



MPIfG Press Release | 20 November 2009

The Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies Celebrates  
Its Twenty-Fifth Anniversary

## Governing Society – Politics versus Markets?

Since 1984 the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies (MPIfG) has been conducting research on the governance of modern societies. It is one of the leading research institutes in the world in this field. Today the institute's research concentrates on the social and political foundations of modern economies. On December 4, 2009, the MPIfG will mark its twenty-fifth anniversary with a celebration at the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum in Cologne.

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Gebäude des MPIfG in der Kölner Südstadt

When it founded the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies in 1984, the Max Planck Society reinforced its interest in supporting research on human society. Like all other Max Planck institutes, the MPIfG is committed to basic research and theory development.

The newly created institute began by examining the governance of modern societies. The objective was to develop a realistic, practically useful social

science-based theory of the governance of modern societies by an interventionist state in cooperation with an organized society. A second phase of research beginning in the 1990s concentrated on new forms of multilevel policymaking and the impact of economic liberalization on countries and governments. This was a response to the growing importance of markets and competition even in sectors that had formerly been controlled by state authority. The changes in the institute's research program reflect the results of its empirical research and its advances in theory development as well as changes in the real world of economies and politics over the last twenty-five years.

Today, the continuing shift from state regulation to market-driven forms of social order and the liberalized economy's propensity for crisis make it necessary to pay even more attention to the working of the economy. Markets have come to predominate the governance of the production and distribution of goods. Current research thus investigates the social, cultural and political preconditions for the operation of markets and the historical changes that have occurred in the organization of economic institutions.



Many projects explore how markets and business organizations are embedded in historical, institutional, political, and cultural frameworks. The objective is an empirically based understanding of the social and political foundations, or the „constitution,“ of modern economies and of the interrelations between social, political and economic action.

**Founded on November 23, 1984**, by the Max Planck Society, the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies began conducting research in Cologne in January 1985. With 31 positions for research staff and 25 positions for doctoral and postdoctoral fellows, the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies is one of the largest institutes for research in the social sciences in Germany. The institute receives 4.1 million euros in annual funding from the Max Planck Society. It is run by two directors, Professor Jens Beckert and Professor Wolfgang Streeck.

The Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies will mark its twenty-fifth anniversary on December 4, 2009, with a celebration at the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum in Cologne. The event will feature a panel discussion among the past and present directors of the institute, Professors Jens Beckert, Renate Mayntz, Fritz W. Scharpf and Wolfgang Streeck, on an issue at the heart of the institute's present research, "The Governance of Society: Politics versus Markets?". Professor Peter Gruss, President of the Max Planck Society, will address the invited guests, and there will be welcomes from Professor Andreas Pinkwart, the Minister of Innovation, Science, Research and Technology for North Rhine-Westphalia, Thomas Rachel, the Parliamentary State Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, Jürgen Roters, the Lord Mayor of the City of Cologne, Professor Axel Freimuth, the Rector of the University of Cologne, and Professor Christine Musselin, Director of the Centre de Sociologie des Organisations (CSO) at the Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques (Sciences Po) in Paris.

More information in German at: [www.mpifg.de/25Jahre.asp](http://www.mpifg.de/25Jahre.asp)

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