



**From in-work poverty
to Decent Work –
Think European.
Act in solidarity.**

#inworkNOpoverty

**Conference Reader
Berlin, 25 September 2019**

Welcoming Address



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Elke Breitenbach

Senator for Integration, Labour and Social Services in Berlin

Poverty is rooted, above all, in social inequality, or as Bertolt Brecht once succinctly put it: “If I weren’t poor, you wouldn’t be rich.” Poverty has a long history, various causes, and numerous aspects – on both a local and global level.

In this conference we want to focus our attention on “in-work poverty”. No longer work is a guarantee of protection from poverty. We need to look at the causes why, despite high employment, more and more people are poor even though they work. To this end, we want to discuss and compare academic and political assessments, European experience and best practice with one another. We want to learn from each other and develop possible solutions together.

Berlin has also seen a significant rise in employment in recent years. However, not all people have benefited, as is shown for instance by the high number of long-term unemployed in the city.

Especially depressing is the fact that many people who work do not earn a living wage. This is an unacceptable situation. To varying degrees, the problem also exists in many other European regions, towns and cities.

The Berlin Senate is committed to promoting decent work for all citizens of Berlin and wants to reduce precarious employment. We want to strengthen decent work. The long-term fight against poverty and social marginalisation is a key political task for the Berlin Senate. The aim is to have jobs that are both decent and that provide a living wage, but also to increase cultural and social participation. This issue is also very close to my heart.

I consider it important to discuss in-work poverty in connection with the future of work and digitalisation. In the “Work 4.0 – made in Berlin” process, we have long been developing approaches to ensure that the digitalisation of work proceeds in accordance with the concept of “Decent work 4.0”. This involves a new definition and development of workers’ rights to ensure that minimum wages and employment conditions offer protection from in-work poverty in the light of digitalisation.

Women, and families with many children, are particularly vulnerable to in-work poverty and precarious employment. As a result, children are also increasingly growing up in poverty, while poverty in old age is a risk, particularly for single parents. Children “inherit”, so to say, their parents’ poverty. This is another issue we need to look at more closely.

We also need to focus on migrants and immigrants, one of the most rapidly increasing population groups, especially in big cities like Berlin. A far too high number of migrants in Germany work in the low-wage sector. People with disabilities are also particularly affected by in-work poverty, earn less on average than people without disabilities, and often encounter unfavourable working conditions, which either pose accessibility problems or are not adapted to their respective disability – although there has been significant improvement in this area in recent years. The more these factors coincide in a person or a group, the greater the risk of (in-work) poverty.

As part of our labour and vocational education and training policies for Berlin, we, together with our economic and social partners and other stakeholders in society, have developed and implemented numerous initiatives, measures and tools to help people transition from precarious employment to decent work. However, this must be complemented on a national and European level.

On the European level, the role of the new EU Commission, the European Parliament, and the Member States is especially important. The new EU Commission must do everything in its power to tackle the problem of in-work poverty in Europe. The “European Pillar of Social Rights” provides a solid foundation for the task. However, action also needs to be taken with regard to regulation and financing. The European Social Funds must have sufficient means for the funding Period 2021 to 2027 to intensify the fight against in-work poverty on a federal state and municipal level, on a regional and local level in Europe, and to do so with a realistic chance of success.

The strategies, approaches, and measures that have thus far been applied on the European, national, and city levels are clearly not enough to effectively and permanently tackle the problem. We are also confronted with indirect consequences, such as populism and extremism – an untenable situation, which we cannot allow to stand idly by.

So what can political and administrative bodies, the economy, society, but also each and every one of us do to overcome this situation?

I invite you to join the discussion at our “From in-work poverty to Decent Work – Think European. Act in solidarity” conference. I hope that the insights gained from this event will help us to advance the fight against in-work poverty. There will be exciting discussions with guests from Berlin, Germany, and Europe. Our expert speakers and participants in panels and workshops will give us the opportunity to expand our viewpoints and take in new ideas and approaches. We will learn what initiatives and projects are being implemented in Berlin, across the country, and on a European level – and what we can learn from them.

I wish you all a very interesting day!

Sincerely,
Elke Breitenbach

From in-work poverty to Decent Work – Think European. Act in solidarity.

Organiser	Senate Department for Integration, Labour and Social Services
Date	25 September 2019
Location	Hotel Stadtbad Berlin, Oderberger Straße 57, 10435 Berlin
Moderation	Dr Julia Kropf

Throughout the conference (including the workshops), simultaneous translations will be provided in English ↔ German.

8.30 am – 9.30 am **Arrival and Registration**

9.30 am – 9.35 am **Conference Welcome**
Dr Julia Kropf, Moderation

9.35 am – 9.45 am **Welcome Address**
Michael Müller, Governing Mayor of Berlin

9.45 am – 10.00 am **Welcome and Introduction**
Elke Breitenbach, Senator for Integration, Labour and Social Services, Berlin

10.00 am – 10.45 am **In-work poverty in comparative theory**
Keynote I
Prof Dr Heinz Bontrup, Professor of Economics at the Westphalian University of Applied Sciences

10.45 am – 11.15 am **Table Talks**
All participants at their tables.

11.15 am – 11.30 am **Coffee Break**

11.30 am – 11.45 am In-work poverty from the perspective of the people affected

Talk in Pairs

Erika Biehn, Verband alleinerziehender Mütter und Väter (VAMV), Berlin (Association of single mothers and fathers)

Sarah Jochmann, Spokeswoman of the Facebook campaign “Liefern am Limit”, Düsseldorf

11.45 am – 12.30 pm In-work poverty – What answers does Europe have?

Panel I

Ignacio Doreste Hernández, European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), Brussels

Dr Katherine Duffy, European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN), Brussels

Alexander Friedrich, ASB Germany, AWO Germany and Volkshilfe Austria, Brussels

Prof Dr Henning Lohmann, University of Hamburg

Jeroen Jutte, European Commission DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Brussels

12.30 pm – 01.30 pm Lunch

01.30 pm – 02.00 pm In-work poverty
(German book title: Arm trotz Erwerbstätigkeit)

Keynote II

Dr Wolfgang Strengmann-Kuhn, MdB (Member of Parliament) and author

Programm

02.00 pm – 02.15 pm In-work poverty from the perspective of employees and employers

Talk in Pairs

Johannes Jakob, German Trade Union Confederation (DGB), Berlin

Alexander Schirp, Confederation of Employers and Business Associations of Berlin and Brandenburg (UVB e. V.)

02.15 pm – 03.45 pm Parallel Workshops

Workshop 1 – Precarious employment and in-work poverty

Elke Ahlhoff, ArbeitGestalten, Joboption Berlin

Dr Christian Pfeffer-Hoffmann, Minor – Projektkontor für Bildung und Forschung gGmbH, Berlin (Project Office for Education and Research)

Workshop 2 – Digital transformation and in-work poverty

Prof Mark Graham, Oxford University Internet Institute

Dr Konstantin Vössing, Hans Böckler Foundation, Berlin

Workshop 3 – Service sector and in-work poverty

Franziska Baum, ArbeitGestalten, Berlin

Veronika Bohrn Mena, Trade Union of Private Employees, Printing, Journalism, Paper; Vienna

Workshop 4 – Vocational education and train and in-work poverty

Dr Alexandra Bläsche, Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health, Women and Family Affairs, Potsdam

Dr Michael Dörsam, Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB), Bonn

03.45 pm – 04.00 pm **Coffee Break**

04.00 pm – 04.45 pm **In-work poverty – What answers exist for Berlin?**

Panel II

Opening statement of Prof Dr Michael Hüther,
German Economic Institute (IW), Köln

Alexander Fischer, Secretary of State for Labour and
Social Services, Senate Department for Integration,
Labour and Social Services, Berlin

Christian Hoßbach, German Trade Union
Federation (DGB), District Berlin-Brandenburg

Lutz Mania, Jobcenter Berlin-Mitte

Kerstin Oster, Berliner Wasserbetriebe
(Water Utilities)

Prof Ingrid Stahmer, Spokeswoman of the
“Landesarmutskonferenz” in Berlin and former
Senator of Berlin

04.45 pm – 05.00 pm **Conclusion**

Alexander Fischer, Secretary of State for Labour and
Social Services, Senate Department for Integration,
Labour and Social Services, Berlin

From 05.00 pm **Get Together at the Chimney Lounge**

Abstract

An increasing number of people in Europe are poor, even though they work. Germany is the European country with the largest increase in in-work poverty over recent years. This is an indefensible situation in a wealthy country where the economy has been booming for years.

Despite continuous economic growth and increasing employment, around 10 % of people employed in Germany can be classified as poor. This means that more than four million people and their families receive an income that is not sufficient to provide an appropriate standard of living and are therefore dependent on additional government benefits. Across EU member states the proportion of people living in in-work poverty also amounts to roughly 10 %. For these people and their families, in-work poverty is a bitter reality that often ends in poverty in old age.

Women, especially if they are single mothers, are particularly affected by and vulnerable to in-work poverty in Germany. In addition, women are far more likely to work in precarious or atypical employment, such as mini-jobs or (poorly paid or involuntary) part-time work. There is also the ongoing problem of the gender pay gap. The problem of child poverty is closely linked to this. Roughly 21 % of all children in Germany live in permanent or recurrent poverty for a period of at least five years. 50 % of these children are in single-parent families.

In-work poverty is reaching alarming proportions in large cities such as Berlin. Berlin's growing labour market is home to a comparatively large amount of atypical employment, and the proportion of people who receive additional benefits in accordance with the SGB II (German Social Code Book II) is particularly high. At the same time, Berlin-based companies are increasingly searching for employees and skilled workers. Berlin and other major European cities in which the service sector plays a significant role are paying increasing attention to certain industries, professions and jobs that are poorly paid and often feature precarious and atypical working conditions.

The main reasons behind this shift in focus are social inequality and the ever increasing gap between rich and poor, issues that are closely linked in global capitalism. In-work poverty is often blamed on excessively low pay. Nowadays, almost one in four employed people in Germany works in the low-paid sector.

Other factors that contribute to in-work poverty include the increase in atypical employment, in particular part-time and mini-jobs, the pressure on unemployed people to find a job as quickly as possible, inadequate government benefits, strict conditions for obtaining transfer payments, high rents (particularly in major cities), and a low standard of education. These factors play a role in the creation of in-work poverty throughout Europe, and some of them became more acute as a result of structural reforms following the European debt crisis, for example in Greece, Spain and Portugal.

From the German Anti-Poverty Conference to economic and social partners, political parties, European member states and European Union institutions, all relevant stakeholders have been in agreement for years that political action is required to combat poverty, and especially in-work poverty. However, there is still major progress to be made when it comes to strategic focus, effective policies and the specific implementation of tools and measures.

At its core, this is an issue concerning money and tools and, above all, the value of work and the dignity of people, which in our knowledge- and work-oriented society are best served when the transition from in-work poverty to decent work – and thus a self-determined life with a positive outlook and possibilities for development – is achieved.

Better education, fewer mini-jobs, faster wage and salary growth, and an increase in the minimum wage and/or social benefits are all frequently mentioned as possible means of fighting in-work poverty. An increase in employment with mandatory social security contributions and good working conditions (as opposed to precarious or atypical employment), the declaration of the general applicability of collective agreements, the reduction of (involuntary) part-time work, and the construction of more social housing are other recommended remedies.

On a European level, in Germany and particularly in Berlin, there are numerous approaches and tools that have helped and continue to help to combat (in-work) poverty. The task is to keep developing and expanding such approaches, but also to replace or complement them with more radical ones, as it is clear that the existing strategies and approaches are not (yet) sufficient to effectively and sustainably eradicate in-work

poverty, and by so doing also put an end to a socially unacceptable situation with indirect consequences including populism and extremism.

Maximum effort is therefore required to build on what has already been achieved by committed people and initiatives in the areas of politics, public administration and civil society:

For years now in Berlin, the Jobcenter and the Senate Department for Integration, Labour and Social Services (SenIAS) have been taking active steps to successfully integrate the long-term unemployed in the world of work, to reduce the number of mini-jobs in favour of work with mandatory social contributions, and, as part of the “Work 4.0 – made in Berlin” process, to analyse the positive and negative effects of digitalisation on the labour market and on vocational education and training policies.

The dialogue between social partners also plays an important role in this regard. Such dialogue makes it possible to continually reassess and redefine the possibilities for action between the SenIAS and the social partners with regard to collective agreements and social partnerships.

The coordination unit for tackling illegal employment, also based at the SenIAS, helps to combat in-work poverty by preventing or limiting the permanent loss of legal jobs due to illegal employment, which in turn reduces unemployment, exploitation and human trafficking.

The EU Office for the Equal Treatment of EU Workers at the Federal Government Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration reaches out to both employers and employees (and their families) from the EU as well as experts from the existing advisory structures, so that EU employers and employees (and their families) do in fact receive equal treatment with regard to employment, pay and other working conditions.

Migrants are also particularly affected by in-work poverty. The Berlin Counselling Centre for Migration and Decent Work (BEMA) offers advice and education to make migrants more aware of their employment and social rights.

The 20 principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights, proclaimed in 2017, are an important foundation and at the same

time a means of support in the fight against in-work poverty on a European level. This is especially true for the requirement for equal opportunity and access to the labour market as well as the implementation of fair employment conditions. These principles provide a framework for binding and non-binding measures for all EU member states in the area of European employment and social policy as well as a foundation upon which to build strategies for tackling in-work poverty. The same applies to the United Nations' sustainable development goals, in particular goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth). The phenomenon of in-work poverty will be explored in depth at the conference. Current research, which highlights causes and effects, in particular in the context of digitalisation, plays a decisive role. It is necessary to take the perspectives of those affected into account, but most important of all is to elicit and develop practical solutions for overcoming in-work poverty. There are many promising approaches throughout Europe, and it is important to identify, exchange, and further develop good practice projects from across the continent.

What can the political and administrative organisations, the economy, society as a whole but also each of us as individuals do to help solve this problem?

The following issues and courses of action lie at the heart of the conference. When it comes to these issues, causes and effects as well as possible solutions will be addressed:

1. Precarious employment and in-work poverty

The in-work poverty that many people face is the result of precarious employment in the low-pay sector (for example, mini-jobs, multi-jobbing, solo self-employment, involuntary part-time work, fixed-term contracts). What adjustments are necessary to change, improve or overcome this situation?

2. Digital transition and in-work poverty

In its "Work 4.0 – made in Berlin" process, the Berlin Senate Department for Integration, Labour and Social Services has long been developing approaches to ensure that the digitalisation of work proceeds in accordance with the concept of "Decent work 4.0". What effects does digitalisation have in particular on employed people who are affected by in-work poverty?

3. The service sector and in-work poverty

As in other major European cities, the service sector plays a defining role in Berlin. Of 1.4 million people who had jobs in Berlin with mandatory social contributions in the period 2017/2018, 85 % worked in the service sector, with women making up the majority. Which groups are particularly affected by in-work poverty and what needs do they have?

4. Vocational education and training and in-work poverty

Qualifications and educational aspirations, as well as good education and training that is available to as many people as possible are essential if in-work poverty is to be overcome. What role does education and training play in the transition to decent work and the prevention or overcoming of in-work poverty?

Curriculum Vitae



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Michael Müller

Governing Mayor of Berlin

1964 born in Berlin; married; two children

1982	Graduated from secondary school
1983	Technical College for Business and Administration
until 1986	Business apprenticeship
1986 to 2011	Self-employed printer
since 1981	Member of the Social Democratic Party (SPD)
1991 to 2000	Chairman of the local SPD chapter
1989 to 1996	Member of the Berlin-Tempelhof borough assembly, also as chairman of the SPD group; delegate to the district and state party conventions
since 1996	Member of the Berlin House of Representatives
2000 to May 2004	Chairman of the SPD in Tempelhof-Schöneberg
2001 to 2011	Chairman of the SPD parliamentary group in the Berlin House of Representatives
2004 to 2012	Chairman of the SPD in the federal state of Berlin
2011	Re-elected with a direct mandate by the constituency of Tempelhof-Schöneberg (District 4)
2011 to 2014	Berlin Mayor and Senator for Urban Development and the Environment
since 11 December 2014	Governing Mayor of Berlin
since 2016	Chairman of the SPD in the federal State of Berlin
1 November 2017 to 31 October 2018	President of the Bundesrat
since August 2018	President of the city network Metropolis

Memberships

- Arbeiterwohlfahrt Bundesverband e. V. / AWO (Workers' Welfare Association)
- Berliner Wirtschaftsgespräche (organisation for economic policy debates)
- Sozialdemokratische Gemeinschaft für Kommunalpolitik / SGK (Social Democratic association for municipal policy)

Curriculum Vitae



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Elke Breitenbach

Senator for Integration, Labour and Social Services, Berlin

Born in Frankfurt/Main on 30 March 1961

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Since 08/12/2016 | Senator for Integration, Labour and Social Services, Berlin |
| Since 2012 | Deputy State Chair of DIE LINKE in Berlin |
| 2003 – 2008 | Member of the Party Executive of the PDS
(from 2007 DIE LINKE) |
| Since 2003 | Member of the Berlin State Parliament |
| 2002 – 2003 | Special Advisor to the Berliner Senator for Health,
Social Services and Consumer Protection,
Dr Heidi Knake-Werner |
| 1998 – 1999 | Temporary position (via job creation scheme)
as a historian at the Sachsenhausen Memorial Site |
| 1992 – 1997 | Secretary of the Trade Union of Retail, Banking and
Insurance Workers (HBV) with responsibility for the areas
of young people, vocational education and training
and women |
| 1989 – 1991 | Academic researcher at the Technical University of Berlin
for the project “Cooperation between vocational schools
and providers of trade union youth services in Berlin
und Herford” |
| 1981 – 1989 | Studied for a degree in Political Sciences at the
Free University of Berlin |
| 1976 – 1981 | Attended full-time vocational school in Obertshausen,
occupational field of social care professions, obtained the
intermediate secondary school leaving certificate,
subsequently completed her upper secondary school
leaving certificate in Babenhausen |

Curriculum Vitae



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Alexander Fischer

Secretary of State for Labour and Social Services, Senate
Department for Integration, Labour and Social Services,
Berlin

Born on 10 October 1974, married, one son

Since 09/12/2016	State Secretary for Labour and Social Services, Berlin
2016	Head of the Department of Labour, Social Services, Health, Women, Family, Education, Cultural Affairs, Media, Environment, Nature Protection and Energy at the Thuringian State Chancellery (Representation of the State of Thuringia in Berlin)
2015	Government Spokesperson of the Free State of Thuringia
2010 – 2015	Press Spokesperson for the Party Executive of DIE LINKE
2008 – 2010	Member of the Party Executive of DIE LINKE with responsibility for establishing the party in West Germany
2007 – 2008	Head of the Office of Klaus Ernst, Deputy Party Chair and Parliamentary Party Leader of DIE LINKE at the time
2006 – 2007	Special Advisor on Children's and Youth Policy to the Parliamentary Party of DIE LINKE
2002 – 2006	Youth education advisor for the German Confederation of Trade Unions, Berlin-Brandenburg district
1993 – 2001	Studied for a degree in Modern and Contemporary history, Economic and Social History and Philosophy at the Technical University of Dresden
1981 – 1993	Attended Polytechnic Secondary School 22 and the Dreikönigs Upper Secondary School in Dresden, upper secondary school leaving certificate



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Dr Julia Kropf

Moderation

Short Biography Dr Julia Kropf is a freelance moderator and Systemic Business Coach. She holds a doctorate in occupational sociology, has previously been a consultant and senior manager in the private sector economy and brings about 20 years of professional experience to the table. Discussion is her passion. She seeks empathy without descending into sentimentalism and takes an objective approach which avoids any sense of a know-it-all attitude. She injects humour whilst never losing sight of the seriousness of the situation and is a fan of plain speaking from which provocation is absent. Julia Kropf chairs specialist conferences, panel discussions, strategic meetings and workshops. She is also happy to preside at festive events and citizens' conferences. This often involves working at the intersection between policy makers, trade and industry as well as society. She also coaches individual persons and teams during occupational change processes.

Keynote I | 10.00 am – 10.45 am



Prof Dr rer. pol Heinz-J. Bontrup

Professor of Economics at the Westphalian University of Applied Sciences

Short Biography Studied in Bielefeld and Bremen, completed his doctorate in Bremen, then had management roles in the air and space industry at MBB. He then became department head at the Progress Institute for Economic Research in Bremen, followed by his appointment to the management board at Stahlwerke Bochum AG, a Thyssen Group company. In 1996 he was appointed as Professor for Economic Science, specialising in work economy, in the economic law department at the Westphalian University of Applied Sciences. He has been emeritus since the end of the 2019 summer semester. Since 2010 he has been one of four directors of the Westphalian Energy Institute at the Westphalian University of Applied Sciences and spokesman for the working group "Alternative Wirtschaftspolitik (Alternative Economic Policy), AAW" which has issued the counter study to the report published by the German Federal Government's Council of Economic Experts since 1997. He is also an expert in the Bundestag (German federal parliament) and various Landtagen (federal state parliaments) as well as the liaison professor of the Hans Böckler Foundation.

Main focus

His research focus is labour economics through a holistic approach comprising the analysis of persons within companies on both the microeconomic and the macroeconomic level (labour market theory/ -policy).

In-work poverty in comparative theory



Erika Biehn

Verband alleinerziehender Mütter und Väter (VAMV), Berlin
(German Federal Association of Single Parents)

Short Biography Ms Biehn completed her higher education entrance qualification in Lipstadt. In 1999 she obtained her qualification as a social worker. She has been a member of the VAMV since 1987, where she was on the board of the local committee from 1979 to 1986. Since 1991 she has been a member of the VAMV local committee in Essen and chairwoman of the same since 2006.

She was on the state board of the VAMV in North Rhine-Westphalia from 1979 to 1986 and from 1990 to 2013. From 2007 onwards she was a member of the federal board and chairwoman from 2017 to 2019. She is a founding member of the National Poverty Conference, founded in 1991, and she was the vice spokeswoman from 1993 to 2007. She is still involved in various working groups.

Main focus

Poverty in general, in particular poverty of single parents and the German social welfare system.

In-work poverty from
the perspective of the
people affected



Sarah Jochmann

Spokeswoman of the Facebook campaign “Liefer am Limit”,
Düsseldorf

Short Biography Voluntary activist Sarah Jochmann used to work as a Deliveroo driver. In 2018 she and other drivers started the “Liefer am Limit (Delivering at the Limit)” initiative to improve working conditions in the sector. She has just finished her master’s thesis on “Prekäre Arbeit in der Plattformökonomie (Precarious Work in the Platform Economy)” and will start her traineeship at NGG (German food workers’ union) as union secretary in October.



Ignacio Doreste Hernández

European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), Brussels

Short Biography Ignacio Doreste is the ETUC advisor working on the dossiers of labour market and employment; self-employment, atypical work, and the platform economy; occupational health and safety; and organising workers. He graduated on Psychology in the Autonomous University of Madrid and he holds Masters on Human Resources Management (Open University of Catalunya), International Aid and Cooperation for Development (Complutense University of Madrid) and Clinical Psychology (Spanish Association of Behavioural and Cognitive Psychology). He works for the European Trade Union Confederation since 2013. Before, he was engaged in the Spanish trade union movement since 2009.

Main focus

Labour market and employment; self-employment, atypical work, and the platform economy; occupational health and safety; and organising workers.

In-work poverty –
What answers does
Europe have?



Dr Katherine Duffy

European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN), Brussels

Short Biography BA Economics, MA Industrial Relations, PhD Social Exclusion

Katherine's academic career was as principal lecturer in a university Business School. Throughout her career she has combined this with social policy analysis and anti-poverty action. She is a participant in EAPN (The European Anti-Poverty Network, www.eapn.eu). Katherine is previously UK evaluator for the European Commission Poverty 3 programme (1991 – 1994); director of the Council of Europe initiative on Human Dignity and Social Exclusion (1995 – 1997); chair of the Social Inclusion Group, the main policy group in EAPN Europe (2006 – 2010) and chair of the Social Policy Task Force of UK NGOs working on European social policy (2003 – 2010), which had consultative status with UK DWP, informally then formally. Katherine led on the European Minimum Income Network (EMIN, see www.emin-eu.net) for UK EAPN. Katherine has recently authored EAPN Europe's paper on new ways of work, <https://www.eapn.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/>.

Main focus

Katherine was a university labour economist. For EAPN, she contributes on the link between social assistance, minimum incomes and paid work and decent work. She is currently updating EAPN's concept, definition and measures of poverty to further emphasise the multidimensional nature of poverty. Katherine is also a member of the UK largest trades union, UNITE, and is active in her local branch around minimum income and decent work.

In-work poverty –
What answers does
Europe have?



Alexander Friedrich

ASB Germany, AWO Germany and Volkshilfe Austria, Brussels

Short Biography The political scientist Alexander Friedrich was born in the Austrian capital of Vienna, where he directed the Citizens' Service and the Europe information service at the Federal Chancellery until 2012. At the beginning of 2013 he moved to Brussels to work in the EU liaison office of the city of Vienna.

In 2015 Alexander Friedrich took over the direction of the joint Europe office of the Workers' Welfare Association (AWO), the Workers' Samaritan Federation (ASB) and the Volkshilfe Österreich (a non-partisan charity supporting professional social facilities). In his role representing the interests of this office on the European level, Alexander Friedrich's work mainly focuses on social and cohesion policy, (child) poverty, care and labour market policy, living, asylum and migration, assistance for the homeless and the concerns of people with disabilities.

In Berlin, he represents the AWO in particular in various bodies of the Federal Association of Non-statutory Welfare (BAGFW), the German Association for Public and Private Welfare, and the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN).

In-work poverty –
What answers does
Europe have?

Main focus

In its daily work, the AWO supports the numerous consultation and service facilities for people facing in-work poverty and represents their interests on both the national and European level. Since the start of this year, the AWO is chairing the Presidency of the National Poverty Conference (nak) and speaks on behalf of the people concerned in this way too.



Prof Dr Henning Lohmann

University of Hamburg

Short Biography Henning Lohmann is Professor of Sociology, specialized in methods of empirical social research, at the University of Hamburg. His work focuses primarily on poverty and inequality from a welfare-state comparative perspective.

Main focus

Henning Lohman has been working for around 15 years on the topic of in-work poverty. One of his main areas of work is the analysis of in-work poverty from a European comparative perspective with regard to the influence of structural and institutional framework conditions. He has published extensively on the subject, including the Handbook on In-Work Poverty (together with Ivo Marx, 2018) and "Armut von Erwerbstätigen in europäischen Wohlfahrtsstaaten: Niedriglöhne, staatliche Transfers und die Rolle der Familie (Poverty of the Employed in European Welfare States: low wages, state transfers and the role of the family)" (2007).

In-work poverty –
What answers does
Europe have?



Jeroen Jutte

European Commission DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Brussels

Short Biography Mr Jutte leads since 2013 the „Employment and social aspects of the European Semester“ unit in the Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG of the European Commission. In that function he gives direction to European economic coordination issues related to employment, education and skills, social and healthcare policy. He furthermore is responsible for the production of the annual, Treaty based, Joint Employment Report.

Mr Jutte started his Commission career in 1995 in EUROSTAT, in the field of business statistics. In 1998 he moved to the Regional Policy DG dealing mostly with accession issues. In 2003 he joined the Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG where he dealt with a variety of issues including European Social Fund coordination, pre-accession assistance (IPA), discharge on the Commission expenditure in the employment and social domain (some EUR 11 bn/yr) as well as relations with the European Court of Auditors. Mr Jutte is an economist by training.

Main focus

The European Semester analyses the full range of economic and social issues in Member States, including wages, poverty and social inclusion, etc. Furthermore, the Commission proposes Country Specific Recommendations to Council. Both the analysis and recommendations are prepared under Mr Jutte’s general supervision. Whilst different for each Member State, in-work poverty is an important element in this work, including also the „Joint Employment Report“, prepared within his team.

In-work poverty –
What answers does
Europe have?



© Stefan Kaminski

Dr Wolfgang Strengmann-Kuhn

MdB (Member of Parliament) and author

Short Biography Dr Wolfgang Strengmann-Kuhn is an economist and a member of the German parliament. He has been the spokesman for labour market policy and European social policy since 2017. He received his doctorate and post-doctorate qualification from Goethe University Frankfurt. Before moving up into the Bundestag (German Federal Parliament) he filled in for the Professor of Labour Economics at the University of Frankfurt in 2007/2008. His PhD thesis “Armut trotz Erwerbstätigkeit – Analysen und sozialpolitische Konsequenzen (Poverty despite employment – Analyses and socio-political consequences)” was awarded the Josef Popper Foundation research prize. He studied in Bielefeld, and taught and researched in Bielefeld, Frankfurt, and Stuttgart-Hohenheim. He was also a fellow at the Hanse Institute for Advanced Studies in Delmenhorst. He has worked, for example, in several of the international research projects funded by the EU on poverty and social inequality in the European Union.

Main focus

Poverty research, social security, basic security benefits, basic income, labour market and gender economy.

In-work poverty
(German book title:
Arm trotz Erwerbs-
tätigkeit)



© DGB

Johannes Jakob

German Trade Union Confederation (DGB), Berlin

Short Biography Johannes Jakob, 63, Studied social work (specialising in community work), professional experience in various social projects and in work with the unemployed. Political work in local parliaments.

In 1985 he became the youth education officer at the German Trade Union Confederation (DGB). From 1987 to 1995 elective function as DBG county chairman for the Emsland region and Bentheim county with headquarters in Lingen/Ems. In 1995 federal board, unit director in the labour market policy department, specialising in the integration of the unemployed, continuing education and training, social security of the unemployed, precarious and atypical work. Head of Labour Market Policy Department at the DGB National Executive Board since 2016.

Main focus

Social security system of the unemployed, continuing education and training, integration of the unemployed in the labour market.

Regulation on the labour market, atypical and precarious employment, development of participation and poverty. European Labour Market Policy.

In-work poverty
from the perspective
of employees and
employers



Alexander Schirp

Confederation of Employers and Business Associations
of Berlin and Brandenburg (UVB) e. V.

Short Biography 1993 and 1995, first and second state law examinations in Passau and Rostock; 1995–2008 employment law specialist at Association of the metal and electrical industry in Berlin and Brandenburg e.V. (VME); 2008–2011 director of the social security department at the UVB Berlin-Brandenburg (umbrella organisation of company associations); since 2012 general manager of labour market, vocational education and training and social security at UVB.

Main focus

Labour market and vocational education and training policy with a focus on how Berlin-based companies secure skilled workers. Represents the interests of employers in social and health-care policy.

In-work poverty
from the perspective
of employees and
employers

Workshop 1

Precarious employment and in-work poverty

02.15 pm – 03.45 pm

The in-work poverty experienced by many people is caused by precarious employment in the form of, for example, mini jobs, multi-jobbing, solo self-employment, involuntary part-time work, and fixed-term contracts that lead to job insecurity. Excessively low wages or salaries are often cited as specific causes of in-work poverty. In Germany today, almost one in four employed people work in the low-wage sector.

An increase in employment with mandatory social security contributions and good working conditions, as opposed to precarious or atypical employment, the declaration of the general applicability of collective agreements, the reduction of involuntary part-time work, the construction of more social housing and a rent cap are recommended as effective measures for dealing with the problem.

The minimum wage also plays an essential role in tackling in-work poverty and must be sufficiently high to enable a dignified existence and a reasonable standard of living.

On a European level, the 20 principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights (September 2017), in particular Chapter II “Fair working conditions”, offers a basis for eradicating precarious working conditions.

The workshop will therefore look at how to reduce in-work poverty related to precarious employment conditions, and what approaches exist for turning precarious employment into decent work.

Key questions

- What changes are necessary to combat precarious employment?
- How can the transition from precarious employment to decent work be achieved? What steps can those who are affected take? What forms of support and good practice projects/approaches exist for this purpose?

Expert speakers

- Elke Ahlhoff, ArbeitGestalten, Joboption Berlin
- Dr Christian Pfeffer-Hoffmann, Minor – Projektkontor für Bildung und Forschung gemeinnützige GmbH, Berlin (Project Office for Education and Research)



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Dr Julia Kropf

Moderation

Short Biography Dr Julia Kropf is a freelance moderator and Systemic Business Coach. She holds a doctorate in occupational sociology, has previously been a consultant and senior manager in the private sector economy and brings about 20 years of professional experience to the table. Discussion is her passion. She seeks empathy without descending into sentimentalism and takes an objective approach which avoids any sense of a know-it-all attitude. She injects humour whilst never losing sight of the seriousness of the situation and is a fan of plain speaking from which provocation is absent. Julia Kropf chairs specialist conferences, panel discussions, strategic meetings and workshops. She is also happy to preside at festive events and citizens' conferences. This often involves working at the intersection between policy makers, trade and industry as well as society. She also coaches individual persons and teams during occupational change processes.



Elke Ahlhoff

ArbeitGestalten, Joboption Berlin

Short Biography For many years now, the ArbeitGestalten Team has been engaged with the many facets and forms of precarious atypical employment in Berlin. Ms. Ahlhoff has been involved with the “Joboption Berlin” project since 2013, initially as an advisor and since 2016 as general manager of the ArbeitGestalten Beratungsgesellschaft mbH. Based on qualitative social research and social dialogue, it is ArbeitGestalten’s mission to fight precarious employment conditions and promote Decent Work. The further development of the project is significantly aided by the participation of employees from diverse industries and the exchange with company representation bodies. Events and publications invite participants to lead the public discussion on the design of working environments in digital and analogue reality.

Main focus

Identification of precarious atypical employment in all of its facets and forms. Creating broad awareness of the risks and consequences of precarious atypical employment and promotion of the potential of precarious atypical employees for gaining skilled workers and Decent Work. Analysis of structures that cause precarious atypical employment and, – in a social partner dialogue – determination of action fields and development of possible measures for creating Decent Work.



Dr Christian Pfeffer-Hoffmann

Minor – Projektkontor für Bildung und Forschung gGmbH, Berlin
(Project Office for Education and Research)

Short Biography Christian Pfeffer-Hoffmann has a PhD in media education and is the director of Minor – Projektkontor für Bildung und Forschung (project office for education and research). For many years now his tasks have combined the fields of labour market and integration policy. This includes projects such as “Fachkräftesicherung durch Integration zuwandernder Fachkräfte aus dem EU-Binnenmarkt (securing skilled workers via the integration of migrant skilled workers from the EU single market)” and “Gute Arbeit für zuwandernde EU-Fachkräfte in Berlin (Decent Work for migrant EU skilled workers in Berlin)” for the Senate Department for Integration, Labour and Social Services, in which the aim is to counteract both the existing shortage of skilled workers and the precarious working conditions of EU migrants by means of analyses and the development of innovative and fair ways to successfully integrate the target group in the labour market.

Main focus

Dr Christian Pfeffer-Hoffmann’s work particularly focuses on model and research projects in the contexts of migration, labour market integration, securing skilled workers, promoting democracy, political participation and media education. On the topic of in-work poverty, the book “Prekär in Berlin – Zusammenhänge zwischen Arbeitsmarktintegration und Wohnungsnotfällen bei EU-Zugewanderten (Links between Labour Market Integration and accommodation shortages in the case of EU migrants)” was published as part of the “Gute Arbeit in Berlin (Decent Work in Berlin)” project in March 2019.

Workshop ②

Digital transformation and in-work poverty

02.15 pm – 03.45 pm

In its “Work 4.0 – made in Berlin” process, the Berlin Senate Department for Integration, Labour and Social Services has long been developing approaches to ensure that the digitalisation of work proceeds in accordance with the concept of “Decent work 4.0”.

Links between in-work poverty and the future of work will be discussed in the workshop, while possible solutions in accordance with the concept of decent work will also be presented. At the same time, this topic has profound relevance for Europe, as digitalisation, automation, robots and artificial intelligence, globalisation and flexibilisation influence the forms, content and organisation of work throughout Europe and around the world, and are radically transforming the world of work. On the one hand, tasks and jobs will (and in some cases already have) become redundant due to automation and digitalisation. On the other hand, new areas of work and jobs will arise, while existing forms of work are constantly evolving. Personal services remain important and will continue to gain in significance. Digitalisation also offers the chance to “humanise the world of work”, for example in the sense of better, more employee-friendly working conditions or improved

access to work (for example in the form of assistance for people with disabilities). Digital competencies will become increasingly important as a requirement for finding work and long-term employment. Different forms of work such as mobile, crowd and gig work are an integral part of an international division of labour. In light of digitalisation, the rights of employees as well as a minimum wage that protects employees against in-work poverty must be redefined. It is the job of politicians and social partners to shape this process.

Key questions

- What effects does digitalisation have on employees who are affected by in-work poverty?
- How can the new forms of work that have arisen as a result of digitalisation be designed so as to, ideally, reduce rather than reinforce in-work poverty?

Expert speakers

- Prof Mark Graham, Oxford University
- Dr Konstantin Vössing, Research Department “Work of the Future” – Hans Böckler Foundation, Berlin



Franziska Grell

Moderation, Berlin Senate Department for Integration, Labour and Social Services

Short Biography Franziska Grell studied political science in Berlin and Oslo. Since 2016 she has worked as an officer in the Berlin Senate Department for Integration, Labour and Social Services and is responsible for the divisions concerned with European employment policy and the future of work. Her work particularly focusses on the effects of digitalisation on both employment and vocational education and training.



Prof Mark Graham

Oxford University Internet Institute

Short Biography Mark Graham is the Professor of Internet Geography at the Oxford Internet Institute, a Faculty Fellow at the Alan Turing Institute, a Research Associate at the Centre for Information Technology and National Development in Africa at the University of Cape Town, and a Visiting Researcher at Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung and Technische Universität Berlin. He leads a range of research projects spanning topics between digital labour, the gig economy, internet geographies, and ICTs and development.

Main focus

Mark Graham has spent the last few years investigating the implications of new types of digital labour for workers in the Global South. This research is ongoing in his team's work on outsourcing and microwork, as well as digital/platform work more broadly. Together with colleagues on three continents, he has started an action research project called the Fairwork Foundation that aims to conduct research that creates incentives and disincentives for fairer work in the platform economy.



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Dr Konstantin Vössing

Hans-Böckler-Foundation, Berlin

Short Biography Konstantin Vössing has directed the “Arbeit der Zukunft (Work of the Future)” research department at the Hans Böckler Foundation in Berlin since May this year. From 2016 to 2019 he filled in for the Professor of Comparative Political Science at the Institute for Social Sciences at the Humboldt Universität zu Berlin. There he was also a research assistant from 2009 to 2016. Further career milestones include the position as John F. Kennedy Memorial Center Fellow at the Centre for European Studies at Harvard University from September 2013 to August 2014, the Jean Monnet Fellowship at the Robert Schuman Centre of the European University Institute from September 2015 to August 2016, and his role as lecturer of political science and international studies at Ohio State University from September 2008 to September 2009. He completed his doctorate at Ohio State University in August 2008.

Main focus

Konstantin Vössing concentrates on designing the work of the future and the role of unions in a changing world of work. In this respect he is particularly interested in the historical development of work, political debates on the subject, and the potential of European and global cooperation.

Workshop ③

Service sector and in-work poverty

02.15 pm – 03.45 pm

The service sector is the largest economic sector in Germany, accounting for approximately 75 % of employment. In Berlin and other major cities, the figure is even higher, exceeding 80 %. The service sector encompasses a broad range of industries and is also the fastest-growing economic sector in Germany. On the one hand, the sector is defined by innovation and attractive jobs, on the other hand it is also the sector with the highest proportion of low-wage and precarious employment. Specific industries, such as hospitality and retail, are particularly affected.

Digitalisation also plays a major role in this sector, for example in the form of smart services. Household-related services are also increasingly organised via digital platforms.

Social services are expanding and, at the same time, are subject to an already long-term and increasing commercialisation. Women account for the vast majority of people employed in these personal services. Further differentiation between prestigious, professional occupations and more simple assistance work in the low-wage sector is predicted. Among other factors, it is a question of what value a job is seen to have and how this value is expressed in terms of wages and salaries.

The close ties between industry and the services sector also play an important role.

Against this background, the workshop will look at how in-work poverty in the service sector, especially in light of anticipated developments, can not only be reduced but, to the greatest extent possible, prevented from arising.

Key questions

- Which groups are particularly affected by in-work poverty and what are their needs?
- What measures and resources could lead to a reduction of in-work poverty experienced by people who work in the service sector?

Expert speakers

- Franziska Baum, ArbeitGestalten, Berlin
- Veronika Bohrn Mena, The Union of Private Sector Employees, Printing, Journalism, and Paper; Vienna



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Margrit Zauner

Moderation, Berlin Senate Department for Integration, Labour and Social Services

Short Biography Margrit Zauner is a qualified bank clerk, she holds a qualification as Master of Business Administration and a master's degree in adult education. Since 2017 she is Head of Unit for Labour Policy and Vocational Training at the Senate Department for Integration, Labour and Social Services in Berlin. Before she has been actively involved in labour, vocational education and training and gender equality policy for the State of Berlin (head of the office of the Senator for Work, Vocational Education and Training and Women, direction of the unit for women's equality in the world of work, and direction of the professional training unit). She has gained experiences in working in an institution for education and training advice and at a state-wide consulting association. Since 2007 she has been Berlin state representative and chairwoman of the Verein Berufsbildungswerk Berlin e. V., sponsor of the Annedore Leber Berufsbildungswerk (Vocational Training Centre). She is also the Berlin state representative on the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training BIBB Board.



Franziska Baum

ArbeitGestalten

Short Biography Ms Baum studied social sciences at the Humboldt Universität of Berlin and the University of Amsterdam with a focus on work and gender sociology. Since that time she has been researching on precarisation and gender relations. Initially, Franziska Baum worked four years at the Fraunhofer Center for Responsible Research and Innovation (IAO). In the beginning of 2019 she started working at the Joboption Berlin project. Within the project she is responsible for the hotel and catering industry and digitally mediated service work. The project identifies industry-specific fields of action and develops concrete measures for Decent Work.

Main focus

In the Joboption project, structures that generate precarious atypical employment are analysed and fields of action are identified in the social partner dialogue. Possible measures for the creation of Decent Work will be developed especially for the service sector. This requires a broad understanding of who is specifically affected by precarious conditions and how and which inequality structures are reflected in these employment relationships.



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Veronika Bohrn Mena

Trade Union of Private Employees, Printing, Journalism, Paper;
Vienna

Short Biography Veronika Bohrn Mena is author of the book “Die neue ArbeiterInnenklasse – Menschen in prekären Verhältnissen (The new working class – people in precarious situations)” and has intensively focussed on precarious working situations, segmentation processes and changes in the world of work and all of its effects for ten years. She is a qualified photographer and studied culture and social anthropology at the University of Vienna. Since 2013 she has worked full-time representing the interests of the Trade Union GPA-djp as an expert on atypical employment. She was also the chairwoman of the Plattform Generation Praktikum and was involved as a student in the Bundesvertretung der Österreichischen Hochschülerinnen- und Hochschülerschaft (Austrian Federal Representation of the Austrian Student Union).

Main focus

Veronika Bohrn Mena represents the interests of the Trade Union of Private Employees GPA-djp as union secretary and as an expert on atypical employment relationships and precarious work. She is also an author and publisher and writes about wage development, social security, labour market segmentation, labour market development and social policy.

Workshop 4

Vocational education and train and in-work poverty

02.15 pm – 03.45 pm

For people without formal professional qualifications it is often difficult to gain a foothold in the world of work. This is particularly the case for the unemployed. No proof of expertise and a low level of formal education have been proven to contribute to in-work poverty. The strengthening of vocational education and training is therefore a key factor in tackling in-work poverty. Research has also established a direct link between political measures for the labour market and in-work poverty: While low unemployment and social benefits, as well as strict conditions for obtaining transfer payments, lead to higher in-work poverty, higher spending on active measures for the labour market and professional qualifications, such as vocational education and training, have a positive effect. Opportunities for occupational qualifications and continuing education should therefore be expanded and made possible or expanded for people in atypical or precarious employment or who work in the low-wage sector. In June 2019, Germany passed a national continuing education strategy (Nationale Weiterbildungsstrategie, NWS) which aims at strengthening the collective efforts of the federal government, the federal states, business and unions for continuing education and formal qualifications. The objective is for a new

“continuing education culture” to arise, not least in small- and medium-sized enterprises. Among other things, employability among the labour force should be improved. The new strategy might also improve the qualifications of people in low-income work, in terms of upward mobility. The workshop will examine how in-work poverty can be tackled via vocational education and training and, ideally, not arise at all.

Key questions

- How must qualification measures be designed so that those affected by in-work poverty have a realistic chance of improving their prospects?
- Can greater permeability and the opening of the labour market for people with fewer qualifications remedy this situation?

Expert speakers

- Dr Alexandra Bläsche, Brandenburgian Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health, Women and Family Affairs, Potsdam
- Dr Michael Dörsam, Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB), Bonn



Stephanie Urbach

Moderation

Short Biography Stephanie Urbach studied political science in Bonn and Leeds and has worked since then in the fields of consulting and process support, organisational development, project and network management, and public relations.

Stefanie Urbach has worked at gsub mbH since 2008, initially as a consultant and moderator for various federal programmes and later for organisational development projects. She is currently head of the programme office for the “Die Vielfaltsgestalter – Lokale Bündnisse für Zusammenhalt in Vielfalt” (Designing Diversity – Local Alliances for Cohesion and Diversity) Robert Bosch Foundation support programme and assists two of the local alliances for business and work in Berlin.



Dr Alexandra Bläsche

Brandenburgian Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health, Women and Family Affairs, Potsdam

Short Biography After graduating as a social scientist from the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin in 1997, she was a research assistant at BTU Cottbus in the economic and industrial sociology faculty until 2004. She has worked at the Brandenburgian Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health, Women and Family Affairs since 2005. Since 2014 Ms Bläsche has directed the unit for vocational education and training and skilled workers policy in the Department for Work, Training and Skilled Workers.

She is a member of various educational policy committees and advisory councils, and is currently chairwoman of the Board of the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training.

Main focus

Ms Bläsche's work primarily focuses on vocational education and training in terms of the fundamental issues of dual training and continuing vocational education and training. An important aspect of this is the participation of all labour market target groups in vocational education and training. The participation of people with low-level qualifications in continuing education and training is, in view of the huge demographic change, both a particular challenge and a big opportunity for improved labour market participation.



Dr Michael Dörsam

Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB), Bonn

Short Biography Following his economics degree, Dr Michael Dörsam initially worked for several years in the field of empirical economic research (at first in the field of human resources economics, later in education economics). In 2018 he moved to the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training in Bonn. Since then, he has worked there on the topics of continuing education and permeability, initially within the scope of the research focus area InnovatWB funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), and now in the context of supporting the National Further Training Strategy.

Main focus

Dr Michael Dörsam works on the topics of vocational education and training and permeability as programme manager and in terms of his own scientific work.

Insights on assessment, on the validation and recognition of competencies acquired by informal and non-formal means, on target-group suitable teaching and learning formats, and aspects of access to, participation in and motivation for continuing education and training from the funding priority we recently supported, InnovatWB, provide starting points for the issues and questions raised in the workshop.



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Prof Dr Michael Hüther

German Economic Institute (IW), Köln

Short Biography Prof Dr Michael Hüther, born on 24.04.1962 in Düsseldorf, studied economic science and medieval and contemporary history from 1982 to 1987 at the Justus Liebig University in Gießen. He became a research assistant after completing his doctorate and in 1995 he was secretary general of the German Council of Economic Experts. In 1999 he became head economist at DekaBank and was appointed as director of the economics and communication department there in 2001.

Since August 2001 he is a visiting lecturer at the EBS Business School in Oestrich-Winkel and is director and member of the German Economic Institute's executive committee. He was appointed as chairman of the board of TÜV Rheinland AG in April 2019.

In the 2016/17 academic year he was Gerda Henkel Adjunct Professor in the Department of German Studies at Stanford University, CA, USA.

In-work poverty –
What answers exist
for Berlin?

Main focus

Prof Dr Michael Hüther is actively involved in the German research community which deals with issues of justice and dysfunction in terms of the labour market. He particularly calls for a more active integration policy for the long-time unemployed, measures for improved upward mobility, and the reduction of regional inequalities. He assigns the tariff partnership a particular significance with regard to all possible solutions.



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Christian Hoßbach

German Trade Union Federation, District Berlin Brandenburg

Short Biography Christian Hoßbach was born in (West) Berlin in 1963. He graduated as a Diplom-Volkswirt (economist) in 1988. Alongside his studies he was involved in the youth education programmes of IG Metall. He has been a member of DGB (German Trade Union Confederation) unions since 1985.

Hoßbach was the spokesman of the municipality of (East) Berlin in 1990. He moved to a privatisation agency in 1991 (Treuhandanstalt). From 1997 to the beginning of 2010, he worked at the Berlin office of the IG Metall board, which is responsible for communication with the Bundestag (German Federal Parliament) and political parties. His priorities included the rebuilding of East Germany, and structure and industry policy. Since 2009 he was head of the office.

From 2010 to 2018 he was the vice chairman of the DBG regional organisation. In spring 2018 Hoßbach was elected as district chairman. He is also alternating Chairman of the Deutsche Rentenversicherung Berlin-Brandenburg (pension insurance).

In-work poverty –
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Lutz Mania

Jobcenter Berlin-Mitte

Short Biography He started working for the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit – BA) in 1990. The path to his current position as general manager of the Jobcenter Berlin-Mitte saw him take on various roles at various bodies within the BA. The entry level job as statistician and chief of press and public relations was at the employment agency Dessau (employment agency). He was an employment adviser at the employment agency Halle from 1995 to 1997. Afterwards he moved to his first leading position as office manager and later operational manager at the employment agency Wittenberg. Following various management positions at the BA's headquarters in Nuremberg and the Saxony-Anhalt Thuringia regional office, he was appointed as authorised representative of the management in 2006, initially for unemployment insurance and later also for basic social security and, as of 2008, operations manager of the Saxony-Anhalt Thuringia regional office. Since 2016 he has been the general manager of the Jobcenter Berlin-Mitte – one of the biggest in the country.

Main focus

The Jobcenter is responsible for implementing the SGB II (German Social Code), i.e. the basis of social security for job seekers. Alongside securing a living, this includes advising and placement in employment and training, support and advance funding. By cooperating with our network partners, it is our goal to use appropriate measures to put an end to our customers' need for help.

In-work poverty –
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Kerstin Oster

Berliner Wasserbetriebe (Water Utilities)

Short Biography Kerstin Oster has been Executive Board Member of Human Resources and Social Affairs at Berliner Wasserbetriebe (BWB) since 2015 and is responsible for both the personnel department and information technology. She is also deputy chairwoman of the employer's association (Kommunaler Arbeitgeberverband e. V.).

Before starting work at the BWB, Ms Oster worked as a director of human resources, procurist, and CEO all over Germany in the telecoms sector.

Main focus

Increasing digitalisation, shortage of skilled workers, demographic change, and effective generation management are just some of the challenges which the HR and IT sectors are and will be facing in the future. An equal and fair compensation for the employed in order to meet challenges and actively support processes of change is an important part of the HR-strategic direction of the company.

In-work poverty –
What answers exist
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Prof Ingrid Stahmer

Spokeswoman of the Berlin state conference on poverty (“Landesarmutskonferenz”) in Berlin and former Senator of Berlin

Short Biography Up until 1999, Professor Ingrid Stahmer was a social worker, a group dynamics trainer (German Society for Group Dynamics and Organisational Dynamics, DGGGO/ DAGG), district councillor for social affairs in Berlin-Charlottenburg, member of the Berlin state government as representative of the governing mayor, and senator for the department of health, social affairs, youth, school and sport. She retired from politics after the 1999 election. She has run an office for organisational consulting, strategy and team development, coaching and supervision (DGSv) since 2000. She is also a visiting lecturer at the Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences in Berlin. Voluntary positions: Chairwoman of the board at the German Central Institute for Social Issues (DZI) and the August Bebel Institute (ABI), and chair spokeswoman for the Berlin state conference on poverty (Iak-Berlin).

Main focus

Professor Stahmer has been engaged with the subject of poverty her entire working life as a social worker and politician. The Berlin state conference on poverty is an association of over 40 NGOs. It has concentrated on analysing the backgrounds and contexts of poverty and drawing strategies from these to develop a poverty-free Berlin since its founding in December 2009.

In-work poverty –
What answers exist
for Berlin?

Senatsverwaltung
für Integration, Arbeit
und Soziales



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