



## Social democracy

In today's Europe, few social democratic parties are in power. The politics of the "third way", associated with Tony Blair and New Labour, seems to have lost its attraction. More than a decade after Blair's 1997 landslide victory, few are seeking social democratic renewal by moving more to the political centre. In the aftermath of the financial crisis, however, the demand for social democratic policies seems to be growing. To get in power, political parties on the right have to abandon their former neo-liberal dogmas to at least rhetorically pursue the kind of welfare policies traditionally associated with social democracy. And in many social democratic parties a self-critical debate has begun in order to create a future politics capable of both handling the challenges of globalization and strengthening welfare, employment and social solidarity.

In *Fronesis* 32–33, the changes in social democracy during the latter decades are discussed, both regarding political ideas and economic policies. Was the third way nothing but "neo-liberalism with a human face", or were these policies on the contrary a successful defence of the social democratic model in an era of increasing economic globalization? What insights into the increasing inequalities of our time can be found in the ideological heritage of social democracy? And is social democracy today only a European concern?

In this issue of *Fronesis* we publish "Building the Good Society: the project of the democratic left", written by Labour MP Jon Cruddas and SPD General Secretary Andrea Nahles, a declaration for a social Europe written ten years after Tony Blair's and Gerhard Schröder's third way manifesto. The British political theorist David Held outlines a global social democratic model with the aims to strengthen the regulation of global finance and to make the increasingly powerful international institutions more democratically accountable. The Brazilian social theorist Roberto Mangabeira Unger — who has also been a minister in president Lula's Social Democratic government — discusses the prospects for social democracy in a society less defined by the social structures of industrial society, and more pressed by the demands of the new service economy.

Political scientist Magnus Ryner examines the relationship between the financial crisis and the politics of the third way being pursued by European social democratic parties since the 1990's. Using the example of New Labour, French political scientists Florence Faucher-King and Patrick Le Galès discuss how the new governmental techniques often labelled as "new public management" have created an "auditing society", in which citizens are reduced to consumers and the professional ethics of the public employees are deteriorating.

North–American social scientists Richard Sandbrook, Marc Edelman, Patrick Heller, and Judith Teichman scrutinize whether social democracy is possible in the global south during the conditions of globalization. Swedish sociologist Adrienne Sörbom analyses how locally active social democratic politicians and trade unionists seek strategies to counteract the local effects of globalization.

The issue also offers contributions from Sheri Berman, Jonas Pontusson, Samir Amin, Sten O. Karlsson, Carl Tham, Jenny Andersson and Örjan Nyström.

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