

Call for Abstracts / Save the Date

FIS-Forum with the Social Policy Biennale 2024: Lost in Social Policy? Research for an integrated welfare state

**06. – 08.11. 2024 / BERLIN,
GLS-Campus**

As a research and networking institute, DIFIS is committed to strengthening social policy research in Germany, initiating interdisciplinary research on future challenges for the welfare state and facilitating networking between researchers and practitioners. The annual FIS Forum serves as a central dialogue platform for promoting knowledge transfer both within the scientific community and also between researchers, policy-makers and practitioners. This year, the FIS Forum will again take place together with the Social Policy Biennale which focuses on international social policy discourses.

Conference Theme

Social policy today is characterized by rapid changes in individual fields, pressure on public administration and a plethora of social benefits and social infrastructures that are difficult to navigate for those entitled to them. The resulting fragmentation of social policy as well as the interdependencies in provision and the problems of coordination between different policy areas are increasingly seen as a challenge for adequate service provision and for the overall acceptance of the welfare state. Social policy research has certainly addressed these issues and presented work on interdepartmental and cross-level cooperation in policy formulation, user-friendly administrative structures, digitalization, and coordination management – mostly for selected areas of social policy or specific coordination problems. However, there is still a lack of overarching concepts on how to organize social policy in a way that promotes participation and ensures customized and easier access to benefits, services and infrastructure for citizens and at the same time, simplifies administrative processes and improves cooperation between the many actors involved in social policy.

Against this background, this year's FIS Forum and Social Policy Biennale invite research inputs aimed at designing better-integrated social policy – ensuring not only adequate service provision but also enhancing cooperation and accessibility from the perspectives of practitioners, policy-makers, citizens, and administrators.

Abstracts related to the thematic focus of the FIS Forum and Social Policy Biennale can be submitted in one of the following formats:

- Individual contributions to the to the panels offered by DIFIS Research Fields and DIFIS Issue Networks **(1)**,
- Panels (with up to four presentations, open or closed that align this year's thematic focus **(2)**,
- Panels or contributions accentuating international comparison in relation to the thematic focus for the Social Policy Biennale **(3)** and
- Individual contributions *outside* the thematic focus **(4)**

(1) Each of the six DIFIS Research Fields and three Issue Networks will offer a panel in line with the thematic focus of the conference. We welcome submissions to one of the following panels:

Research Field 1 Social policy and ecological sustainability

In the context of the newly emerging social-ecological risks, effective environmental policy can be understood as preventive social policy. However, the developmental scenarios that inform social and environmental policy remain unclear. In practical terms, the question arises: what socially equitable climate measures and new institutions can strengthen coordination between these two policy fields. We welcome contributions that engage with these aspects.

Research Field 2 Challenges of the modern world of work for shaping social security

The transformation of work poses new challenges for linking or integrating social and economic policy, namely ensuring social security while supporting the transformation of the economy and work. We invite presentations that address the challenges and solutions, with a primary focus on digitalization and decarbonization. These aspects can be explored at the sectoral or company level and/or in an international context, discussing the heterogeneity or homogeneity of the processes examined.

Research Field 3 Transnational social security in the migration society

Ongoing cross-border mobility challenges (national) welfare states and their social security systems. We invite contributions that address questions of "integrated social policy" at any of the levels dealt with in Research Field 3:

- 1) What transnational regulatory bodies (supranational, intergovernmental or global) are emerging in response to current labour and mobility regimes?
- 2) What integrated welfare state solutions are being implemented at the administrative (local) level to deal with complex migration-related social problems in the context of competing demands from migration control and social policy?

Research Field 4 Life course and social policy

In the interplay between life courses and social policy, coordination problems are associated with detrimental life course effects and have to be resolved individually. For life course-oriented social policy research, coordination problems become relevant

- 1) During life course transitions between different areas of social policy regulation (e.g. education–labour market) and

- 2) due to insufficient institutional, implemental or normative coordination between different regulatory areas that simultaneously affect individuals in certain life phases.

Therefore, we welcome contributions focusing on these critical aspects and offer innovative approaches to address the coordination challenges

Research Field 5 Social policy as process: Definition, organization, implementation

Coordination always draws attention to the processual dimension of social policy. In line with the Research Field's orientation, we would therefore welcome contributions that address coordination problems, processing strategies and possible solutions, especially for social policy at the municipal level. The focus can be on the definition, the organization or the implementation of policy by the various actors and institutions.

Research Field 6 Social conflicts and social policy

Will new rivalries and conflicts arise between different policy fields in times of a tight federal budget? We look forward to receiving contributions on potentially conflicting policy goals, e.g. in coordinating climate protection and poverty reduction, preferably with convincing strategies for identifying the causes. Contributions on policy packages with multiple goals, e.g. CO₂ taxation combined with compensatory transfers ('Klimageld') are also welcome.

Issue Network Poverty Research and Working platform on the prevention of poverty (consequences) for children and young people

The European Child Guarantee is a comprehensive strategy to combat child poverty. In order to successfully implement such a strategy in Germany, actors from various policy areas and all federal levels (national, regional and municipal) need to develop joint policies and implement integrated measures. We invite contributions from research and practice on this topic.

Issue Network Social services and digitalization

Digitalization is changing access to social services permanently: Which opportunities and challenges arise for an inclusive and accessible welfare state? How does digitalization affect the integration and coordination of services? And how is the transformation progressing from the perspective of public administration, service providers and welfare organizations? We invite submissions that address these questions, and the impact of digitalization on social service

Issue Network Social jurisdiction

Social courts can play a clarifying role in disputes over benefit entitlements and responsibilities. They are an important instrument for ensuring social rights and serve as an oversight body for the administration. But how do they influence social policy processes and what contribution can they make to a stable social policy? With these questions in mind, we would like to take stock of research to date and identify future research needs.

- (2) **Panel proposals related to the thematic focus:** Does this year's topic inspire you to organize your own panel in line with the main focus? We welcome proposals outlining your planned thematic structure either with suggestions for potential speakers (closed panel) or without (open panel).

(3) Proposals for panels or individual contributions to the Social Policy Biennale: We welcome proposals addressing this year's thematic focus from an international comparative perspective. Case studies or "best practice" from a European or international context are also welcome. The conference language for the Social Policy Biennale is English.

Open Track: Independent of the conference theme, we also welcome submissions on current issues in future social policy development and research.

Perspectives

The FIS Forum aims to provide a space for bringing together different perspectives relevant to social policy (research). We therefore welcome proposals with the following focus:

Research: We invite researchers across various disciplines to submit their latest empirical findings as along with methodological and theoretical considerations related the outlined research topic.

Practice: Practitioners, including civil society, diverse branches of administration, and professionals in occupations related to social policy (especially occupations providing social services), are invited to present innovative projects aligned with the outlined thematic focus. This is crucial to highlight insights that may have previously been overlooked by research, facilitating their integration into the broader dialogue and encouraging further development.

Conference formats

Panels: In the panels, new findings and questions will be highlighted and brought into the discourse between research, practice and politics. These sessions, including fifteen- to twenty-minute inputs will bring together diverse perspectives within thematically coordinated panels. This format is suitable for presenting research projects as well as practical perspectives. During the selection process, the conference organizers in cooperation with the existing DIFIS research teams and Issue Networks will assign submissions to the panels.

Additionally, there will be an opportunity to present and discuss ongoing research with colleagues. This includes sharing research designs and initial empirical results as well as more advanced work. Practical projects, measures, strategies and instruments at different stages of development can also be brought into the discussion.

Gallery: A gallery is planned for the FIS Forum and Social Policy Biennale where content that is currently in progress or in-planning at your institute, related to the thematic focus can be presented in the form of a poster, or other creative forms (e.g. stand/video/podcast ...).

We also welcome submissions that use **other (creative) ideas/formats** to present their results.

Abstract (250–300 words, submission deadline 23 April 2024)

The abstract should include the topic, research question and approach of the contribution as well as the main findings. The following questions should be answered in the abstract:

- For which topic or panel (see (1)–(4) above) is the contribution intended?
- What perspective (research or practice) does the paper represent?
- What is the format of the submission? If it is gallery format or a (creative) idea: How exactly do you envisage the presentation?
- In which language (English or German) would you like to present?

Please submit your abstract (250–300 words in English or German) for the FIS Forum with Social Policy Biennale by **23 April 2024** here: <https://www.conftool.pro/fis-forum-2024>

For further information please visit our conference website: <https://difis.org/en/events/fis-forum-2024/>

If you have any questions, please write to us at info@difis.org

We look forward to your proposals!

Imprint

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