



Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences



Wicked Problems, Contested Administrations:
Knowledge, Coordination, Strategy

The Research Colloquium of the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences:
CURRENT RESEARCH ON “WICKED (POLICY) PROBLEMS”

**“Local democracy in times of austerity:
For better or worse?”**

- Venue:** University of Potsdam, Campus Griebnitzsee
House 6, Room S13
- Date:** 22 June 2016
- Time:** 12 – 14 c.t.

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“Local democracy in times of austerity: For better or worse?”

The global financial, economic and fiscal crisis has led governments to take economic recovery measures and to implement drastic budget cut-backs. Some countries have also implemented recentralization agendas with respect to crucial policies and functions, in order to manage the politics of austerity better. We can easily identify this trend in Southern European countries (Italy, Greece, Portugal, Spain), where the severity of the economic crisis has renewed debates about the available strategies to economize public resources in order to reduce the deficit. In doing so, those countries have questioned the decentralizing ethos that had dominated the past several decades. The up-scaling of policy competencies in crucial sectors, as well as the reform initiatives which have aimed to supervise and to exert direct control over local governments' financial autonomy, resource management, and decision making, amongst others, constitute clear evidence of this path. While some of the reforms in question might well be justified as necessary in order to reduce the public deficit, others can be regarded as attempts to advance particular political agendas.

Focusing on Spain, our talk will present this evidence and discuss the effects of the crisis on local autonomy: is local autonomy incompatible with financial stability and consolidation measures? Does up-scaling of power, imposed by a top down policy style, weaken local democracies? Is there a trade off towards output legitimacy (performance) at the expense of input and throughput legitimacy?



Carmen Navarro Gómez is Lecturer at the Department of Political Science at the University Autónoma of Madrid, where she focuses her research and teaching activities in local government and public policy. She is member of international networks for research on local politics, among others: the European Mayor Project (first and second rounds), the International Metropolitan Observatory, Municipal Assemblies in European Local Government, Second Tier of Local Government in Europe, Local Government Reforms: an International Comparison and Local Autonomy Index. She has published her research work in international journals and books. She has been visiting scholar at the Public Policy Institute, Georgetown University, Institute d'Études Politiques de Bordeaux, Department of Political Science of the Boston College and School for Policy Studies, Bristol University. She has served as Vicedean for International Relations at the Faculty of Law (2006-2010) and as Head of the Department of Political Science (2010-2014).