Debating Unemployment Policy
Political Communication and the Labour Market in Western Europe

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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.


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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,
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