



PROMOTIONSKOLLEG GLOBAL SOCIAL POLICIES AND GOVERNANCE

In cooperation with the doctoral program Global Social Policies and Governance at the University of Kassel, the Heinrich Böll Foundation and the Hans Böckler Foundation are offering a total of **nine doctoral scholarships** – five of them from the Heinrich Böll Foundation – with the research focus

North-South Relations from a Socio-ecological Perspective

National and international responses to the global financial crisis and climate change have highlighted the challenges facing political parties and civil society forces pursuing policies of social equality and ecological sustainability. Despite the disastrous consequences of these global dynamics for broad strata of the population, there has so far been only a gradual change of direction with little willingness to curb global capital or to move away from energy-intensive growth regimes. This policy of maintaining the status quo is blocking development in the Global South, since it channels resources from countries lacking financial capital to the financial centres of the North; at the same time, by failing to halt climate change it also threatens the living conditions of a large number of human beings.

The social, ecological and economic dimensions of these crisis phenomena are linked with one another in many different ways and can no longer be tackled in isolation. The impact of climate change on both a global and local scale is making existing social dislocation worse, a situation highlighted at the local level in attempts to combat rural poverty. Despite accelerating processes of urbanisation, poverty still has a rural face in many countries of the Global South, and reducing poverty here is inextricably linked with access rights to material resources such as land and water and to immaterial goods such as education and health. Globalisation has increased the links between one part of the world and another. Thus employees in the North, for example, may benefit in their role as consumers from the precarious employment conditions in the South, while in their role as producers the pressure of competition from low-wage countries forces them to accept a deterioration in their own working conditions. Production locations in the South, on the other hand, stand in some cases to gain from the high environmental standards in the North, while tacitly accepting the long-term destruction of their natural means of subsistence together with the social implications of this.

Despite the adoption of the guiding principle of sustainable development in Rio in 1992, there has so far been no significant integration of social, environmental and economic policy. There are many reasons why these three areas of policy are continuing to be pursued separately, and the dominance of economic interests is only one of them. Social research,

too, has continued to follow a rather narrow approach, so far failing to develop any integrated concepts. Research analysing social, ecological and economic processes in relation to one another has tended to be the exception. Yet if we are to develop a stronger research and policy focus on the opportunities for and obstacles to designing an internationally effective regulatory framework for social and environmental policy, traditional dualistic ways of looking at things must give way to socio-ecological approaches to research. This should also include a greater focus on asymmetries between the North and the South. Boomerang effects like the pressure of economic competition, migration, the dismantling of the welfare state, climate change, food crises and global inequalities are, after all, increasingly becoming the North's problem as well and have come to constitute a central conflict axis in the international system. For all these reasons, socio-ecological research and North-South relations – i.e., economic, social, political, cultural and resource-related relations between the industrialised nations and the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America – form the central focus of this doctoral program.

Research and policy face a particular difficulty here, however, for in many areas our knowledge about the policy patterns and socio-cultural and socio-ecological constellations in the countries of the South is insufficient. In addition, there is enormous variation among these countries: industrialising states like South Korea constitute one end of the spectrum, while at the other we find countries like Somalia that apparently do not even have a central state authority. Give this broad range – which applies to civil society actors as well – it would seem advisable to develop pluralistic methodological and theoretical approaches and strategies with which to analyse and address problems. Generally speaking the countries of the South are not viewed in terms of their particularities – of how they differ from the others – but instead are evaluated using OECD standards and experience and are hence quite often disqualified as deficient or underdeveloped. Yet without a more profound understanding of these societies based on knowledge of their history, any attempts to establish robust international cooperation models or effective international standards are unlikely to be successful.

In order to understand the formal and informal mechanisms that stand in the way of raising social and environmental standards, we need an analytical framework that looks for the connections between local, (trans-) national or global institutions, regulatory frameworks and conditions. For only by taking into account the interaction between the different levels of change processes can we grasp why opportunities for action open up or close and how changes in global parameters interact with local contexts. Environmental and social policies are both historically and locally embedded and increasingly couched in transnational terms. Both constitute a challenge to the existing analytical approaches of social and political science.

For these reasons we need to study the local particularities of the countries and regions of the South in politically relevant fields of social and environmental policy while at the same time assessing organisational perspectives for civil society actors on both the local and the transnational and international levels. In addition, we need to examine the chances for and obstacles to national and regional implementation of social and environmental policy and of international standards in the South.

The doctoral program is therefore principally concerned with two dimensions: Firstly, it seeks to arrive at a better analysis and understanding of the starting points and specific conditions for enacting social and environmental policy in the countries and regions of the South. Secondly, it aims to assess whether and how it might be possible via political steering in the field of social and environmental policy to treat the repercussions of structural changes in the international community and the associated global changes for both the OECD and the countries of the South interdependently.

The program is interdisciplinary and geared particularly towards social scientists. It also includes a more general academic program that is obligatory for all students in the doctoral program.

Scholarship holders will be allocated space to work at the university. They are therefore advised to base themselves in or near Kassel.

In addition the Heinrich Böll Foundation offers all scholarship holders a broad program of events in which they are expected to take a lively and active interest. In addition the Scholarship Department arranges contact between scholarship holders and the foundation's specialist units.

Please submit your application to the Heinrich Böll Foundation. The cover of the application should be marked (see www.boell.de/studienwerk): **Application for the doctoral study program "Global Social Policies and Governance" / Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung**. An information sheet giving a detailed description of the conditions for application of the Heinrich Böll Foundation as well as a list of documentation to be submitted together with the application can be found on the website of the Heinrich Böll Foundation Scholarship Department at www.boell.de/studienwerk. Applicants will be selected according to the general rules of procedure and the funding criteria of the Scholarship Department.

We offer a monthly scholarship of € 1,150. In some cases students may be eligible for a family and childcare supplement and/or for funding to cover the costs of living abroad, available upon application.

The deadline for applications is **1 September 2010**; the funding period is expected to commence on **1 April 2011**.

An information event for interested applicants will be held in Kassel on 1 July 2010. For further information please visit <http://www.social-globalization.uni-kassel.de/aktuelles.php>

Please direct any questions about the content of the doctoral program to the director of the program Professor Burchardt, who is also responsible for issuing expert evaluations. Please contact him at:

Prof. Dr. Hans-Jürgen Burchardt
(www.international.uni-kassel.de)

Detailed information on the doctoral program (concept, cooperation partners etc.) can be found at www.boell.de/studienwerk and at <http://www.social-globalization.uni-kassel.de/aktuelles.php>

Questions concerning procedure or application formalities should be addressed to:

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We look forward to receiving your application!