



Press Release No. 21/2018

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Administrations as crisis managers

New joint project of political scientists from the University of Konstanz, LMU Munich and ETH Zurich - funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research

During the so-called refugee crisis of the past years, administrations in the German municipalities and counties were confronted quite suddenly with new tasks that they had to tackle flexibly and with the help of the general public. A new joint project (HybOrg) on “The Emergence and Social Impact of Hybrid Organizations in Local Crisis Management” will study how German administrative institutions mastered a situation that some called critical, and how they involved committed citizens or church-charitable institutions. Professor Wolfgang Seibel, Professor of Politics and Administration at the University of Konstanz and board member of the Konstanz Centre of Excellence “Cultural Foundations of Social Integration”, acquired the project with Dr Steffen Eckhard and Dr Matthias Fatke from LMU Munich, Dr Florian Roth from ETH Zurich as well as Lorenz Neuberger from the University of Konstanz. The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) will fund the project with approximately 634,000 euros.

“Our project is based on the assumption that administrative institutions can moderate the social consequences of crises and positively influence them through flexible and participatory crisis management”, explains Wolfgang Seibel. The participating researchers intend to find out how administrations in counties and municipalities can build up inclusive social capital and consequently help society cope with difficult situations. Seibel says that the first step will be to systematically record administrative responses to crises and then to analyze their impact on social cohesion. The researchers expect that the results will enable them to formulate specific recommendations for administrative action.

They will focus on hybrid organisational structures, especially those that make civil participation possible, for example by involving citizens in decision-making processes who have been strongly committed to supporting refugees since 2015. What impact does this type of co-operative organisation have on the local management of acute crises? How does it contribute to social cohesion in the long term? These are the questions the researchers want to answer with this project, which will run until the beginning of 2021.

Facts:

- Joint project (HybOrg) on “The Emergence and Social Impact of Hybrid Organizations in Local Crisis Management”
- Funded in the context of the BMBF funding measure “Zusammenhalt stärken in Zeiten von Krisen und Umbrüchen” (promoting cohesion in times of crisis and upheaval)
- Participants: Professor Wolfgang Seibel and Lorenz Neuberger (University of Konstanz), Dr Steffen Eckhard and Dr Matthias Fatke (Geschwister Scholl Institute of Political Science GSI at LMU Munich) as well as Dr Florian Roth (Center for Security Studies CSS at ETH Zurich)
- Duration: 2018 to 2021
- Approved funds: approximately 634,000 euros

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