



Call for Abstracts:

The Causes and Consequences of Private Governance: The Changing Roles of State and Private Actors
6 – 7 November, 2014 in Mannheim, Germany

A conference hosted by the Mannheim Centre for European Social Research (MZES)

www.mzes.uni-mannheim.de

and co-sponsored by European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST) within the Action
IS1309 “Innovations in Climate Governance: Sources, Patterns and Effects (INO GOV)”

http://www.cost.eu/domains_actions/isch/Actions/IS1309

Conference organizers: Sebastian Koos, Jennifer Shore, and Jale Tosun

Overview:

The two-day conference will serve as a platform for an interdisciplinary exchange on the causes and consequences of private governance, bringing together international scholars from multiple academic fields. We seek a variety of contributions for the workshop: First, we will examine works that highlight the emergence and diffusion of private governance systems. Second, we turn to the effects of private governance, both for societies, but also for businesses, standards organizations, and governments. We welcome both theoretical and empirical contributions. Although the study of private governance is by no means a new area of investigation, the research field remains quite fragmented in terms of both its objects of interest and disciplinary foci. Against this background, the workshop pursues a twofold goal: 1) to take stock of the large volumes of research on the topic of private governance and 2) to systematically map out the road ahead in order to identify which questions remain unanswered and where the new frontiers lie. We are especially but not exclusively interested in contributions that shed light on private governance in the fields of environmental protection and climate change, labour standards, and product quality and safety.

Organization:

Abstracts are to be submitted by **September 1st, 2014** to privategovernance2014@gmail.com. They should comprise around 500 words and clearly describe the theoretical arguments and/or data and method(s) used. Decisions and invitations will be sent within three weeks of the abstract deadline. Completed papers are to be submitted by October 15th, 2014.

Funding and publication:

Travel expenses and accommodation for paper presenters will be covered by the MZES or by INO GOV. We aim to publish the key insights from the conference in a special issue with a reputable field journal. Please indicate upon abstract submission whether your paper would be available for publication.

Concept and focus of the workshop:

To overcome what some have called the “global governance gap”, the past decades have witnessed an increase in private forms of governance. Civil regulation or business self-regulation refers to any



type of social and environmental and climate-related standards or practices voluntarily adopted by businesses. These standards are frequently determined by NGOs, governments, industry associations, or the firms themselves. Despite the rise in and diversification of private governance measures, their origins, interactions, and outcomes have only been studied selectively.

The first half of the conference will examine work dealing with the origins and diffusion of private governance, focusing on diverse groups of actors, institutions, but also social changes. What sort of timeline can we observe for private innovations to spread across industries and sectors? Can we observe different generations of private governance instruments? Which factors facilitate or impede the emergence and diffusion of various types of private governance? How do public and private actors share the work load of governing the commons?

On the second day, we will turn our attention to the effects of private governance. We are particularly interested in studies that address whether the implementation of standards produced the expected outcomes as well as how implementation has affected different groups of actors. Can private governance solve public goods problems? Under which conditions do we witness behavioral and attitudinal changes on the part of consumers?