

Debating Unemployment Policy

Political Communication and the Labour Market in Western Europe

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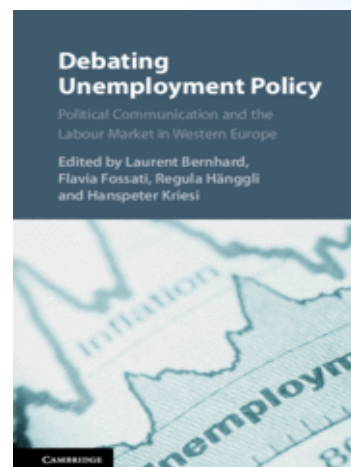
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In 2008 the world experienced the Great Recession, a financial and economic crisis of enormous proportions and the greatest economic downturn since the 1930s. In its wake, unemployment became a key preoccupation of West European publics and politicians. This comparative study considers the policy debates surrounding unemployment in the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, Denmark and Switzerland since 2008. With an over-arching focus on drawing out cross-national commonalities and differences, the authors ask whether patterns of political communication vary across countries. Their analysis draws on interviews with labour market policy-makers in the six selected countries, and paints a revealing picture. Appealing to researchers in comparative politics, political communication and welfare state research, this book will also interest practitioners involved in labour market policy.

Part I. The Context Structures and the Policy-Specific Debates: 1. Introduction: shaping the debate on unemployment and the labor market; 2. Theoretical framework: production of policy-specific political communication; 3. The political contexts of the national policy debates; 4. The variety of national debates; Part II. The Political Actors and Their Assets: 5. What affects power in the labor market domain?; 6. The labor market policy space; 7. Beliefs or interests: what is the driving force behind coalition formation?; 8. The action repertoires for shaping the debates; Part III. Communicating in Public: 9. Framing strategies: important messages in public debates; 10. The positioning of the actors in the public debates; 11. Inside the interaction context; 12. Quality of public debates; Part IV. Conclusion: 13. Conclusion.



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'Written by policy experts and public communication specialists, this volume provides a very effective analysis of the debate on unemployment in Europe in the aftermath of the Great Recession. It convincingly shows that the link between policies and discourse is key to our knowledge of the politics of unemployment. A great read for anyone who wants to understand how complex political economies react when things go wrong.'

Giuliano Bonoli,
Université de Lausanne



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