

# Coimbra Conference on The Revival of Political Economy: Prospects for sustainable provision

Coimbra, Portugal, October 21-23, 2010

The recent financial collapse and the ensuing economic downturn are still visiting hardship and suffering upon millions all over the world, especially the poor and the unemployed. The crisis has raised public awareness of the consequences of neoliberal drift and of the shortcomings of a mainstream academic economics that did not anticipate, and even actively contributed to setting up the new (toxic) financial architecture. For many - economists, managers and politicians - the depression has been a sobering experience. Statements produced in the heat of events even suggest that this could be an opportunity both for seriously reconsidering and reversing the trend towards a growing financialisation of the economy, and for recasting the very foundations of knowledge of the economy. However, at the first signs of recovery, the habitual ways of thought, and of doing politics and business are settling down once again.

The need is therefore felt - with a sense of urgency - to widen public debate stimulated by renewed social science perspectives on economic issues. The failure of mainstream economics, acknowledged by many, calls for a revival and renewal of political economy. This will be achieved by strengthening the ongoing dialogue among scholars in all fields of the social sciences and humanities interested in economic processes and their relation to politics, morality, culture and nature.

The reflection needed must go beyond means and measures that may secure a return to a 'normal' growth regime and move to reconsider the ends to be pursued by public policies and institutional change. The new political economy in the making should address the issue of sustainability: economic, social and environmental. Prosperity – the purpose of any economy – can no longer be separated from social justice and environmental values.

With the intent of bringing together researchers from different disciplines and theoretical traditions for a reflection on the road ahead towards a *sustainable economy*, we call for participation in this Conference, to be held in Coimbra, Portugal, on 21-23 October, 2010.

Papers are welcome addressing any of the following (or closely related) topics:

1. Capitalisms and institutional change

How to grasp variety in capitalism?

What are the proper roles of international finance and commerce?

Which scales for which institutional changes?

2. Sustainability: economic, social and environmental

What should count as economic achievement?

What is the role of public provision in fighting inequality?

Can the economy be democratized? If so, how?

3. The Revival of Political Economy

What is political economy today?

Which research agenda for political economy today?

How to teach and publicly discuss political economy?