

Lund University | Department of Sociology of Law



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*Faculty of Social Sciences
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FROM ECONOMIC TO POLITICAL INFORMALITY: EXPLORING THE LINK BETWEEN SHADOW PRACTICES, POLICY MAKING AND DEVELOPMENT

International Workshop

SEPTEMBER, 17-19

Lund University, Sweden

Rationale of the workshop

Since initial conceptualization, a large stream of research on informality (also known as informal sector, gray or shadow economy) maintained that the phenomenon would soon disappear as an effect of economic modernization (Lewis 1954, 1959). Yet, further studies acknowledged the resilience of a robust informal sector able to outlive market reforms (Hart 1973), a fact that also gained the attention of the International Labour Organization (1972, 1973).

Since then, the economic significance of informality has been largely acknowledged. In 2009, estimates pointed at two-third of the global working population (1.8 billion) active in the informal sector (Jütting and Laiglesia, 2009). In the EU, the informal economy is estimated to amount to approximately 18.4 per cent of the national GDP, but these figures are likely to be much higher when transitional states, including the post-Soviet regions with peaks of 40 and 60 percent, are taken into account (Schneider 2012, 2013). It is not a case, in fact, that post-socialist spaces are the places where research on informality has been most coordinated (Giordano & Hayoz 2014; Makovicky & Henig 2014; Morris & Polese 2014, 2015; Polese et al. 2018). These studies explore the short-term or one-time effects of informal transactions (Patico, 2002, Polese 2008), the long-term impact and systemic nature of informal practices (Ledeneva, 2009; Yang, 2002), or the long-term dependency relationships that informality generates (Rivkin-Fish, 2005).

Building on, and engaging with the above debates, our workshop has a three-fold goal. First, it will expand the scope of theoretical research on informality beyond its economic understanding at the national level, something pointed out in the above studies by Dixit, Helmke and Levitsky and Stone as something necessary, but not yet systematically approached. We will look at the role of informal practices in the redefinition and renegotiation of business environments and how entrance and exit barriers are created, causing the reversal that state-led measures were intended to bring about. Second, it will apply this interpretative framework to look at the way policy making, and development policies, are affected by informality in the transitional world. This will eventually allow us to engage with worldwide debates in a comparative perspective. Our starting point is, indeed, the post-socialist region, where informality has been widely studied. However, with this workshop we intend to upscale the scope of our inquiry to Southeast Asia, Africa, Latin America. Third, inasmuch as this has been timidly attempted so far. Our event represents a chances to shed the basis and the social capital to establish and develop a research group on informality that can work together to funding applications and publication projects as outlined below.

17 September

12.30-13.20 Lunch

(Eden building: room 129)

Welcome and introduction: Matthias Baier, Rustamjon Urinboyev, Abel Polese

13.30 – 15.00 PANEL 1

Chair: Ainoura

Sagynbaeva

Discussant: Christopher Swader

Steven Sampson (Lund University)

Stasi-nordic style? Informing on cheating neighbors in Denmark and Sweden

Borjan Gjuzelov (Queen Mary University of London)

Between Written and Unwritten Rules: Informality in the Macedonian Judiciary.

Anna Danielsson (Swedish Defence University)

Informal Economies and Power.

Denys Gorbach (Sciences Po Paris)

The crisis of hegemonic informality in Ukraine: from the shopfloor to the national scale.

15.00 – 15.30 Networking break (with coffee)

(Eden building: Lecture hall)

15.30 – 17.00 PANEL 2

Chair: Liga Rudzite

Discussant: Arnis Sauka

Petr Danek (Masaryk University) and **Petr Jehlicka** (Open University)

Beyond coping strategy: Central European informal food economies as future-oriented and transformation-enabling practices.

Francesco Bagnardi (European University Institute)

Global production networks and the reproduction of informalized labour processes in Europe's periphery.

Milda Malling (Södertörns University)

Formal and informal interactions between journalists and their political sources in Sweden and Lithuania.

Aviv Kruglanski (University of Hull)

Wild Yeast Economies: ecological spontaneity in alternative organizing.

**17.00 – 18.00 Keynote
speech**
**Moderator: Steven
Sampson**

Alena Ledeneva (University College London)
*Patterns of Informality: The Ambivalence of Social, Economic and
Political in the Global Informality Project.*

19.00 Dinner

18 September

**8.30 – 9.30 Scopus Diaries breakfast. Topic of the day: *why academics publish 10
articles per year when one is enough?* (Eden building: room 129-room)**

9.30 – 11.00 PANEL 3

Chair: Abel Polese
**Discussant: Alessandra
Russo**

Liga Rudzite (Tallinn Technical University)
*Managing to succeed: Exploring the informal development cooperation
practices in Kyrgyzstan.*

Gian Marco Moise (Dublin City University)
Informality in the Kazakh Oil Industry.

Olga Lysa (Kyiv International Institute of Sociology)
Results of the Shadow Economy Survey in Ukraine.

Ainoura Sagynbaeva (SIAR research&consulting)
Results of the Shadow Economy Survey in Kyrgyzstan.

Elena Druica (University of Bucharest)
State capacity and tolerance towards tax evasion.

11.00 – 11.30 Networking break

11.30 – 13.00 PANEL 4

**Chair: Francesco
Bagnardi**
Discussant: Tim Shaw

Samuel Rogers (University of Bristol)
*Fidesz, the state-subsumption of domestic business and prebendalism
going global.*

Sophie Russo (Sciences Po Paris)

Encroaching upon the law: street-level bureaucrats and traders' illegal occupation of public land in Karachi's bazaar.

Arnost Novak (Charles University in Prague)

Risks and limits of informality: the case of the Autonomous social centre Klinika in Prague.

Christal Spel (University of South Africa)

The bane of informality: Why informality is the old and new normal in Africa's institutions.

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch

14.00 – 15.30 PANEL 5

Chair: Agnieszka Kubal

Discussant: Roman

Sigov

Paul Stacey (Roskilde University)

The political economy of illegally extracted gold in Ghana.

Cinzia Losavio (University of Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne)

Rethinking internal migration and urban development through an integrated definition of informality: the case of Zhuhai (Guangdong).

Sam Wong (University College Roosevelt)

Gendering the 'elite capture-power-informality' nexus.

William Kelly (Rutgers University)

"We had the bitter experience of lamenting the loss of a child": Housing, Informality, and Everyday Life in Camagüey, Cuba, 1976-1980.

15.30 – 16.00 Networking break

16.00 – 17.30 PANEL 6

Chair: Tatsiana Prannik

Discussant: William

Kelly

Agnieszka Kubal (University College London)

Greasing the wheels of asylum system in Russia: informality as an opportunity.

Cynthia Boruchowicz (University of Maryland)

Market Responses to Formalization Processes: Incentivizing the Demand for Formal Domestic Workers in Argentina.

Timothy M Shaw (University of Massachusetts Boston, Carleton university, University of Ottawa)

Ubiquitous informality & high technology in African PE in 2020: towards a fourth industrial revolution and/ or fragile states?

Daniel Kashnitsky (Higher School of Economics)

Labor Migrants in Russia: claiming their right to health tangled in the web of legal uncertainty.

17.30 – 18.15 Book Launch: Governance Beyond the Law: The Immoral the Illegal The Criminal (Palgrave 2019)

Abel Polese and Alessandra Russo (Sciences Po Bordeaux)

Moderates: Tim Shaw

19.00 Dinner

19 September

8.30 – 9.30 Scopus Diaries breakfast: What are your favorite strategies to get published? *(Eden building: Room 129)*

9.30 – 11.00 PANEL 7

Chair: Olga Lysa

Moderator: Gian Marco

Moise

Somita Sabeti (Migration Research Center (MiReKoc) of Koç university in Istanbul)

Between Liminality and Belonging - mapping the experiences of Afghan young adults 'in transit' in Istanbul.

İlknur Yiğit Yazğan (Boğaziçi University)

Urban Integration of Irregular Afghan Migrants in İstanbul: Yeni Mahalle Case.

Maria Sakaeva (Ukhta State Technical University Komi Republic)

Everyday Legality among Small Entrepreneurs: How Rising State Regulation Influences Mobilisation of Law in Russia.

Mirzokhid Karshiev (University of Helsinki)
Informality and Administrative Transformations in Uzbekistan.

11.00 – 11.30 Farewell / Overview of future plans