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News

Markets, morals, and responsibility

Hardly a week without a new scandal. In the financial business, in consumer industries or in politics, ethical and legal boundaries are being crossed. During the financial crisis, fraud became part of the system – with global repercussions. The authors of the June issue of the WZB-Mitteilungen analyze different forms of fraud and corruption from historical, legal, and political perspectives.

More information
To the new issue

WZB survey of elite: demographic change is the biggest challenge

Demographic change is viewed as the biggest challenge for society by 60 percent of German leaders. In second place are the economic, financial and government crises (48 percent). Only 28 percent consider overcoming social inequality and safeguarding social cohesion as the most important problem, as shown by results of a survey conducted among 354 top-level leaders from the fields of politics, administration, economics, law, military, churches and media by a WZB research team. It is the first comprehensive census among executives in Germany since 1995.

Further information

Making science an attractive career

As the first institution in Germany, the WZB has been acknowledged the "HR Excellence in Research" logo. The EU commission rewards the WZB's internal analysis and action plan aimed to improve working conditions and to ensure attractive research careers. The WZB endorsed the "European Charter for Researchers" and the related "Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers" only in April 2013; the implementation was done quickly.
Parties, quotas, and competence

What happens when political parties use gender quotas for drawing up their lists of candidates? This question addressed Torsten Persson (University of Stockholm) at the Second WZB Distinguished Lecture in Social Sciences on May 23. Persson showed that gender quotas not only create a better balance between men and women, but may also reduce the number of incompetent candidates. His talk is now available on video.

Journalists in Residence

As in previous years, we offer short-term residencies to experienced journalists. The Journalist in Residence Fellowship is for salaried editors and freelance journalists who wish to interact with researchers at our institute on subjects of their choice. Fellowships may last from six weeks to three months. We provide each fellow a workplace and a monthly research stipend of 3,500 Euro.

Events

July 8, 2013, 1 pm
Changes and challenges in China’s democratic governance since the reform
Colloquium with Professor Yu Keping. The Director of the Center for Chinese Government Innovations at Beijing University, China, will talk about the radically changed Chinese society after the reform in 1978.

July 8, 2013, 2 pm
Foetal programming - from epidemiology to epigenetics
Lecture with Professor Berthold Hocher. He is a professor at Potsdam University. His research focuses on fetal programming of cardiovascular diseases, exploration of novel targets for the treatment of diabetic complications.

July 15, 2013, 1 pm
Theorizing territorial rights, the justification of states and immigration from a global standpoint
Colloquium with Professor Mathias Risse. The Professor of Philosophy and Public Policy at Harvard Kennedy School will talk about the origin and limits of the territorial rights of states.

July 18–19, 2013
Linking theory and empirical research in the social sciences – major challenges and current debates
Conference during the Berlin Summer School in Social Sciences, July 18, venue: WZB, A300, and July 19, venue: BGSS (Luisenstr 56), Festsaal.
Part time bosses – rare in Europe’s boardrooms

Dual or tandem leadership – new models in working hours for management are often discussed in the media. Reality looks different: In Europe, few managers in leadership positions reduce their working hours. Lena Hipp and Stefan Stuth, researchers at the WZB, came to this conclusion following a study of management and part-time work. In some countries, managers are better able than others to implement their desire to work part-time. Whereas in Germany, only 5 percent of all managers work part-time, i.e. less than 30 hours per week, in the UK it is 12 percent and 8 percent in the Netherlands.

With shared responsibility

Do large committees make better decisions? Justin Valasek, researcher at the WZB, shows in his article in the new issue of the WZB-Mittellungen that on one hand, a larger committee has more information regarding which decision is correct. On the other hand, a larger committee dilutes responsibility since each individual is less likely to be decisive in determining the final outcome. This tradeoff can lead to overcaution in large committees.

Overview of publications

Our publication list includes WZB publications from the last couple of months.

New discussion papers

A list of recent Discussion Papers can be found here.

The Guardian online, June 27, 2013
The euro debt crisis must force a re-evaluation of capitalism
Jürgen Kocka on the the great crises of capitalism
To the article

The Globe and Mail, June 4, 2013
Where the chores gaps between women and men are widest
Jan Paul Heisig on the housework income gradient
To the article

France 24, June 4, 2013
"Berlin pushes parents to make more babies"
Matthias Pollmann-Schult on the conditions of founding a family in Germany
To the broadcast