

Introducing a New Journal

Welcome to the first issue of the Warsaw Forum of Economic Sociology, a new journal published by the Warsaw School of Economics (Szkoła Główna Handlowa, or SGH). Our aim is to become a wide-ranging discussion forum for scholars interested in theoretical and empirical issues in socio-economic studies, with a particular emphasis on questions related to Central and Eastern Europe (CEE).

A systematic study of English-language publications in economic sociology shows a rather small number of texts relating specifically to Central and Eastern Europe. And yet we in Warsaw are aware of a large body of empirical research and theoretical reflections produced each year by scholars from our region and beyond. Most of these publications are released in the local languages only. This limits their global reception, and deprives international academic discourse of some very important, often groundbreaking work. The Warsaw Forum intends to provide a forum for such discussions, to bring to a wider audience the fruits of a wealth of research carried out in our field and in our area.

There are in fact multiple motives behind our decision to launch a journal with a geographical emphasis confined to a particular region of Europe. First of all, there is the undeniable reality that over the last two decades, this region has undergone a series of profound social, economic and political transformations. Social science has its origins in the study of social transformation, and rarely has a region experienced so much of it so fast as has the eastern half of Europe since the late 1980s. After the collapse of communist authority, all the countries in the region stepped onto an unknown path, which regularly produced results at considerable variance with the original concepts of the policy-makers. Although market economies and parliament democracies have now been institutionalized in the region, the consequences of these transformation processes remain in place, affecting the everyday course of life in a large number of countries. Most of the countries may have by now joined the European Union, but social reality here is still quite different from other parts of the world, and still quite different from social reality in the EU-15 countries.

Secondly, despite the systemic similarities that make the region different from others, east-central Europe remains a place of great internal differentiation. Dominant stereotypes still prevailing in elite western political, economic, and academic circles see the region as a monolith. In fact, however, for well over 20 years now, dating back to the communist period, each particular country has followed its own path. The Warsaw Forum intends to bring this diversity to the fore, without losing sight of the many unifying factors that mark the region as a whole.

We certainly acknowledge the numerous, valuable scholarly publications in global circulation dealing with socio-economics in the CEE countries. But these are spread out over various periodicals, none of which is based on an approach such as we envisage. Our approach combines the two dimensions, regional and thematic. Our aim is to investigate socio-economic issues in Central and Eastern Europe. We feel that we are better able to pursue this double agenda than most journals currently on the academic market.

While the idea to launch the Warsaw Forum of Economic Sociology emerged in the Department of Economic Sociology at the Warsaw School of Economics, the contributors to the first issue come from other departments at our university, other Polish universities, and from around the world as well. They represent a spectrum of social science ranging from public administration to neo-institutional economics, from political science to organizational sociology. We hope that the interdisciplinary scholarly cooperation that our first issue symbolizes will be continued and extended in future issues of the Forum.

The Warsaw Forum of Economic Sociology welcomes contributions dealing with socio-economic issues broadly defined. We see the journal as an academic platform where scholars of various social science disciplines engage in debate with the aim of establishing interdisciplinary connections, stimulating new and variegated research that closes gaps among separate academic departments. We seek articles that focus on theoretical and empirical aspects of socio-economic transformations and current socio-economic reality.

We plan to publish this journal on a bi-annual basis. Among the topics to be explored in future issues are the methodological aspects of socio-economics, the role of social capital, and industrial relations in transition countries. We will be happy to consider for publication papers and proceedings from academic conferences. We will also feature reviews of books dealing with economics and sociology, particularly those published in this part of Europe.

We encourage prospective authors to contact our editors and to send us your work. Let our journey begin.

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