

30th International Labour Process Conference 2012



Stockholm
University

Department of Sociology, Stockholm University, 27-29th March 2012

Call for papers to special stream:

***'Global capitalism, national institutions and the comparative political economy
of work and employment relations'***

Now open at www.ilpc.org.uk. Deadline for submissions 31st October 2011

Comparative political economy is a thriving field of research focused on how the functioning, outcomes and performance of national economies may be explained in terms of distinct institutional frameworks, historical trajectories and power relations. The field is dominated by a small number of schools. The social systems of production (Hollingsworth, Boyer) and historical institutionalism (Crouch, Streeck) approaches emphasize broad historical trajectories, social norms and idiosyncratic power relations, whereas the varieties of capitalism approach (Hall and Soskice) is more concerned with institutions as efficient coordination mechanisms and strategic behaviour within fixed institutional configurations. The national business systems approach (Whitley) focuses on detailed analysis of corporate governance institutions, while regulation theory (Boyer) focuses on a broad set of institutions from models of work organization to the state and the international system.

There are similarities but also important differences between these approaches. And, of course, there are also hybrid or eclectic approaches to comparative political economy. A key similarity of all of these approaches is that each considers the labour process and labour markets to be central institutions. At the same time, however, there is a tendency in the literature to focus on the macro level, analyzing comparative macroeconomic performance and being preoccupied with the construction of national models, often neglecting to examine in detail the diversity of labour processes, work arrangements and employment relations within or across national political economies. And while scholars have been increasingly attempting to move beyond approaches like varieties of capitalism, there remains an issue of enduring methodological nationalism in the context of an increasingly internationalizing world. While national-level institutions remain of fundamental importance, they are being transformed in the context of the

globalization of finance and the current economic crisis, but also by the growth global production networks and shifting balances of power in the international political economy due to the entry of industrializing countries into global capitalism (including but not limited to Brazil, Russia, India and China). These changes have implications for the comparative political economy of work and employment relations, on which this conference stream focuses.

An important focus of our stream is to examine how micro-level labour process/workplace analysis and meso-level labour market/employment relations analysis contribute to our understanding of comparative and international political economy. In order to be considered for inclusion, proposed papers should be comparative or engage with recent debates of comparative political economy. We therefore seek abstracts from scholars that address the following themes. The themes should be seen as illustrative rather than exhaustive:

- Comparative studies of work, employment relations and HRM
- Multi-level analysis: Connecting workplace studies to other levels of analysis
- How do institutions change? How to conceptualise change of national models?
- The financial crisis and its impact on work and employment relations
- The 'precariat' and low-wage workers across countries
- Comparisons of labour markets and corporate governance
- The social construction of markets and competition
- The role of ideology in capitalism
- Labour movement revitalisation from a comparative perspective
- Marxist analyses of the labour process and capitalism

Stream Organisers:

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To read more about the general conference, this and other special streams, and to submit abstracts (350-500 words in length), please visit the ILPC-website: www.ilpc.org.uk. Abstracts are externally refereed and papers must not have been previously published or presented elsewhere. Decisions on acceptance will be made in December 2011. Please follow the online instructions.

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