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The European Social Model under Pressure: Liber Amicorum in Honour of Klaus Armingeon

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Introduction

The central theme of this book is the challenges facing the European Social Model, its political institutions and the democratic elements embedded in its structures. Ever since the 1990s, discussions about the future of continental welfare states, the democratic deficit of European-level institutions or the emergence of right-wing populism as a mass political phenomenon have incorporated an element of ‘crisis’. Over the years, the tone has become even more severe following the Great Recession and its widespread consequences, not only on economic and social policy, but also on policy-making in general. In the aftermath of the 2008/09 financial crisis and the Euro crisis that followed, many commentators questioned the European Social Model and its viability. However, ten year later, and with the benefit of hindsight, it is worth asking: Is the European way of social concertation indeed facing a crisis, or are such views exaggerated? And, in a broader perspective, do recent events, when accumulated, threaten the very foundation of European democracies and the European Union in particular, or are they rather likely to prompt answers and solutions leading to more democratic systems, better equipped to cope with internal and external challenges?

We invited renowned scholars to deploy their methodological and analytical tools in answering these questions. The general inquiry we proposed generated explorations in many a direction. The contributions brought together in this volume raise numerous inspiring questions concerning the facets of neo-corporatist interest intermediation, the changing relationship between citizens and their polities, the spill-over of EU politics into the political lives of its neighbours (such as Switzerland), and they prompt reflections on the role of social investment policies, on quality and legitimacy of democracy, or on the social dimension of EU citizenship.

This volume does not provide one, or ‘the’, answer. Yet, by painting a broader picture of the pressures facing the European Social Model, it produces a reliable and well-founded overview of the crisis-like events and their wide-ranging consequences, occurring in the last 30 years. We believe that having such an overview, supplemented by detailed accounts on transformations of current practices, is a necessary step in becoming aware of the possible outcomes concerning social concertation, democracy, welfare states or social structures in the (not so distant) future of European states.

All the contributors of this volume were asked to also connect their reflections to the work of a political scientist whose work, spanning over four decades, has influenced the thinking of generations of scholars pondering big and small questions concerning the political, economic and social trajectories of the European Social Model. Throughout his long and prestigious academic career, Klaus Armingeon has been particularly concerned with the European Social Model. Yet, while appreciating its positive sides, he has always had a keen eye for its challenges. As Martin Höpner observes in his contribution to this volume, for Klaus Armingeon, politics gets interesting when it hurts. Among his numerous books, chapters and journal articles, the (alleged) crisis of the European Social Model runs like a red thread through his work, be it in the form of painful reforms in the age of austerity, new social risks or political alienation.

Yet, Klaus Armingeon has never been the one to see only the gloomy side of things. Typical for his work, as Kees van Kersbergen and Barbara Vis note in their contribution, was the conviction that controversies cannot be solved through endless theoretical disputes. Instead, rigorous and systematic (and comparative, one might add) empirical research must make the difference, identifying the real challenges to the European Social Model, while providing a badly needed dose of sober analysis in other cases. The contributions to this volume have all been written in this spirit. Before presenting the chapters in more detail, we will cast a limelight over the career of Klaus Armingeon.

Brief overview of Klaus Armingeon’s career and scholarly contribution

On his webpage at the Institute of Political Science, Klaus Armingeon introduces himself as citizen of the European Union, of the Federal Republic of Germany and of Switzerland. These few words summarize the way he sees himself. However, it bears to emphasize that Klaus Armingeon is an *active* citizen, who, through his scholarly work as well as through his numerous interventions in mass media, has contributed significantly to the way we understand the workings of the political systems.

After obtaining a master’s degree in Political Science and East European History at Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen (Germany), Klaus Armingeon received his PhD in Political Science at the University of Konstanz (Germany) in 1982 with a thesis on *Neocorporatist Income Policy: A Comparative Study of Income Policies in Western European Countries in the 1970s*

(Neo-korporatistische Einkommenspolitik: Eine vergleichende Untersuchung von Einkommenspolitiken in westeuropäischen Ländern in den 70er Jahren, Armingeon 1983). Several research positions followed at reputed German universities (Konstanz, Mannheim, Tübingen and Heidelberg). In 1993, he obtained his Habilitation in Political Science at the Ruprecht-Karls University of Heidelberg (Germany) with a thesis on *State and Employment Relationships: An International Comparison* (Staat und Arbeitsbeziehungen: Ein internationaler Vergleich, Armingeon 1994a), and soon after obtained an associate professorship (Extraordinarius) in political science at the University of Bern (Switzerland), where he was also appointed Director of the Institute of Political Science. In 1996, he became full professor at the same institute, a position he has held ever since.

As professor of Comparative and European Politics, he has taught generations of students and has actively engaged with the scientific community. He has been a guest professor at Duke University (2002) and at the Leopold-Franzens University in Innsbruck (2003), Nannerl O. Keohane Distinguished Visiting Professor at Duke/UNC Chapel Hill (2010), and fellow of Collegio Carlo Alberto, Moncalieri/Turin (2014, 2017). He has been, and is currently, a member of numerous advisory boards of prestigious scientific institutions, such as ZUMA (Mannheim), Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies (Cologne), FORS (Lausanne), Institute for Higher Studies (Vienna) and Hans Böckler Foundation (Berlin). He has been the first foreigner to hold the position of President of the Swiss Political Science Association, between 1999 and 2002. From 2004 to 2006, he has acted as the Chief Editor of the Swiss Political Science Review and he is currently a member of editorial Boards of high-ranking political science journals (Comparative Political Studies and West European Politics). Between 2006 and 2012, Klaus Armingeon has also been a member of the Board of the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR), responsible for the Dossiers Research and Europe.

Klaus Armingeon's research themes illustrate his manifold interests and the breadth of fields to which he has brought a contribution. His scholarly focal points have been economic and social policy, social partners and political parties. These elements are present throughout his work, be that in the context of analyses focusing on countries, on supranational structures such as EU, OECD or trade regimes, or on contemporary processes such as economic crises. Some of the questions spurring his intellectual curiosity in recent years are: How successful are the reforms in direction of austerity or liberalization? How do national states react to OECD or EU-led reform initiatives or advice? How do citizens inform themselves and how do they react to policies and reforms? How is the European democracy affected by economic crises, by the repositioning of various political actors, by interests of non-political actors or by supranational organizations and policy regimes?

To seek answers to these and many other questions, Klaus Armingeon and his collaborators have launched many fruitful explorations. The many research projects bear witness not only of the breadth of his interests, but also to his continuous efforts to support the first steps of young scholars. Recent collaborations include the project *Critical Junctures: An International*

Comparison of Institutional Reforms, which addressed the question of conditions for substantial reforms, while the project *International Organizations and National Welfare States* explored the link between the OECD as a supra-national organisation and its member states. The project *Social Integration and Political Participation* focused on civic engagement of individuals as part and parcel of democratic societies, while the project *Societal Conflicts and Forms of Government: A Comparison of 28 Eastern Countries* collected data on the post-communist countries, tracking their institutional transformation on a multitude of political and institutional indicators. The project *Political Consequences of Attitudes towards the Welfare State* explored the conditions under which welfare state attitudes become consequential for political behaviour, while the project *Constitutionalism and Multilayered Governance* explored the process of “constitutionalisation” taking place within various regulatory trade regimes that emerge at the intersection of globalisation, international institutions and mutual commitments of individual states. Most recently, his projects *Austerity: An International Comparison of the Implementation of Austerity Plans and their Social Consequences* as well as *Trajectories of Liberalization* throw light on liberalization processes, the implementation of austerity plans and their social consequences.

In the early years of his academic career, Klaus Armingeon focused on issues concerning working relationships, trade unions’ roles and impact, corporatism and neo-corporatism, initially at the state level, and – as the European level gained more emphasis – at the supranational level. For example, in several of his first articles, he analysed the political and institutional context explaining the ability of trade unions to represent their members, and secure the rights and work conditions for workers (Armingeon 1983, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989a, 1989b, 1993, 1994a, 1997b; Armingeon and Schmitt 1986). As concerns about labour relations trickled up to the European level, with several discussions and proposals at the end of 1980s and beginning of 1990s, his analysis led him to conclude that short-term prospects for convergence in European industrial relations were low (Armingeon 1991, 1994b). The factors he emphasized then, such as diverse traditions in the European countries and the divergence in interests of political actors and social partners, remain relevant today when the limited progress in the area of a common EU industrial relation system is addressed.

In the 1990s and years after, the scholarly interests of Klaus Armingeon broadened significantly. Pursuant his appointment at the University of Bern, he embarked upon what became an in-depth exploration of the functioning and specificities of the Swiss political system. His studies in this vein focus on the Swiss political economy (Armingeon and Emmenegger 2007; Armingeon 1998b), welfare protection (Armingeon, Bertozzi and Bonoli 2004; Armingeon 2001a), party politics (Armingeon 1995a, 1999), institutional makeup and its effects (Armingeon 2001b, 2002a), labour market (Armingeon 1997a, 2001b) or direct democracy (Armingeon 2000). Other studies have examined Switzerland or negotiation democracies more generally in a comparative perspective (Armingeon 1997b, 1998a, 2002b,

2004a, 2004b; Armingeon and Sciarini 1996; Armingeon and Freitag 1997; Armingeon and Hirashima 2004).

Klaus Armingeon also addressed major societal challenges, notably in his highly influential work on the reform of the welfare state (Armingeon et al. 2004, 2016; Armingeon and Beyeler 2004; Armingeon 2005; Armingeon and Bonoli 2006; Armingeon and Giger 2008). His keen interest in institutional change (Armingeon 2004a; Armingeon and Careja 2008) and in the interaction between international organisations and nation states (Armingeon 1995b; Armingeon and Milewicz 2008; Armingeon 2007) has resulted in publications shining a critical light on these topics. Equally important, he focused on the political repercussions of socio-economic changes, for instance in his work on political behaviour and preferences (Armingeon 1994c, 1995a, 2001b; Armingeon and Schädel 2015; Armingeon and Guthmann 2014) and the policy determinants of socio-economic outcomes (Weisstanner and Armingeon 2018). After 2008/09, a major focus has been the Euro crisis and its consequences. His work has addressed how the European states have managed the aftermath of the crisis (Armingeon 2012a; Armingeon and Cranmer 2017; Armingeon, Guthmann and Weisstanner 2016a) as well as the consequences of the austerity policies (Armingeon and Guthmann 2014; Armingeon and Ceka 2014; Armingeon, Guthmann and Weisstanner 2014, 2015, 2016b).

Yet, Klaus Armingeon's contribution does not rest with his publications alone. He has long recognized the value of data quality for social science research. Therefore, he has launched several projects aimed at creating large databases, which he fully opened to the scientific community. The large number of citations for the Comparative Political Data Set (see www.cpds-data.org), developed together with researchers at the Bernese Political Science Institute, initially including the OECD countries and subsequently incorporating the 28 post-communist countries of Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union as well, clearly indicate the widespread appreciation of the dataset. More recently, he, together with Lucio Baccaro, have joined forces to develop a database of liberalizing policy reforms – equally intended for the benefit of all scholars.

Last but certainly not least, over twenty public appearances in the last two years alone consolidate Klaus Armingeon's public image as an expert in European politics. His media appearances address a variety of topics – from current hot issues for Swiss politics, to explaining the positions of the EU, Germany and other major EU-level actors – both in written media, and in radio and TV-interventions. Far from being an academic hiding in an ivory tower, he has always engaged with the public and disseminated his research to the larger audience and has never shied away from sharing inconvenient truths.

This volume

This collective volume honours Klaus Armingeon's numerous contributions to the advancement of the field of political science. The chapters engage with his most important work

and therefore we divided the volume into five sections, corresponding to some of the main themes of his work: the transformation of neo-corporatism, the politics of welfare state reform, the political determinants of socio-economic outcomes, democracies in hard times and the current challenges facing the European Union.

The first section of the volume includes chapters which interact with Klaus Armingeon's many scholarly contributions concerned with coordinated capitalism, labour relations and neo-corporatism. Several authors take these reflections as their starting point. Building on Armingeon (1986), **Marius R. Busemeyer** explores the relationship between neo-corporatist interest intermediation and the responsiveness of democracy. Engaging with recent concerns about interest group influence and its effect on democratic policy-making, he critically examines the promises and challenges of neo-corporatist decision-making with regard to its ability to ensure the proper representation of interests that are difficult to organize and mobilize. **Benedikt Bender** and **Bernhard Ebbinghaus** focus on the responses of European democracies to the Great Recession. In particular, they examine the economic, political and labour relations conditions leading to tripartite social concertation efforts. They show that labour relations and political – but not economic – factors explain why social partners are included in crisis management.

Several contributions are concerned with the transformation of neo-corporatism and labour relations. **André Mach**, **Frédéric Varone** and **Steven Eichenberger** document a reconfiguration of the Swiss neo-corporatist political regime toward a more pluralist system, in which interest groups more actively target political parties and parliament (cf. Armingeon 2011). Nevertheless, economic groups remain dominant in the domains of economic and social policies. **Paul Windolf** focuses on the rise and decline of corporate networks in Germany. Offering opportunities for the coordination of market strategies and the self-monitoring of management, the structure of these corporate networks has fundamentally changed in recent decades, leaving little discernible difference between Germany and the United States of America. **Rafael Labanino's** examination of the dissolution of social dialogue in Hungary under Orbán governments lends support to the argument that parties' ideologies and party competition play a role in the development of labour relations in Eastern Europe (cf. Armingeon 2012b).

The second section focuses on the politics of welfare state reform. **Markus Hinterleitner** and **Fritz Sager** examine blame avoidance strategies and welfare state retrenchment. Categorizing the different blame avoidance strategies that governing elites can employ to avoid electoral punishment, they show that these strategies may have rather diverse effects and leave governing elites with several options to pursue reform. **Carsten Jensen** and **Georg Wenzelburger** explore the effect of partisanship on welfare state activities. Focusing on unemployment insurance and old age pensions, two paradigmatic examples of “old” social risks, they find that the partisan effect of governments has declined since the 1970s. Examining “new” social risk policies (cf. Armingeon and Bonoli 2006), however, **Duane Swank** shows

that social democratic incumbency has a positive effect on social policies addressing the needs of labour market outsiders, in particular in the presence of encompassing labour organizations.

Christine Trampusch explores the politics of burden shifting in Germany's fiscal welfare corporatism. She demonstrates that the costs of industrial restructuring were offloaded onto the social insurance budget, which brought short-term relief in several policy fields, yet triggered a negative feedback process and ultimately led to a transformative change of German welfare corporatism. Social investment policies have been a prominent topic in recent work on welfare state reform. **Kees van Kersbergen** and **Barbara Vis** examine the temporal dimension of these policies. They argue that the accelerating pace of technological change tends to complicate the assumptions of social investment policies and might ultimately result in higher inequality. Similarly, **Giuliano Bonoli** critically assesses the adequacy of social investment policies. Starting from the observation of increasingly multicultural societies, he suggests that social investment policy must be adapted to deliver on the promise of maintaining social cohesion. Finally, **Herbert Obinger** explores the role of the First World War in shaping the welfare state in Austria, Germany and Switzerland. He identifies important parallels in how the war affected social policies in these three countries, although the effects were somewhat weaker in Switzerland.

Klaus Armingeon's work has always been concerned with the political determinants of socio-economic outcomes. The third section of this book looks at several important policy fields also been prominently featured in his work. **Evelyne Huber**, **John D. Stephens** and **Kaitlin Alper** examine the varied sources of increasing wage dispersion. Among others, they identify several important countervailing factors such as union density, wage coordination, employment protection legislation and investment in human capital. Focusing on "lay" explanations for poverty, **Lionel Marquis** shows that self-interest considerations mostly drive poverty attribution. However, following the 2008 economic crisis, explanations relating poverty to social injustice have risen to unprecedented levels in most European countries. **Stefano Sacchi**, **Dario Guarascio** and **Silvia Vannutelli** examine the effects of technological change on public opinion. Using data on Italy, they show that occupational risk related to technological change is an important driver of redistribution preferences.

Isabelle Stadelmann-Steffen analyses how flexible work arrangements affect the gender-specific allocation of time on paid work and care work. She finds that women spend more time in the labour market under flexible work conditions, although this effect does not apply to women with traditional childcare preferences. **Wolf Linder** examines differences in educational attainment in Switzerland, finding that family background explains a significant part of education success. He also investigates why there seems to be little willingness on behalf of the governing elites to deal with these inequalities and take advantage of the untapped potential. **Philipp Lutz** explores how welfare state regimes moderate the relationship between demographic ageing and labour immigration policies. He finds that while social democratic welfare states opt for the facilitated expansion of female employment, liberal and conservative

welfare states feature elements of demography-induced liberalisation of labour immigration. Finally, **Manfred G. Schmidt** compares public policies of democracies and autocracies. He shows that performance levels vary within both democracies and autocracies. Most notably, differences between “defective” democracies and advanced constitutional democracies explain a significant part of the “democracy advantage”.

Throughout his long and distinguished academic career, Klaus Armingeon has regularly explored the political repercussions of socio-economic changes, for instance in his work on political behaviour and more recently political alienation and the crisis of democracy (e.g. Armingeon et al. 2016b; Armingeon and Schädel 2015). This book’s fourth section focuses on democracy in hard times. **Uwe Wagschal** examines the degree of polarization of party systems and observes an increase of polarization in recent years, which is particularly accentuated in countries with proportional electoral systems. **Sarah Engler** and **David Weisstanner** explore the effect of changes in the relative deterioration in material conditions on support for radical right parties. They show that increasing income inequality – both directly as well indirectly through status decline – substantially increases support for the radical right. Departing from his joint work with Klaus Armingeon on the political attitudes of trade union members (Armingeon and Schmitt 1986), **Rüdiger Schmitt-Beck** finds no effect of trade union membership on the support for the recently established right-wing populist *Alternative für Deutschland*. Yet, he finds several indirect effects, which show that trade union membership is no significant barrier to the adoption of right-wing populist attitudes.

European integration processes raise particular challenges for democracy. **Hans Keman** explores indirect democracy in the European Union. He discusses the emergence of “new” political parties at the European level and the resulting challenges for established parties as well as the European Union. Focusing on the domestic politics of European integration, **Pascal Sciarini** analyses the dilemma Swiss citizens face between the reintroduction of some form of immigration control and the continuation of the bilateral agreements with the European Union. He finds that age, trust in government and left-right orientation are key determinants of the choice between bilateral treaties and immigration control.

Recent decades have witnessed the far-reaching liberalization of several major policy fields. Did these processes have negative effects on citizens’ satisfaction with democracy? **Kai Guthmann** and **Anna Fill** examine this relationship, yet they find only limited support for the expectation that liberalization processes have undermined democratic satisfaction. **Anja Heidelberger**, **Marlène Gerber** and **Marc Bühlmann** analyse the political behaviour of citizens who are dissatisfied with democracy. They observe that a majority – despite their dissatisfaction – participate in elections, although participation varies with party identification. In addition, they do not find a strong relationship between dissatisfaction with democracy and protest voting. Finally, **Reimut Zohlnhöfer** and **Frank Bandau** explore the determinants of programmatic change in West European political parties. They observe that office-seeking

concerns drive programmatic change rather than lack of policy success, because parties consider a lack of success at elections to be more directly related to their programmatic position.

In recent years, Klaus Armingeon's many research interests have culminated in his critical work on the Euro crisis. This book's last section therefore focuses on the European Union and the Eurozone. **Martin Höpner** examines the politics of internal devaluation within the Eurozone. Discussing the political limits of, and resistance to, internal devaluation, he argues in favour of a flexibilisation of the Eurozone in order to restore democratic autonomy. **Andreas Busch** discusses the causes and effects of the German account surplus, which reflects some of the imbalances of the Eurozone. He offers several remedies to ease the account surplus and explains why they should be considered even if one does not consider the account surplus to be an economic problem. While Germany was thriving, other countries were in need of a bailout. How did these bailouts and the accompanying restrictions of democratic autonomy affect satisfaction with democracy? **Frank Schimmelfennig** and **Dominik Schraff** observe a strong negative effect of bailouts on democratic satisfaction, but this effect diminishes substantially after a number of years.

More pessimistically, **Yannis Papadopoulos** observes a dramatic decline in the quality and legitimacy of democracy, both in the countries of the Eurozone periphery as well as at the level of the European Union. He argues that much of the improvements in the alleviation of the democratic deficit in the European Union have been reversed during the management of the Eurozone crisis. **Maurizio Ferrara** calls for the enhancement of the social dimension of EU citizenship. Concerned about an increasing cleavage between mobile workers and "stay at home" people, he argues that there is greater potential for solidarity within public opinions than meets the eye. Finally, **Marlene Kammerer**, **Fadri Cramer** and **Karin Ingold** examine the effect of the European Union on German and Swiss climate politics. They show that developments at the EU level are important points of reference in both countries, although domestic political agents engage with the EU in different ways.

Be they optimistic or pessimistic, empirical examinations or theoretical reflections the chapters of this volume illustrate that the European project is far from finished: it has challenges ahead, lessons to teach and hope to give. And all the more, it requires continuous critical assessment, not least from its own citizens and from the scholarly community.

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