

# transform!

european network for alternative thinking  
and political dialogue

Since December 2009 the **transform! europe** newsletter has been published regularly once a month. It contains information about the activities of our network, its members and observing members and about important initiatives of social movements we are taking part in.

## Contents

<b>Editorial .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Subscription to the <i>transform!</i> newsletter .....	2
<b>Studies and Articles .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Systemic Danger Ahead? The Effects of the Financial Crisis on Private Pensions .....	3
Austria's Students' Protests "Our University, Our Lives!" .....	3
<b><i>transform!</i> Activity Report .....</b>	<b>5</b>
"Poulantzas Today": Conference in Athens .....	5
Copenhagen Summit – Between Failure and Hope .....	6
The Forum for a Social Europe .....	7
"Women, Labour and the Teaching Profession": Seminar in Bordeaux .....	7
<b>Upcoming Events .....</b>	<b>8</b>
"The Crisis in Europe": Workshop in Vienna .....	8
Preparatory Assembly of the European Social Forum .....	9
Conference in Memoriam Joerg Huffs Schmid .....	10
"Why the Crisis Seems to Favour the Right Rather than the Left in Europe": Seminar in Spain .....	11

# Editorial

Hereby we present the second issue of the *transform! europe* newsletter which has been published regularly once a month since December 2009. It contains information about the activities of our network, its members and observing members and about important initiatives of social movements we are taking part in.

The seminar on *The Crisis in Europe: Depression Economics – Social Crisis – State Policy – Alternatives* taking place in Vienna on Friday and Saturday this week will bring together about 60 experts from 14 European countries, among them political protagonists from trade unions and social movements but also elected representatives.

A video-recording of the introduction and debate can be watched after the session days on the *transform! europe* homepage ([www.transform-network.net](http://www.transform-network.net)). And also a written documentation will be provided and can be ordered from [office@transform-network.net](mailto:office@transform-network.net).

The study *Systemic Danger? The Effects of the Financial Crisis on Private Pensions* (compiled by Richard Detje on behalf of *transform! europe*) so far has been published in German and French. With its publication in English we are launching a new format of our print medium, the *special editions*, in which we will at irregular intervals provide relevant materials and documents for the left discourse – an undertaking supple-

menting the *transform!* magazine, which is being published in seven languages every half a year. The *special editions* will primarily be published in English, but occasionally also in other languages. They can be ordered via the *transform!* webpage, from our members and observing members or from [office@transform-network.net](mailto:office@transform-network.net).

We wish all our comrades and friends a happy, peaceful and successful New Year!

**Eva Himmelstoss**  
(editor of the newsletter)

**Walter Baier**  
(co-ordinator of the network)

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# Systemic Danger Ahead?

## The Effects of the Financial Crisis on Private Pensions

**One of the core projects of the neo-liberal époque during the last two decades has been the privatization of public pension systems, promoted by the ruling classes in the international institutions and nation states.**

The outcome of this transformation can hardly be overestimated. The transfer of big financial assets from the public welfare system to capital market based pension funds was – and still is – a powerful resource for the accumulation of a financial market led capitalism. The well known US-Marxist David Harvey would say: a cornerstone of a system based on accumulation by dispossession. It is this system which has crashed into the deepest crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

*transform! europe* therefore suggested a brief study about the effects and aftermath of the financial crisis for privatized pension systems. This study was carried out by Richard Detje. Some of the main findings are:

- In the first period of the financial crisis private pension funds lost 20-25% of their capital in the leading capitalist world (OECD member states): about 5.4 trillion US-\$. Ireland, Belgium, the Netherlands and the UK are most severely affected in Western Europe, the Baltic states, Hungary and Poland in Eastern Europe.

- In the second period, when the financial crisis gave rise to a crisis of the real economy, company pension funds faced growing problems. From the peak in October 2007 to February 2009 the pension asset levels dropped by 35% in the US. Consequences are that "ballooning pension deficits will leave some companies with diminished profits, weaker credit ratings and higher borrowing costs, which can translate into lower stock prices".

- In the third period we are confronted with a social crisis characterised by growing public debt, further weakening of the welfare state and growing poverty amongst senior citizens in the forthcoming years.

The *transform! europe*-study shows: privatization is completely misleading. There is no easy way back to a strong public pension system without hard and long lasting social struggles. But it has become more difficult to argue that private pensions guarantee more social security. The opposite is true.

When private pension systems are a cornerstone in the takeoff of financial market capitalism, the strengthening of public pensions will be one of the most important arenas for the battle of social and economic transformation.

For the **full version of the study** please refer to: [www.transform-network.net/uploads/media/Detje\\_FinancialCrisis.pdf](http://www.transform-network.net/uploads/media/Detje_FinancialCrisis.pdf) (204 kB)

From Friday, 15 January, a **printed version** of the study (*transform! special edition*) can be ordered via e-mail: [office@transform-network.net](mailto:office@transform-network.net)

*Richard Detje is a member of the scientific association for the analysis of capitalism and social policy, WISSENTtransfer.*

### *transform! Austria*

# Austria's Students' Protests "Our University, Our Lives!"

By Barbara Steiner

**After two months of delaying tactics the management of the University of Vienna called the police to "clear" the Audimax, Vienna's largest lecture-room. About 90 homeless people who had found shelter from the cold there and 20 occupying students were evicted in the early morning of 21 December.**

After that the management ran a "blockade back"-tactics, with nobody except teachers and employees being allowed to enter the departments, libraries and offices. Students were not allowed to study at the library nor were the students' institutionalised political representatives granted admittance to the building.

### **How everything started**

Virtually nobody expected the protest to spread so widely or the solidarity accompanying them, when in the beginning of autumn, students came back to university and everyday political work after the summer holidays.

There has been a long ongoing struggle about students' institutionalised representation on all university levels <sup>(1)</sup>, from individual departments to nationwide representation, a struggle which involved organisations, individuals, groups in and outside the institutions, working and teaching staff.

Like in every other country there was plenty of reason for anger and protest: de-democratisation, first the introduction of study fees and then their part-only abolishment, time pressure, competition, the abolition of choice, the definition of education as mere service and universities as companies, the introduction of barriers to courses and classes, exclusion as part of the social and economical reality of patriarchal hierarchies, structural racism, growing class difference combined with the neo-liberal dogma of total competition and global free enterprise.

It happened that the protests at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna (which traditionally can boast a unique alliance between students, employees, lecturers, professors and management) against the full implementation of the Bologna process (Bachelor-Master-system) on all the faculties sparked a "fire of protest" that was to spread and "set fire" to universities all over the country.

On 20 October, the Academy was occupied. From the very beginning the protesters had been emphasising that the university was an integral part of society and therefore struggles had to address the entire social situation. Two days later, in the course of a demonstration,

the occupation spread to Vienna's biggest university, the University of Vienna, where mainly the social sciences and humanities are located. Thousands of students occupied the "Auditorium Maximum", traditionally a symbolic location of the students' movement, and further lecture rooms were to follow. Within the shortest possible time the organisation of different structures such as working groups, workshops, peoples' kitchen, alternative lectures, sessions and cultural programmes was brought about. Critique of conservative curricula was accompanied by lively debates about emancipative, left-wing teaching-content.

Most remarkable, however, and differentiating the "burning uni"-protests from earlier movements such as the big university-strike in 1987, is the complete absence in it of organisational leadership by institutions or traditionally left-wing organisations. Individual persons got active, came together – which included individual members of political groups like KSV – LiLi (students' organisation in alliance with the Communist Party of Austria), but the far bigger number were seemingly "apolitical" people. Parts of the "movement" would not necessarily call themselves left-wing and sometimes not even "political", whatever that means. There were thousands of people coming to discussions, ten thousands to demonstrations. Maybe one reason for that was that this time media reports were not as hostile and devastating as usual when protests occur; and maybe again because the government and other authorities did not want to appear ac-

tively repressive. Contrary to the "usual" level of repression against leftist protests (violence, law suits etc...), police seemed to stand by and watch for a long time.

There were protests and occupations not only in Vienna – at nearly every university and department – , also at the traditionally more conservative university-towns resistance soon gained momentum. And also in Germany universities were occupied and an amazing load of declarations of solidarity reached us from all over the world.

The greatest – and hopefully lasting – successes of these protests were a change in the social climate among university students and an increase in students' and many other people's awareness of the "catastrophic" conditions – at least at the universities. Future will show whether there will be more than breaks and cracks in the capitalist, patriarchal hegemony, whether single issue politics will – in the best case – turn into the necessity of an overall big movement of resistance.

*The author is an activist of the Austrian Communist Students' Association, KSV – LiLi ([www.votacomunista.at](http://www.votacomunista.at))*

<sup>(1)</sup> *In Austria there is a legal representation of students, therefore it is financially and politically comparably strong. The Communist Students' Association, KSV – LiLi, is also part of this representative body called "Österreichische HochschülerInnenschaft".*

# transform! Activity Report

## Past Concepts and Methodologies, highly relevant for the European Radical Left of today Poulantzas Today

Report by Haris Golemis

**A very interesting, successful and useful NPI – transform! europe Conference took place in Athens on 18 and 19 December 2009.**

When, some time ago, we discussed the idea of organizing the *Nicos Poulantzas Institute (NPI) – transform! europe* Conference, in Athens, to commemorate Nicos Poulantzas thirty years after his death (see newsletter 1/2009), we expected to have a rather medium-sized event, which could hopefully have been of interest to a limited number of people and could also be marginally useful in our common job. Our awareness of the fact that the work and especially the research methodology of Poulantzas, one of the most important post-war "classical" Western Marxists, according to Perry Anderson and Bob Jessop, has recently regained its respect and its timeliness in academic and political circles, had not changed our mediocre predictions. We proved wrong. "Poulantzas Today" was finally a big and well organized two full days (10 am to 10 pm) conference, with very good presentations by *Alex Demirovic* and *James Martin*, the two key-speakers, experts on Poulantzas, and a large number of Greek academics, intellectuals and young political scientists. Each of the conference's ten sessions was followed by interesting discussions with people from a mainly young audience which at times packed the big auditorium of the Goethe Institute, in the centre of Athens.

At the same time, as noticed by *Nicos Petralias*, NPI president, and *Walter Baier*, coordinator of *transform! europe*, the conference dealt with issues directly related to the interests of both the various forces of the European Radical Left and social movements and *transform! europe*, especially its project "Political and Strategic Perspectives of the European Left": the state as "the condensation of a relationship of forces between classes and class fractions such as these express themselves in a necessarily specific form..." and its "relative autonomy", Marxist theory in general, ideology, social classes, parties and movements, class and political alliances, globalization / imperialism, European integration, the question of space, the articulation of representative and direct democracy, euro-communism, the democratic (but not necessarily peaceful) transition to socialism and the nature of socialism (which will be democratic or will not exist), etc.

In the roundtable, *Makis Cavouriaris*, *Michael Lowy* and *Constantinos Tsoukalas*, friends and / or comrades of Poulantzas during the 1960s and 1970s, together with *Alkis Rigos* (chairman) and *Stathis Couvelakis*, a young Greek political scientist who now teaches at the University of London, had a very fruitful discussion on Nicos Poulantzas as an organic intellectual of the Left. The French philosopher *Etienne Balibar*, who was also invited to participate in the roundtable, sent an e-mail, where he

expressed his regret for not being able to be present in Athens which was due to pre-arranged commitments. He regretted that he could not be present, because, as he said "... time not only has not diminished my admiration for his work, but rather enhanced it over time".

The conference closed in an emotional way. *Thanos Mikroutsikos*, a well known Greek composer and ex-Minister of Culture in a socialist government, performed on the piano and sang a piece composed by him on verses of a poem by *Alkis Alkaios*. This synthesis was devoted by both creators to Nicos Poulantzas, some days after his suicide in 1979. Before starting his performance, Mikroutsikos revealed to the public that during that time, as a member of the Greek Communist Party (KKE), he had received strong pressures from the then Secretary of the Athens Organisation of that Party, to withdraw his dedication to Poulantzas, since the latter was a member of the "reformist group", i.e. the Greek Communist Party of the Interior, who had split from KKE in 1968 – a reminder of the traumatic experiences and hard internal conflicts of the European Left during the past century. But this is another story.

The papers of the conference will be published in Greek (and possibly in other languages too), before the end of the year.

*Haris Golemis is director of the Nicos Poulantzas Institute (NPI), Greece.*

## Judith Butler delivered the 3<sup>rd</sup> Nicos Poulantzas Memorial Lecture in Athens

The event on 16 December, announced already in newsletter 1/2009, was a great success in terms of the quality of Judith Butler's lecture, the attendance (hundreds of people, mainly

young, crowded the big Goethe Institute Auditorium, its foyer and the pavement outside the building) and the high standard of the discussion that followed the lecture.

The event was transmitted live from the NPI site and will be hung on it and also on the site of *transform! europe*, as soon as possible.

## Copenhagen: Between Failure and Hope

At the Copenhagen Summit, the **transform! europe** network was represented by Ruurik Holm and Chantal Delmas who held a stall to promote the *transform!* journal and to disseminate the four-page Copenhagen special among the participants of the *Klima Forum*. They also participated in various discussions in the *Klima* and trade unionist forums. And alongside the European Left, they were present in the demonstration of 12 December. Here are their first thoughts after Copenhagen.

Report by Chantal Delmas

Just after the official summit in Copenhagen on global warming was over, all the press and Western governments were quick to deplore the failure of negotiations at the COP 15 (*United Nations Conference on Climate Change*). The final document agreed upon in Copenhagen is not binding for the developed countries, even if all countries agree on the goal of limiting warming by 2 degrees. There is a desire to put on the same level Western countries responsible for 77% of the emission of greenhouse gases since the beginning of the industrial era and developing countries like China and India. The aim is to hold them responsible for the failure of the agreement and the issue of greenhouse gas emissions while Western countries relocate all their obligations by outsourcing polluting industries and the social and environmental costs.

And worse than that: As Sarkozy highlighted, Western countries – i.e., the 27 countries making up the *Forum of Major Economies* – were eager to establish an alternative negotiation system in the United Nations and seek to impose that on other countries. The goal of Western countries is to prove the inability of the UN to manage the climate

problem. The G-20, this was the subject, is at least equally good or even better able to manage the problems of the planet while simultaneously continuing the commercialization thereof.

Their logic: It is important that people do not get involved!

It is precisely this kind of governance following neo-liberal principles that was challenged at the summit. That is why Copenhagen is also a great hope with social and environmentalist movements. They met in a counter-summit, the *Klima Forum*, which comprised more than 300 meetings with several hundreds of participants each time and was organised by more than 250 organizations.

- The forum of trade unions met in the WoW (Work of World)-pavilion.<sup>(1)</sup> It saw many of the participating trade unions questioning the capitalist system in its willingness to take on responsibility for climate change and the social question.
- The parties were also present in the seminars and events and included environmentalist parties, political parties of the European Left, parties with Trotskyite tendencies and the GUE.

- Within the COP 15, the official summit, many intrusions took place by groups from the South and social movements, whose presence was also covered by the media.
- A forum of Latin American countries which agreed upon organising an alternative summit in April.
- The most significant event of the summit was the demonstration of 100,000 people assembling to the slogan "System Change, not Climate Change!" Social and environmentalist movements as well as people from southern countries showed their fighting spirit and their determination not to hand over the social and environmental fate to the masters of today's world who have only got their profit in mind.

The sentence spoken by Hugo Chávez adequately summed up the situation: "If the climate had been a bank, it would long ago have been saved."

Although this movement is still in its infancy, the international *Climate Justice Now* network aims to develop on all levels of society, from the local to the international, starting from local communities and regions. Future

appointments are numerous: There will be a "Meeting of Peoples", a summit on climate alternatives on 21 and 22 April proposed by Evo Morales, the *Alternative Social Forum* in Mexico in May and the next *European Social Forum*. The next COP is to be held in Mexico in late 2010.

An important step was taken in connecting environmentalist, social and political movements and trade unions. Although most of these movements agree on demanding the systemic changes necessary to meet the climate emergency and to bring about social justice, many questions remain to be further developed including the questions of "ecological and social transi-

tion", the relationship to science and technology necessary to solve the ecological crisis, energy and the role of planning and public services.

<sup>(1)</sup> For the list of trade unions participating in the WOW see: <http://climate.ituc-csi.org/unions-in-copenhagen-wow-the-world.html?lang=en>

## The Forum for a Social Europe

**On 9 and 10 December 2009 the *Forum for a Social Europe* was meeting in the European Parliament in Brussels. The forum is a network of left trade unionists co-operating with the parliamentary faction of GUE/NGL for many years.**

After the welcoming speech by **Lothar Bisky**, the president of the faction, several members of the European Parliament reported about the concrete consequences of the crisis in their respective countries and the challenges the trade unions and social movements are facing due to that.

Many trade unionists underlined the necessity of finding new methods of organisation by approaching the employed in unconventional ways and of making special efforts to achieve a much stronger unity in struggles. A paper on the reform of trade unionist concepts authored by university professors cooperating with the trade union movement was put up for debate.

Regarding the European level, the content of joint mobilisations was discussed, in particular with the focus on the *European Day of Action* on 24 March. In some branches, especially in the automobile industry, the struggle will be one of bringing about unity and solidarity against the competition among production sites imposed from above and the methods of blackmailing accompanying it. The social movements will be working at a remobilisation of the unemployed in 2010. In the beginning of July there will be a reunion at the *European Social Forum* in Istanbul. Despite a considerable number of movements in the various countries and branches there was agreement among the

participants of the meeting that the EU has succeeded in forcing the trade unions into a defensive position which had already been the case before the economic crisis peaked. The weakness of the political Left in the individual countries was contributing to intensifying the unfavourable power relations. **Horst Schmütthener** concluded the conference stating that the trade unions had to be able to bring more clarity to the analysis of the crisis and its causes and that they had to intensify their work on a concept of overcoming the crisis.

Two meetings were scheduled for June and December 2010.

### Seminar of Espaces Marx

## Women, Labour and the Teaching Profession: Gender and Class Relations

**In November a seminar on the gender question took place in Bordeaux, France.**

It was part of a long-term joint effort of *Espaces Marx* and *transform! europe* in which for two years a research into the questions of labour and the social classes is conducted dealing also with

the realities and the ideological and cultural struggles which they trigger. The increase of women's wage labour in the context of globalisation creates specific conditions, both inside and outside the working process.

Exactly this contradictory new reality in women's lives – access to jobs under

neo-liberal conditions with the latter also jeopardizing the wage earners as a whole regardless of their sex – creates the need for a specific debate about how these new conditions affect human emancipation.

This issue directly concerns the IUFM (*Instituts Universitaires de Formation*

*des Maitres / University Institutes for Teacher-Training*) and their mission of training teachers. The IUFM of Aquitaine, recently attached to the University of Bordeaux 4, agreed to collaborate with *Espaces Marx* in organizing the seminar departing from two very different experiences which allowed to enrich the ideas of both the speakers and the audience considerably.

The focus of the first day was on women and labour. It provided a broad survey of the real state of female labour and how the current crisis affects it, on

the challenges and problems arising from a gender perspective for the emancipation of labour and the connection of class and gender relations.

The second day was dedicated to gender-relevant questions in teacher training. It highlighted gender and the question of cultural diversity, the socio-cultural habits, representation and gender, the learning of social roles and the construction of gender at school. Also the current professional practice was submitted to the scrutiny of the debate, which included the gender approach in

the training of teachers as well as in their teaching, the effects of feminization of the teaching profession, the analysis of documents and textbooks from a gender-point-of-view and experiences of how to approach the gender question in the different scientific disciplines.

A number of texts are available at the website of *Espaces Marx Bordeaux Aquitaine*:

<http://espacesmarxbordeaux.apinc.org>.

Also a printed version is being prepared.

## Upcoming Events

**International Workshop by *transform! europe* in Vienna, 15-16 January 2010**

### The Crisis in Europe:

**Depression Economics – Social Crisis – State Policy – Alternatives**

Europe is fighting against the deepest recession since the great depression in the 1930s. We are now facing a severe social crisis with rising unemployment and growing pressure on what has been left of the welfare states after the neoliberal regime. In this process the state and the central banks played an active role and stopped the free fall of the economy. But: this is not the end of the crisis yet. And without illusion: the political Left is not the winner of this "game". Wage earners and average tax payers shall pay to save the assets of the wealthy.

The workshop taking place in Vienna this week (Hotel Regina, 1090 Wien, Rooseveltplatz 15) will focus on four topics: The causes of what has to be characterized as a systemic crisis, the role of politics and the state in the world economic crisis, the social consequences of the financial and economic turmoil as

well as alternatives and transformation strategies proposed by the political Left and progressive social forces.

The workshop will bring together about 60 experts from 14 European countries, among them political protagonists from trade unions and social movements but also elected representatives.

*Elisabeth Gauthier, Joachim Bischoff, Bob Jessop, Miguel Portas* and *Maria Karamessini* will give a speech. Interventions by *Euclides Tsakolotos, Peter Fleissner, Jiri Malek, Stephen Bouquin, Ashbjörn Wahl* and *Lutz Brangsch* will follow. *Walter Baier* will chair a roundtable with *Thomas Händel, Miguel Portas* and *Francis Wurtz*.

Seminar languages are English, German and French.

For the detailed program please refer to: [www.transform-network.net/uploads/media/Folder transform crisis of europe 2010-01-15.pdf](http://www.transform-network.net/uploads/media/Folder_transform_crisis_of_europe_2010-01-15.pdf) (589 kB)

#### Please note!

A **video-recording** of the introduction and debate can be watched after the session days on our website: [www.transform-network.net](http://www.transform-network.net)

Also a **written documentation** will be provided and can be ordered from: [office@transform-network.net](mailto:office@transform-network.net)

**Berlin, 29-31 January 2010**

# **Preparatory Assembly of the European Social Forum (ESF)**

## **The Axes for the European Social Forum were defined in Diyarbakir and Paris**

**The upcoming preparatory assembly will be a very important step in the preparation of the next European Social Forum, which will be held in Istanbul between 1 and 4 July. Although the axes of the debate at the ESF as defined at the last European Preparatory Assembly in Diyarbakir are quite "classical" they cover a wide range of relevant topics.**

However, in order to gain more visibility for the ESF we now have to develop the "transversalities" between the axes, which means also to elaborate on the strategic convergences of the different movements. At the Berlin meeting space will be provided for this debate within the different networks.

Of course, the Middle East, the Kurdish, the Armenian and the Palestinian questions will be in the spotlight of the ESF in Turkey. Also the debate on the conclusions of Copenhagen will be on its agenda (see also the article by Chantal Delmas in this newsletter). Nevertheless a lot of work still is to be done.

As mentioned above, 13 axes of the discussion were defined in Diyarbakir and concretized during a meeting in Paris last November. An "Assembly of the Assemblies" on the last day of the ESF, including topics discussed in the meetings of the previous days and inspired by the model created in the last World Social Forum (Belém 2009), will be the most important novelty in the programme of the European Social Forum, replacing the "Assembly of Social Movements". Another innovation inspired by the activities in Belém will be the initiative "Istanbul Expanded" that will allow activists and organizations who cannot go to Istanbul to organize events using video-projection and the Internet.

The European Social Forum itself will take place almost in the very centre of Istanbul. Taskisla Campus of the Istanbul Technical University, 5 minutes away from Taksim Square (the most crowded area of the city), will be the main meeting place. All the locations for the events are very close to each other (a few minutes' walking-time) with various movie theatres and cultural centres on Istiklal Street (linked to Taksim Square) being used for these events. Yeni Melek Concert Hall will be the biggest space, with a capacity for holding 2,000 persons. The European Social Forum will occupy the centre of Istanbul, with a very strong visibility for the local population.

77 Turkish organizations are supporting the organization of the European Social Forum. Their appeal for participation states that "We struggled together against the privatization of public services, the occupations in the Middle East, the deadlock in the Kurdish problem, the deaths of the workers in dockyards, the commercialization of water, violence against women, censorship of the media, unidentified murders, isolation in prison, urban transformation, environmental disasters and violation of trade union and labour rights. We developed a common struggle and discussion culture. In 2010, we will host the social movements of Europe and organizations that are in favour of labour, democracy and freedom in Istanbul. We believe that the European Social Forum in Istanbul is an important opportunity for the social movements which are active in Turkey to meet with their corresponding organizations at the international level and to share their experiences".

Proposals for seminars can be presented until 15 March. Each organization can present up to 3 proposals –

which will be merged to avoid repetitions of similar seminars – in the last European Preparatory Assembly before the ESF, to be held in May (14 to 16). This Assembly will define the final programme for the ESF in Istanbul. Before that, another EPA will define the logistics and organizational aspects of the Forum, in Berlin (29 and 30 January).

The axes for the European Social Forum that were approved of in the working group meeting in Paris were based on an exhaustive previous discussion in the European Preparatory Assembly held in September in Diyarbakir, in the days before the Mesopotamian Social Forum. These axes (and subtitles) are:

### **1. Economic and Social Crises: Resistance and Alternatives**

- Crisis or failure of capitalism?
- Specificities and similarities of the crisis in the CEE
- Solidarity versus competition
- Labour struggles against dismissals, closures and against precariousness
- Is a fair international financial system possible?
- How to link struggles for rights with alternatives?

### **2. Social Rights for a Social Europe**

- Common goods and public services for all
- A new welfare model against the ongoing destruction
- Housing rights and resistance against forced evictions
- Basic income and minimum wage
- Labour and trade union rights

### **3. What Kind of Democracy? Promoting Civil and Political Liberties**

- Against racist security policies and anti-terror laws
- Disappearances in custody and jail, isolation, prisons

- The rise of the far right and authoritarian policies
- Which construction of the EU? Who decides?
- Democracy and civil rights in the CEE and in Russia

#### **4. Defending the Rights of Oppressed Nations and Minorities**

- A peaceful, just and democratic solution to the Kurdish question
- Access to water and safe energy for all
- Against unsustainable production, distribution and consumption

#### **5. Against 'Fortress Europe' – Full Rights for Migrants and Refugees**

- Equal social and political rights
- Right to free movement of people

#### **6. Equality versus Discrimination. Feminist Alternatives in the Face of the Global Crisis**

- Opposing the patriarchal system
- Struggles against violence on women
- Sexual diversity, civil rights for LGBT

#### **7. Save the Planet: Building a Sustainable World**

- Overcoming the ecological crisis: How to link struggles for a sustainable envi-

ronment with struggles for social justice

#### **8. Peace versus War, Militarism, Occupations**

- The struggle to stop occupations in Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine and elsewhere
- Militarist policies in Europe
- Disarmament is necessary – How can we achieve it?
- Stop nuclear armament, dismantle military bases and missile shield projects
- Responsibility of the EU in the implementation of international law to achieve justice and peace in the Middle East
- Struggles of European movements for a just and peaceful solution for Palestine

#### **9. Youth – the Right to Education, Work and a Future**

#### **10. Democratising Knowledge, Education and Culture. Creating Alternatives**

- Privatization and commodification of Education: The Lisbon Strategy

- Which content and which methodologies for which goals?
- Life-long learning, vocational learning – culture, science and democracy
- For a democratic construction of Europe based on the respect of its diversity and the self governance and participation of the populations at all levels

#### **11. Mass Media and Power Relations: Defending the Freedom of Expression and Democratising Information**

- Against censorship

#### **12. Europe and the World: Cooperation and Development Based on Solidarity versus Domination and Neo-Colonialism**

- Free trade as a means of domination
- For a democratic international framework

#### **13. The State and the Future of the Global Movement for Justice**

## **Conference in Berlin, 20 February 2010**

# **Kapitalismuskritik heute – Zum Forschungsprogramm von Joerg Huffs Schmid**

## **In Memoriam Joerg Huffs Schmid**

On the morning of 5 December 2009, Joerg Huffs Schmid passed away. With him we lose one of the world's most important economists of the post-war era.

On 20 February – one day after Joerg Huffs Schmid's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday – the above conference will take place to his memory.

The commemoration is organised by *Attac*, *Memorandum Group*, *EuroMemo Group*, *Rosa Luxemburg Foundation*, *ver.di* and the journals *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik*, *Sozialismus* and *Z-Zeitschrift Marxistische Erneuerung*.

Venue: *ver.di* Bundesverwaltung, Paula-Thiede-Ufer 10, Berlin

For the programme of the conference and further details please refer to:

[www.transform-net-work.net/uploads/media/Flyer\\_Tagung\\_HuffsSchmid\\_2010-03-20.pdf](http://www.transform-net-work.net/uploads/media/Flyer_Tagung_HuffsSchmid_2010-03-20.pdf)  
(843 kB)

Seminar by *transform! europe* in Spain, 12-14 March 2010

## Why the Crisis Seems to Favour the Right Rather than the Left in Europe

Within the scope of its project "Strategic Perspectives of the European Left", *transform! europe* will hold a seminar entitled "Why the Crisis Seems to Favour the Right Rather than the Left in Europe".

The seminar will take place from 12 to 14 March 2010 in Spain.

The following topics will be addressed:

- The common ground of two *transform!* projects
- The validity of the claim: results of elections held in Europe in 2009
- Crisis of the European social democracy
- Country case studies

- Can the Left in Europe launch an effective counter-hegemonic project to overcome the crisis?
- The situation of the Left in Spain
- Summary

For details please see the *transform!* website or contact us via e-mail: [office@transform-network.net](mailto:office@transform-network.net)