



Dear colleagues,

After two highly stimulating and successful rounds, PHOENIXTN finally ends its activities in March 2009. The last conference, ***Health and Welfare: diversity and convergence in policy and practice***, will be held in Athens 19-22 February 2009. Sessions are meant to illustrate and document our manifold activities. Reports and presentations will appear from the working groups but all participants of our network are of course welcome to contribute within the general theme.

Please announce your intention to take part and submit abstracts presenting the content of your planned interventions to laurinda.abreu@mail.telepac.pt before 25th November 2008.

The following quotation reminds us of the aims of the network from its very start and onwards:

“Being a structural point of all societies, public welfare and attention to the poor and ill has always been a main problem for institutional power. The different ways in which every country tried to solve the problems related to well-being and people's health has varied over the years according to ideological contexts and financial resources.

Yet, apart from the particularities from each State, there have been some moments in which all Europe has mobilised in search of answers for basically identical problems. For this reason, it is possible to individualise three great stages in European history that were, at the same time, moments of rupture of current social support systems and of modernisation of health and social solidarity structures.

The first stage is the one of the decline of the feudal

world. The second one is the situation which arose from discoveries and economic globalisation (16-18th century). The third one occurred during the process of European industrialisation and ended up in the creation of the providence-State.

The current collapse of the frontiers, the social problems arisen from the political de-structurization of Eastern Europe and the economic globalisation force us to rethink social policies nowadays. This means that Europe is living a new moment of rupture and transformation of both health and public welfare policies.”

After eight years of research, meetings and workshops, this final conference will be the right moment to evaluate the results of our network, in terms of knowledge accumulation, scientific breakthrough, attraction of the field for new scholars, balance between the different European regions. It will also be a tremendous opportunity to go back to the initial hypothesis and to see if and how they have been modified by the recent researches.

We hope that this event will be an impressive demonstration of academic work as well as the lively scholarly communications and new academic and social links that have been established during the past years.

Yours sincerely

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