



Call for Papers

International Conference

Central and Eastern Europe:

Work, Employment and Societies between Transition and Change

Evry, France (Université d'Evry-Val-d'Essonne)

Address : UFR SSH, 2, rue du Facteur Cheval, 91 000 Évry, France

21-22nd November 2013

The European Union integrated 10 new countries in 2004 (Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Cyprus and Malta) and two more in 2007 (Bulgaria and Romania). Croatia will be the 28th EU member in the summer of 2013, other countries of the Western Balkans are candidates to join the EU or at least start accession negotiations in the following years. Several theoretical approaches have been mobilized to try to assess the character of the "system transition" and institutional change. Among them, the path dependency has had a prominent place in particular in the course of the first decade of transition in order to question the weight of history and the conversion of the power of the old elites in the new system. Other theoretical frameworks have helped integrate the weight of external factors, resulting from the integration of countries into the international division of labour (including through FDI), the accession of these countries to the EU, or the rise of migration. In this context, a central role played the European studies which have particularly investigated the Europeanization of institutional frameworks, and more recently transnational studies. The varieties of capitalism (VoC) approach finally allowed to question the nature of capitalism/s in Eastern Europe, their possible convergence with the "Anglo-Saxon" model, their closeness to a "*dependent capitalism*" or the questioning if the Eastern European model is unique. These theories have guided the research and debate on issues related to employment and work. However the impact of these contributions were not equal in terms of explanatory power. Among these issues of research are the process of Europeanization (e.g. the establishment of the European Works Councils), the role of the multinationals (exporting employment relationships or experimenting new forms of social and labour relations), the relocation of activities and the new European division of labour, the migration of labour. Other topics addressed relating to the changing conditions of work and employment in the countries concerned are the segmentation of the labour market, the differentiation of employment standards (between the skilled workers from sectors with high added value and the others), the increase in inequality between individuals and authorities, the persistent informal economy, etc. In the aftermath of the 2008 crisis the dependency of CEEC on Western investors and banking systems has generally worsened. The gap has increased between the countries which have advanced in their catching-up process (Central Europe) and those which are at the very start (the Balkan states). Within the group of the new EU member States territorial divisions have deepened in favour of Western regions and at the expense of Eastern regions, aggravating the working conditions and wages systems. Despite the fact that the EU structural funds have been beneficial for various economic sectors, they have not improved the working class conditions. At present, even if there are some regions and niches where the ICT-based revolution and the forms of learning organisations dominate, it becomes clear that the modernisation and the catching-up with the West is not proceeding as expected and the differences between East and West are still in place. The role of the informal economy and undeclared employment, regarded for a long time as temporary

phenomena, increases in the context of continuous deregulation of labour markets. For instance, youth unemployment is extremely dangerous in some of the CEECs, as it is in Southern Europe. Finally, many structures of employees' representation or social dialogue do not produce meaningful outcomes. The migration flows are still active. In this perspective the question is to what extent the CEEC serve as a reservoir of labour and relocation destination for the West and whether it is possible to foresee new actors of development and a new 'high road' in terms of innovation and learning organisations.

The objective of the conference is to investigate the state of the art in the research on changes in work and employment in Central and Eastern Europe in the context of the economic and financial crisis, the austerity policy and its effects, the enlargement of the European Union and the intensification of capital and population movements. The main question is what theoretical instruments can explain what is happening in the CEEC region in terms of work and employment. The theoretical debates will be accompanied by examples and illustrations of current empirical research on topics based not only on cases of sectors and companies, but also on macro-studies on the specificities of the CEE tripartism, the phenomena of corruption, etc.

Finally, this conference will be followed by a larger event in 2014, co-organised by different French research and higher education institutions in order to make the assessment of the CEEC 25 years after the fall of the Berlin wall.

Submission of proposals

The proposals should include the following elements: full name, e-mail, professional status, institutional affiliation; title of the paper; abstract – less than 3000 characters (less than 450 words) in French or English, specifying the problematic and its originality, the discipline, the sources, methods and empirical data used and a short bibliography.

Agenda

26 June 2013 – deadline for submission of the proposals. They should be sent to Vassil Kirov (vassil.kirov@gmail.com)

15 July 2013 – answer of the organisers (after the opinion of the Scientific Committee) to the authors

30 September 2013 – submission of the presentations to the Organisation Committee

21–22 November 2013 – Conference at the University of Evry

Practical conditions

The participation fee is 100 Euro (30 Euro for Ph.D. students). Participants are asked to make, and cover the cost of their own travel arrangements. A limited possibility exists for subsidising the expenses of researchers from low-income countries. Please, if necessary, formulate such a request in your proposal.

Scientific Committee

Stephen Bouquin (University of Evry/CPN, France), Jean-Pierre Durand (University of Evry/CPN, France), Vassil Kirov (University of Evry/CPN, France/Bulgaria), Franois Bafoil (CNRS/Sciences Po, France), Adam Mrozowicki (University of Wroclaw, Poland), Csaba Mako (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Hungary), Krastiu Petkov (University of National and World Economy Economics, Bulgaria), Violaine Delteil (University Paris 3, France).

Organisation Committee

Contact: Vassil Kirov (University d'Evry/CPN - France/Bulgarie), Stephen Bouquin (University d'Evry/CPN - France), Julien Choquet (CPN).

Contact

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