

Institute of Economic and Social History
Faculty of Arts, Charles University Prague
cordially invites you to a lecture on

Beyond an Elite Project: Citizens and the European Union since 1950s.

with

Prof. Dr. Hartmut Kaelble

The history of European integration is often seen as a pure elite project. Citizens look uninvolved, uninterested and unpredictable in their reactions. This picture corresponds to the situation of the 1950s and 1960s. Over the past almost fifty years, it has failed to do justice to the ideas and influences of citizens for three reasons. Periods of distrust of the citizens towards the European Union alternated with periods of confidence. We seem to be re-entering such a period of trust, besides growing anti-European minorities. Citizens also had their own and different ideas about European integration from those of political decision-makers. From the beginning, they expected more political integration, were less interested in economic integration and expected more codecision in European politics. Moreover, one should not be deceived by the decline in voter turnout in the European elections since 1979. Since the 1980s, citizens have become increasingly active in European politics, exerting increasing pressure through civic organizations, interest groups and trade unions, and influencing European institutions more and more through petitions, law suits and initiatives. The talk presents these arguments on the basis of the review of numerous, mostly digital, surveys and reports of the European institutions, which have so far hardly been evaluated historically and which give a new picture of a clear historical change in the ideas and influence of citizens on the policies of the European Union.

Prof. Dr. Hartmut Kaelble, * 1940

1971-1991 professor for social and economic history at Freie Universität Berlin,
1991-2008 professor for social and economic history at Humboldt Universität Berlin.
2004-2009 visiting professor at the College of Europe at Bruges.

Research fields: comparative social history of Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries, especially history of social inequality, social history of European integration and history of the welfare state.

Recent Publications: *Der historische Vergleich* (1999) (incl. Chinese); *Wege zur Demokratie* (2001) (incl. French, Spanish); *Sozialgeschichte Europas* (2007) (incl. Japanese, English, Polish, French); *Kalter Krieg und Wohlfahrtsstaat. Europa 1945-1989* (2011) (incl. Japanese); *Mehr Reichtum, mehr Armut. Soziale Ungleichheit in Europa vom 20. Jh. bis zur Gegenwart* (2017); *Der verkannte Bürger. Eine andere Geschichte der europäischen Integration* (2019).

Tuesday, May 7, 2019, 5.30 p.m.

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