Zimmermann, Katharina and Fuertes, Vanesa: Employment policy implementation mechanisms in the European Union, the United Kingdom and Germany. Paper presented by Katharina Zimmermann at the Seminar on employment policy implementation mechanisms, International Labour Organisation, Genf, 4.-5. November 2013.

Recent decades have seen changes in welfare state paradigms and in the governance of social policies in many European countries. Changes in governance have been associated with strategies to cope with societal and economic changes (van Berkel and Borghi 2007). It has been argued that changes in welfare state paradigms are the result of various challenges such as: economic globalisation, demographic and labour market changes, processes of differentiation and personalisation, and reduced government expenditure (van Berkel and Moller 2002, Taylor-Gooby et al. 2004). The recent crisis, which can be argued has developed from a financial crisis to an economic and fiscal crises, has introduced a new element of necessity or opportunity to employment and labour market policy change and reform. There are a number of similarities regarding the reforms countries have taken, nevertheless although commonalities can be observed, the goals, actors, instruments, and mechanisms in these reforms are varied. This study is set out to analyse EU employment policy implementation mechanisms in the framework of a broader EU macro-economic framework. Furthermore, it aims at analysing the national employment policy implementation systems of two Member States, namely Germany and the UK, and their adaptation of EU policies. A special focus will be put on three subsystems of implementation in the EU, the UK and Germany: the coordination-, the accountability- and the supporting system. What are strengths and weaknesses of these subsystems? To what extent are they able to implement effectively both the EU and national policies? The studyalso considers the future development of policy implementation mechanisms, to finish by highlighting successful experiences and lessons learnt.