

Salzburger Anstöße – Impulses from Salzburg International Conference, Salzburg

May 18-21 2009
ifz – International Research Centre
Edith-Stein-Haus
Mönchsberg 2a
5020 Salzburg

Call for Papers: Resilience and Unemployment

We invite you to participate in the inter-disciplinary conference on “Resilience and Unemployment” that will be hosted by the Center for Ethics and Poverty Research (University of Salzburg) and the Salzburg Ethics Initiative.

It is the fourth year that the Center for Ethics and Poverty Research and the ifz – International Research Centre will be organizing an international gathering of around 30 young scholars. They will exchange new ideas, discuss good practices, and develop creative suggestions and concrete recommendations. We will meet in groups organized around topical clusters, and we will have plenary sessions of experts invited to stimulate discussion. We will meet with academics and practitioners working in this area, and there will be opportunities to get to know colleagues from other countries and diverse disciplines.

The conference will be organized as an exchange of creative ideas rather than the reading of papers. In this context, we are requesting that you develop alternatives to traditional academic papers, and present creative ideas in response to the given questions within one of the three clusters. Your presentation can be about a current or historical “good practice” or “best example” based on your experience or academic expertise. It can be a provocative new idea, a concrete suggestion, or it can be one single point you would like to make.

Cluster 1: Micro-level: The resilient unemployed

The most recent wave of resilience research is “characterized by a focus on multilevel analysis and the dynamics of adaptation and change. Resilience is defined as a broad systems construct, referring to the capacity of dynamic systems to withstand or recover from significant disturbances” (Ann S. Masten, *Development and Psychopathology*, Vol. 19, 2007). One of these observable dynamic systems is the human individual. Although driven jointly by internal and external factors, we want to focus discussion on the individual, eclipsing external factors as much as possible. Successful ways of handling difficult situations have formed the ground of resilience-research for the last decades, some of them with promising results. (Imminent) Unemployment is a specifically critical situation and bears multitudinous ways of reaction. At the Salzburger Anstöße 2010 we will address questions concerning people in this particular situation:

1. What personal qualities predict resilience among unemployed people?
2. What difference does it make if subgroups such as youth, 45+, asylum seekers, and

gender are considered?

3. How could resilient qualities be strengthened even before the crisis occurs? What therapeutic- and training programs might help? Where can motivational forces come from? How might these promote resilience?

Cluster 2: Meso-level: Resilient Enterprise

The term ‘resilience’ – mostly used on an individual or personal level – can also be applied to a formal, structural, organizational, and thus to a business level. Yossi Sheffi demonstrates this in his book *The Resilient Enterprise* where two aspects can be distinguished: lowering a business’s vulnerability (anticipatory resilience) and increasing a business’s ability to bounce back after a crisis (crisis management resilience) such as natural disasters, economic crises, terrorist activities, or financial scandals. This can mainly be achieved by building in redundancy and flexibility.

Within this cluster we want to focus on the following questions:

1. What is the role of corporate culture in resilience? What is the “right” corporate culture to create a resilient enterprise? Which values/value systems are crucial within a business philosophy to become resilient? How can these values be implemented and realized?
2. How are leadership skills connected to resilient supply chain management? What leadership styles support business resilience? How is individual resilience connected to business resilience?
3. Can a resilient enterprise be socially responsible? In what way is the co-determination right of the works council connected to a business’s resilience? How important is the structure of employment relationships (e.g. temporary work) on a business’s resilience?

Cluster 3: Macro-level: Political framework for a resilient society

The term “resilience” can also be applied to society as a whole. Mass unemployment can be understood as a societal crisis, as it leads to poverty of large number of people or affects special social groups that are confronted with social exclusion as a consequence. Dynamics and decisions during crises are difficult for the individual to understand. Human beings, who are affected by unemployment, feel powerless in the face of macro-level developments that they cannot control. With respect to the topic “resilience and unemployment” we would like to draw attention to the dimensions that the individual is able to control, or at least to those that can be influenced within the local and regional living environment.

Within this cluster we are going to focus on the following questions:

1. What kind of political measures in general (strategies, activities...) would be useful to support the resilience of unemployed? Is it possible to single out good-practice-models in Europe concerning measures to support or enhance the resilience of unemployed people?
2. How is it possible to combine bottom-up or informal strategies with already established unemployment policy frameworks (e.g. “active labour market policies”) and institutions? What kinds of policy advice can be formulated in the light of empirical cases/findings/evaluations?
3. In social welfare states, unemployment benefit is linked with certain terms and conditions, e.g. with the mobility of labour. What kind of conditions would strengthen

the resilience of the unemployed and labour forces?

500 word abstracts (papers, work-in-progress or reports) should be submitted by 15th January 2010. They should be in Word, RTF, or OpenDocument formats. If an abstract is accepted for the conference, you are invited to register (fee: 50 Euro) until 15th February 2010.

We will organize the incoming ideas and prepare a document that you will receive by the end of March 2010. On the basis of this document we will have our intensive exchange in Salzburg in May 2010. A full draft paper should be submitted after the conference by 1st July 2010. The proceedings of the conference will be published.

We would be happy if you could warm up to this new conference format. We expect the workshop with its unique format to be an exciting and stimulating experience for all people involved. The topic of “unemployment” has sadly gained new prominence with the recent international financial crisis. Also here in Salzburg, people suffer from the consequences, as there have been job losses. That is why we are interested in **solutions rather than problems**, and will attempt to organize the transfer of knowledge to society, politics, and the economy. This is the main challenge we face, and why we need creative and fresh minds.

We are happy to have you in Salzburg, and will organize your stay and carry the costs for board and lodging. We will also organize a cultural program around the workshop to make your visit more enjoyable

If you have any questions, please contact the coordinator of the conference, Dr. Nadja Lobner, at: nadja.maria.lobner@sbg.ac.at. She will be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

We are looking forward to welcoming you in Salzburg.

With best wishes,

Prof. DDDr. Clemens Sedmak
Director

Prof. Dr. Otto Neumaier
Vice-Director

Dr. Nadja Lobner
Coordinator

Center for Ethics and Poverty Research
University of Salzburg