

Oikosnet Annual Meeting Prague 2016



Venue:

Hotel Čechie
U Sluncové 618/25, 186 00 Praha 8 - Karlín
www.hotelcechie.cz

Study Day 8th September 2016

Transition Accomplished or Mission Impossible – Economic Developments and Civil Society – example of the Czech Republic

9.30–10.30 NEOLIBERAL ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AND ITS OUTCOMES

Ilona Švihlíková (economist), Marketa Vinkelhoferová (Ecumenical Academy), Roman Juriga (Orthodox Academy Vilémov)

After the experiment of state socialism people hoped for better in the form of social welfare state of West European shape. But the so called transition happened under conditions of neoliberal globalisation. Unprecedented privatisation, deregulation and liberalisation couldn't keep the promise of bridging the standard of living gap between the West and the East. Even in the most successful of post socialist countries economics are fragile and vulnerable in the case of future turbulences. What kind of economic politics would be desirable? Is there any chance for sustainable, social and solidary economy to develop?

10.30–10.45 Break

10.45–12.00 Discussion in groups

- Economy (with Mrs. Švihlíková)
- Economic alternatives (with Mrs. Vinkelhoferová)
- Sustainable development (with Mr. Juriga)

12.00–13.30 Lunch

13.30–14.15 SOCIAL CONSTRAINS AND SOCIAL COHESION

Ivana Mariposa Čonková (social activist), Jakob Hurrle (Local politician), Konstantinos Zormpas (Orthodox Academy Crete)

The data of poverty level are not as bad for Czech Republic in comparison with other European countries. But large group of people is living just very close to the poverty line. The minimum salary is one of the lowest in EU, the social security benefits are very low as well. The average salaries reach about 1/3 of the Western countries like Germany, but the prices of consumer goods are often comparable. Programs of social housing are practically not existing and number of homeless people is growing. Especially groups as pensioners, single mothers or Roma are living under poor conditions, often with high debt burden. Current government tries to replace the previous austerity politics and be more social, but it acts with limited possibilities. Maybe the biggest challenge is to change the viewpoint: difficult social situation shouldn't be seen as a personal problem (fault) but as a problem of the society as whole. How to make this change?

14.15–14.45 Discussion (plenary)

14.45–15.15 Break

15.15–16.00 LOSS OF POLITICAL DIMENSION AND POLARISATION OF THE SOCIETY
Jiří Koubek (political scientist), Jaroslav Fiala (journalist), NN Ukraine, Belarus?

The frustration and loss of hope lead many people to the trust in populist promises of some political groups, which channel the anger towards Roma, refugees and especially Moslems (there are hardly any in the country) but as well towards NGOs and activists. The society is deeply divided along different lines, which mix traditional attitudes of left and right. Traditional parties are uneasy with the answers, progressive groups and movements are weak and divided, many people just resign. What strategies can activate civil society and churches and bring new impulses into politics?

16.00–17.00 Discussion (plenary)

17.00–17.30 Introduction to the excursions

EXCURSIONS (in groups) 9. 9. 2016

- Forum 50 % (women equity in politics)/ Bliss without Risk (sexual workers)
- Fair trade shop of Ecumenical Academy, fair trade in Czech Republic/Fair & Bio co-operative coffee roasting plant, a social enterprise
- Prague sightseeing led by homeless people/ homeless women cooking
- Protestant Church of Czech Brethern/ Czechoslovak Hussite Church

