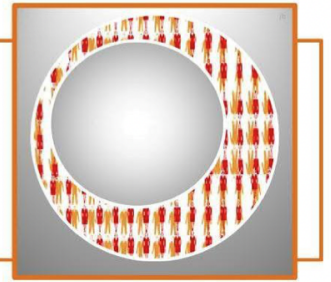


sektion
wirtschaftssoziologie

in der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Soziologie



Call for Papers

Early career scholars' conference on State capacity

Mittelbautagung der DGS Sektion Wirtschaftssoziologie

John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies, Freie Universität Berlin

April 18-19, 2024 in Berlin (FU)

**The state of “the state” in economic sociology: Perspectives on state capacity
in transformative times¹**

The questions of what capacity to act as an economic agent the state has, should have, and could have, loom in the background of almost all major public and scholarly debates of our times. Be it with regard to the economic effects of the climate catastrophe, unprecedented levels of inequality or the return of inflation and war – the economic role of states is central to understand, analyze and address the defining economic and societal questions of the 21st century. Understanding *the state* from an economic sociology perspective, its fiscal organization and how it interacts with *the market* and other actors within a pluralistic society are central questions in the field of fiscal sociology and economic sociology more broadly. The work of some of the most influential writers for this subfield of economic sociology (see for example Joseph Schumpeter, Vilfredo Pareto and Max Weber) touch upon related questions. In general, economic sociology as a discipline offers a theoretically founded and fruitful analytical lens to study state capacity. Echoing earlier calls to bring ‘the state back in’, we therefore want to dedicate the *Mittelbautagung of the DGS Sektion Wirtschaftssoziologie 2024* to questions surrounding *state capacity*. Broadly, the themes of the conference are the conceptual understanding of state capacity, the political contestation (or absence of contestation) of state capacity, the ways in which state capacity is constructed through economic discourse, imaginaries, statistics, theories or politics, the capabilities and configuration of state capacity, and, lastly, its imprints in socio-economic terms.

We call for contributions from economic sociology but also welcome proposals from relevant neighboring disciplines and fields from graduate students, post-docs, academics, or activists relating, but not limited to, the following topics and questions:

¹ To cater to a broader, more international audience and because much of the relevant work for the topic at hand is already in English, we have decided to use English as the language of the conference.

- How is state capacity understood within economic sociology and beyond? How is it measured in empirical terms?
- How do imaginaries of the future play into actors' assessment of a state's capacity to shape and organize the economy?
- How and why is economic state capacity changing over time and place?
- Which role do economic experts like accountants play in the construction of state budgets and budgetary definitions?
- Which actors are involved in the struggles over the nature and scope of state capacity? (Business associations, parties, voters, consumers, trade unions, different governmental levels.)
- How do public debt, public finance or taxation act as central determinants of scope and limits of state capacity?
- How does monetary policy and inflation relate to state capacity? To what extent and under which conditions does central banking constrain state capacity?
- Which actors can influence the use of public finances as a means of state capacity (and how does it influence for example socio-economic segregation)?

Abstracts should be submitted [online](#) by January 15th. Confirmations of acceptance will be sent by February 1st. In case you have any questions, you can contact us at dgsmittelbautagung2024@gmail.com.

The conference will take place at the John-F. Kennedy Institute at the FU Berlin from April 18th to 19th 2024. We aim to support early career researchers with the travel costs. In case you are in need of such a travel grant in order to attend the conference, please inform us.

Organizers

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