

15th Conference „Social Monitoring and Reporting in Europe“

Convergence or Divergence?

Changes in attitudes, socioeconomic structures and well-being across Europe

Villa Vigoni, Loveno di Menaggio, October 12-14, 2020

Call for Papers

The initiation and arrangement of processes resulting in convergence among the member states of the European Union has always been and still is a great hope and major goal of EU policies, for example the introduction of a common European currency. It is thus upward convergence in economic, social and territorial terms – ultimately convergence and progress in well-being and socio-economic levels and structures – whilst preserving diversity in terms of cultures and languages at the same time that is at the heart of European integration and the European project.

In 2012 the World Bank Report „Golden Growth“ acknowledged that “Europe has achieved economic growth and convergence that is unprecedented” and attested Europe to be a „convergence machine“. A more recent (2018) World Bank Report - titled „Growing United“ – however identified „growing divides“ and thus called for an upgrade of Europe’s convergence machine.

The Great Recession of 2008-2013 has affected the living standards, economic conditions and social climate in many European countries. However, its impact as well as the speed and extent of recovery varied due to different national economic situations, institutions and policies. The crisis intensified reflections on both, the actual degree of economic and social convergence between countries and the normative perspectives on links, dependencies and solidarity between and within the societies.

Whereas economic convergence has been widely studied, issues of social convergence and divergence are not equally well researched and thus can be seen as a challenge as well as an opportunity for cross-national social monitoring and reporting to provide urgently needed evidence on the extent of similarity and dissimilarity of national and regional developments. Whilst a number of tools have recently been developed and applied in the context of assessing economic convergence in the EU, systematic research of trends, drivers, and consequences of social convergence or divergence is still underdeveloped.

Reflecting on the diagnosis of „growing divides“, the 15th „Social Monitoring and Reporting in Europe“ - conference seeks to bring together and discuss empirical evidence to better assess whether or not and to what extent European societies are converging in terms of well-being,

attitudes and socioeconomic structures. Moreover contributions addressing the conceptualization and measurement of social convergence across Europe are welcome as well. The perspective of the conference is not limited to the European Union and considers Europe broadly. Papers are invited to address one or more of the following issues:

- Living apart together? – measuring the extent of similarity and dissimilarity of European countries
- Convergence and divergence in quality of society, civic values, and political preferences
- Convergence and divergence in well-being, living standards, social structures and inequalities
- Convergence and divergence in institutional arrangements
- Trends of regional inequalities in Europe
- Consequences of divergence, e.g. in trust and views of the citizens: is the European project at risk?
- Observations of „undesired convergence“, e.g. diminished diversity in cultural domains

Although the conference will mainly focus on issues of social convergence and divergence in Europe, there will also be opportunities to discuss „recent developments in European social monitoring and reporting“. Contributions presenting new initiatives, projects and releases on social monitoring and reporting in Europe are very welcome as well.

Please submit your abstract (no more than 300 words) to Dr. Heinz-Herbert Noll (hh.noll@t-online.de). **The deadline for submissions is May 15, 2020.**

Decisions about the acceptance of submissions will be made by the conference committee: Jeroen Boelhouwer (SCP, The Hague), Carla Collicelli (CNR, Rome), Peter Farago (formerly FORS, Lausanne), Tadas Leončikas (Eurofound, Dublin), Heinz-Herbert Noll (formerly GESIS, Mannheim), Christian Suter (University Neuchatel), István György Tóth (TARKI, Budapest)

For information on previous conferences see: <http://www.tarki.hu/villa-vigoni-conferences>

The conference is kindly supported by:

