

C) Culture and other contextual (and individual) factors interact with each other recursively.

This means, for instance, that economic conditions exert their impact through and within the constraint of the mediation of the culture; from a complementary standpoint, the cultural channelling of sensemaking is constrained and shaped by contextual (institutional, economic, demographic, spatial) conditions. For instance, interpreting life in the light of a specific symbolic universe can lead to different feelings, attitudes, decisions according to the local context where it occurs – e.g. in a context characterized by symmetric availability of economic and institutional resources as opposed to a context where resources are distributed very asymmetrically.

This latter aspect is inherent to the Re.Cri.Re. conception of culture in terms of symbolic universes. Indeed, given that symbolic universes are hyper-generalized meanings, they have no specific content – therefore they express themselves through the way of interpreting the objects comprising the landscape of social life. Therefore, the concrete product of sensemaking always emerges from the interplay between the basic uniform cultural dynamics (i.e., the symbolic universes) and the context-specific contents of social life.

Re.Cri.Re has provided several instances of the empirical description of this division between cultural products and the underpinning cultural dynamics. More specifically, the analysis of the ways various social issues were represented in the newspapers of different countries showed that, while the content of the representation reflects the institutional and socio-political contingencies of the national context (e.g. in a certain period of time the way health themes were represented in Rumania and in Italy were affected by the government's decisions in that field), the semantic structures underpinning them tend to be similar across national contexts (especially for topics involving a high affective arousal, like immigration and Islam) (cf. Deliverable 3.1; www.recrire.eu).

It is worth adding that the interactive approach to the relation between culture and other contextual facets is expressed in the interpretation of the socio-political scenario proposed by Re.Cri.Re. (cf. § 7.1). Indeed, this is a two-way interpretation: on the one hand, it focuses on how culture affects the way people interpret the socio-political landscape and react accordingly; on the other hand, it complements such an analysis with a hypothesis about the contextual conditions that have triggered and constrained the cultural dynamics. In short, stressing the role of culture (as symbolic universe) and the need for policy-making to take it into account does not mean to say that the only factor that matters is culture, as if technologies, power, interests, and environmental resources were irrelevant. Rather, it

means drawing attention to a dimension that, unlike others, is rather peripheral in the way of thinking and addressing political issues

Remark 4. Culture is synonymous with variety, rather than uniformity

The Re.Cri.Re. view of culture enables it to be seen as the basic meanings that fuel in-group variability. This is relevant because it provides a frame for understanding and addressing differences within the group.

Some social scientists consider culture in consensual terms, namely as a set of institutions/meanings/practices that are shared within a certain group. Besides the fact that this view is hardly consistent with the reality of social life – i.e. every social group shows high internal cultural variability - it has limited usefulness for policy making. Indeed, it leads to an overlapping of culture and core identity of the social group and this makes culture the constitutive element of the group, therefore something that policy-making has to respect, valorise and work within (cf. Comment 1). Above all, it reifies differences among social groups, hampering the possibility to address them. If culture is what is shared by a social group, any form of culture is the expression/signal of a given sub-group within society, which cannot be reduced to the others. As a result, the cultural interpretation of social and political phenomena often raises the concern/criticism that it favours either the splitting up of the social body or the negation of its inherent variability.

The view of culture as symbolic universes is not subject to this concern/criticism. Indeed, reference to symbolic universes implies that the variability within the group is due to the few symbolic universes underlying it, and therefore it can be interpreted accordingly. Above all, symbolic universes provide a way of seeing the in-group variability that is transversal to the socio-political segmentations of the group. They therefore prevent the crystallization of such differences that is involved in any interpretation of them in terms of sub-group identity. In short, from a more general perspective, the Re.Cri.Re. view of culture considers it both as the common ground shared by a given social group and the dynamics underpinning the inherent variability of the group. This twofold characteristic is due to the fact that culture is not the mere collection of a set of self-contained symbolic universes, but a web of symbolic universes: each of them defines its meaning by virtue of the similarities and differences from the others. Therefore, any member of any social group, by shaping her/his sensemaking in terms of a symbolic universe, share in the whole web of symbolic universes making up the culture. And this corresponds to the statement that the web of symbolic universes is the shared source of variability of social groups.

This is important because it enables us to recognize that cultural analysis is not the analysis of what a given social group has in common, but of how and why members of a group differ from each other.

Part II. Methodological proposals

5   A typology of interventions

It is worth making a general distinction between two types of policy related to culture. We have named them, respectively: policy **through** culture and policy of cultural development

- *Policy through culture*. Policies relate to culture because of the very fact that they are designed and implemented within a situated cultural milieu. Accordingly, the cultural context is both a constraint and a key resource for policies. Indeed, the cultural elements (e.g. values, beliefs, social scripts, discursive practices – more in general: symbolic universes) that mediate the relation between policy and target population can therefore work as drivers of the interventions as well as their limits (cf. the tenet of interpretative autonomy). Accordingly, **the policy has to adopt an active attitude toward the cultural milieu,** aimed at: a) recognizing and adjusting to the cultural constraints; b) identifying and valorising the cultural resources.

- *Policy of cultural development.* At this level of intervention, the policy does not take the cultural milieu for granted, but sees it as having its own specific, strategic purpose. This level is particularly relevant when the cultural milieu is in critical shape, thus becoming a problem in itself, namely when it works as a constraint on policy, rather than a resource.

Incidentally, it is worth highlighting that here and henceforth the term "policy" is used with a general meaning – an action carried out by a collective actor (be it public or private), addressing a certain target population and aimed at a certain set of goals.

6   Policy through culture. How to take culture into account

In what follows, 10 methodological tenets concerning the design and implementation of policies through culture are outlined:
- Cultural segmentation
- Demand at the core of policy
- Interpretation of the policy by the target group
- Policy addresses cultural variability
- Interpretative agency
- Policy-making as a dynamic process
- Backward regulation
- Agreement through constraint
- Prosumership
- Intersubjective density

6.1 Cultural segmentation

Segmentation is widely used in policy-making. It is usually based on socio-demographic factors (e.g. age, gender, income, geographical position). What the Re.Cri.Re. findings suggest is that cultural differences within the population are a major source of variability that has to be taken into account in designing and implementing policies, because the way of reacting to policy may largely depend upon it (cf. the tenets of cultural mediation, interpretative autonomy and uncertainty-affective sensemaking link). Accordingly, the different symbolic universes within the cultural milieu can be used in differentiating the population, in order to identify sub-sets of people, each of them characterized by a particular system of meanings.

Segmentation is usually associated with *profiling*. Accordingly, the policy-making can take advantage from the description of relevant characteristics of a certain cultural segment - socio-demographic characteristics, job position, geographical and spatial position; health status; attitudes towards important facets of the policy.

Roser-Renouf and colleagues (2014) segmented the US population into 6 groups (the "Six Americas"), each of them characterized by a specific, internally consistent set of beliefs and attitudes towards climate change. The authors also provided socio-demographic profiling of the segments. In so doing, communication strategies aimed at sensitising the population and promoting commitment can be differentiated in order to make them fit with the target.

It has to be noted that unlike Roser-Renouf and colleagues, and most other approaches, Re.Cri.Re's segmentation and profiling is based on the global worldviews that are active within the cultural milieu, rather than on intervention-specific criteria.

6.2 Target group's demand at the core of policy

The **need** is an objective condition of necessity or critical lack that the policy intends to address. The need is defined independently from the target – it is a fact that justifies the intervention per se (e.g. from the medical standpoint, the disease defines the need of medical intervention regardless – even in spite of - the sick person's view of his/her state of health).

The **demand** is the *target individual's interpretation of his/her condition* – why it happened, if and how to address it and with what aims. Thus, the demand goes beyond the need – it consists of the meaning in terms of which the target individual makes sense of his/her current state in the context of her/his world (i.e. sense of self, expectations, values, projects, social roles and so forth). Moreover, it must not be confused with the request made. In fact, the demand is the more general meaning of one's condition and the relation with the policy that underpins and triggers the content of the request. Thus, putting the demand at the core of the policy does not mean taking requests for granted, but contextualising them in a deeper understanding of the meaning that prompted them.

According to the tenet of cultural mediation, the value that the target population attributes to the policy as well as to the level of commitment and cooperation depends on the demand, namely on how the target population interprets the policy. Moreover, from the tenet of interpretative autonomy it follows that need and demand are not necessarily associated with each other. There

can be *need without demand* (i.e. many people live in a state of educational deprivation, yet they do not consider that as a problem that needs to be addressed) as well as *demand without need* (e.g. the problem of the abuse of drugs and medical interventions).

In many, even most, cases, the policy is focused on the need, namely on the definition of goals and actions based on the objective conditions the policy intends to address. *Putting the demand at the core of the policy means recognizing that goals and actions have to be defined not only in terms of the state of affairs identified by the policy-makers but also by taking the meaning that people attribute to them into account.*

It is worth underlining that this does not mean in any way being prone to accept the target group's requests (that are often conflictual or incompatible with the policy's aims), as if a good policy were one that chases after the expectations of people. Rather, it means that the interaction with the target group has to be grounded on understanding and engaging with the meaning mediating the way the target group relates to the policy.

This therefore makes the criterion of **appropriateness** (to the target group's project) important.

Appropriateness. The value and efficacy of goals and actions do not depend on their inner functional/technical quality alone, namely on how consistent they are with the objective conditions addressed. Rather, value and efficacy also depend on whether, how and to what extent the policy is perceived as meaningful by the target population as well as a resource for their projects and development plans.

In the final analysis, this tenet states that no policy – even those focused on structural issues – concerns things only. Any policy is always a matter of engagement with people too.

In the health context, putting the demand at the core of the policy means designing interventions that consider the subjective meaning of the disease and treatment (logistic, organizational, social, physical, economic, psychological, ethical and all the other components comprising it) part and parcel of the interventions, both as source of its value and efficacy and as their aim. In other words, a demand-centred health policy views the patient not only as the conveyer/container of the disease, but as a person that asks for help to defend/restore/adjust the whole course of his/her life, broken by the disease

6.3   *Interpretation of the policy by the target group*

The centrality of the demand means that one cannot take it for granted that the **target population interprets the policy in the same way as the policy-makers, or at any rate in a way consistent with their view**. Accordingly, the policy has to adopt devices aimed at understanding and monitoring the target population's interpretation of the policy, in order to make it as consistent as possible with the policymaker's framework.

An example of the interpretative distance between policy-making and target is provided by a study (Gneezy & Rustichini, 2000), which analysed the case of a school that had the problem of parents dropping off their children late for school. The senior management of the school decided

to intervene and voted to impose a fine on parents that arrived late with their children. Yet, paradoxically enough, the outcome of this intervention was that more children were late than before!

This was because of the interpretative distance between policy-makers and target. Indeed, the school's senior managers interpreted the intervention as the provision of a negative incentive, and therefore they expected that parents would stop being late as a response to it. On the contrary, parents' interpretation was very different: due to their interpretative autonomy, they viewed the fine as the "price" to be paid for being allowed to be late. They responded to their own interpretation, rather than to the one that motivated the policy-maker's decision.

6.4   Policy addresses cultural variability

The target population is culturally plural: people vary in their way of feeling, thinking and acting, because each sensemaker interprets the reality in accordance to one of the several symbolic universes that are active in the cultural milieu. Therefore, the policy has to be designed in ways that allow the flexibility required for taking into account the cultural dimension of differences in the target population, as well as other dimensions (e.g. socio-demographic, linguistic, and so forth).

The teaching of catholic religion in the Italian school system is an example of how hard it can be to introduce flexibility towards cultural variability. Until 1989, even though Italian legislation envisaged the principle that the teaching of catholic religion was optional, various practical and procedural constraints limited its application. It was only with the intervention of the Constitutional Court (i.e. the highest Italian Juridical Body) – namely an intervention external to the legislative system – that these constraints were overcome and the option nature of the subject was assured to students.

6.5   Interpretative agency

The policy is not meaningful in itself for the target population. Rather, people make the (engagement with) policy meaningful *through the very process of interpreting it*. This means that, in order to promote the target population's commitment and cooperation, the policy has to leave room for – even trigger - the population's active interpretation and negotiation of meanings. In other words, actors can be "assimilated" by the policy only if and insofar as they can assimilate the policy.

This might seem counterintuitive, given that in many cases the target population's demand is conflictual and centrifugal with respect to policy's goals and requirements. On the other hand, leaving room for the expression of the demand does not mean being forced to accept any form of it. Rather, it means making the functional boundaries of the policy as flexible as possible in order to enable it to include forms of demand that otherwise would be considered critical deviations. From a complementary standpoint, it means designing and implementing *ad hoc* institutional and

organizational settings that allow the demand to be expressed in compatible ways, namely in forms that promote – rather than damage – the target population's engagement with the policy.

The very many forms of community participatory processes are instances of this criterion. Citizens participate in discussion where they can actively express their point of view, and discuss it with others. By interpreting and negotiating it, they appropriate the subject of the discussion and, at the same time, they become involved, an integral part of the collective action on the issue.

In the final analysis, these instances show how the person becomes part of the whole when she/he can make the whole part of her/himself.

6.6   Policy making as a dynamic process

A major implication of the interpretative agency is that policy has to be conceived in dynamic terms, namely as a socio-technical system that evolves over time as a result of the progressive development of the relation with the target population. According to this conception, both the policy drivers and the target group are viewed as endowed with the **capacity to evolve**. Thus, the dynamicity consists of the idea that the match between the policy and its targets is not a pre-condition, but a dialectical process that – starting from a minimal initial common ground - evolves over time, in terms of the recursive development of both subjects, resulting from their reciprocal commitment (cf. Figure 1).

Policy making as a dynamic process emphasizes the idea that policy making has to be conceived of more as a process than a state or a discrete event. If incorporated in the evaluation process of programmes and interventions, dynamicity introduces *recursivity* as an additional key term, besides *dose* (how much of the intervention is delivered?), *uptake* (how much is actually received by participants), *reach* (how much of the target population is covered by the intervention), and *adherence* (to what extent is the program implemented as intended?) (Moore et al., 2014).
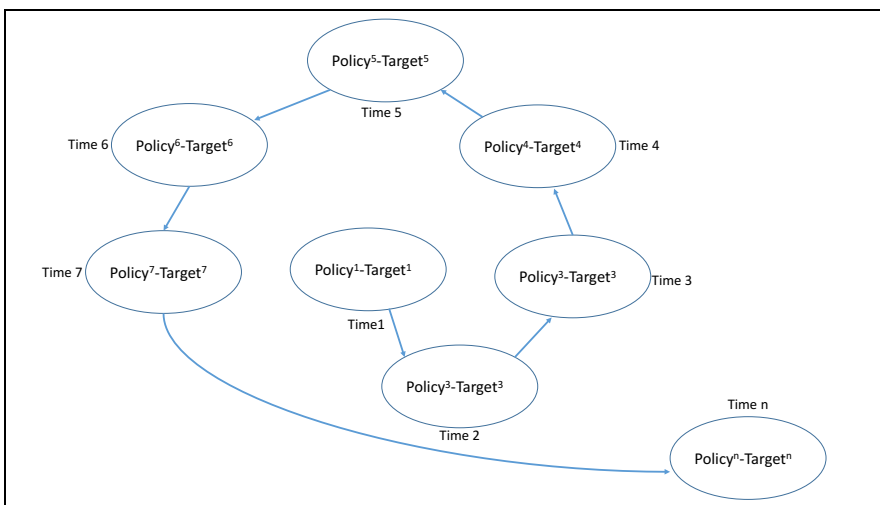

Figure 1. Dynamic model of the policy-target relationship

6.7 Backward regulation

In most cases policies are conceived as decisions that, once made, have to be acted upon. Here it is suggested to expand this schema with the complementary sequence: *first action, then decision*. This means designing devices, organizational settings and drivers that allow to regulate the policy reactively, through step by step adjustment to the target population's response.

The progressive, reactive adjustment to the target population's response has two main functions. On the one hand, it enables a dynamic approach to the policy, because it allows the – more or less expected - evolution of the policy to be dealt with. On the other hand, it defines an interactive, negotiating setting through which the policy can assimilate the target population's interpretative agency and in so doing increase the level of target cooperation/engagement (see *Interpretative agency*, § 6.5)

When the policy involves a legislative framework, a chance to implement this criterion is provided by the displacement of a large proportion of decision making to the level of executive agencies. Accordingly, whereas the strategic aims and general criteria are fixed at the legislative level, the way of implementing them can be established flexibly at the level of executive agency. In so doing, the policy lends itself to be rewritten in important respects close to and consistently with the response of the target population – but within the constraints defined at institutional and legislative level.

6.8 Agreement through constraint

As already observed, insofar as one recognizes the inherent autonomy of the target population, one has to recognize that it is not possible to adopt a shared framework between policy and target as the pre-condition of cooperation (cf. *Target's otherness*, § 6.3). This raises the central issue of how cultural convergence can be promoted between policy and target population.

The *agreement through constraints* is a way of responding to this issue. According to this criterion, the mutual engagement between policy and target population starts with a minimal shared cooperative framework, enabled by the resources (i.e. rules, goals set, levels of trust, willingness to cooperate, commitment) that the policy can find within the target population's cultural milieu. This minimal framework is used as the starting point to be developed through marginal adjustment (cf. Policy making as a dynamic process and Backward regulation, § 6.6 and § 6.7).

In order to develop it, the minimal initial framework has to be defined in quite a generalized, polysemic encompassing way, so as to leave room for the co-existence of both the policy framework and the target population's demands. This means that the minimal framework does not consist of a definite agreement between participants, but of a non-steady condition where, due to the genericity and polysemy of the framework, each participant can assume the other's cooperation as given because there are no major signals disconfirming such an assumption.

In other words, in the minimal cooperative framework, it is the absence of signals of disagreement, rather than the presence of signal of agreement that enables mutual engagement.

The more the mutual engagement goes on, the more it enables the cooperative framework to develop.

This tenet echoes Lindblom's *muddling through* approach (Lindblom, 1959) to policy making. Indeed, it shares with it the recognition of the incremental nature of policy making (see also the recognition of the impossibility of grounding policy making on a preliminary, once-and-for-all, shared framework and the consequent recognition of the ambiguity, situativeness and partiality of any process of decision making.

An example given by the author in his classic work provides a clear illustration of what in this context has been defined cooperation in terms of the absence of signals of disagreement, based on the polysemy of the framework.

"It has been suggested that continuing agreement in Congress on the desirability of extending old age insurance stems from liberal desires to strengthen the welfare program of government deferral and from conservative desires to reduce union demands for private pension plans. If so, this is an excellent demonstration of the ease with which individuals of different ideologies often can agree on concrete policy." (p. 83).

Thus, cooperation is based not on a shared framework, but on the fact that there is no disagreement on the premises grounding the proposal (extension of old age insurance), as a result of its polysemy, namely the fact that it is set in a way that does not limit interpretative pluralism (i.e. the liberal as well as the conservative interpretations

6.9 Prosumership

This suggestion concerns the model of value construction elaborated in the domain of service management. According to this model, the policy-target relation is considered a component of the intervention, namely a factor of production. In other words, the client is not only the target of the intervention but is involved in the intervention as a co-driver. In the language of service management, the client becomes a pro-sumer: both *pro*ducer and consu*mer.*

The literature on service management underlines that the tenet of prosumership makes the relationship with the client the key point of the provider's success, given that the very construction of the service depends on the dynamic, co-constructive integration of the client within the boundaries of the production process of the service.

In the context of policy, prosumership is to be seen mainly as a strategic and organizational device that puts mutual engagement at the core of interventions. In so doing, it favours the mobilisation of the target's desire, working as a catalyst to increase the intersubjective intensity of the interventions.

Participatory and inclusive decision making processes, inspired by deliberative theory, are examples of how the notion of prosumership can be transferred to the policy sector, with no reference to the marketing and business mentality. The co-design of policies, or at least a regulated collaboration between the policy target and policy makers, along with the interactive process through which it can be achieved, enables citizens to serve as both the users and the co-planners of policies themselves. So-called participatory governance may benefit from the concept

of prosumership since it helps to conceive the involvement of citizens in policy making as a structural component of the policy itself.

6.10 Intersubjective density

The policy (aims, actions, rules) has to be internalized by the target individuals. Internalization is the psychosocial process through which people make the content and the aim of the policy something meaningful and vital, part and parcel of their domain of life.

Internalization occurs through intersubjective processes. in intersubjective contexts people experience the policy in terms of concrete interpersonal patterns of feeling, thinking and acting, in so doing making it psychologically salient.

It follows that it is useful to design interventions endowed with high intersubjective density. A policy that has high intersubjective density is an intervention that is implemented through actions involving interpersonal social exchanges as one of their major components.

In prevention programmes for adolescents, systematic interpersonal exchanges, interactive instructions and hands-on experiences are considered some of the factors that increase the effectiveness of the interventions (Nation et al., 2003), as opposed to programmes where the prevention aims are achieved (but to a lesser extent) via unidirectional information conveyed by experts to a passive target audience.

7 Policy of cultural development. Why and how to change culture, and what for

7.1 Why we need a cultural development policy

7.1.1 The cultural milieu of the European societies

Taken as a whole, the Re.Cri.Re. analyses of the cultural milieu have highlighted two important issues. First, European societies **lack semiotic capital** – i.e. the *semiotic resources* (e.g. meanings, cognitive schemas, values, social representations, attitudes, behavioural scripts, etc.) that enable individuals to interiorize the collective, supra-personal dimension of life, namely to experience the systemic regulative framework as a vital dimension, a concrete fact impacting on the way of thinking and acting. Less of 1 out of 4 European citizens (though with differences among countries) proved to have access to these resources of the cultural milieu.

Second, the cultural milieu of the European societies appears to be significantly characterized (about 40% of the population of the 11 countries sampled, though with differences among countries) by a cultural form we call **paranoid belongingness**. People identifying with this worldview look at the external world as if it were full of threats which might disrupt their living spaces. This worldview is called "paranoid" in order to highlight that it personifies the external world as an active threat, an enemy with a destructive will from which one has to defend oneself.

The **enemization of the other** fuelled by paranoid belongingness works as a powerful device of identity construction, providing people with the possibility of recognizing themselves as unified by the shared threat, regardless of any cultural, social or economic difference.

Comment 5. About the notion of semiotic capital
Semiotic capital is a new concept, introduced by the Re.Cri.Re. interpretation of the socio-political crisis scenario. In the final analysis, it concerns the positive impact in terms of civic sense and social progress of certain symbolic universes (ordered universe and caring society), which for that reason are considered resources for social development.

Salvatore et al provide the following definition of the concept, together with a discussion of the linkage with related concepts.

With semiotic capital we intend to mean repertoires of generalized meanings that work as resources for civil and socio-economic development. Here we highlight the affective laden, pre-reflective, generalized and embodied valence of the generalized meanings semiotic capital consists of. We prefer the term "semiotic capital" to the more used "symbolic capital", because t the latter is more strictly related to the Bourdieu's theory and intended in terms of prestige and celebrity - "degree of accumulated prestige, celebrity or honour and is founded on a dialectic of knowledge and recognition" (Thompson, 1991, p. 7). Rossolatos (2016) has recently used the term "semiotic capital" in a similar way adopted here.

Needless to say, semiotic capital is related to social capital (Driessens, 2013; see also Coleman 1990; Putnam, 1993, Swendesen, Swendesen, 2009), but requires distinction from the latter too. Indeed, the embodied, generalized meanings it consists of lead to consider symbolic universes as the cultural, affective source of a sense of trust, the quality of institutions, and networking (i.e. the most referred forms of social capital). This view is not inconsistent with a non-functionalist interpretation of social capital. For instance, Ostroom and Ahn (2009) state that:

Trust cannot always be explained entirely by the incentives embedded in the structure of social interactions (…) We emphasize that individuals' intrinsic values are an independent reason for behaving cooperatively and reserve the term trustworthiness primarily to refer to such non-selfish motives (pp 25-26)

Symbolic universes represent a way for modelling "intrinsic values" as the expression of the position of the individual within a cultural milieu. Rather than assuming "intrinsic values" as a primitive datum, the latter can be understood as circularly connected to the social processes they themselves help bring about.

According to the perspective outlined above, due to their content and socio-demographic profile, two symbolic universes - *ordered universe, caring society* - can be viewed as functional forms of *semiotic capital*. Indeed, both of them are characterized by reference to a super-order, systemic dimension of social life that enables people to

recognize and give relevance to the relation between the individual sphere of experience and the sphere of collective life that goes beyond the experience of oneself and the primary bond (family relatives, close friends). In one case (*ordered universe*), such a reference consists of the anchorage to an axiological belief about how the world works and therefore how things cannot but proceed the way they are; in the other case (*caring society*) the system is represented in terms of institutions and agencies working as providers of commodities (resources and services), whose consumption feeds the individual's autonomy. Accordingly, the universalistic breadth of ordered universe leads to see it as a worldview feeding what is known as *bridging* forms of social capital, whereas the functional anchorage to the structural dimension of social life (institutions, agencies) characterizing caring society leads to an association of this symbolic universe to *linking* forms of social capital – namely social capital consisting of hierarchical, top-down relationships (with regards to the notion of linking social capital, see Woolcock [2001]).

Regarding *interpersonal bond* and *niche of belongingness,* these can be seen as a source of what is known as *bonding* social capital – i.e. what feeds the in-group identity and cohesion. On the one hand, *niche of belongingness* can be seen as a critical form of bonding capital - a worldview leading to put bridging and bonding forms of social life in conflict with each other: the *us* meant as a protection from *them*. One can add that such an opposition seems constitutive: us consists of what is threatened by what comes from the outside. On the other hand, the positive connotation of the world expressed by *interpersonal bond* seems to be reached in terms of a sort of affective hedonism, namely in terms of the absolutization of the emotional networking and the backgrounding of any reference to what is beyond it. Finally, the analysis has shown that *others' world* is a sort of "semiotic black hole": it leads to experience being lived in absolutely negative terms – for those who are characterized by this symbolic universe, the world appears full of extraneous and aggressive events, a jungle. From within this worldview no positive elements and no resource can be seen. Any critical aspect is felt as a further sign of the totally negative reality. In the dark night everything cannot but be dark - there is no room for variability, modulation, or time, no possibility for changing what is inherently and fully alien. All that remains is the reactive acceptance of existence as a way of surviving. (pp. 23-25)

The discussion on semiotic capital reported above enables us to highlight three important facets of this notion.

First, semiotic capital consists of pre-semantic, embodied forms of meaning, working as generalized interiorized habits and as such underpinning values, way of thinking, preferences and so forth. Consider the following vignette as a way of showing what the internalization of the systemic framework means. Take two individuals – Tom and Dick – at a red light. The road is free of cars and the visibility is optimal. After having checked that no risk is present, Tom decides to cross the road, Dick decides to wait for the green light. What

marks the difference between Tom and Dick's choices? What distinguishes Tom and Dick is the field of experience adopted as a frame for their choices and actions. For Tom the field of experience making up the world of his actions is the local, contingent experience of the relation with potentially present car drivers – and given that no cars were on the horizon, he decides to cross. Instead, Dick's field of experience is given by the systemic order, as it is instantiated by the abstract traffic rule. Dick's decision is a function of this abstract, exogenous rule, rather than of the situated, endogenous state of the relation with other actors (i.e. the car drivers). In short, what distinguished Tom and Dick is neither the level of knowledge of the normative framework (Dick knows the rules of the game – pedestrians may not cross the road when the light is red) nor the prediction of the consequence of their decision (Dick knows that there is no risk in crossing the road). Rather, the difference is in the framework of experience adopted, and due to it those elements of reality that were made pertinent, namely having value of life for them: the local contingent circumstances of social action (Tom's framework) *vs* the abstract systemic framework in which such social action is embedded (Dick's framework). In brief, what distinguishes Dick from Tom is the fact that the former has access to semiotic resources fostering the internalization of the systemic framework.

Second, the label of semiotic capital does not involve an economic approach to culture. It clearly denotes a psychosocial concept. Consistently with a broadly shared approach in social sciences, the term "capital" is meant to denote the capacity of a certain element to work as resource.

Third, the notion of social capital has an inherent normative valence. Indeed, it concerns the symbolic universes that are considered as resources, because of their capacity to fuel civic and socio-political development – e.g. a more inclusive, tolerant, democratic society. Yet this implies that they are resources in accordance to the normative assumption that civic and socio-political development is considered a desirable aim. For instance, take the issue of the refugee crisis - one can expect that the greater the semiotic capital, the more the embodied attitude of people to take the systemic dimension of life into account, then the more refugees will be viewed as part of the same whole, therefore the more an understanding, open-minded solution will be sought. However, if one imaged that the refugee crisis should be addressed in accordance to an opposite vision of social development, the semiotic capital would be identified in other symbolic universes

In short, the inherent normative valence of semiotic capital lies in this– any symbolic universe is a resource for a certain form of social life; which symbolic universes are considered semiotic capital depends on the form of social life that is considered worth being pursuing.

On the other hand, it has to be underlined that the normative assumption on which the identification of the symbolic universes as semiotic capital (ordered universe and caring society) comes not from within the Re.Cri.Re project itself, but is a more general assumption of the European project, as such reflected in the call the project addressed.

7.1.2 Cultural milieu and systemic dynamics

It is proposed to view the lack of semiotic capital and the incidence of paranoid belongingness as the result of the impact of two major characteristics of the globalization dynamics in which individual and social life is embedded: hyper-connectivity and opacity.

Hyper-connectivity here means the dynamics induced by globalization leading to the growing reduction of the material and immaterial distances physically and subjectively separating individuals, systems of activities and collectives.

Opacification is here meant to denote that the global systemic dynamics are increasingly massively dependent on abstract and distributed mediators/processes. Due to their abstractness and distributedness, these processes operate according to logics and modes that are less and less representable (starting from the very possibility of identifying space-time location and physical and subjective drivers).

For many people, the relation between hyper-connectivity and opacity corresponds to a disorienting condition: being subjected to disruptive, critical changes (e.g. climate change, demographic transformations, unemployment, dismantling of welfare services, rupture of social linkages, need to change place of residence), which, the more they exert their conditioning power upon people's lives, the less they can be represented. Thus, what people experience are critical changes that are at the same time hard to represent and that are a sign of the weakening/disruption of the boundaries of their local, situated forms of life (the community, the situated domain of activity, the local group, the place where they live). People thus find themselves confronted with a radical **deficit of sense** - they experience critical changes that have a high existential impact but the processes that generate and drive those change remain hidden- people experience *what* happens, but not *how*, *why,* and *what for*.

Paranoid belongingness can be seen as the semiotic consequence of the disruptive impact of the two faces of globalization (i.e. hyper-connectivity and opacity) on people's ways of life. People perceive these critical impacts in terms of diffuse and overwhelmingly uncertainty, loss of cognitive and pragmatic control over their life. In turn, this global perception triggers a broad spectrum of emotional reactions according to the psycho-social characteristics of the sensemaker (anger, impotency, distrust, fatalism, denial), but all associated with the basic affective interpretation - generally working implicitly, as an embodied habit at the margin of their awareness - of being subjected to the destructive attack of an external foe.

In so doing, the affective category of the *threatening/hurting enemy* becomes far more the way of connoting the alleged source of this or that critical state, but, more radically, the *fundamental way of interpreting and engaging with the world*, applied globally and homogeneously to potentially any form of otherness that can be somehow associated with any perturbation and uncertainty in one's sphere.

Accordingly, paranoid belongingness can be seen as an extreme and at the same time distorted form of communitarian linkage, which turns it from a system of bonds *for* into a systems of bonds *against* life.

7.1.3 Crisis and identity

The Re.Cri.Re. analysis provides an empirical framework for interpreting the current socio-political scenario in a cultural key – i.e. the centrality of the identity issue, populism, growth of ultra-right parties, Euroscepticism, widespread intolerance, xenophobia, and so forth. More particularly, the identification of the incidence of paranoid belongingness helps to understand some important facets of the many phenomena of closure towards otherness that are not directly observable at the descriptive level.

First, as already observed, paranoid belongingness is an emotional construction that grounds identity on the enemization of the other. Accordingly, one has to recognize that intolerance/aversion for the other is not only the consequence of the latter's threatening power, but the basic semiotic mechanism of identity: it is the way a large segment of the population satisfies the need for identity and the need to make sense to their experience. Needless to say, this is not to deny that the other can be consistent and even anticipate its representation as enemy (Daesh terrorism is a clear instance of a strategy aimed at accelerating and radicalizing the enemization of Muslim communities, in order to promote their counter-radicalization); however, such "collaboration" with its own enemization accelerates and radicalizes the process, but it is not an integral part of it. If one should need a counter-proof of how the enemization of the other is independent from the actual aggressive force of the latter, just consider how it works for social categories which provide no reason to be considered a source of peril (e.g. homosexuals, Jews).

Second, it has to be noted that due to its affective nature, the enemization of the other works in a generalizing and homogenizing way (see the affective sensemaking tenet): it is a way to make sense of the world as a whole, rather than of specific objects of experience. Once the world is affectively construed as *we-threatened-by-them*, any major aspect of experience is linked to the friend-foe schema (indicative of this process is the fact that, as observed by many analysts, the reference to an enemy is constitutive of populism). The generalized and homogenizing valence of paranoid belongingness clarifies why this form of sensemaking need not refer to facts – i.e. interests to protect, material conditions to enhance, social practices to promote. The *we* the paranoid belongingness refers to does not concern any material basis, but derives from the attribution of the value of foe to otherness. As a result, it can be applied to an infinite set of forms of life and contexts (the territory, those-like-us, the soccer team, the nation, the West, and so forth) that can vary over time and across discourses and practices with high flexibility (an instance of this is the evolution of the Italian "Lega Nord" from local, identity-based party to national populist movement).

It follows that it is necessary to consider the single critical forms of the current socio-political scenarios (i.e. xenophobia, populism, politicization of the EU institutions, radicalization and so forth) as one of the many sides of the same dice. Needless to say, this does not mean eliminating the different socio-political implications of any specific critical phenomenon and event, or the particular process and conditions associated with each of them. Rather, it means recognizing the need to consider phenomena of intolerance as the contingent manifestations of the very same *fundamental systemic dynamics of identity construction* – that need to be dealt with as such.

Thus, it can be observed that paranoid belongingness is the outcome of a process of **irradiation of the identity bond.** Irradiation here refers to the tendency to define the *we* in terms of

dematerialized, mythical symbolic objects - weakened in their anchorage to/confinement within places, practices, interests, social positions - therefore capable of extending themselves in an unlimited and asymptotical way, despite social, cultural and economic differences. Populism is the paradigmatic form of this homogenizing process of irradiation. Grounded on such a definition, the *we* evoked by populism is a mythic entity endowed with an organic and unitary will, with indefinite and indefinable borders. In the rhetoric of populism, the people are not an aggregate of individuals grouped on the basis of an inclusion criterion (for example, those who possess the nationality of a certain state); on the contrary, who and what constitutes a people is tautologically defined: the entirety of those who participate in the common ground shared by the population, *because of their being against whose who are outside*.

Accordingly, paranoid belongingness has to be considered the way the community bond changes shape to defend itself from the systemic dynamics: membership is freed from its roots within the vital territorial bond, and takes as its reference point a mythical generalized entity (the people, the nation, the values of Western society), which has as its foundation and its vital source the enemization of otherness.

This shift **makes belongingness, no longer the solution, but the fundamental problem of contemporary European societies**. This conclusion is irrespective of ethical or axiological argumentations: the paranoid drift undermines society and institutions because it conveys a hyper-simplified interpretation of the world, as such incapable of generating projectuality to cope with the challenges raised by the current systemic dynamics.

7.1.4   The strategic need for a cultural development policy. The promotion of semiotic capital

The lack of semiotic capital prevents the positive development of the socio-political scenario. There are two major reasons for this.

First, the lack of semiotic capital implies that actors are unable to identify deeply with the social and cooperative dimension of their life. As a result, institutions are weakened in their capacity of grounding and regulating civil and political life – of incorporating particular interests and identity. Above all, the poverty of semiotic capital, as observed above, means that the cultural milieu does not make enough "semiotic antibodies" available to counteract the tendency to adopt defensive, identity based reactions to the overwhelming uncertainty induced by systemic dynamics.

Taken in itself, paranoid belongingness is not a totally new cultural phenomenon – yet the diffusion it has reached within European societies, together with the poverty of alternative forms of identity construction, makes it quite a critical issue. Counteracting it needs to be recognized as a core strategic priority both at supranational, national and regional level. This is because its manifestations in terms of enemization of the other (e.g. xenophobia, hate crimes, radicalization, intolerance, destruction of the inter-ethnic dialogue) undermine social cohesion as well as profoundly transforming the institutional and axiological foundations of the European area. Above all, the systemic force of the risks associated with the current spread of paranoid belongingness lies in the fact that it implies a radical devaluation of supranational institutions together with a progressive informal (in certain cases also formal – cf. the constitutional reform in Hungary) re-shaping of national institutions in authoritarian, and illiberal terms. Due to its emotional grounds,

paranoid belongingness is equally able to fulfil the demand for sense induced by the systemic crisis as it is unable to provide functional analysis and solutions to the big problems making up the crisis. This leads us to recognize the strategic need for *policies addressing the European societies' cultural milieu with the purpose of promoting the development of semiotic capital.*

Indeed, it is not possible just to act on the external triggers of the critical cultural dynamics. This is because, once the cultural dynamics has been activated, it keeps its autonomy; therefore, it cannot be counteracted simply by switching off its trigger. Even if and when the trigger has been weakened, the cultural dynamics will still be able to adopt new ways of self-feeding, by turning to further forms of critical ruptures and/or identifying new socio-political drivers. Therefore, any policy aimed at promoting cultural change has to complement both indirect and direct interventions - namely, both the interventions focused on the systemic conditions underpinning the cultural dynamics and intervention directly focused on the way the cultural dynamics develops.

7.2   The aim of the policy of cultural development. The internalization of the system

As discussed above (cf. § 6.1.1), semiotic capital is the meaning that is active in the cultural milieu that substantiates the experience of the super-ordered systemic dimension of a person's life. Thus, people that have access to this meaning feel their life is embedded within a broader super-ordered, meaningful, subjectively salient, over-arching framework, transcending situated experience and providing the confines of its subjective meaning.

The meaning substantiating the experience of the super-ordered system has to be seen as a *generalized, embodied, affect-laden* significance, embedded within routine social practice. It is generalized in the sense that, due to its over-arching valence, it encompasses the whole domain of experience, rather than specific segments of it. It is embodied, in the sense that it is not a discrete representation, but a form of procedural knowledge, namely a habit shaping routine social practices - behaviours, ways of feeling and thinking of collective matters. This is because the super-ordered systemic dimension is by definition beyond the domain of experience and therefore cannot consist of the representation of something. It is affect-laden, in the sense that it consists of a vital experience, subjectively dense (i.e. having value of life for the sensemaker), of a live object endowed with a relational intentionality toward the sensemaker, as happens with other persons. Indeed, it is only on this condition that the feeling of the systemic dimension can acquire identity valence and operate as the sensemaker's frame of meaning.

Due to these characteristics, the meaning substantiating the feeling of the systemic dimension can be internalized by the sensemaker, namely it can work as a fundamental taken-for-granted background assumption shaping the subjective world. This means that the systemic dimension is not something that is experienced, but the frame in which the experience is interpreted – i.e. thanks to the semiotic capital, people do not think of the systemic dimension, but *through* and *in terms of* the systemic dimension.

The internalization of the systemic dimension is the fundamental background assumption that enables the sensemaker to recognize and provide subjective valence to important aspects of collective life that are at the core of scientific and political discourse on society and its

development. First, it is the presupposition for recognizing and feeling the general collective interest as something that matters – namely seeing the common good as the super-ordered outline of sense framing the way of interpreting and giving value to contingent events, projects, decisions and acts. Second, the feeling of being embedded within a system leads us to recognize the need for "rules of the game" (e.g. formal and informal norms, social and institutional scripts, laws, codes of conduct) as a *sine qua non* condition for collective action, in the many fields where it unfolds (business, political participation, private exchange, the market and so forth). Indeed, the internalization of the systemic dimension is the basis for recognizing the interdependency among the system's actors as something that matters and therefore the need for structures of cooperation/coordination, and for the resources (institutions, norms, trust) required for grounding them.

In short, many resources that the political and social sciences have recognized at the heart of social development (civic-mindedness, trust) can be viewed as grounded on and/or instantiation of the psycho-social cultural process of internalization of the systemic dimension.

Last but not the least, the considerations above should have clarified why it is assumed here that the internalization of the systemic dimension is the way to counteract the main critical aspect emerging from the Re.Cri.Re. analysis of the cultural milieu - the enemization of the other. The recognition of the systemic dimension is the "semiotic antibody" of paranoid belongingness: it does not deny the increasing impact of otherness on local life; rather, it represents the semiotic resources– i.e. the valorisation of the rules - for elaborating the potential valence of "enemy-ness" that is inherent to otherness. This elaboration consists of feeling, imagining and then enacting the mutual participation in the system and therefore the chance of otherness to work also as the condition and not only as the limit, of one's identity project. In this hard balancing-act lies the chance of humanizing otherness and empowering the institutions – which represents the field where the future of Europe is being played out.

Comment 6. Policy of cultural development has nothing to do with manipulation and social engineering

Policy of cultural development has nothing to do with manipulative, top-down, authoritative power strategies. As the Re.Cri.Re. framework itself highlights, sensemaking is inherently autonomous. On the other hand, as happens for any domain of social life (environment, education, economy…), institutions are asked to promote the resources through which societies develop.

> The discussion with stakeholders and policy-makers around the previous version of the document has allowed us to recognize that the proposal of a "policy of cultural development" could be interpreted as a top-down, authoritative, even manipulative approach through which institutions enact their power, shaping society as they want. This would be a misunderstanding of the content and the spirit of the Guidelines.
> First, it is worth underlining that the internalization of systemic rules does not mean that the content of rules cannot be criticized. Indeed, the internalization of systemic rules concerns the recognition of their structural value, namely their indispensable function of regulating collective life; therefore, the internalization of the systemic dimension enables the

sensemaker to distinguish between the need for regulation and the contingent way of carrying it out. In short, semiotic capital is not alternative to socio-political conflict, but a premise to make socio-political conflict productive for society.

Second, policy of cultural development does not aim at changing people in themselves, either their identity or their behaviors. It pursues the purpose of promoting the incidence of certain types of semiotic resources within the cultural milieu. If this is a form of top-down manipulation, then any promotion of resources (e.g., opening a library in a neighborhood) would be one.

Third, the aims of policy of cultural development are political goals, whose value is a matter of political and ethical choice. Manipulation does not lie in the definition of the goal, but in how such a goal is set and how it is pursued (e.g. through actions that are proposed as though they aimed at different goals).

Fourth, policy of cultural development is based on a set of criteria drawn from the scientific understanding of how cultural dynamics works. The fact that the policy could take this form of scientific knowledge into account is a protection from manipulation, rather than a form of manipulation itself. On the contrary, also in this case any policy based on an empirically supported forecast of how people will react to it would be manipulative (e.g., in several countries the price of cigarettes has been raised because it has been proved that such an increase has a positive impact on reducing smoking).

Last but not least, the main concern as to the manipulative valence of policy of cultural development is perhaps due to its global, all-encompassing extension. Indeed, cultural development policy does not address one single issue, but the cultural milieu as a whole. This is true, but it does not mean that the change of the cultural milieu is designed in a control cabin and from there implemented in society. Any form of policy of cultural development cannot but be based on the involvement of people in their autonomy as sense-makers, as tenets 1-10 (cf. § 6) show.

7.3   *How to promote semiotic capital*

Five methodological tenets integrate the criteria outlined above (cf. § 6.1). They are intended as the framework enabling the design of policies of cultural development aimed at promoting semiotic capital (cf. 6.4).

- Performativity
- Identity
- Meaning giving
- Blurring boundaries
- Systemic effect

7.3.1   Performativeness (meaning follows action)

The tenet of performativeness highlights how the cultural generalized meanings are reproduced over time and within the social group through the very fact of being enacted – namely, used as assumptions to ground beliefs, actions, and choices. In other words, the dynamics of generalized

cultural meanings is not a matter of explicit negotiation; rather, such meanings are reproduced – and they may develop – because of (and in terms of) their being embedded within sensemaking, as the grounds of the social practices comprising sensemaking. In short, while on the one hand the generalized meaning enables social practices, on the other hand, social practices convey the meanings they are grounded on. Accordingly, if one wants to change the cultural milieu, one does not have to declare contents (beliefs, values, principles), but design the social practices encapsulating them: symbolic resources are not produced by statements, but by *generalizations of action structures*. First comes action, then meaning follows: a generalized meaning is consolidated within the cultural milieu not because it is stated (for example in terms of petition of principle) but because it is enacted - namely a certain social practice, in which it is implied as its inherent criterion of regulation and justification, takes root and spreads through the social body. It follows that to promote a certain generalized meaning within the cultural milieu, it is necessary to create social action settings that, in their structure, contain the meaning that is to be promoted.

7.3.2   Identity

The recognition of how the enemization of the other responds to a basic need for identity construction has two major methodological consequences. On the one hand, it cannot be conceived (and counteracted) as if it were a form of mere cognitive bias - namely through policies aimed at correcting the misperception associated with the representation of others. Indeed, the bias is the consequence, not the cause of the enemization – it is the way the cohesion of the self is carried out; and this means that it is a *matter of identity and at this level has to be addressed*[3].

On the other hand, the enemization of the other and the many phenomena of (passive and active) intolerance in which it manifests itself, cannot be counteracted by means of a call for values or by top-down normative interventions that do not take into account the psychosocial function of such phenomena. Indeed, it has to be recognized that in the context of the current socio-cultural scenario characterized by poverty of semiotic capital and paranoid belongingness, policies that see the enemization of the other only as something to oppose, without considering the demand for sense underpinning such socio-political phenomena, would be perceived by large segments of the population as meaningless obligations, constraints imposed upon identity and desire from an external enemy, and as such they would be more or less violently opposed and rejected. In brief, they would end up paradoxically fuelling the spiral of irradiation of belongingness, favouring rather than contrasting the enemization of the world (i.e. what is outside belongingness). Thus, phenomena of enemization of the other have to be addressed by policies that go to the heart of the underpinning semiotic dynamics – i.e. what Re.Cri.Re. identified in the drift of belongingness in paranoid terms as the way of fulfilling a radical demand for sense.

Needless to say, this does not mean giving up normative and counteractive interventions especially when active forms of intolerance are at stake. Rather it means integrating "negative" policies with "positive" ones and bringing the latter into the foreground. "Positive" here refers to

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[3]. Kahan (2015) provides convincing empirical evidence on the importance of identity motivation in affecting how people organize their scientific knowledge, think and position themselves with respect to important political and ethical issues (e.g. evolutionary theory; climate change).

policies aimed at promoting the vital experience of the systemic dimension – and of the rules that derive from and instantiate it. This means thinking of policies as the way of building conditions that enable the target population to experience the systemic dimension as the driver/resource for their projects, rather than as just a normative limit - *allowing*, rather than preventing.

7.3.3   Meaning giving

One of the main claims made above is that enemization of the other is a way of fulfilling the demand for sense triggered by the overwhelming uncertainty induced by globalized hyper-connectivity. As discussed above, the opacity of the processes and mechanisms mediating the impact of systemic dynamics make people face critical changes and disruptions that cannot be interpreted; they thus trigger and fuel the totalizing emotional interpretation of being subjected to the attack of a global enemy. On the other hand, psychology - and psychoanalysis even more - has shown that people can develop more differentiated interpretations of experience when they can take other standpoints and theories into account. Indeed, in so doing the sensemaker is enabled to place constraints on the original totalizing emotional interpretation. This has a subjective cost – indeed, it involves giving up to the good-for-all-uses semiotic key of access to the world; yet, it can comprise such a cost because of the advantages it obtains in terms of cognitive and pragmatic agency on the phenomenon being interpreted.

This is what the tenet of meaning giving consists of: in order to develop the paranoid interpretation of experience towards more differentiated forms, people have to be enabled to represent and make sense of the processes and mechanisms mediating the relation between local spheres of life and systemic dynamics.

Needless to say, the development of the ability to make sense of the systemic dynamics meets some major obstacles – on the one hand, the opacity of the latter; on the other hand the scarcity of semiotic resources (explicative models, narratives, metaphors, contexts and practices)[4] that could scaffold the effort of making sense and provide a positive balance between the advantages in terms of empowerment and the subjective cost associated with giving up the all-encompassing, identity-laden interpretative key. Accordingly, at the very centre of policies of cultural development there must be the creation of conditions that enable people to semiotize the systemic dynamics. This means, on the one hand, working on reducing the opacity and, on the other hand, promoting the social conditions and semiotic resources that serve as scaffolding to people's ability to understand the world in which they are embedded.

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[4]. Just to provide one instance of that poverty, one can consider the way the refugee crisis is represented by the media – regardless of the attitude and the political orientation of the source, aspects concerning the events (humanitarian emergency, number of arrivals, political and institutional reactions, biographical aspects) are in the foreground, whereas analysis of the mechanisms, reports on the dynamics triggering the migration remain in the background. In this way, public opinion is exposed to the representation of an overwhelming wave, remaining blind to the underpinning dynamics, as if the phenomenon were a self-contained process having meaning in itself.

7.3.4 Blurring boundaries

In past decades, political and social sciences, as well as political action, identified the paradigm of the community as the symbolic and socio-political form capable of reconciling the conflict between the self-referentiality of the individual vital sphere of life and systemic normativity. As observed above (cf. § 7.1.3), the incidence of paranoid belongingness suggests that under the pressure of the growing dependence of local environments on systemic dynamics, the community bond has been showing its limits - the effects of globalization are having a destructive impact on the community bond, which requires systemic responses that communities alone cannot provide.

However, the recognition of the limits of the community must not lead to the baby being thrown out with the bath water. In the final analysis, the internalization of the systemic dimension is a way of rescuing the basic function of the community, namely that of making social relations meaningful and in this way providing vital content to collective life. On the other hand, the call for a re-vitalization of the system states that nowadays the only way to make the community an instrument for humanization is to weaken and enlarge its boundaries progressively and asymptotically, in order to encompass what is outside it. The world has become too intertwined for narrow boundaries.

This means promoting multiple belongingness (see below, point d) and introducing integrative elements of universalism within the process of development of the community bond, in order to weaken the community boundaries and promote the capacity of belongingness to valorise what is outside it.[5] A way to implement this methodological tenet is to work on the community-to-community exchange in the perspective of promoting *communities of communities.*

7.3.5 Systemic effect

This tenet is strictly related to the previous ones. It states that each specific content has to be considered in terms of the fact that it interacts with other contents because of its latent generalized worldview. Accordingly, semantic contents always have a potentially contagious effect – they are not to be considered in themselves only, but for their capacity to prime/trigger/reproduce the worldview they convey across the cultural milieu.

This can be expressed as follows. Consider the social practices A, B, C, D, each of them behind a specific content – say content $\alpha, \beta, \chi, \delta.$ Despite the difference between them, these contents convey the same generalized meaning, the same worldview – say M[6].

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[5]. This means foregrounding the bridging capital over the bonding one (Coleman 1990; Putnam, 1993). An example of how the weakening of the community boundary does not necessarily mean a reduction of the capacity of belongingness to ground identity and sense is provided by the recent protest action that occurred in South Salento against the passage in that territory of the Trans-Adriatic pipeline (TAP). Protests were motivated mainly by local and identity concerns –e.g. the impact of the pipeline on the landscape, the conflict with the tourist vocation of the territory - and found their symbolic form in the strong opposition to the eradication of the centuries-old olive trees, that represent an identity marker of that territory. Now, these concerns would still have been recognised if they were integrated into a broader, beyond-community argument concerning the problems of democracy characterizing the supplier country for whom the pipeline is necessary.

[6]. For instance, say A is the voice against a new Mosque in town, conveying the meaning (α): |Islamic religious practice has to be discouraged because it can be a source of dangerous agreement|; and B is the

Legend. SC= Cultural milieu; m, n, o, p=situated practices/interventions; Cm, Cn, Co, Cp= domain/contexts of practices/interventions; α, β, χ, δ= specific contents enacted by the practices/interventions in reason of the contexts; N= generalized meaning driven by the specific contents

Figure 2. The logic of policy of cultural development (from Fini et al, 2012)

This tenet leads us to envisage how the integration of policies can be pursued by designing interventions that, through their different local content, push the same M - where the latter is the semiotic capital or a generalized meaning working as a semiotic antibody to the enemization of otherness. The figure 7 shows the logical structure of such a model of semiotic integration.

7.4   What to do. Instances of systemic interventions for cultural development
A few examples of interventions are presented below. Taken as a whole, interventions such as the ones outlined are a way of achieving two main purposes: on the one hand, to define social practices that promote the positive experience of institutions and more in general of the systemic rules; on the other hand, to introduce constraints on the opacification of the system, in order to reduce the deficit of sense it fuels.
The 13 policies of cultural development proposed below are not the only ways of addressing the lack of semiotic capital - other interventions can be designed to complement, or even provide an alternative to, the policies proposed here. These were selected in accordance with the criterion of

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request to get rid of any constraints on milk production, implicitly conveying the meaning (β) |we have to decide how much milk to produce, and nobody seated at Brussels must have any say in what concerns us|. Now, both α and β convey the same M – the absolutization of belongingness and the view of what comes from outside as a threat/aggression (i.e. paranoid belongingness).

valorising socio-political dynamics that are already active in the current socio-political scenario. This was done on the grounds of the general view that a cultural development policy cannot invent new forms of interventions *ex nihilo*, but that it has to be thought of as an effort to promote the foregrounding of potentially convergent lines of socio-political development, in order to generate virtuous systemic effects.

From a complementary standpoint, it has to be recognized that the interventions proposed below are based mainly on theoretical arguments (albeit grounded on the findings of the Re.Cri.Re. empirical analysis of European societies' cultural milieu and integrated with reference to the empirical and theoretical sectorial literature). This means that these policies cannot be considered fully validated – rather, they need to be subjected to further stages of empirical analysis aimed at testing their appropriateness, feasibility, efficiency and efficaciousness. On the other hand, the 13 interventions are proposed with an illustrative purpose - for the sake of showing how it might be possible to translate methodological criteria aimed at promoting semiotic capital into practice. Our expectation is that in doing so, a fruitful discussion with policy makers and institutional actors might be triggered, in the perspective of building a global culturally-informed strategy for coping with the crisis and to prepare a better future for Europe.

In the final analysis, the 13 proposals are meant to show that the policy of cultural development is not a sectorial policy but rather resembles environmental policy (actually it can be considered a specific form of this kind of policy, addressing the *cultural* environment). It consists of a second-order framework guiding and providing a strategic, systemic aim to several sectorial policies. Thus, just as environmental policy frames interventions concerning consumption, production, recycling, energy saving, education, and so forth, policy upon the cultural environment frames interventions concerning, among others, institutions, welfare, economics (the three domains considered below).

7.4.1 A new institutional deal

Though it is a controversial matter, various authors believe that the economic crisis provided the chance for an enforcement of EU institutional integrations, with the displacement of strategic dimensions of policy – first of all in economic and financial areas - at the supranational level.

On the other hand, as the Re.Cri.Re. analysis showed, people perceive the institutions as part of the problem or as being unable to provide protection from the turmoil to which they are subjected. Accordingly, a new institutional deal is greatly needed, in order to stop and invert this cultural drift. The following lines of intervention are framed by the idea that in the current context of socio-political crisis, characterized by critical cultural conditions, institutional empowerment is not only a matter of technical, political and administrative enforcement, but also, and above all, of the capacity of the institutions to be attuned to people's way of feeling and thinking.

1. Supranational, national and regional institutions have to regain and enforce their capacity of strategic governance of systemic dynamics. Insofar as institutions adopt a short-term horizon, confined to managing and reacting to contingencies – or at least insofar as people see them as such - populism and radicalization cannot but be appealing. Where there is no room for imagining

the future, the only ways of representing it become fear and fatalism.[7] The Re.Cri.Re. analysis suggests that the demand for a sense underpinning phenomenologies of intolerance and distrust are at the same time a demand for institutions, namely a demand for protection and empowerment that require demand-centred policies if they are to be fulfilled.

2. Efforts have to be made in order to promote the perception of supranational and national institutions as supporting interlocutors of local institutions and communities, committed to the promotion of local empowerment and development. Needless to say, this does not mean eliminating regulative and constraining functions, but recognizing the necessity for dynamic forms of balance between functional and normative criteria and the strategic aim of valorising the local demands and dynamics of development.

Accordingly, innovative forms of inter and intra-level institutional cooperation and models of deliberative and participative democracy have to be developed and implemented at different scales. The contrast between the "Europe of the institutions and bureaucrats" and the "Europe of the people" is at the core of the populist narrative – the new institutional deal lies in tearing down this symbolic opposition.

3. Efforts have to be made to reinforce and re-build the role of intermediate bodies (not only as they have traditionally been seen, i.e. political parties, trade unions, non-governmental organizations). The progressive weakening of these bodies has to be considered a main driver and at the same time an important marker of the current socio-political crisis. Indeed, due to their mediational role between institutions and society, intermediate bodies are the symbolic and pragmatic places where the vital worlds, the subjectivity of individuals and groups is framed by super-ordered rules, yet close enough to the exchange to allow their internalization. Accordingly, the intermediate bodies are the *gym of otherness*, the contexts where people can develop competence to interact with strangeness – in sum, they are the socio-cultural producers of semiotic capital.

4. A new, demand-centred, administrative culture has to be developed. This requires investing in training and organizational innovation to promote a new identity and a new vision of what it means to work as *civil servants,* at the service of the institutions and citizens. This is a strategic aim because it is the condition to enforce the discretion and autonomy of institutional decision making, in so doing enabling it to interact with the demand dynamically.

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[7]. The appeal of populism lies in the fact that – as Elchardus, and Spruyt (2014) state - it is a *politics of hope*. "(…) paradoxically, populism appears as a politics of hope – some would undoubtedly say a desperate politics of hope – a politics that expresses the hope that where established parties and elites have failed, ordinary folk, common sense and the politicians who give them voice can find solutions, halt the decline, return to the heartland, to a society that in retrospect – a no doubt partly nostalgic and romanticized retrospect –seems good and just." (p. 16).
In time of crisis people do not necessarily look for solutions – they seek to escape from their current state. According to this perspective, what the Leave choice may have represented for many UK people was the chance of enacting a possible future.

7.4.2 Meaningful economy

The Re.Cri.Re. aim and focus are not the economic factors of crisis per se, but their interplay with cultural dynamics. Accordingly, the lines of intervention outlined below are not meant to address economic problems but to reflect two main aims: a) to develop protective institutions from the overwhelming, disruptive impact of global dynamics; b) to promote innovative social practices fostering a constructive vision of otherness.

5. Devices and normative frameworks should be designed to reduce the opacity of the global economic dynamics and increase the capacity of collective representation and accountability of diseconomies associated with financial and productive activities. This kind of devices and normative frameworks would have a twofold impact on the cultural milieu – on the one hand, it would promote the perception and valorisation of the institutional and political system as the protective barrier from the "aggression" of the globalized outside; on the other hand, it would have the semiotic function of favouring the recognition and therefore the socio-cognitive appropriation of at least some of the ways the financial and economic dynamics impact on the domains of life[8].

6. Relational economy[9] represents a potentially important source of social and cultural development. Indeed, this kind of practice may fuel new ways of understanding the relation between needs, social exchange and systemic frames. On the other hand, it is hard to think that the relational economy can go beyond a testimonial role only by itself – in order to work as a hub of innovative semiotic capital, its structural and institutional consolidation and social incidence have to be supported and promoted by means of normative, functional and economic incentives.

7. Investments in relational goods, quality of life and social infrastructures should be promoted at both supranational and national level. This means making efforts to promote the vision of the political and institutional system as being committed to making individual and social needs a fundamental regulative tenet of the economy.[10]

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[8]. The Tobin Tax is an emblematic example of this kind of device. It was proposed for the first time by James Tobin in 1972, conceived as a minimum tax rate on financial transactions (quantified by Tobin himself at 1 per cent). It pursues two main aims. First, it aims at reducing financial speculation. Second, it aims at increasing tax revenues. On the theoretical ground, the Tobin Tax proposal rests on the view that financialization generates a reduction of the rates of growth, increasing unemployment, increasing income and wealth inequalities. Importantly, financialization is also associated to the increasing political power of the rentiers (Epstein, 2005) and, therefore, to their increasing possibility of affecting economic policies to their own benefit. Proponents of the Tobin Tax are aware that it is nothing more than "a grain of sand" with respect to the aim of stabilizing financial markets (e.g. Bellofiore and Brancaccio, 2002). In this respect, it is conceived as a measure of *symbolic impact*, which, in the current crisis of de-legitimation of the Institutions governing the Eurozone, could generate positive political and cultural effects.

[9]. Relational economy here refers to forms of economic activities framed by social and ethical criteria rather than profit maximisation.

[10]. The Erasmus programme is perhaps the most successful and emblematic form of systemic, long-term investment in relational goods. An entire generation has experienced the European institutions as the driver of an experience of inter-cultural encounter that has consolidated reciprocal knowledge, trust,

8. Resources and goods that are fundamental for individual and collective life (e.g. water, biodiversity, air, climate) have to become the core of an institutional action of de-commodification, aimed at putting constraints upon the market's tendency to expand its domain asymptotically. From a complementary standpoint, this entails designing innovative models of governance that promote responsible ways of usage and consumption.

7.4.3   Vital welfare

Welfare is the domain where people experience the institutional-political system in the context of the satisfaction of basic social and political needs and demands. For this reason, welfare policies and organizational models play a central role in shaping how people perceive, feel, trust and make commitments towards the institutional and political system. Accordingly, the indications proposed below are designed to promote people's experience of the welfare services as meaningful, vital exchanges with a systemic interlocutor committed to the demand of the user.

9.The promotion of semiotic capital requires a strategic investment in education, school systems, and life-long learning. Needless to say, semiotic resources do not correspond to specific subjects, but consist of – and/or are favoured by - the diffusion of transversal competences. Competence with strangeness, tolerance, reciprocity are some of these transversal competences whose promotion requires ad hoc implicit and explicit curricula.[11]

10. Efforts should be made in order to integrate the welfare services so as to enable them to address consistently the unity of the user's demand. Indeed, the institutional, organizational, functional and logistic segmentation of services do not correspond to the inner organization of the demand – on the contrary, it is the rule that the processes required to address a demand cross several welfare subsystems (e.g. school, health care, social security). The more such subsystems work in an integrated way, the more effective the intervention, and, above all, the more the users experience involvement with a systemic actor endowed with a single, meaningful intentionality to work as a resource for them[12].

11. Though welfare services usually concern individual user's needs, they can – and should - foreground collective and systemic purposes. It is worth pointing out that the relation between these two levels of goals cannot be taken for granted – the pursuit of the former does not

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networking - namely relational goods that have grounded the European identity as well as working as the social infrastructure of economic and institutional innovation.

[11]. For instance, subjects like literature, arts, and history can work as the enactment of identity closure or as a practice of exploration of otherness. From a complementary standpoint, the class and the school environment can - but also may not - provide students with the experience of a vital bond of belongingness open to and empowered by systemic rules with a universal reach.

[12]. For instance, from the standpoint of the person affected, a state of disease is not only a demand for health. It is a more general demand to be cared for, that encompasses aspects such as: transportation, management of daily life duties, work requirements and so on.

guarantee the achievement of the other per se; on the contrary, regarding the service supplied to the individual user as the way to pursue a systemic intervention entails in most cases designing services that do not fit fully with the individual demand.[13] Accordingly, the foregrounding of the systemic purpose requires a balance with the commitment to the individual user's services. Thanks to this balance, the individual user can experience the integration between the satisfaction of one person's demand and the pursuit of super-ordered systemic aims.

12. It is certainly worth designing organization and supply processes of welfare services in accordance to the criterion of the demand/production intertwinement (i.e. *Prosumership*, cf. § 6.9). This means weakening the boundaries that separate providers and users in order to involve the user in the supply process. In so doing, the user becomes part of the welfare system's inner environment, participating in the latter's life. As already underlined, the adoption of such a criterion may provide several functional and institutional advantages for the welfare system – e.g. a more efficient use of resources, higher user commitment, more efficacious reciprocal attunement between provider and user, participative democratic management of the service.[14] Yet the criterion is suggested here for one more reason: the participation of the user in the inner environment of the welfare system provides the latter with the chance of making a meaningful experience of engagement with the service as a systemic actor. Indeed, the inclusion of the provider-user interaction within the boundaries of the welfare organization leads both participants, on the one hand, to make changes in their domains and, on the other hand, to recognize the structure of reciprocity underpinning such changes - namely the fact that they are the way the relationship works. As a result, the user is favoured in its ability to feel the welfare organization as a living entity involved in a constructive engagement with her/him. Moreover, it has to be remembered that the user normally interacts with the welfare organization due to major needs, and therefore concerning subjectively significant areas of his/her identity. Therefore, the vital experience of the welfare organization in terms of mutual engagement further favours the internalization of the system.

13. From the previous point, it follows that the organization of welfare services needs to be designed consistently with the aim of making the user's participation a meaningful experience of reciprocity. This means that the supply and delivery processes through which the service is provided have to be built in accordance to a tenet of maximization of the engagement, namely what has been called *intersubjective density* (cf. § 6.10). In other words, the service has to be

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[13]. This aspect is paradigmatically evident in the domain of health care services – in that domain it is clear that interventions are carried out generally on the basis of individual demand and for the sake of addressing the individual health need. On the other hand, the purpose of these interventions is systemic – to guarantee the population a certain level of health. Individual interventions – both in their organizational and technical aspects – are designed and constrained by this super-ordered systemic purpose. This means that a health treatment supplied by the welfare system is guided not only by the criterion of optimizing the individual user; rather, resources are implemented as a function of the super-ordered criterion of making the single intervention functional to the need to replicate it at the level of population.

[14]. For instance, this is the case of the Italian school system, which envisages seats in the school's administrative board for elected representatives of parents and students (the latter only in high school).

conceived as a relational process, framed and constrained by rules, yet entrusted to the dynamics of reciprocal engagement between users and providers; where the latter aims to shape the local solution that optimizes the fit between the welfare system's resources and the specificity of the user's demand. This model is in a sense the opposite of the paradigm based on the application of invariant procedures grounded on pre-defined typologies of users and requests/needs. The core difference from the latter model is the recognition of the provider-user relation as the process through which the service is construed and valorised - rather than only delivered. Needless to say, the design of high intensity vital welfare services requires major development both at the level of structure and culture of the welfare organizations – the main change at stake may be summed up thus: to view the mutual engagement with the user as the resource to get involved with, rather than noise to defend oneself from.

8   The local context of policy-making

The suggestions in the previous paragraphs cannot be considered to have universal validity - their feasibility and utility depends on the contextual conditions in which they are designed and carried out. On the other hand, contextual conditions need to be analysed at national and regional level at least, in order to identify the specific role they play and thus how to adjust the Re.Cri.Re. proposals to them.

This level of analysis proved to be beyond the scope of the Re.Cri.Re. project, which had to limit the analysis of the local context to the macro-regional level (i.e. Northern-Eastern, Northern, Continental, Western, Southern Europe). At this level of analysis, it does not make sense to define specific suggestions for taking into account the local context, given that the variability within the macro-region is still high (e.g. between Italy and Malta, or between Estonia and Bulgaria). Therefore, a different strategy was adopted: the identification of dimensions of contextual variability that can interact with the Re.Cri.Re. proposals. The dimensions identified were those that emerged – more or less explicitly - from the discussion with policy-makers and stakeholders. Therefore, the list proposed below must not be considered exhaustive, but is meant just as a first step, in the direction of the recognition of how to take local contexts into account.

Economic conditions. This factor matters in two complementary ways. On the one hand, the more critical the economic conditions are, the more policies tend to be interpreted in terms of basic needs to be satisfied. On the other hand, it has to be recognized that taking the culture into account also requires economic resources; therefore, the lower the availability of economic resources, the more the practicability of the Re.Cri.Re. suggestions requires capacity to innovate and find creative solutions.

Driver-target distance Several of the suggestions for policy of cultural development involve some kind of interplay between the driver of the policy and the target (e.g. intersubjective density). Therefore, the organizational and institutional distance between driver and target becomes a critical issue: the greater the distance, the more one can expect the policy to be designed and implemented in an abstract way, thus leaving limited room to the engagement and valorization of the target's sensemaking. On the other hand, such a distance can depend on several factors. Needless to say, the policy sector is relevant – e.g. monetary policy is by definition systemic and

generalized. Yet it depends on the institutional architecture of the country as well as its dimensionality. For instance, it is easier to introduce forms of target engagements in countries with a limited surface area (e.g. Estonia, Malta) as well as being characterized by a high institutional differentiation (e.g. the role played by Regions in Italy).

8.1 Domain specific policies

In what follows some considerations are proposed as to how the Re.Cri.Re. proposals could be adopted in specific domains of policy. This level of analysis has been carried out for 3 domains: health, education, labour market, on the basis of the case studies carried out in the previous stage of the project (WP4). The considerations cannot be considered immediately generalizable. Indeed, the case studies they are based on focused on a limited set of local contexts – health and education: Italy and Greece; job market: the Netherlands and the UK;

On the other hand, the considerations offered below could not have attempted to encompass the many domains of policy, in the different local contexts of EU countries. Rather, they are proposed with the purpose of highlighting that the Re.Cri.Re. general proposals can assume different meanings and forms depending on the policy domain.

8.1.1 Health

Health care is an area of the relationship between the individual and the public system focused on an essential, global issue – health. Essential in the sense that it refers to a fundamental need, at the basis of the very possibility of existence; global in the sense that the health demand is all-encompassing - it potentially invests the totality of the spheres of experience (the body, social relations, planning, work, status, values, etc.). Health policies and practices are therefore carried out in a field with a high degree of subjectivity. On the one hand, healthcare is an area where the interpretative, methodological and organizational models that Re.Cri.Re is developing - specifically centered on the idea that people's subjectivity can be engaged in such a way as to act as a resource - can be particularly useful. On the other hand, the existential value of health means that the experience that people have of the health system contributes significantly to shaping the vision they have of public services as a whole. In this sense, healthcare is an area of choice for the promotion of semiotic capital.

Healthcare demand is by definition generalized. It is triggered by the emergence of a critical medical condition - the onset of a pathology or a critical physical condition. The medical need substantiates the core of the health demand; however it does not exhaust it. In fact, the health demand includes the set of existential, psychological and functional implications that the health problem expresses in the person's life (at the level of family relationships, job role, organizational and logistical facets, financial aspects, planning for the future, etc.).

From a complementary point of view, the health demand also includes the needs that arise when the person is called to face the critical health situation. Some of these needs have a general existential value (for example, deciding whether or not to tackle a decisive but risky operation); other needs are of a managerial, logistical and functional nature (for example, the need to put

consultancy and specialized assessments in the right sequence, choose the structure to contact, organize the interventions so as to make them as compatible as possible with daily routines; summarise partly divergent opinions and information, etc.); other needs concern the moment of contact with and use of health facilities (for example, the understanding of the flexibility of services, the need to foresee the time needed to make use of the services, the understanding of administrative procedures, logistics, etc.).

On the basis of the analyses developed in the context of Re.Cri.Re, as well as of other findings retrievable in the literature, the public health system is characterized by the tendency to collect the demand for health according to a reductive and fragmented model: reductive in the sense of focusing in a tendentially exhaustive manner on the medical core, conceiving the additional components of the health demand as residual; fragmented in the sense that also the medical need is faced in additional terms, as the aggregation of discrete performances, each focused in a tendentially self-referential way on its technical-operative domain.

The reductive/fragmented model has its functional motivations - it represents the form with which the practicability of professional specialism has developed in a service context operating at the level of population. However, the model reveals critical limits.

We understand how this model of health service leads the user to experience her/himself as a target of an aggregate of discrete performances (incidentally, not necessarily connected to each other clearly from an organizational and functional point of view) endowed with outcomes, but without purpose. The system does not propose to the user a global charge; consequently, the system remains opaque for the user - the latter does not perceive it as a subject endowed with an intentionality of relationship towards him, bearer of a global representation and design of the user. This has two significant critical consequences.

On the one hand, the user cannot but entrust a further subject - external to the health system – with the part of the health demand not taken on by the health system. This further subject is generally found within the life sphere of the person (the family, friends, those who share the same pathological condition, facebook, the information found on the Internet); consequently, it is highly likely that the ways of acting and of feeling that the user develops in the relationship with these vital areas will inevitably tend to be divergent from the functional and organizational needs of health services.

In this regard the following example is reported, limited in scope but emblematic in its meaning: in front of a hospital clinic about twenty patients are waiting. The clinic has no information service to guide patients through administrative procedures and organizational and logistic aspects (e.g. how to book for the visit, who manages the order, how patients are distributed among the surgeries, etc.). Given that no one has taken charge of this component of the demand, the micro-community of users self-organizes: they exchange information on the various aspects, instruct the new arrivals, offer forecasts on waiting times. All this obviously based on idiosyncratic conjectures, often groundless and in any case poorly documented, necessarily influenced by the inevitably stressful conditions that accompany the users' wait in a medical clinic. Users therefore find a way to satisfy the surplus of demand, which the system neglects, but this is at the cost of fuelling potentially conflicting methods of use, critical in terms of compliance and user's capacity to make the best use of the resources that the health system makes available to them.

These considerations lead to the conclusion that the health system is a paradigmatic area where the feasibility and utility of the Re.Cri.Re. tenets can be experienced, in particular "put the demand at the core of policy". This is not only as a form of humanization of healthcare, but also as a way of improving the efficacy of the system.

8.1.2 Education

The following suggestions for policy making in the field of teacher evaluation (educational policies) are based on WP4 case study 1 (Greece), which focused on primary school teachers' symbolic and cultural perceptions of the teacher evaluation policy in Greece. According to the central notions of policy guidelines introduced in Deliverable D 5.1, we have developed a series of proposals specifically regarding the field of teacher evaluation. These suggestions are detailed below in conjunction with the criteria introduced in Deliverable D 5.1, followed by a section of proposals for future policy making in the field of teacher evaluation and quality in education.

Target group's demand

As specified in D 5.1, the notion of target population's demand is central for the success of policies. As shown by our research among Greek primary school teachers as recipients of the teacher evaluation policy in 2010-2014, teachers have specific views and endorse specific interpretations about the content, motives, and possible consequences of the evaluation policy. They tend, in particular, to regard the governments' efforts to implement this policy as punitive and they also think that the policy-makers' motives included salary cuts and layoffs in the long run. By contrast, the teachers' demand revolved around an evaluation policy that would be linked with in-service training, mentoring and provision of feedback for improving their practice. Thus, it is apparent that the gap between the teachers' demand and the perceived goals and motives of policy makers led to teachers vehemently opposing and sabotaging the policy. This points to the importance of the target population's representations, meanings and identities. Future policy making should recognize that without taking into account these representations and demands and factoring them in, future evaluation policies would be doomed to failure.

Moreover, these collective representations of the teachers' communities are historically shaped, through the years, though intensified in the context of crisis and due to external political pressures of the Memorandum Agreements and Troika. As a result, these negative representations are not easy to change and transform to the better if a broader policy aimed at promoting cultural development is not well designed and implemented in the years to come.

Furthermore, our empirical data indicated that teachers are not opposed to the idea of evaluation as a tool of promoting quality, but to the suggested policy to be introduced. This is a clear sign that their resistance was not a matter of opposing the notion and the essence of evaluation and quality, but the specific policy designed and proposed which to a great extent ignored the teachers' demands and their symbolic world as a whole. This was intensified by a generalized hostility and suspiciousness due to the lack of semiotic capital on behalf of the state.

Lastly, it has been shown in the teachers' discourse that their demand for a policy on quality and evaluation is closely related to their professional empowerment, and the increase of their resilience as resources to deal with crisis and the overall threatening environment. This was not

the case of the evaluation policy, in the way it has been perceived by teachers, which also explains why they couldn't identify with such a policy, give meaning to it and internalize it.

At this point we should stress the fact that "the demand" of the teachers cannot be explored and understood merely with typical needs assessment procedures. This is because the notion of demand goes beyond and exceeds some material or generally expressed universal requests that can even come up through a literature review or be presented in a horizontal and uniform way, not to mention the approach and understanding of things by experts or academics who lack the specific, grounded and culturally based experience of the teachers' semiotic and symbolic world. So the notion of demand includes and is an expression of the symbolic world of the teachers reflecting their core values, ideas, mentalities etc. Thus, in any case they have to be specifically addressed by culture-sensitive interventions.

Policy addresses cultural variability

From our research, it has become evident that the target population of the evaluation policy (i.e. Greek primary school teachers) is not homogenous. On the contrary, it comprises tenured and non-tenured teachers, teachers working in cities and teachers working in remote rural areas, teachers working in well-off and underprivileged schools (e.g. schools with high percentages of immigrant pupils). Policy makers should take into account all these factors of variability and allow for flexibility in the evaluation policy, for example by introducing criteria that take into account the socio-cultural milieu of the school. The evaluation policy should also be tailored according to the teacher category it addresses (tenured, non-tenured, years of experience, area of teaching, etc) which by all means suggest the variability in needs and demands for help and empowerment.

Furthermore, the differences and the variability existing in mental schemas should also be considered. For example, the mental representations through which the demand for an evaluation policy was constructed and justified are not homogenous and this has been shown in our empirical data. We can mention the concept of accountability, of professional development, of teaching innovation, of professional identities which are quite complex and diverse. So, in order for the policy to be considered problem solving by the individuals, it must be able to respond positively to the existing variability both in terms of material but also in the symbolic-conceptual level.

Cognitive appropriateness

As shown from our research, the Greek Ministry of Education initially focused on a normative approach, without actually recognizing the underpinning representations of teachers as regards the evaluation policy. The result was that teachers' unions opposed and blocked the implementation of the policy. Thus, future policy making should endorse 'cognitive appropriateness' and take into account teachers' views by performing an a priori, in-depth needs assessment. It is important to delve into teachers' views about their role, their professional needs and their aspirations regarding professional development.

Also, there has to be a clear distinction between the output and the outcome of the teachers' evaluation policy. More specifically there has to be a clear knowledge and understanding between the results of the evaluation policy as intended and defined by the policy makers and those which were actually produced and provoked to the teachers' symbolic and actual world. In our case

study it has been shown that not only was the output of the policy not clearly defined and expressed but also the outcomes of the policy, despite being profound in the teachers' world, were ignored or misinterpreted by policy makers. All these factors should be incorporated in a future evaluation policy. On the contrary, in the 2010-2014 teacher evaluation policy, teachers' views were only recognized in a post-hoc way, after teachers' reactions to the policy.

Organizational appropriateness

As regards teacher evaluation in 2010-2014, it seems that policy makers did not actually attempt to factor in the structure and the particularities of the Greek school system. They tried to implement teacher evaluation in a top-down, one-size-fits-all way. Future policy making should include a more realistic analysis of the ways the policy could be implemented. Decentralized, school-level evaluation forms should be included. Evaluation should be flexible and organized in a way that does not disrupt the already burdened working day of the teachers. The teachers in our sample said, for example, that they were discouraged by the bureaucratic procedure of evaluation. Material incentives should also be provided for teachers assuming various roles in evaluation and in-service training at the school level.

Generalization

From our research, it became apparent that teachers interpreted the evaluation policy as part of a generalized effort by the government to impose austerity measures in education, in the context of a neo-liberal oriented policy dictated by the Troika, which brings individualism and strict competitiveness into the educational world. This generalization of the evaluation policy contributed to their negative stance. Future policy making should make an effort to disconnect the symbolic meaning of evaluation from more generalized punitive and austerity measures, and stress the positive outcomes of evaluation for teachers' everyday practice and for schools.

A very important point should be raised here about the lack of trust towards government and state structures. Teachers in our research repeatedly stressed that they didn't trust the representatives of the Ministry, the educational administrators and the government in general, because they have proved in the past to be corrupt and non-meritocratic. This is seen as even more paradoxical since the official discourse about evaluation promoted the meritocratic aspect of teacher evaluation. Thus, a major priority of future policy making in this field would be to cultivate a more trusting relationship with educational staff, by introducing measures to promote meritocracy, transparency and accountability of all administrators in education. Moreover, these initiatives should take into consideration the diachronic aspect and the historical "roots" of the mistrust culture, which goes far back before the crisis era.

Meaning giving

Once again, future policy making in the field of educational evaluation should include an important stage of needs assessment and negotiations with teachers' associations. Teachers should be more included in the political dialogue, by representatives at the level of the school and by representatives of all categories of teachers (such as non-tenured, younger teachers etc.). Policy making should also aim to assigning the role of assessor to a professional who is highly

trusted and valued by the teachers (e.g. senior teacher, mentor, a reformed version of the school counsellor).

Also, in order for the teachers to embrace, internalize and give meaning to the educational assessment law and the subsequent procedures, they have to feel that this law was created through a bottom up procedure in which they were essentially included not only in terms of their demands heard (just from a practical or material perspective) but also as for the semiotic and psychological capital which they bear and through which they signify their professional relationships and identities. This means that in practical everyday terms, the evaluation procedures must respond to the teachers demands and professional mentality in topics such as professional development, building of teaching skills and capacities, empowerment and resilience, effective teaching, class management, promotion of overall quality. From our empirical data it has been shown that the definitions of quality, the dimensions highlighted in terms of priorities and the methodology of assuring quality are totally different between policy makers and everyday teachers which by all means is indicative of the semiotic gap that exists between policy makers and teachers' communities. These different and opposing worlds of meanings, values and ways of representing reality lead to an enemization of otherness, suspiciousness, lack of trust and lack of legitimacy not only on the part of the teachers' community but also on the part of the state-policy makers- who tend to act aggressively, normatively and in a top-down fashion, leaving little room for flexibility, pluralism and openness to the system.

Intersubjective density

Teacher evaluation should be promoted as being an integral part of teachers' practice which offers solutions and ameliorates everyday school life and not merely as a theoretical or normative discourse. Positive incentives should be included that would affect teachers' careers and development in a positive and concrete way. Teachers should be encouraged to assume various roles at the school level based on their experience and competences, e.g. the role of mentor or 'critical friend' which will offer a safe learning environment and positive incentives for improving without the fear or insecurity of external controls. The positive consequences of evaluation for the whole school community should be stressed which will represent school quality as a whole and as a system. This representation as a system will not consider school teachers as the only responsible for achieving high educational quality, placing a greater burden and stress on teachers for factors that are beyond their reach and are affecting quality (eg. Educational policies, socio-economic inequalities, different socio-cultural identities, school curriculum, professional university education, crisis context etc).

All the above, being part of the teachers' demands which were highlighted in our empirical data, if embraced in the teachers' educational policies, it will be a sign of intersubjective intensity and may foster mutual engagement to this policy. This could bring more freedom and autonomy to teachers in order to accept and implement the reform. A precondition of this is to achieve a sense of trust, informed accountability and security from both policy makers and school community. Autonomy and freedom in a discursive and negotiating context requires the existence of adequate time but also the presence of legitimized, culturally informed trade union intermediaries with a broad consensus. Our research findings showed an extremely low legitimacy and low semiotic and

cultural acceptance of the teachers' representatives who apart from being ineffective are considered to be untrustworthy and not expressing the demands and the cultural symbolic system of teachers. This is a great obstacle that has to be addressed.

Prosumership

Teachers should be included not only in the design of the evaluation policy, but they should be included in their own evaluation, thus becoming producers of the evaluation policy. Self-evaluation at the level of the school and of the individual teacher is an important component of this proposition, as teachers can become personally involved and motivated towards finding ways of improving their practice. The teachers' active involvement as critical friends and colleagues for a collective goal is likely to create and promote a safe environment of collaboration and self-development, the sense of partnership within the school units and finally reduce antagonism and individualism.

Policy making as a dynamic process

It is important to acknowledge that, as regards the teacher evaluation policy in Greece, important experience has been gained by the conflicts and the failures of the past. Future policy making should acknowledge this experience and try to incorporate teachers' reactions in future proposals about assessment. Also, the policy has to create and maintain a dynamic and creative balance between the external needs and pressures regarding the creation of a European oriented teachers assessment framework and on the other hand the teachers' demands and their symbolic universe. Having in mind the teachers' opposition to the proposed policy a future initiative must make use of this dialectic and evolve to something new.

Backward regulation

Future policy making in the field of teacher evaluation should be based on a continuous appraisal and evaluation of the policy. Instead of rigid and pre-planned, it should be dynamic and open to change. More emphasis should be given to pilot programs of assessment in various school contexts and for various teacher categories. It is important to stress that although the legal framework requires certain actions in the area of evaluation, at the administrative level there should be more flexibility to interpret and implement these actions in various ways that take into account teachers' cultural and social contexts.

Agreement through constraints

In the field of educational policy-teacher evaluation, this would mean that a minimal level of trust should be developed between teachers' associations and the ministry, which would require only a minimum of common ground and agreement. Policy makers should recognize the dynamic and evolving nature of the relationship and the potential for negotiations, and should look for many alternative ways to build trust. There should also be a minimal and fundamental common ground on the basic values, principles, goals and methodology of the assessment policy. This starting point can build a step by step engagement and commitment to the evaluation process.

Proposals for future teacher assessment policies that would take into account the target population's culture based on WP4 case study 1 (Greece)

- A flexible body of intermediaries resulting from school units should be created (e.g. one dedicated teacher to represent his/her school's mentalities, demands, and core values) in order to transfer the voice of each school to higher administrative levels and to policy makers. This may provide culturally sensitive information to policy making and could foster autonomy from the trade unions' strategies and discourses (which are highly discredited as shown by our data). These representatives or cultural-semiotic intermediaries (teachers) must also be the product of and express collective action in school procedures.

- Technical-wise, the evaluation law must respond to and make use of the existing variability (working status, different working experience, different school subjects, socio-economic variables and cultural identities of both students and teachers, etc.). For example, there should be a smart utilization of human resources according to teachers' expertise, knowledge and other forms of human capital. This human capital must play a central role within the assessment procedures and become a valuable resource through the participation in strategic roles and actions within the school unit.

- Evaluation criteria that do not consider this form of variability and are horizontal for everyone might be suitable only for some and unfair for others. An example might be the emphasis of the evaluation procedures on knowledge-intensive criteria rather than ones based on experience. The former criteria are more in favour of younger staff and the latter, more in favour of senior staff. Nevertheless, both categories are a great resource for school units.

- Another example could be the emphasis on targets acquired as an evaluation criterion for teaching staff and school units. School units are characterized by a huge range of variability in size, students' competencies, students' socio-economic and cultural characteristics, synthesis of staff in terms of working status, urban or rural context, material resources etc. Common, insensitive and undifferentiated criteria could simply be unfair for many school units and teachers and outside their semiotic and symbolic context which defines the notion of demand.

- The output of the policy must be clearly defined, articulated and presented not only from the side of the state and policymakers but also in the way the teachers perceive it and define it. This must create a discursive interaction from both sides and not just parallel monologues from policy makers and teachers separately. Policy makers must consider the perceived level of threat or insecurity that the assessment reform poses and either clear the misrepresentations or redesign the law in a better way so as to promote quality and increase resilience. Resilience and empowerment must be a fundamental pillar of quality assurance and evaluation mechanisms.

- Evaluation must be related with positive incentives for teachers' self-development. Also, it must be user friendly, clear about its goals and promote collegiality and not individualism.

- Evaluation must lead and contribute to positive changes within the school community and deal with practical problems. So, for example, internal assessment must lead to problems being addressed by the state and not just to the mere reporting of problems.
- Evaluation must not add extra bureaucratic burden to teachers (it must be fast, flexible, make use of existent administrative structures and procedures and especially existing IT systems).
- It must create chances and provide material incentives to those assuming extra roles but not in a distinctive antagonistic way which may create different staff categories or new performance based elites.
- Evaluation procedures must lead to in-depth, school specific and demand oriented training seminars and expert consulting so as to respond to actual everyday issues and at the same time empower teaching staff with specific knowledge, skills and expertise on the actual problems they face.
- A culture of trust should be built by making the intentions and the aims of the policy makers regarding evaluation clear beforehand. These aims must be co-formed with the teaching community.
- Important educational reforms must have a long term horizon and planning and be beyond and above governmental changes in political personnel.
- Managerial and executive positions in education must be open to candidates to apply in an objective, reliable, merit-based and transparent way.
- Quality education criteria should include the level of policy making and broader systemic factors as well and not be confined only to teachers' performance and school practices. In this line of thinking Quality Assurance should extend to policy making and design, hiring of staff, working status and working conditions of teachers, University education etc, in a systemic approach. For example, evaluating teachers' performance without considering the university education they have received, or their working conditions is highly problematic and methodologically questionable. Also at the level of policy making, malpractices, poorly designed reforms, frequent changes of planning, absence of strategic goals or poorly expressed and communicated institutional changes which lack broader legitimacy and consensus should be characterized as anti-quality practices. Quality Assurance and promotion is not limited to school units and practices but is a broader system which has cultural and semiotic aspects.
- Evaluation should not be perceived per se and as a stand-alone mechanism, but as a tool that works in favour of and promotes quality in education.
- Evaluation must be connected with positive emotional categories, resilience, empowerment, creative, efficient and smart use of human capital and problem solving
- Evaluation as quality assurance must be a tool of promoting innovation, best practices, meritocracy but at the same time reduce inequalities in education (in human and material resources) and provide a fair context in opportunities.
- It is important to incorporate the role of mentor and critical friends for teachers within the same or similar (in terms of morphology) school units (or possibly not)

- Evaluation should be "fair" as for the potential impact and the role of teachers in the promotion of school quality
- Accountability through evaluation must concern not only teachers or head teachers but also policy makers and higher administrative executives.
- Evaluation must be a tool of mapping and highlighting the real/actual problems, dynamics, best practices but also ways of dealing with problems, of the school units. This could serve as an instrument of valuable data which will provide policy makers with quality, real time information for policy design and implementation. This information could also be culturally sensitive since it will derive from the semiotic world of teachers.
- In doing so, teachers will realize that evaluation (especially internal evaluation of school units) could be an efficient and objective way of transmitting and communicating their symbolic world and their real demands to the policy makers without the mediation of trade unions or other representatives who are considered to be untrustworthy or corrupt.
- Best practices followed by school units and personal achievements must be made public and communicated to the broader teacher community. The foundation of an Observatory for Quality Assurance in School Education which will be demand-oriented and bottom-up not top-down, will provide cultural and semiotic feedback to policy makers so as to make their approaches more culturally informed.
- Teachers should be made aware in an explicit and detailed way of the European and global framework and various practices followed in the field of Quality Assurance and Teacher Assessment worldwide. This contextualization and especially the emphasis given to the variability of practices within the E.U. will shape the boundaries within a genuine, effective, substantial, meaningful and factual dialogue which can begin between policy makers and teachers.

8.1.3 Regulation of working conditions of EU labour migrants in the TWA sector

The following suggestions for policy making in the field of labour market regulation in the context of EU labour migration are based on WP4 case studies in the UK and the Netherlands, which focused on policy making actors perceptions and actions concerning regulating the working conditions of EU labour migrants in the temporary work agencies sector. According to the central notions of policy guidelines introduced in Deliverable D 5.1, we have developed a series of proposals regarding specifically the field of labour market regulation of temporary agency work in the context of EU labour migration. These suggestions are detailed below in conjunction with criteria introduced in Deliverable D 5.1, followed by a section of proposals for future policy making in the field of teacher evaluation and quality in education.

Cultural segmentation

Explanation D5.1

The different systems of meaning within the cultural milieu can be used for differentiating the population into sub-sets characterized by a particular system of meanings. Segmentation or profiling can be related to sociodemographic characteristics, job position, geographical and spatial

position, health status, attitudes towards important components of the policy. Categorization is in a sense the mirror approach of segmentation. Whereas in the case of segmentation one starts from the system of meaning that characterizes a certain segment and determines the profile of the prototypical individual in that segment, categorization starts from the individual (e.g. based on a particular response to the policy) and attributes to her/him the system of meanings that best explains her/his way of thinking/acting. Quantification then refers to the incidence and the distribution of segments across the population. This information is relevant when the policy has to take into account the size of the segments, for instance when a strategic decision is based on the aim of achieving consensus. A prototypical example is the estimation of political preferences in order to orient a political or electoral strategy.

Case study

In the case study on regulation of working conditions of EU labour migrants in the temporary working agency (TWA) sector in the UK and the Netherlands, it became clear that the policy approach distinguishes three target populations: 1) labour migrants, 2) TWAs, and 3) user companies. Policy makers use categorization for the first two target groups whereas no further distinction is made in the policy approach towards user companies: there is a uniform approach towards this group. In the target group of labour migrants, the policy approach distinguished labour migrants from different countries, adjusting the language in which they are approached. Quantification is also used in terms of nationality: the approach focuses mainly on labour migrants of Polish origin as this is the largest group in both countries under study. No segmentation approach is used at this time. Within the target population of TWAs, also a categorization approach is used based upon the behaviour of the TWA: do they violate the working conditions of labour migrants or not. A difference between the UK and the Netherlands is that dishonest TWAs are perceived and labelled as criminal elements in the UK and therefore not a labour market issue but a crime issue, whereas in the Netherlands they are perceived as the extreme on a continuous spectrum of TWA behaviour and therefore as a labour market issue to be regulated by labour market regulation. No quantification is used, as in both countries nobody has an idea about the size of the violations of working conditions of labour migrants and inherently the number of dishonest TWAs. Actually this is one of the aspects that make it very hard to regulate in the first place and to judge whether regulation is effective. Again, no segmentation is used.

Demand at the core of policy

Explanation D5.1

The demand refers to the way the individuals who are targeted by a policy interpret their needs, their relation with the policy, and respond to it accordingly. Each intervention has to take the demand into account.

Case study

The need perceived by policy makers among the target groups of labour migrants and TWAs is information about their labour rights respectively, and the legal conditions which they have to apply. Another need perceived by policy makers is to have inspectorate bodies control TWAs in

order to prevent them passing the boundary between (just) legal and illegal. For user companies, the perceived demand is information about the TWA they use: whether they are honest or not.

Interpretation of the policy by the target group

Explanation D5.1

The policy should be designed and implemented with the fundamental aim of being meaningful for and consistent with the target's demand. The centrality of the demand implies that one may not take it for granted that the target group interprets the policy in the same way as the policymakers. Accordingly, the policy has to adopt devices for understanding and monitoring the target individual's interpretation of the policy, in order to make it as consistent as possible with the policymaker's framework.

Case study

The policymakers did not adopt devices for understanding and monitoring the interpretation of the various target groups of the policies to protect the working conditions of labour migrants in the TWA sector in the UK and in the Netherlands. This is also one of the reasons why one has actually no way of judging whether policies are effective or not.

Policy addresses cultural variability

Explanation D5.1

The demand is inherently plural, as a result of the variety of the cultural milieu. Therefore, a policy should not take it for granted that the target population is culturally homogeneous.

Case study

The policies towards protecting the working conditions of EU labour migrants in the TWA sector in the Netherlands and the UK basically do not take into account any plurality in the cultural milieu of the target groups. There are, however, some small issues in which it is taken into account to a small extent. In the Netherlands, the approach towards informing EU labour migrants about their labour rights was adjusted towards the means of communication of the community they want to reach. For example, television and social media were used to reach the Polish community because the policy makers analysed that these are important means of communication for this group. For other groups of labour migrants, other channels of communication were used. In the UK a distinction is made between honest TWAs, that fall under the limited labour market regulation, and illegal TWAs that are treated as criminals and fall under criminal law. Also in the Netherlands, different policy approaches are developed for different groups of TWAs: honest (policy: quality label) – ignorant (information campaigning) – grey area (inspectorate both sectoral and national) – dishonest (law and national inspectorate).

Interpretative agency

Explanation D5.1

The policy is not meaningful in itself for the target group. Rather, people give meaning to the policy by interpreting it. This means that, in order to promote the target's commitment and cooperation, the policy has to leave room for – or even trigger – active interpretation and negotiation of meanings by the target group. The many forms of community participation are examples of this. Citizens participate to discuss and express their point of view, and negotiate it with those of others. By interpreting and negotiating, they appropriate the object of the discussion and, at the same time, they become involved in the collective action.

Case study

There is some room for active interpretation of the policies targeting TWAs. Many of these policies are initiated or co-coordinated by the employers' organizations in the UK and the Netherlands. The members of these organizations have possibilities to discuss these policies, especially upon implementation. This is not the case for government policies targeting TWAs. In line, the deviation of the policy goal: honest TWAs versus the interpretation by individual TWAs - it should not make business more difficult for me - might be a reason why the policies are not completely effective and dishonest TWAs are still a problem.

Policy making as a dynamic process
Explanation D5.1
To see the policy in dynamic terms means that the agreement between the policy and the target group is not a pre-condition, but a dialectical process, starting from a minimal initial common ground, and evolving over time as a recursive process with reciprocal engagement of both policy makers and the target group.

Case study
We do not see this occurring in the case studies.

Backward regulation
Explanation D5.1
The design of the policy has to include devices, criteria, organizational space and drivers to allow for backward regulation of the relation with the target group, and more generally of the intervention itself. Indeed, if the policy has to find a balance between the demand and the functional requirements, it has to adapt its boundaries post hoc and step by step, reacting to what happens.

Case study
The regulation of the TWA sector in the Netherlands takes place to a large extent at the sectoral level of the TWA sector with active involvement of both trade unions and employers' organizations. The regulation of the sector at this level allows for more active backward regulation strategies than regulation at the national level: the boards of the various organizations in place can adjust the policies when required. This is also the case for the involvement of societal actors in

the information campaigning among labour migrants: they work closer to the target groups of labour migrants and can therefore more easily adjust their strategy than government campaigns.

Agreement through constraints

Explanation D5.1

The mutual engagement between policy and target population starts with a minimum shared cooperative framework, made possible by the resources (i.e. rules, definition of goals, levels of trust, willingness to cooperate, commitment) that the policy can find within the target population's cultural milieu. This minimum framework acts as the starting point which will be developed step by step. In the minimum framework, cooperation is characterised by absence of disagreement rather than the presence of agreement. The more the mutual engagement evolves, the more the framework can be constrained in developing a common, cooperative framework.

Case study

The policies of the UK and Dutch government to increase awareness and responsibility among user companies for the working conditions of labour migrants hired through TWAs can be classified as an agreement through constraint. There is a shared ideal that exploitation is unacceptable. However, at this moment there is not much more engagement of user companies in either of the two countries. The future should be able to tell whether and how this develops.

Prosumership

Explanation D5.1

The client is not only the target of the intervention – s/he is involved in it as a co-driver. S/he is a prosumer: both producer and consumer. In the context of policy making, prosumership is a strategic and organizational device aiming at mutual engagement with the intervention.

Case study

To some extent the involvement of trade unions and employers' organizations in the regulation of the TWA sector is a form of prosumership: after all they represent (part of) the target population. Whether actual prosumership is taking place depends on the continuing involvement of members in the policy making processes in these sectoral organizations. At this moment there is not a real continuing involvement in the policy making process of individual members of the employers' organizations. In addition, the low trade union membership of labour migrants specifically, and also of workers in general, puts pressure on the ongoing involvement of individual members of the target populations in the policy process. In the Netherlands this is even more the case than in the UK, as trade unions are more top-down organized in the former and bottom-up organized in the latter.

Intersubjective density

Explanation D5.1

Preferably, the policy should be internalized by the target group. Internalization is the psycho-social process through which people make the content and the aim of the policy meaningful and

vital for themselves. As a result, interventions should be designed with high intersubjective intensity. This means, on the one hand, that the mutual engagement between policy and target has to be mediated as much as possible by meaningful interpersonal exchanges; on the other hand, that such exchanges have to be endowed with enough autonomy and functional impact.

Case study

It is not clear to what extent the principle of no exploitation of labour migrants is internalized by TWAs. Probably this varies considerably between honest TWAs, which comply with the law, and dishonest TWAs, which do not comply with the law or comply only when penalized.

9   Conclusion

The lines of intervention proposed above have been selected as instances of actions to achieve goals that are methodological rather than normative – that is, they are designed to promote dynamics expected to drive the desired processes of development – namely the promotion of social capital and the reduction of the enemization of the other. Very briefly, such goals can be boiled down to one general perspective: *the promotion of social practices favouring the vital experience of the political and institutional system, as a live interlocutor involved in supporting the individual/local projects as well as in protecting them from the most disruptive impacts of globalization.*

Policy makers can decide how to translate such methodological lines of intervention into concrete objectives, policies, and actions in terms of the contextual conditions as well as their political and axiological orientations. It is hoped that they may find in the previous discussions a conceptual and methodological framework supporting their hard task of designing strategies for coping with the current challenging socio-political scenario.

In the final analysis, the previous discussion has highlighted in very different ways that the crisis requires a deep cultural innovation in policies and politics – a kind of anthropological drift is occurring before our eyes, in the way people think of themselves and the world. To counteract such a drift, institutions have to restore their function of designing and guiding societies towards possible worlds. Institutions have to re-introduce the future as the core parameter of policy making; only viewed in the long term can the current dramatic turmoil be addressed and creative synthesis among current conflictive interests, demands and dynamics be envisaged.

What is needed is a new institutional culture – the politics of desire. On the other hand, it is not a real innovation, but a way to return to the future – today the EU exists because it was dreamt of by decision makers endowed with the strategic capacity of making dreams realizable.

10 Glossary

Culture. In the Re.Cri.Re. framework, culture is intended as the on-going dynamics of sensemaking through which people interpret the world - and thus feel, think and act. This on-going dynamics is channelled by generalized meanings – named *symbolic universes* - embedded within the cultural milieu and working as affect-laden systems of assumptions

Cultural milieu. The cultural milieu is the social arena where people communicate, act, think and experience life and in so doing reproduce and elaborate symbolic universes. The cultural milieu consists of a plurality of symbolic universes; each of them emerging as a particular interpretation of the cultural milieu.

Homo semioticus tenet. This tenet enlarges the view of the human being in terms of *homo economicus*, which is the dominant model in the world of policy making. Whereas according to the homo economicus model human behaviour is guided by rational choice aimed at maximising utility, homo semioticus is guided by the need to interpret experience, to make it meaningful. Homo semioticus is not irrational; yet it is rational within the constraint of the fundamental need of keeping one's worldview stable and coherent.

Irradiation of the identity bond. The tendency to define the *we* in terms of dematerialized, mythical symbolic objects - weakened in their anchorage to/confinement within places, practices, interests, social positions - therefore capable of extending themselves in an unlimited and asymptotical way, despite social, cultural and economic differences. In other words, the bond is no longer anchored to concrete social practices and contexts (e.g. the community of people sharing a given territory); rather, it is referred to as a mythical entity (e.g. the Nation, the people).

Semiotic capital. Semiotic capital denotes the set of symbolic resources (e.g. meanings, cognitive schemas, values, social representations, attitudes, behavioural scripts, etc.) that enables individuals to internalise the collective, supra-interpersonal dimension of life, namely to experience the systemic regulative framework as a vital dimension, a concrete fact impacting on the way of thinking and acting.

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