

# NEWSLETTER

## LIVEWHAT—Living with Hard Times: How Citizens React to Economic Crises and Their Social and Political Consequences

<http://www.livewhat.unige.ch/>



**LIVEWHAT** is a research project that studies policy responses and citizens' resilience in times of crisis. The project brings together universities and an international advisory board of leading scientists from nine European countries – France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

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### LIVEWHAT updates

LIVEWHAT examines the ways in which European citizens have reacted to the crisis that, at different degrees of intensity in different countries, has struck Europe since 2008. It studies both **individual** and **collective** responses by citizens, the **private** and the **public** dimensions of such responses, and **political** and **non-political** responses.

LIVEWHAT not only focuses on citizens' responses but also sheds light on policy responses so as to have a baseline for assessing

citizens' resilience in times of crisis. In this respect, LIVEWHAT researchers have recently completed a **comparative analysis to assess national policy responses to crises** through interviews with policy-makers and the study of secondary sources. The findings are illuminating.

The analysis of crisis responses over the period 2005-2014 indicates **shifting patterns across countries**. Expectedly, there are great differences between countries that

have been more or less affected by the crisis. In Germany, Switzerland and Sweden the effects of the crisis, as well as the related policy changes, have been moderate. While France has not gone unscathed through the crisis, its policy responses have not had a fundamental impact on labor market policy and social security systems. Both Poland and the UK have engaged in wide-ranging reforms to cut public spending.



Still, the welfare retrenchments that have been initiated and their possible effects on citizens must be understood in the light of changing structures on the labor market, namely the precarization of labor. Even slight changes in levels and conditions of eligibility for sickness and unemployment benefits will have potentially more palpable affects for a workforce that is increasingly less likely to be granted access to such systems. Hence, although the majority of the reforms directly worsened the situation of public sector employees, there are negative long-term impacts for those at the beginning of their labor career.

Another finding is that the reforms adopted in the nine countries have

in many cases no direct relationship to the recent economic crisis. Some reforms, in particular changes to pension systems, had been discussed for a long period of time before the crisis erupted in Europe. The crisis provided **an opportunity to adopt and implement such reforms** as part of broader packages aimed towards decreasing debt and consolidating budgets even if the short-term gains of reforms to attain such goals are sometimes negligible. Similar patterns can be discerned in relation to systems of **unemployment insurance and sickness benefits**, the reforms of which in some cases were discussed long before the crisis erupted in Europe in 2008. Regardless the causes of the reforms observed, their negative impact on states' welfare systems denote that many groups of citizens, particularly in Greece and Spain, need to look for **alternative initiatives** for enhancing their resilience.



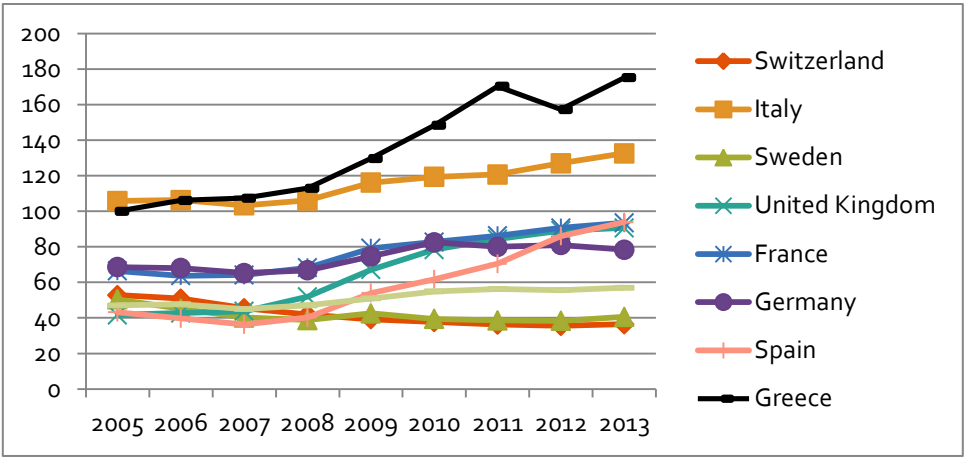
Alongside assessing policy responses, the LIVEWHAT team also assessed the legal consequences of the economic crisis. The findings indicate that there has been an increasing willingness among the governing authorities to limit and regulate citizens' use of the freedom of assembly in many countries, and in some cases this is a direct result of the numerous street demonstrations opposing austerity policies. So far, many of the most restrictive proposals have been defined as unconditional (France, Spain, Greece). From the perspective of protection of citizens' fundamental

rights, these trends call for further attention by civil society groups, scholars and politicians.



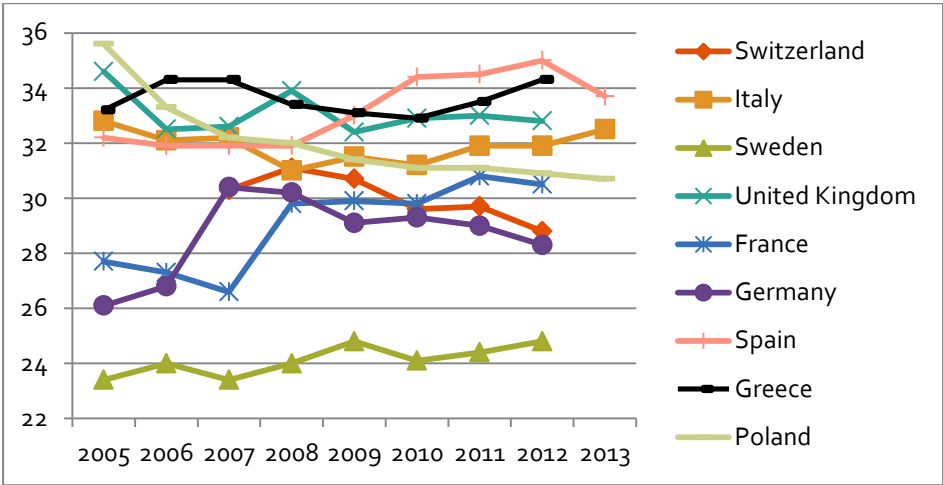
Concurrently, the LIVEWHAT team put together a **comparative database** that comprises a set of **macro-level indicators** (i.e. economic, social and political indicators capturing the 'input' aspect of crises) and **micro- or individual level indicators** (addressing the 'output' aspect of crises with regard to ordinary citizens' subjective attitudes and behaviors). The database draws on data spanning the time period 2005-2014 and all the nine project countries.

Looking closely at the data, it was found that the economic crisis has had a differential negative impact for all countries - having affected especially Greece, Spain, Italy but also the UK, and to a lesser extent France. Poland seems to have remained relatively untouched by the crisis. In the economic field, we have been able to find that the countries mostly affected are the UK, Italy, Spain, France, and Greece especially with regard to their performance vis-à-vis the Gini coefficient (Figure 1) and government debt (Figure 2).



**Figure 1:** Percentage of total central government debt as part of GDP (Source: Eurostat)

**Figure 2:** Gini coefficient of equivalised disposable income (Source: Eurostat)

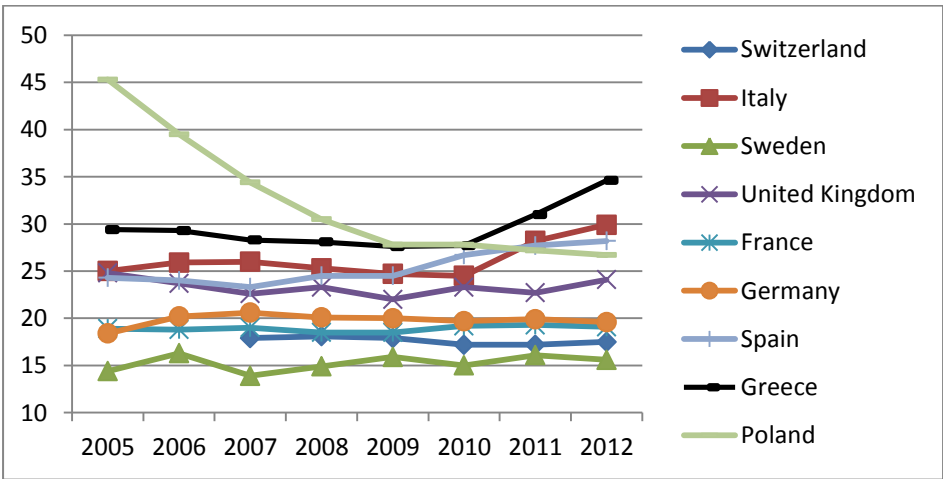


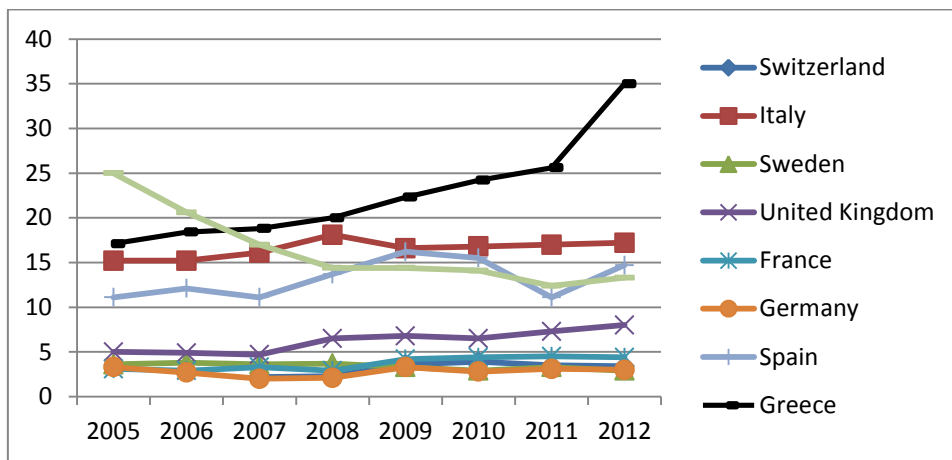
In the social field, the number of people who are at risk of poverty and social exclusions (Figure 3) has increased particularly in Greece, Spain, and Italy.

Concurrently, economic strain (Figure 4) has become more intense in the UK, Spain, Italy, and particularly in Greece. Interestingly after the onset of the

economic crisis, economic strain increased and reached its peak in 2009 in Switzerland, France, Germany, and Sweden.

**Figure 3:** Percentage of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion (Source: Eurostat)



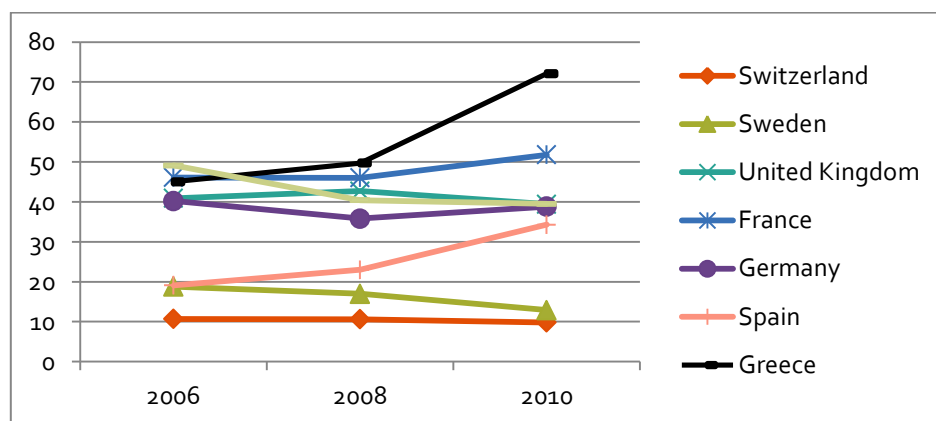


**Figure 4:** Economic strain, percentage of households making ends meet with great difficulty (Source: Eurostat)

Concerning political attitudes and behaviors, since the onset of the economic crisis dissatisfaction with how democracy works (Figure 5) has increased in Greece, France,

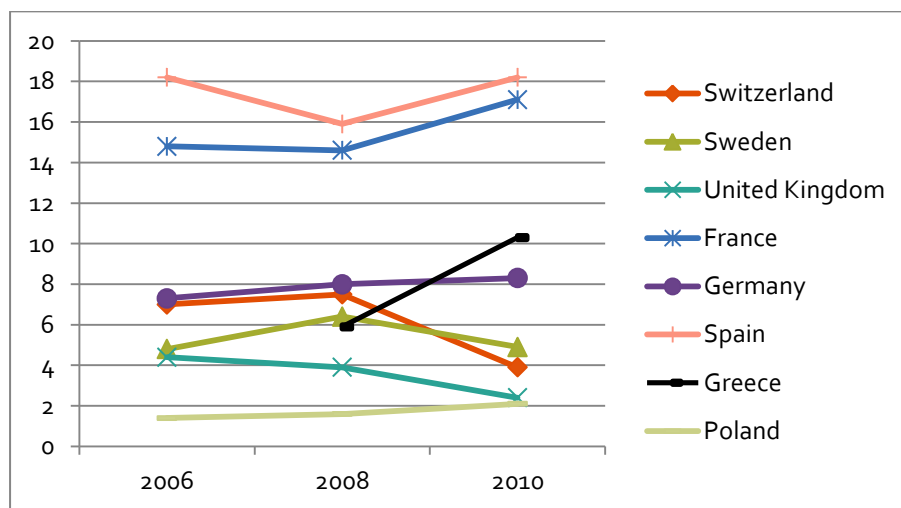
Germany, Spain and declined in the UK, Sweden and Poland. Also, it seems that the economic crisis has brought more people to the streets especially in Greece, France, and

Spain but not in the UK and Switzerland (Figure 6).



**Figure 5:** Satisfaction with how democracy works by country, percentage of respondents, who stated 'Extremely dissatisfied' (Source: European Social Survey)

**Figure 6:** Participation in lawful public demonstration last 12 months, percentage of respondents who answered 'Yes' (European Social Survey)



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## Announcements and upcoming events



# LIVEWHAT SUMMER SCHOOL

We are pleased to announce that the call for applications is now open for the **Summer School on Citizens Resilience in Times of Crises**, sponsored by the LIVEWHAT project and organized at the Centre on Social Movement Studies (COSMOS). The Summer School will take place in Florence at the European University Institute from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> of July 2015 and will address fundamental issues such as:

- How do people respond to crises in general and to the current economic crisis in particular?
- What strategies are developed to cope with the crisis in the public and private domains, collectively and individually, and through policies, protests and individual behaviors?
- What forms of resilience does society show in hard times? The Summer School will bring together young scholars and more established academics interested in these issues through an intensive curriculum of lectures and workshops.

Participants investigating the dynamics linking crises, policy responses, and citizens' resilience will focus on mobilization and alternative forms of action in times of economic crises.



More generally, the Summer School aims to offer analytical and methodological tools to investigate how citizens respond to the social and political consequences of economic crises either individually or collectively, privately or publicly, politically or non-politically. This will include responses such as changing attitudes and behaviors; engaging in collective action; adapting lifestyles; expressing discontent in the media; voting for a populist party; and broadening social ties.

The Summer School will also feature keynote speeches from internationally renowned scholars:

- **Prof. Javier Auyero**, Sociology Department, University of Texas, Austin;
- **Prof. Donatella Della Porta**, Political and Social Sciences Department, European University Institute, Florence;
- **Prof. Marco Giugni**, Department of Political Science and International Relations, University of Geneva;
- **Prof. Jeff Goodwin**, Department of Sociology, New York University;
- **Prof. Maria Kousis**, Department of Sociology, University of Crete;
- **Prof. Hanspeter Kriesi**, Political and Social Sciences Department, European University Institute, Florence;
- **Dr. Magda Osman**, Department of Psychology, Queen Mary University of London.

The Summer School is open to **20 graduate students** as well as **early career researchers** throughout Europe and beyond with a specialized interest in participation and mobilization during periods of crises in different fields of study, including political science, political



sociology, political communication, and political anthropology.



Applicants should email a cover letter (i.e. two pages) in which they explain how the Summer School would be beneficial to their research, a 500-word abstract of a

proposed academic paper, and a curriculum vitae to:

**[livewhat.summerschool@gmail.com](mailto:livewhat.summerschool@gmail.com).**

The deadline for applications is the 15th December 2014. Applicants will be informed about the outcome by email no later than 30th January. Those offered places must confirm their participation within 10 days, after which places may be offered to applicants on the reserve list. Participants to the Summer School will be required to write and submit a **7000-8000 word paper before 1st June**. The paper will be presented during the Summer School, providing a unique experience for discussion and feedback. English will be the working language and therefore students are expected to have a good command of written and

spoken English. The Summer School has no fees and will provide welcome drinks and a farewell dinner, academic materials, and the use of the library, computing and internet facilities. Travel and accommodation costs are not included, however the LIVEWHAT project can offer **five travel and accommodation grants** (€700 each) to selected participants. For more information about the application procedure and academic program, please contact the Summer School organizing committee at:

**[livewhat.summerschool@gmail.com](mailto:livewhat.summerschool@gmail.com)**

## LIVEWHAT events

### ECPR General Conference

Glasgow  
3-6 September 2014



**L**IVEWHAT researchers organized a Section on 'Citizens' Resilience in Times of Crisis' that provided evidence-based knowledge about citizens' resilience in times of economic crises with a view to identifying more effective policy responses to the negative consequences of such crises.

This section's aim was to create a dialogue as well as a cross-fertilization of finding between the research outputs of the project and the wider scholarly community, also with the aim of establishing a research network of scholars working on the topic. The section was supported by the Standing

Group on Participation and Mobilization. Panel 3 was part of the section on Forms of Political Violence. The section included **eight panels**:

#### **Panel 1: Changing interactions between publics and policies in times of crises**

This panel dealt with relational mechanisms at the meso-level beyond the consideration of policy change at the macro-level and variations of political behavior in time of crisis. The current crisis is often discussed in terms of its bad impact on a number of 'deviant' forms of political behavior, in particular, electoral abstention, political aphasia, or alternatively, affiliation to left/right extreme

movements and parties (and the recourse to extreme forms of political mobilization).

The increasing call for a 'normalized' political inclusion is also bringing about many calls for reforms in terms of labor market, social policy, access to citizenship, as well as specific policies targeting the most vulnerable groups.



Yet, relational dynamics stand out as a crucial filter between channels for political access, flow of resources, and identities on the one hand, and both the micro- (individuals) and the meso- (organizations) levels of political participation on the other hand.



Attention to these relational dynamics allows for assessing the roles and positions of a large number of different actors, including policy-makers, political elites, movements of citizens, vulnerable groups, organizations mobilizing on their behalf, as well as various civil society stakeholders. Going beyond an

approach that looks especially at associational membership as an 'individual' attribute that impacts upon the political participation of 'individuals', this panel thus examined relational dynamics across the public domain and the policy domain, considering different types of actors, and possibly, different policy and issue fields. The relationship between the domain of policy-making and the public domain of political intervention considers that these two domains are independent from each other, without the assumption that one necessarily affects the other.

Accordingly, the panel assessed the extent to which variations of political participation in times of crisis, both at the micro- and at the meso-level, can be linked to specific relational mechanisms, that filter the impact of more 'distant' explanans. This panel included: empirical papers dealing with both national and sub-national spaces, as well as theoretical papers questioning the nature of the relationship between policy-making and (sub) national publics in times of crisis.

## Panel 2: Political responsiveness in times of crisis

Protests against government policies are not rare, although at times of economic crisis there are probably more reasons for protests and therefore more contentious mobilization. Policy-makers are blamed if they do not propose plans to remedy citizens' difficulties and if they propose too radical austerity plans. The interesting question, especially in the contexts of democratic governments, is the authorities' responsiveness to such citizen protest. Do activists actually achieve what they demand (a new constitution, regulation, legislation

or a resignation of a politician) or do their efforts fail and governments continue with their initial policies?



More importantly, in what context do these processes take place? Can we say that at times of crisis there is more policy responsiveness because of insecurity? Or is the situation opposite and governments follow the requests of the international community rather than their own protesting citizens? Is short-term success what activists wanted and what are the unintended political consequences of contentious actions in times of crisis?



This panel included papers addressing such questions and systematically examined governments' long- and short-term responsiveness to citizens' demands in times of crisis, particularly demands expressed via non-electoral forms of actions. Comparative papers and case studies were presented, which helped to improve our understanding of political responsiveness.





### **Panel 3: Political violence in times of economic crisis**

The goal of this panel was to advance the understanding of political violence in times of economic crisis. We were concerned with addressing the following interrelated research questions:

How do violent repertoires of contention relate to the context of economic crisis? Does economic hardship provide incentives to the use of violent tactics? Which forms of political violence are most widely used in this context? How does the context of economic crisis impact on the level of socially tolerated violence and on individuals' availability to certain tactics? What kind of justification of political violence is pursued in times of economic crisis? Which political groups are more likely to turn to violence in this context? How do security forces react to political violence in time of crisis? The panel hosted papers coming from different disciplinary fields, in the attempt to bridge the scholarship on political violence with the empirical analysis of the social outcomes of the economic crisis.

### **Panel 4: Economic crises and social citizenship**

Economic crises, and particularly the current economic recession starting in 2008, have caused a far-reaching decrease in citizens' social security. As a result, changes occur in the two intertwined spheres of

citizens' political participation and welfare state functioning. Thus, there are at least three (new) forms of pressure to the welfare state: the need to adjust protective measures, responding to rising citizens' claims and the growing scarcity of financial resources.

The aim of the panel was to address the issues of welfare state changes from the citizenship perspective. It focused on changes in social rights, and particularly on the following questions: has the balance between social rights and social responsibilities shifted, and if so how? What changes regarding universalism, generosity and scope of risks covered occur in spite of crisis? How does the (re)defining of social entitlement shape the new boundaries of a political community?

For the purpose of the panel the broad notion of social citizenship was stressed, which includes formal social rights, but also informal practices, including the use of discretionary rules and street-level democracy on both national and local levels.

### **Panel 5: Economic crises and the rise of populism**

Economic turmoil has often been connected with the rise of populist political movements and parties. Unemployment and other personal and social consequences of economic crises have been found to favor votes for extreme-right parties and participation in populist movements. However, this is not a universal implication of economic downturns: even within the current European crisis we find a great deal of variation in terms of the rise of such parties and movements, across and within countries. Therefore, we are interested in understanding under what conditions economic

crises breed populism. The panel presented comparative research focused on the contextual and individual factors that condition this relationship, as well as case-studies that provided insights on the causal mechanisms that link crises with increased support for extreme right and populist parties and movements.



### **Panel 6: Citizens' political responses to economic crises: grievances or opportunities?**

Do economic crises lead to greater or lesser political participation? Do grievances lead to protest and other forms of unconventional political engagement? Or rather, does the experience of economic crisis lead people to exit the political sphere?





How does this vary for the conventional and unconventional political domains? And what about membership of SMOs and NGOs? Do findings apply to the general population or only to those groups most hard hit by the economic crisis? Grievances and relative deprivation have been increasingly dismissed as explanations for political protest. Instead, mobilization models emphasizing the importance of resources, political opportunities, and the construction of ideological frames for political solidarity have received more support.



May hardships stemming from economic crisis rather spur political engagement as recent waves of contention seem to suggest? What is the role of absolute and relative deprivation? In relation to which reference group(s) should the latter be understood?



To address these important questions for understanding political participation in times of crisis, this panel invited papers addressing the political responses of citizens to economic crises, and in particular the role of grievances and opportunities for explaining such

responses. Both individual-level and collective-level analyses could be proposed, insofar as they focus on political responses to economic crises. Empirical comparative studies were presented. Some further research questions that considered include: how do different types of European citizens construct economic crisis and how does this relate to their political participation? Do European citizens feel that the European Union's reactions to the economic crises have been adequate? Do they feel more or less confident in the European Union as a result and does this have any repercussions on their political activism? Are there important differences across social groups and countries in constructions of crisis and in citizens' political reactions? Is the role of grievances and/or opportunities more important in some contexts than others?

### **Panel 7: Resource-poor people in times of crisis**

The past decades have provided ample evidence for the ability of poorly resourced people (e.g., the unemployed, working poor, undocumented workers and migrants) to protest on their own behalf, thus overcoming their social and political marginalization. The economic and political crisis spreading throughout Europe since 2008 has not terminated these mobilizations, as illustrated by protest waves in the European South (e.g., Portugal, Spain and Greece).

Individual cases have received ample consideration (e.g., the Spanish 'Indignados'), but no consistent picture has been portrayed so far. This panel aimed at studying these protests in a more systematic manner by presenting, analyzing and discussing available

evidence from various mobilization waves. It proposed to address a number of relevant questions. On the one hand, it is necessary to assess the role of poorly resourced people in the protests against the hardships of the crisis and the policies advanced by the European Union and national governments to combat economic recession. How far were deprived people proactively involved in these protests? Where they able to stabilize their mobilization across time?

And are we speaking primarily of local events, or did protests develop a national and/or European range of activity? On the other hand, it is interesting to discuss conditions, mechanisms and consequences of these protests. Do times of crisis provide more favorable conditions for the mobilization of poorly resourced people by increasing the relevance of their claims, expanding the range of allies and improving public support, or do we also need to acknowledge new impediments?



What does the varying intensity of protests across the European Union tell us in comparative terms about beneficial or inhibitive conditions?



What can we learn about the conditions of a successful scale-shift of local protests of poorly resourced people towards the national and/or European level?

And can we say anything about the outcomes of these protests, i.e., does the mobilization of the people most severely hit by the economic crisis have any impact on public policies at local, national or European level?

The panel invited papers that addressed these questions and allowed for deepening empirical and theoretical knowledge. While the focus was on poorly resourced people, the panel was open to research about different constituencies, policy issues and countries. Comparative papers were presented, but also relevant case studies.



**Panel 8: Alternative forms of resilience in times of crisis**

The aim of this panel was to contribute to the study of collective responses to economic and political threats as they are reflected in alternative forms of economic and non-economic activities by citizens confronting hard economic times and falling rights, especially since the global financial crisis of 2008.

Expanding world-wide, collective responses to economic threats under neoliberal policies, tend to cover basic and urgent needs relate to food, shelter, health, childcare and education.



Alternative collective actions and initiatives of resilience include: solidarity-based exchanges and networks, cooperative structures, barter clubs and networks, credit unions, ethical banks, time banks, alternative social currency, citizens' self-help groups, presumption practices, social enterprises, and others.

Related studies center on innovative practices (e.g. *clubes de trueque*)

which sprang up during the economic crisis in Argentina and other Latin America regions.

Nevertheless, similar initiatives have developed in Europe before and after the crisis of 2008 – e.g. the SOL social currency Project in France; regional currencies supported by NGOs in Germany aiming to support local economies; the flourishing of local currencies and barter networks in Greece and Spain; the alternative cashless production and exchange systems Local Exchange Trading Systems (LETS) in the UK; and, ethical banks promoting ethical commitment, ideology and principles.



These alternative practices attest to a new kind of politics through the creation of bottom-up participatory initiatives promoting a 'solidarity economy', as seen in countries confronting crises in the past. Papers addressing such alternative forms of resilience at a theoretical, comparative, or empirical level were presented.



## Interviews with the LIVEWHAT panel chairs at ECPR Conference

**W**e asked them.....What is your impression of the papers and

*the research presented on your panel? What in your view were the most important issues, insights or findings discussed? What new*

*perspectives have the papers presented brought into the work of the LIVEWHAT team?*

**Here is what they told us:**

**Panel Chair**  
**JORDI MUÑOZ**  
(Autonomous University of Barcelona)



### **Panel 5: Economic crises and the rise of populism**

**Jordi Muñoz:** "The papers presented at the panel on Economic Crises and the Rise of Populism constitute a good example of the attention that the discipline is currently paying to the various effects of the crisis on citizens' political attitudes and behavior. What is interesting is that the 'effects of the crisis' as a research theme interests scholars from different sub-disciplines and methodological perspectives. The papers presented at the panel constitute a good example of such a diversity that enriches our perspective on the multiple ramifications of such a complex process. Regarding the specific topic of the panel, the papers presented evidence the different

conceptions and uses of the term populism. Two papers dealt with anti-immigrant prejudice, one with right wing extremist attitudes and two more with wider, and perhaps more classical conception of populism that includes different understandings around a common core based on the binary and sharp distinction between a corrupted elite and 'the people'. In my view the most important issues discussed has to do with the analysis of the effect of the crisis on prejudice: aggregate-level macroeconomic indicators tend to have little or no effects on the levels of prejudice. However, it seems that before we rule out the hypothesis that the economic crisis has an effect on prejudice we should work more on the conceptualization of the crisis and on the measurement of such a complex phenomenon. A theoretical reflection on the socially constructed nature of the crisis might help guide the empirical work. Regarding the debate on populism conceived more broadly, the main insight of the workshop was the outline of a research agenda on the differences of various movements and attitudes that might fall under the same conceptual umbrella. There is ample room for an empirically-informed debate on whether populism as a wide-reaching concept is useful, especially within the framework of the study of citizens reactions to the

crisis. The papers presented brought new perspectives into our work in the LIVEWHAT project. These have to do particularly with the introduction of the social-psychological perspective, as well as the systematic comparison between opposed but simultaneous movements that claim to respond to the crisis are two extremely useful perspectives that can enrich the project."

**Panel Chair**  
**KATRIN UBA**  
(Uppsala University)



### **Panel 2: Political responsiveness in times of crisis**

**Katrin Uba:** "The papers were really interesting, particularly the ones on that focused directly on economic crisis and natural disasters (other type of crisis).



However, none of the papers was exactly about the topic of the panel i.e. the consequences of crisis and this was a pity.

Papers themselves had varying quality and level of ambitions, but all of them could be developed further for interesting and good research papers or publishable articles. Also, as papers were every different it is hard to have a unified issue to mention. Probably, the most interesting discussions were about the used methods - how to improve the analysis for better demonstrating causal relationships. But also, the connections to the every-day politics (e.g., reforms in Spain). Concerning the new perspectives the papers have brought into our work in LIVEWHAT, it should be mentioned that we learned about specific cases, as well as discussed the theoretical importance of crisis-like events (including natural disasters). It is interesting to note that many issues discussed in the frame of LIVEWHAT could also be found in the studies on natural disasters."

**Panel Chair**  
**LUKE TEMPLE**  
(University of Sheffield)



**Panel 6: Citizens' political responses to economic crises: Grievances or opportunities?**

**Luke Temple:** "The papers presented provided illuminating

insights into numerous issues of political and citizen action, supported by robust analysis. Much of the research also utilized innovative techniques to push the field forward methodologically. In this regard particular mention should be made of a paper which explored Twitter data using state-of-the-art research methods to draw on large amounts of data to examine the attitudes of the population expressed in real time. Such work has much to say on how more politically challenging and controversial discourses adopted by social movements generate less acceptance than those that prime social problems related to 'bread and butter issues'. There was also a paper that utilized a unique survey dataset collected in France to look at unemployed youth and participation. The importance of this paper lay in its discovery of different explanators of political contention and political participation, and the study seeks to address these issues further through a comparative analysis. Two papers in the panel clearly complemented each other. These papers compared political participation on a large-scale, adding to the literature on dissatisfied democrats and individualized participation. The one paper concluded that very low-resource participation survived the crisis, and in fact increased. The other paper noted that indeed, resources play a large role in identified likely participants, although this is less clear with riskier participation such as striking or occupying buildings. Research was also presented on how to reconceptualize economic nationalism as an attitude at the individual level suggesting that underlying xenophobic attitudes are more important than economic considerations in explaining this nationalistic understanding. All the papers are helpful in enriching the

research perspectives of LIVEWHAT, in particular their insights will be useful in the latter stages of our analysis when we look at participation and alternative forms of resistance. They also offer a cautionary tale by highlighting how difficult it is to isolate the effects of the crisis on the behavior of citizens – this is something the research of LIVEWHAT consistently grapples with and hopes to tackle."

**Panel Chair**  
**LORENZO BOSI**  
(European University Institute)



**Panel 3: Political violence in times of economic crisis**

**Lorenzo Bosi:** "Four papers were presented in our panel. They were all empirically reach and fitting very well with the topic of the panel. The same cannot be said at the analytical level, where more work seemed to be needed for two papers. At the same time, it should be stressed that the relation between political violence and economic crises is an old topic in the literature. All the papers seemed to agree that there was not a direct connection between the two. However the economic crisis has been used by actors adopting violent repertoires as a way of justifying this. New insights raised by the papers were presented. For instance, violent repertoires can be quite common in periods of crises and anyway easily justified".

**Panel Chair**  
**MARIA KOUSIS**  
 (University of Crete)



**Panel 8: Alternative forms of resilience in times of crisis**

**Maria Kousis:** "The five papers that were presented at Panel 8, constitute a promising set given their fresh data and novel perspectives on alternative ways of dealing with the recent economic crisis. They are especially useful and enlightening in our preparation of the forthcoming WP6 (involving a study on alternative forms of resilience) by pointing to a diverse set of issues, approaches and methodological tools for the study of this complex and intricate set of alternative social practices. It should not come as a surprise that all of the papers address issues of alternative economic and non-economic activities in the southern Eurozone areas since these are the areas that were harder affected by the impacts of more austere social and economic policies. ....The most important and general finding is that, as seen in similar situations of the past, there has been a rapid increase in new, alternative and solidarity-based initiatives and structures to deal with daily needs related to housing, food, health, clothing, education and other necessities across communities in Greece, Spain and Italy, since the crisis. Such alternative resilience

actions reflect the emergence of a new kind of politics through a bottom-up response to harsh austerity policies and measures implemented at the national level, but also involving transnational agencies. One revealing finding of the five papers is that alternative forms of resilience do not appear in communities facing the most acute economic and survival problems, but in communities which are more socially resourceful. This is especially the case of Catalonia, Spain. Moreover, from the papers that were presented new perspectives have emerged that could be useful to our work within LIVEWHAT such as novel analytical framework that combines social movement and political consumerism theories, and new data on the new frames individuals use to mobilize".

**Feedback from latest Consortium meetings**

**L**IVEWHAT 2nd Consortium meeting was conducted on 2nd September 2014 in Glasgow. The meeting was organized by the UK partner – University of Sheffield at the premises of the University of Glasgow.



The main discussions focused on the following research work packages of the project:

Workpackage 2 – Policy Responses to Crises. WP2 involves a comparative assessment of national policy responses to crises through interviews with policy-makers and the study of secondary sources.

Specific outputs include: guidelines for the analysis of policy documents defining the kinds of documents to be consulted and how they will be analyzed; a set of guidelines for the interviews with key informants defining the key informants to be interviewed, the number of interviews, and the content of the interviews; a report on legal analysis of rights depletion; an integrated report on policy responses to crises, and; a report summarizing the main findings of WP2 consisting of a comparative assessment of policy responses to crises based on national reports.

Workpackage 3 – Collective Responses to Crises in the Public Domain. WP3 involves a political claims analysis to assess the claims put forward by the actors intervening in public debates, the issues they address, their policy positions, and the frames they advance. Specific outputs include: a codebook for coding collective responses to crises in the public domain; a codebook for the political claims analysis including instructions concerning the definition, sampling, and coding of claims and the variables and categories to be used in the coding; an integrated report on collective responses to crises in the public domain, and; a report summarizing the main findings of WP3 consisting of a comparative assessment of collective responses to crises in the public domain based on national reports.

At the Glasgow meeting the workpackage leaders and members of the national teams gave presentations on the work conducted since the start of the project and discussed methodological issues and steps ahead.



**LIVEWHAT 3rd Consortium meeting** took place on 6th-7th November 2014 in Paris. The meeting was hosted by the French partner – CEVIPOF – at the premises of the *Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques* (Sciences Po). The national teams discussed the questionnaire to conduct a study on individual perceptions, evaluations and responses to crises by private citizens under Workpackage 4 – Individual Responses to Crises.



WP4 involves a survey on national representative samples of the general population in each of the

countries studied by the project. Specific outputs of WP4 include: a questionnaire for the analysis of individual responses to crises; a questionnaire for the population survey (English version); an integrated report on individual responses to crises, and; a report summarizing the main findings of WP4 consisting of a comparative assessment of individual responses to crises based on national reports.

## Contact Us

**LIVEWHAT Consortium** includes nine European Universities across Europe. Project Coordinator is the University of Geneva (Switzerland).

The Consortium Partners are: **European University Institute** (Italy); **Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques** (France); **University of Crete** (Greece); **Autonomous University of Barcelona** (Spain); **University of Sheffield** (United Kingdom); **University of Siegen** (Germany); **University of Warsaw** (Poland); **Uppsala University** (Sweden).

For questions about the project, you may contact the Project Coordinator, **Professor Marco Giugni**, Director of the Institute of Citizenship Studies (InCite), University of Geneva.

**Email: [Marco.Giugni@unige.ch](mailto:Marco.Giugni@unige.ch)**



## PROJECT INFORMATION:

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