



EuroMemo Group Conference 2016

Suggested topics for the workshops

1. Macroeconomic and developmental policies to challenge austerity and uneven development (coordinator: Achim Truger)

Official macroeconomic policies in the EU have seen some modifications over the last year. Monetary policy has been further loosened and fiscal policy has become less restrictive as the EU commission has decided to concede some more leeway to member countries. However, most of the Euro area is still firmly in the grip of austerity policies. At the same time economic divergence and current account imbalances prevail. Against this background the session encourages non-mainstream macroeconomic analyses providing an alternative view of recent macroeconomic developments and policy proposals as well as alternative proposals for monetary, fiscal and wages policies that challenge austerity and aim at curing current account imbalances and promote economic convergence.

2. EU monetary and financial policies: reaching its limits? (coordinators: Marica Frangakis and John Grahl)

For this workshop we welcome all critical papers on monetary and financial developments in the eurozone and/or the EU. Papers on the problems and limits of quantitative easing would be particularly welcome as would papers on the state of off-shore centres as revealed by the Panama Papers and the current attempt to establish a capital markets union.

3. Tax abuse and tax justice: the political economy of corporate behaviour, current policy and radical alternatives (coordinator: Jeremy Leaman)

The 2008 crisis revealed a global framework of corporate abuse in the shape of financialised capitalism, which was not simply rooted in the pursuit of unsustainable profit rates via debt securitisation and other means, but by the systematic avoidance of tax liabilities, 'merger mania', creative accounting and regulatory arbitrage – playing one jurisdiction off against another. A key component of this framework of corporate abuse was the permissive toleration of delinquent corporate behaviour on the part of advanced states and groups of states, including notably the European Union, in the form of deregulation, market liberalisation, 'light touch' political oversight and extensive capital tax concessions. This has been reinforced by the recent revelations of International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), the Tax Justice Network and other campaign groups.

Against this background the workshop invites contributions on the following issues:

- Economic behaviour of corporate elites in relation tax avoidance and/ or regulatory arbitrage
- Cross-border mergers and tax inversion arrangements
- The role and effect of investigative journalism in exposing corporate abuse (e.g. LuxLeaks and Panama leaks)
- Policy responses of EU institutions, individual member states and groups of states to both corporate abuse and to civil society pressure
- Radical alternatives in fiscal policy across the region and the remaining obstacles to such alternatives
- Radical alternatives in business education and the promotion of compliance in a solidaristic economic culture.

4. Migration, the refugee crisis and the possible breakup of the Schengen Agreement (coordinator: Mahmoud Messkoub)

In 2015 the flow of hundreds of thousands of people fleeing war and persecution in the Middle East and North Africa called into question some of the core principles and values and indeed rules and regulations of the EU such as establishing physical barriers and setting up of cross border checks among the Schengen member states. The principle of 'Freedom of Movement' within the EU has also been questioned by some politicians in the UK under the pretext that the EU migrants take local jobs and abuse the welfare system. The questions of national identity, European identity, etc. are all also not far from the surface. In short, migration has moved to the centre of EU debate on what the EU is about and has the potential to undermine not only the Freedom of Movement but also the integrity of the EU, as is witnessed by the debate on 'Brexit.'

The EU Memo Conference 2016 is organising a stream on 'Migration, the refugee crisis and the possible breakup of the Schengen Agreement' to address some of these issues and would call for contributions on themes related to migration from outside EU, EU 'Freedom of Movement' and Schengen agreement.

5. Right-wing & economic nationalism in Europe: origins and responses (coordinator: Joachim Becker)

The neo-liberal anti-crisis policies of the EU and similarly inclined national policies have opened new spaces for the nationalist right which in many EU countries is in a strong upswing. The nationalist right ranges from national-conservative to fascist forces. Forms of "selective economic nationalism" and exclusionary forms of social policies are common denominators of the nationalist right. The forces of the nationalist right take advantage of the inadequate tackling or outright neglect of socio-economic key issues like foreign-exchange credits in Hungary or the uneven regional development patterns in Poland. They combine heterodox economic policy elements with hard core neo-liberalism. Their concrete positions depend on the position of their countries in the European division of labour. Whereas the Front National in France and the Lega Nord address particularly issues relating to domestic industrial capital, Fidesz in Hungary rather promotes domestic capital in service sectors. The workshop sets out to map economic and social policy

approaches of the nationalist right in Europe and to make proposals for political responses to the nationalist right-wing challenges.

6. EU-external relations: destabilising the neighbours (coordinator: Catherine Sifakis)

The EU Neighbourhood Policy towards East European and Caucasian (ex Soviet Republics) countries as well as Southern Mediterranean countries constitutes an essential component of the Union's external relations. Launched in 2004, after the last EU major enlargement, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) aims to prevent the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its neighbours by implementing a space of prosperity and security in the periphery of the Union. Twelve years after its official launch, the ENP's objective is admittedly, far from being reached. On the one hand, the ENP towards East European and Caucasian countries ("Eastern Partnership") - implemented without strategic vision of the EU relations with Russia - has contributed to a destabilisation of certain "Eastern Partnership" countries (Ukraine). On the other hand, the practice of military interventions by key European countries in North Africa has not only played a significant part in the collapse of certain States (Libya) in the region therefore making effectively null and void the Mediterranean Neighbourhood policy; it also threatens – by favouring a massive migratory flow towards Europe - the viability of the Schengen agreements, a cornerstone of the European edifice.

Papers are invited which critically assess the ENP, its recent evolution and its perspectives. Contributions to a progressive agenda in this area are also welcome.