

Social policy and crises – multiple perspectives

ESPAnet Germany doctoral workshop, 16 & 17 March 2023 at WZB Berlin, Germany

European welfare states are at the center of various crises. In contrast to earlier decades, current crises are often not crises of the welfare state, but rather exogenous developments that affect social policy making and/or need to be addressed by social policy measures. These developments include longer-term political, demographic and macroeconomic trends, e.g. party system change and aging societies, as well as shocks such as the economic and financial crisis, refugee migration, climate change, the Covid-19 pandemic, and the Ukraine war.

Questions about the consequences of the crises for European welfare states arise on several levels. First, at the level of citizens, the effectiveness and efficiency of welfare state programmes under changing conditions are an issue, specifically of crisis measures, as well as attitudes towards social policy and redistributive measures. Second, the specific consequences of crises for policy fields and institutions must be studied, because fiscal and administrative pressures from crises may differ.

Political reactions may imply scaling back of welfare provision, expansion or reorientation to meet changing demands, or new crisis policies. Third, crises affect political actors. Social policy-making may be influenced by changing majorities, transformations of party systems, and the emergence of new actors such as populist radical right parties. Administrative units, businesses, and organizations involved in lobbying and implementation may also be reorganized in the context of crises. Finally, the question of how crises play out can be asked at the level of welfare states. Consequences of qualitatively different developments and shocks may vary across welfare states: Which (types of) welfare states are most affected by exogenous shocks? Which prove to be more resilient?

ESPAnet Germany cordially invites **contributions from doctoral researchers** at any stage of their dissertation that address the relationship between social policy and crisis(es) at one of the many levels. Comparative papers are highly welcome, as well as those taking a longitudinal perspective. Methodologically, the workshop is open to a broad range of methodological approaches and analytical perspectives. Admitted participants will be expected to submit their workshop paper by 15 February 2023, and give a 15-minute presentation at the workshop. Each paper will receive individual feedback by a senior scholar at the workshop.

There will be keynotes given by Dorottya Szikra (Central European University) and Minna van Gerven (Tampere University). Confirmed paper discussants include: Antonio Brettschneider, Lena Hipp, Philipp Lersch, Katrin Menke, Hanna Schwander, Nhat An Trinh, Katharina Zimmermann.

This ESPAnet Germany workshop is a joint endeavour of the working group on welfare state research of the German Political Science Association (DVPW) and the Social Policy Section of the German Sociological Association (DGS). It is organized by Hannah Zagel, Florian Blank, Katja Möhring, and Michaela Schulze, and funded by DIFIS – Deutsches Institut für Interdisziplinäre Sozialpolitikforschung. It will be hosted by the WZB Berlin on 16 and 17 March 2023. Please apply with a short abstract (max. 1 page, including research question, theory, and analytical approach) to the organizing team (espanet2023@wzb.eu) **by 15 November 2022. The abstract should clarify how the research relates to the workshop topic. Notification on acceptance of abstracts will be sent on December 15th, 2022.**