

INFORMATION FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM

WSI-Mitteilungen

Call for Papers

Europe in crisis – cohesion requirements and divergence between member states



Last year the European Union (EU) celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome, which set up the European Economic Community. The form of this unique project for the integration of sovereign nation states has changed crucially over the years. The original economic community of six member states, which was strongly influenced by the idea of maintaining peace between European nations, has become a complex system of institutions with considerable decision-making powers and a greatly enlarged membership. Today, the European Union faces the mammoth task of reconciling the interests of 27 member states while at the same time preserving its global competitiveness. In addition, negotiations over the accession of additional member states are on the agenda. The challenges are huge, as

- firstly, the confidence of EU citizens in the European project is diminishing, as indicated by the recent rejection of both the Constitutional Treaty and the Lisbon Treaty in referenda;
- secondly, the logic of market creation and liberalisation introduced by the Common Market and Economic and Monetary Union has not only unleashed potential for growth but has also eroded national regulation and triggered regional shifts of workers and investments. The appeal of national protectionist policies on the one hand and national wage dumping policies on the other seems to be increasing in the minds of both electorates and governments. In any case the arenas and institutions for representation of interests have remained largely national. This even goes for the trade unions. Given the heterogeneous interests of the member states, Social Europe in particular is still underdeveloped in comparison with the degree of economic integration achieved.
- thirdly, the current financial and economic crisis has put the spotlight on the scope, content, form and limitations of policymaking by the current EU institutions, as well as their enabling and limiting impact on the member states. In this context, coherent Community strategies are just as conceivable as centrifugal, national ones. The boundary between a policy of supporting businesses in times of crisis and one of national protectionism is a fluid one. The current crisis looming over national labour markets threatens to have an explosive impact on governments. And in addition, the economies of some member states are groaning under the pressure of the strong euro.

Is the European integration project endangered or, on the contrary, can it help us to overcome the current financial and economic crisis? What is the scope for reconciling economic growth and cohesion – in the sense of a socially integrated Europe – with convergence of employment and social policies? How should and could trade unions, in particular, act as central economic and societal players? And what mechanisms are preventing or impeding a European policy to secure employment and social as well as democratic participation?

WSI-Mitteilungen (Journal of the German Economic and Social Research Institute) is issuing a call for papers, which should analyse the issues mentioned here and the impact of the current state of the integration process on political structures, the economy, the labour market and the social sphere. This should be done from an economic and sociological perspective and the results of your analysis should be discussed in relation to the future shape of the integration process. Interested authors are kindly requested to note the maximum length (35,000 characters incl. spaces) and to refer otherwise to our Guidelines for Authors (http://www.boeckler.de/173_84253.html). Contributions in English are welcome and will be published in German translation.

Assessment: Submitted articles that fulfil the formal requirements will be subjected to a double-blind peer review process. Contributions assessed positively will be published in the 63rd issue of the WSI-Mitteilungen (in 2010).

Deadline for submissions: 15th September 2009

Please send your articles as Word files to the editorial team of WSI-Mitteilungen
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