

Call for Applications

The Sociology of Markets

Joint PhD Seminar of Sciences Po, Paris, and the MPIfG, Cologne

January 2024, Paris

Instructors

Timur Ergen & Olivier Pilmis

The *AxPo Observatory of Market Society Polarization* (AxPo), the *Center for the Sociology of Organizations* (CSO), and the *Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies* (MPIfG) are welcoming proposals from PhD students to participate in a seminar to be held from January 10 to 12, 2024 in Paris.

Supported by the Franco-German University (DFH-UFA), costs for transportation and accommodation will be covered by the organizers, as well as all lunches and one dinner. No participation fees for the course will be charged. Hotel reservations will be made by the organizers.

The seminar is taught in English by Dr. Timur Ergen (MPIfG) and Dr. Olivier Pilmis (CSO, Sciences Po-CNRS) and will feature as invited guest speakers leading scholars from the field. It is open to Europe-based graduate students currently enrolled in a PhD program in economics, organization studies, political science, sociology and related disciplines. Preference is given to students from Sciences Po, the IMPRS-SPCE, and their direct partner institutions. Participating students must have prior working knowledge of contemporary debates about the economy in organization studies, sociology or political science.

Seminar description

Markets are one of the core organizational mechanisms of capitalist economies. From a sociological perspective, markets are not just an economic device for the allocation of goods services, but are institutions inseparably interwoven with the political, social, and cultural environments in which they operate. The seminar aims to provide students with the analytical and conceptual tools to study markets from a social science perspective. The conceptual texts and case studies discussed in the seminar provide insights into different approaches to study markets. We aim to go beyond the discussion of the field's classics and to stimulate exchange about the current state and future potential of the sociology of markets. To that end, the seminar features sessions and guest speakers that reflect on recent developments in the economy—algorithmic control, distributional struggles, powerful firms, and state intervention—and their impact on the role devoted to market organization in contemporary capitalism. The seminar will rely on extensive readings of classical and contemporary literature, and on presentations by instructors, students, and guest speakers.

Requirements

A maximum of 12 students will be admitted to the seminar.

Students must read all the required readings in advance. They must also read the papers presented by students and guest speakers. It is recommended to read as many of the advised readings as possible. They bring together recent and classic texts and reviews of theoretical and research fields. All texts will be available in advance.

Each student will be assigned to a set of readings to prepare one brief response memo. The memos are intended to prepare the ground for classroom discussions. Memos should not just summarize the readings, but rather take up specific arguments, compare the positions of different authors, raise questions of evidence, usefulness, or plausibility, or draw attention to strengths and weaknesses of the arguments. For everyone to have time to read over the comments of others, these will be due five days before the seminar begins.

Each session will be briefly introduced jointly by one of the instructors, guest speakers, and the students who prepared the associated response memos.

Students will have an opportunity to present their research projects. Specific slots will be devoted at the end of each session to these presentations – in relation to the topic at hand whenever possible.

Application

If you would like to apply for the seminar, please submit a short CV (2 pages max.) and a short description of your PhD project (300 words max.). We welcome applications until **October 31, 2023**. Notifications of acceptance will be given no later than November 15.

Please send applications to Timur Ergen (te@mpifg.de) and Olivier Pilmis (olivier.pilmis@sciencespo.fr).