

Cfp Special Issue - European Integration in COVID-19 - Challenges to Social Policy-Making

Dear colleagues,

The recent COVID-19 induced crisis raises question with respect to the future of European integration, the European Social Model and EU social-policy making. The 'Corona crisis' exacerbates social inequalities along the prevailing conflict lines and deepens already existing labor market divisions. It hits the most vulnerable hardest and points to the fact that society does often disparage those who are suddenly considered important for the system. This poses major challenges to the EU's member states since they are the main social-policy providers. Yet, since the causes as well as the effects of the crisis have a considerable transnational dimension, this is not only the hour of nation states and national welfare states. On the contrary, the recent crisis (just like the crises before) also prompts supranational solutions and a European struggle for solidarity. After the EU woke up from its initial paralysis, it started to discuss and introduce responses to the crisis, thus revealing existing conflict lines again (e.g., between member states in favor of so-called Corona bonds and those strictly against it). This affects compensation and crisis mechanism on the one hand and EU social-policy making on the other hand. Existing instruments emphasize fiscal stability, austerity, and market conformity; priorities that have been supported by an institutional framework based on strict supranational surveillance, budgetary discipline, and the threat of financial sanctions. At the same time, these measures are counterbalanced by supranational social-policy innovations that try to promote mutual responsibility and a more Social Europe such as the European Pillar of Social Rights and the Youth Guarantee. Without a doubt, the current crisis will affect these measures and instruments. Will the new conflicts cause another legitimacy crisis in the EU as was the case after the financial crisis? Will it push EU social-policy making into a new era? What role could the European Pillar of Social Rights and the instruments initiated by the new Commission play? Will it even shift the EU's modus vivendi from a market into a social citizenship regime?

From former crises, we know that such a crisis might provide windows of opportunity and integrative leaps which nevertheless creates new problems and conflicts, i.e., regarding the EU's democratic legitimacy, public support, and political contestation. In order to find out whether the economic and social crisis following the pandemic provides a major threat or a chance for European integration, this Special Issue aims to shed light on the tensions, responses to the crisis, and opportunities that define European social-policy making in light of COVID-19. It will focus on supranational social-policy making and instruments (implying both transnational and supranational actors), but will also consider the perspectives of different welfare regimes in Europe.

Social scientists are invited to submit paper proposals on the following topics and questions:

How is the European Union tackling the pending challenges and what are the implications of the existing and debated instruments for European integration?

How do different welfare state regimes in Europe react to the crisis? What are their major challenges?

What is the role of trade unions and supranational regulations in combating the labor market divisions such as the difference between standard and atypical employment, the low-wage sector, etc.?

Analyses of single fields of EU social-policy, such as public health, unemployment policies, or minimum income;

Can COVID-19 help to bridge social and climate change policies?

What are the implications for transnational solidarity and public support?

We welcome abstracts of no more than 400 words by 31 August 2020.

Dr. Stefanie Börner

Guest Editor

Manuscript Submission Information

Manuscripts should be submitted online at www.mdpi.com by registering and logging in to this website. Once you are registered click here to go to the submission form. Manuscripts can be submitted until the deadline. All papers will be peer-reviewed. Accepted papers will be published continuously in the journal (as soon as accepted) and will be listed together on the special issue website. Research articles, review articles as well as short communications are invited. For planned papers, a title and short abstract (about 100 words) can be sent to the Editorial Office for announcement on this website.

Submitted manuscripts should not have been published previously, nor be under consideration for publication elsewhere (except conference proceedings papers). All manuscripts are thoroughly refereed through a double-blind peer-review process. A guide for authors and other relevant information for submission of manuscripts is available on the Instructions for Authors page. Social Sciences is an international peer-reviewed open access monthly journal published by MDPI.

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