



Joint workshop of the German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ), Tokyo, L'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS), Paris and Japanese-German Center Berlin (JDZB).

## **Do labour market inequalities erode support for democracy? Experiences and perspectives from France, Germany and Japan**

October 6-7, 2017  
EHESS, Paris  
105 boulevard Raspail, Room 13 (6<sup>th</sup> floor)

### **Outline**

For decades, many policymakers and international organisations such as OECD and the IMF, have emphasised the need of structural, especially labour market reforms to improve competitiveness. While many arguments of this debate are still present today (e.g. in the 2017 French election campaign), it is now widely accepted that growing social inequalities have contributed to an increase in income inequality and that rising inequalities in the labour market could be a major factor behind feelings of political marginalisation and alienation, vote abstention, support for extremist and/or anti-establishment parties and growing distrust in parties and democratic institutions.

However, the political consequences of growing inequalities may be less clear than is often assumed. While France, Germany and Japan share many similarities with regard to their dualistic labour market structures with a strong divide between workers in good and those in insecure jobs, they are displaying different levels of support for extremist and populist parties. Japan has currently even no populist movement to speak of, yet voter turnout has fallen to historically low levels and, according to surveys, young Japanese seem increasingly indifferent to the benefits of a democratic system.

This workshop seeks to investigate links between labour market inequalities and falling support for and trust in democracy by bringing together scholars and experts from France, Germany and Japan. The aim of the workshop is two-fold: First, it seeks to establish how labour market inequalities impact politics, political participation and support of democracy in each country. Second, it addresses how different policy and regulatory regimes may contribute to alleviating socioeconomic divides and to enabling strategies to counter political marginalisation, anti-mainstream sentiment and mistrust in democracy overall.

## Workshop Programme

### Friday, October 6

9:50 Welcome address and introduction by Sébastien LECHEVALIER (EHESS), Franz WALDENBERGER and Werner PASCHA (JDZB)

10:00 **Panel 1: Socioeconomics of labour market inequalities in France, Germany and Japan: Structure and consequences of inequality**

Speakers:

- 1) Philippe ASKENAZY, CNRS and ENS
- 2) Hartmut SEIFERT, WSI
- 3) Koji TAKAHASHI, JILPT

Chair:

Steffen HEINRICH, DIJ

11:30 *Coffee break*

11:50 **Discussion panel 1**

Commentator:

OECD representative (tbc)

13:00 *Lunch break*

14:30 **Panel 2: Labour market inequalities and falling support for democracy: How strong is the link? Which factors explain inter-country differences?**

Speakers:

- 1) Bruno AMABLE, University of Geneva
- 2) Steffen HEINRICH, DIJ
- 3) Toru SHINODA, Waseda University

Chair:

Sébastien LECHEVALIER, EHESS

16:00 *Coffee break*

16:20 **Discussion panel 2**

Commentator:

Toru YOSHIDA, Hokkaido University

17:20 End of day one

**Saturday, October 7**

**09:30 Panel 3: Can labour market policy and regulation restore trust in democracy?**

Panel discussion with all participants. Introductory comments by Steffen Heinrich and Franz Waldenberger (DIJ)

Chair:

Sébastien LECHEVALIER, EHESS

12:30 Concluding remarks by Sébastien LECHEVALIER (EHESS), Franz WALDENBERGER (DIJ) and Werner PASCHA (JDZB)

12:45 End of workshop