

EPPC

European Public
Policy Conference

The Fourth European Public Policy Conference - EPPC 2012 | Organized by the Hertie School of Governance, Berlin | Hosted at the Institut Barcelona d' Estudis Internacionals (IBEI), Barcelona | April 18th - 20th 2012

Re-Thinking Economic Crises: A broader look at Origins, Impacts, and Solutions

> ABOUT THE EUROPEAN PUBLIC POLICY CONFERENCE (EPPC)

The EPPC is an annual student-run, public policy conference set every year in a different European city and public policy school. Organized by students from some of the world's leading public policy schools, the EPPC provides an interactive platform for challenging debates, discussions, and networking between political leaders, scholars and students. As the 4th iteration of this annual conference, EPPC Barcelona will be an exciting addition to a line of successful conferences that continues to grow every year.

> CONFERENCE THEME

The ongoing economic crisis is the most pressing and pertinent issue in our world today. The far-reaching effects of the crisis have forced us to question some of our most fundamental understandings of economics. The wide scope of the social, political and economic transformations are not yet complete, much less sufficiently diagnosed and understood. The EPPC 2012 takes on the challenge of discussing creative ideas considering the origins, effects and possible solutions to the economic problems our generation is inheriting.

The Great Depression of the 1930s, directly or indirectly, led to poverty, conflict, and massive changes in legislation, like the New Deal. Besides this, the Great Depression helped us change the way we think about economics and social policy. That crisis and the ones that followed, although devastating, have also been opportunities to grow and improve our understanding of the world. However, mired in the worst crisis since the 1930s, it appears that our knowledge is still limited.



Questions such as the distribution of wealth, the sustainability of economic growth, the role of governments as a market regulator, and even our moral values have all been brought to center stage. Are we in the midst of witnessing a fundamental change in our belief system, especially regarding policy making and economic behavior in today's world?

EPPC 2012 is an exciting way to get fresh perspectives on a topic which, despite its wide discussion, has been mostly limited to analysis within the same framework and models. We are looking to burgeon new ideas on what crises are and their impacts – this is neither limited to our current crisis nor standard economic theory. Given that our generation will inherit today's problems, our input is crucial.

> **POLICY TOPICS**

The following three topics will be discussed at sessions in the EPPC 2012. These descriptions and questions are not meant to be limiting, but rather broad guidelines. We are looking for policy presentations addressing issues related to one of these three topics.

__ Origins of Economic Crises

Why do we have recessions? This is one of the important questions in macroeconomics. Yet, new crises seem to spring up every decade. This raises the demand for a far-reaching inquiry of the current system. Is the crisis in fact inherent to the capitalist system? Creative theories such as economic constructivism accredit a crisis to the spread of ideas. On the other hand, it seems that some economists are trying to replicate the hard sciences, such as physics – does this signify a lean towards the idea of one "economic truth"? Do the answers to crises originate in other fields such as psychology and sociology? Are people really rational agents? Actors and theories that are at one point in time praised are later vilified. Does our vacillation show a deeper understanding or a lack thereof?

__ Impacts of Crisis, the European Union and Beyond

The European Union appears more fragmented than ever before due to the current crisis. The economic heterogeneity within the common currency area has radically changed the political game in the European Union. Uncoordinated European actions, steep decrease in credibility and national isolationism might reveal that it is time for a new European project. Will the solution and resolution of this crisis be more or less Europe? Will it be feasible to go beyond sovereignty issues to adopt a common fiscal policy? Important social protests in some European countries cast some doubts about Europe's ability to manage the current crisis. The adoption by the European Union of an austerity policy has also worsened the perception of democratic legitimacy of the institution. This has spilled into national politics as non-democratically-elected governments now rule in Greece and Italy. Is austerity the best policy? Besides its impact on Europe and the USA, the crisis spread to the developing world as well. How are actors outside the core of a crisis affected by these events? Questions also arise about what the role of different international agencies such as Basel, G20, and the IMF are in fixing the crisis. Will future solutions be at the global level or is this wishful thinking?

— The Role of Financial Markets

Problems from the financial world spilling over to the real economy have led to distrust and loathing toward the financial world. Is this "banker bashing" justified? Next to the well-discussed regulatory problem, other issues arise. Most importantly; how essential is the financial industry in making our economy run? The role of the different agents in the financial sector, such as rating agencies and governments comes into question, as well as their responsibilities. The contribution of the financial sector to create real value is also disputed. Are financial markets signals connected to the real economy? The topic of financial markets has recently come to the forefront with the current crisis, but finance and the moving of money has existed for a very long time. What can we learn from the history of financial markets? How do we see the future of finance in our economies?

For more information about the conference, visit our website: <http://www.eppconference.com>

> PARTICIPANTS

EPPC 2012 invites bright and creative candidates with a good knowledge of the issues. We believe that progress stems from the free flow of often opposing ideas, which is why we welcome presentations and ideas from a diverse group of study fields - economic, social, psychological, philosophical, political, and beyond. We are looking to tackle the issues from different and unexpected angles!

Papers or presentations should outline a clear analysis of an issue related to one of the three topics discussed above and propose a unique policy solution to the problem.

> SUBMISSION

This year we are accepting two types of submissions. The first type is a short abstract for students interested in the EPPC 2012 Best Presentation Award. The second type is an essay for students who are interested in the IPLI Best Paper Award. When submitting your paper or presentation, please include which of the three topics you have chosen.

EPPC 2012 Best Presentation Award

All who wish to apply to the EPPC 2012 Best Presentation Award must submit a Resume and an abstract (two page maximum, double space, Times New Roman, font 12). Both should be submitted electronically by 23.59, March 11th, 2012 (CET\Berlin time) to submissions@epconference.com

Of all abstracts submitted, 36 will be chosen to give a 15 minute presentation during the conference. The three best presentations will be selected by a panel of judges and awarded a 200 Euro prize.

IPLI Best Paper Award

Candidates can also apply to the International Policy and Leadership Institute (IPLI). Best Paper Award by submitting a paper on a topic relevant to the EPPC. The candidate submitting the best paper will present it at the conference and will be awarded a 500 euro prize by the IPLI. A paper of 2500 words (double space, Times New Roman, font 12) and C.V. should be submitted electronically by 23.59, March 11th, 2012 (CET\Berlin time) to submissions@epconference.com

Please note that students may submit an abstract or a paper. Students are not required to submit both. We do allow submission of both, but they must be on separate topics (i.e., you cannot submit a paper for the IPLI prize, and then also submit the abstract of the paper for the normal presentations as well). All candidates will be notified about the selection decision no later than March 25th. For any additional information or questions, please contact communications@epconference.com