In recent years, there has been a growing renewal (rebirth) of interest regarding policy learning, particularly within scholarly discussions on soft law mechanisms. Within the EU framework, this debate has been, mainly, directed towards a particular soft mode of EU governance, namely the Open Method of Co-Ordination (OMC). Soft modes of EU governance do not require any kind of legal or economic sanctions to be taken, in order for common objectives and targets, decided upon at the European Union level, to be implemented by member states. Instead, they essentially rely on mechanisms which promote voluntary cooperation and mutual learning processes among EU member states. This doctoral dissertation proposes an alternative research path on how to study policy learning through the OMC. The main research question posed is twofold: What types of policy learning processes can we expect the OMC to promote and how do Southern European (Greek, Italian and Spanish) national actors acquire them. Within the framework of my research, I aim to identify, interpret and ultimately explain potential differences between these three countries’ learning capacities via the OMC. The testing ground for my empirical research, is a specific social policy, ever more salient due to the current financial crisis, that of poverty and social exclusion.