

New publication

Social policy in the European Union: state of play 2015

Edited by

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The sixteenth edition of *Social policy in the European Union: state of play* has a triple ambition. First, it provides easily accessible information to a wide audience about recent developments in both EU and domestic social policymaking. Second, the volume provides a more analytical reading, embedding the key developments of the year 2014 in the most recent academic discourses. Third, the forward-looking perspective of the book aims to provide stakeholders and policymakers with specific tools that allow them to discern new opportunities to influence policymaking.

In contrast to recent years, 2014 started off with a distinct atmosphere of hope in the EU, with a renewed emphasis on the need for investments to grow. However, more recent developments have demonstrated that these 'results' are in fact only possibilities today and not yet realities. Increased social and economic divergence and rising tensions between the EU's North and South imply that a strengthening of the status quo, a retreat, or even a fatal blow are also distinct possibilities for the EU's future.

In this 2015 edition of *Social policy in the European Union: state of play*, the authors tackle the topics of the state of EU politics after the parliamentary elections, the socialisation of the European Semester, methods of political protest, the Juncker investment plan, the EU's contradictory education investment, the EU's contested influence on national healthcare reforms, and the neoliberal Trojan Horse of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). For the first time in many years, 2014 opened a window of opportunity; what remains to be seen is whether or not the EU will capitalise on it.

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