



Call for Papers for a Special Session at the 36th Annual EAEPE Conference 2024, 4-6 September 2024, Bilbao, Spain

Who owns the future? Democratic economic planning on multiple levels for a just social-ecological transformation

Economies around the world are undergoing significant changes due to climate crisis, globalization, monopolization, re-localization of production, and advances in technology. The emerging polycrisis is threatening the liveability of biological life-forms (including humans) on Earth. Moreover, it increases universal alienation, reshapes labor and the relations of production in general and leads to highly concentrated corporate power in global production networks.

These changes are not to be misunderstood as inevitable market-led transitions, but actually as the central endogenous crisis of late capitalism. The latter is a direct product of capital's evolving structural relations enforced by political institutions, financial investors and monopolized industries, that is, culminating into a serious class struggle from the top.

Without the input from workers, their representatives, and civil society, these market-led adaptations will not lead to a socially and ecologically just future, but to one owned by corporate power. The dismissal of workers' agency exacerbates inequalities and undermines democracy, as, on the one hand labour, becomes more alienated, dehumanized and exploited and, on the other, reproductive work for the communities and families becomes more devalued.

Scope

The industrial policies and state interventions that were developed on national and international level in response to those challenges have so far fallen short of providing actual solutions and usually only shifted their impacts locally or temporally. In this light, there is renewed interest in and discussion on the possibilities of organizing the economy and corporations on democratic principles, human-centered technology, cooperative and public ownership, and the socialization of investment. These discussions aim to bridge workplace democracy with broader economic decision-making, advocating for a democratic economic planning for a socially and ecologically just transition.

Despite limited policy impact, there are successful grassroots as well as trade union initiatives and established examples of workplace democracy that demonstrate the viability of economic alternatives. For instance, the ongoing occupation of the GKN factory in Italy highlights a worker-led approach to ecological and social issues, while the Basque cooperative ecosystem offers insights into the potential and the limitations of economic democracy at the firm level.

This special session aims for a critical examination of how a democratic socialization of the means of production, via the public as well as the commons, can serve as viable alternatives to

green big-tech capitalism. In this special session, we are looking for discussions and syntheses among (and beyond) economic sociology and evolutionary political economy to highlight the potentials, challenges and pitfalls of democratic economic planning on multiple levels of the economy and society.

Topics

- **Public, Cooperative and Commons-based Approaches to (Re-)Production:** Investigation of how public ownership, worker cooperatives and commons-based approaches can offer viable alternatives to green big-tech capitalism for a just social-ecological transformation.
- **Democratic Economic Planning:** Theoretical and practical insights into organizing economies and corporations based on democratic principles, human-centered technology, cooperative and public ownership, and socialization of investment.
- **Workplace Democracy and Economic Democracy:** Case studies and analyses of successful grassroots and trade union initiatives, with a focus on workplace democracy and its impact on broader economic decision-making.
- **Worker Agency and Social Justice:** Exploration of the importance of worker input, representation, and civil society in co-shaping economies toward socially and ecologically just futures.

Submission

Deadline: 5th of April, 2024

Submission Guidelines

Related abstracts (300-750 words) should be submitted electronically at the conference website before April 5, 2024: [HERE](#)

On the electronic form, authors are reminded to select the option "Who owns the future? Democratic economic planning on multiple levels for a just social-ecological transformation." (below the Research Areas).

Organisers

- Laura Porak, Jakob Nitschke, Julian Tiedke, Mads Hansen, Francesca Gabriellini, Maximilian Wilken
- RA [B] Economic Sociology: Stephan Pühringer
- RA [V] Conceptions of Evolutionary Political Economy: Katarzyna Gruszka, Manuel Scholz-Wäckerle

Contact

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