

BEST WISHES

March 2015

Our financial markets have an important role to play. They are supposed to allocate capital, manage risks. We are bearing the costs of their misdeeds. There is a system where we have socialized losses and privatized gains. That is not capitalism; that is not a market economy. That is a distorted economy, and if we continue with that, we will not succeed in growing, and we will not succeed in creating a just society.

— Joseph E. Stiglitz to the protesters at Zuccotti Park, New York



Photo: S. Hanisch

Thank you for the fruitful co-operation throughout the past year. We wish you a peaceful and prosperous year.

Dear colleagues, partners and friends,

In its fourth year of existence, the **Kelso Professorship** extended its interdisciplinary research and policy advice in the area of financial participation to include consumers. In a new project we pursue research on the feasibility of **Consumer Stock Ownership Plans (CSOPs) in the renewable energy sector**.

In October 2014, the European Commission (DG MARKT) published our comprehensive [study on “The Promotion of Employee Ownership and Participation”](#) that provides an overview of the development of employee financial participation (EFP), in particular of employee share ownership, across the EU-28 over the last decade. The study analyses a range of policy options to be considered at EU level to reduce the main obstacles to transnational EFP and to encourage it throughout the EU. As short-term

measures, this includes the launch of a virtual information centre for EFP as well as an online tool for Calculating Effective Tax Rates for Employee Participation Schemes (CETREPS), which were both developed for this project. The long-term measure proposed is to establish an optional Common European Regime for Employee Financial Participation (CEREFP).

We established new contacts to researchers and practitioners during two study tours to Spain and Poland, our international symposium and summer school on the island of Procida (Italy, see photo above), conference participation and guest lectures. In Germany, Hans Böckler Foundation published our study [“Employee Share Ownership Under Usage of an Intermediary Entity: Design and Financing”](#) (in German).

Heading the **Inter-University Centre** of Viadrina, Freie Uni-

versität Berlin, Sveučilište u Splitu and Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, with our Croatian partners we organize a panel at the [11th International Conference “Challenges of Europe: Growth, competitiveness and inequalities”](#) on the island of Hvar (Croatia) on 27–29 May 2015 entitled “Property rights, inequality, and employee/consumer financial participation”. Keynote speaker at the conference will be the Nobel laureate and leading economist Prof. Joseph E. Stiglitz (Columbia University, New York).

Looking forward to seeing you soon. To stay in touch, you can also follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Sincerely,

Prof. Dr iur. Jens Lowitzsch and the Kelso Professorship team