

Comparative institutional analysis

CALL FOR PAPERS

Self-Responsibility in European Welfare Institutions – Concepts, methods and trends

International workshop

19-21 May 2016, Hamburg University

Organisers: Patricia Frericks, Julia Höppner, Ralf Och

Since the 1990s European welfare states have been subject to various reforms. A prominent feature of these reforms is the principle of “self-responsibility”. Promoted by international organisations and the European Union in forms of “activation” policies, “social investment” policies and marketisation individual responsibility has been emphasized in the various institutions of the welfare state both in social services and in social security. Studies and institutional theory in particular have shown however that there are huge differences with regard to the implementation of specific principles. In fact, there are differences *between* and *within* European welfare states in the degree to which social rights are based on individual responsibility. A major challenge of welfare state analysis, thereby, is that differences in the institutionalization of “self-responsibility” cannot sufficiently be captured by commonly used concepts and methods.

In this workshop we aim to discuss different facets of the institutionalization of “self-responsibility”. The main focus we put on methodological and conceptual challenges of institutional analysis and the question on how to measure and compare institutions and their change. Contributions are most welcome that deal – in particular from an international comparative perspective - with one of the following questions:

1. How did and do societies and particular social policies differ in their institutionalisation of “self-responsibility” with regard to social security and social services?
2. How can we, in general, empirically capture institutional design and which data can we use?
3. In how far do we observe institutional change based on the principle of „self-responsibility“, and do we observe particular paths of change?
4. In how far do we need to further develop central concepts of welfare state analysis such as de-/familialisation, de-/commodification, privatization, and individualisation to analyse this change?
5. How can we explain differences in the institutionalisation of „self-responsibility“?
6. Which changes in social inequalities and social risks can we observe or expect as a result of strengthening the principle of self-responsibility?

As keynote speakers, we are happy to welcome **John Campbell** (Dartmouth/Copenhagen), **Per H. Jensen** (Aalborg), and **Jane Millar** (Bath).

Contributions are welcome from colleagues from any discipline relevant to these questions. Abstracts of 300 words should be sent to ralf.och@wiso.uni-hamburg.de no later than **11 January 2016**. We will inform you about the abstract selection by 15 January 2016. We will be able to co-finance travel and accommodation costs.