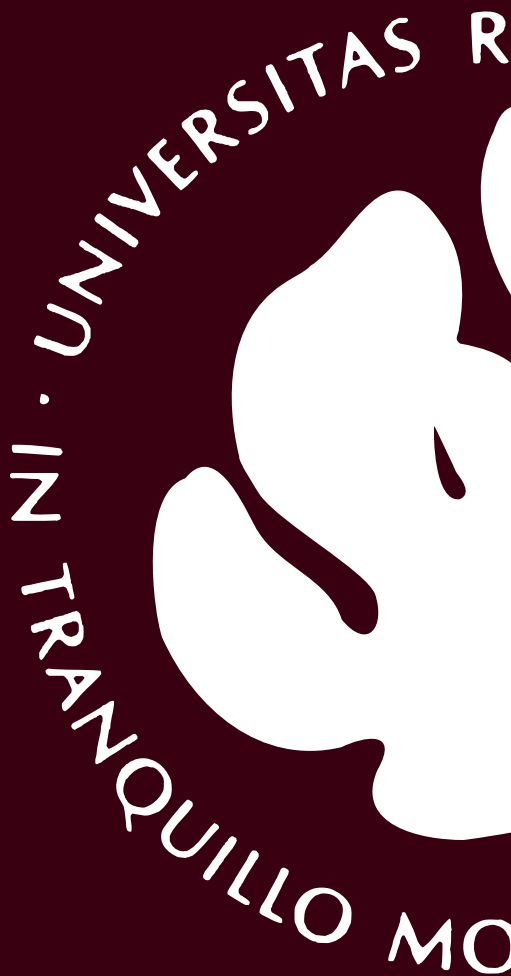




# Strategy Plan 2009-2012

Roskilde University  
Department of Society and Globalisation





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## Strategy Plan 2009-2012

### Mission

The Department of Society and Globalisation (ISG) focuses its research on key societal problems and developments which are taking place in a complex and diverse globalized world. The research aims at generating novel scientific insights which contribute to a renewal of the international research agenda. This is achieved through cross-disciplinary, collaborative and interactive research, which also informs the teaching at the department. Furthermore, ISG research produces knowledge and scientifically based insights which benefit citizens and decisionmakers in the public and private sectors, and, more broadly, Danish society and the international community.

### Vision

ISG is:

- To address and respond to new and emerging societal problems arising in a global world characterized by vertical and horizontal interdependences
- To produce high quality research through cross-disciplinary studies based on a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods
- To collaborate with highly esteemed researchers around the world and interact with external stakeholders in the production of new insights

### Research priorities for 2009-2012

1. Changing Societies: Citizenship, Participation, Civil society, and Welfare
2. Politics, Governance and Democracy
3. Globalization, Regionalization and Local Responses
4. Global/Local Development Challenges



# 1. Changing Societies: Citizenship, Participation, Civil Society and Welfare

## 1.1 Societal relevance

In recent years, citizens' involvement has become a key issue on political and institutional agendas. In all nationstates, migration dynamics and patterns challenge traditional notions of civiness, and practices of active citizenship. The deficient democratic processes and legitimacy crises that surround the modern idea of democracy have led to a growing focus on the importance of social and civic participation aimed at inclusion and social cohesion which may, however, result in new forms of inclusion and exclusion. Consequently, ISG will be active in encouraging new research into the ways in which such dynamics impact the possibilities for human security and social cohesion through the activation of new notions of citizenship.

It involves the need to consider new types of public and civil society institutions and organizations, furthermore new understandings of democratic rights in the private and the public spheres as well as in the work place are required. Currently, we are witnessing the emergence of new dynamics in relation to participation and the interaction between state, market, and civil society. The ongoing processes of globalization, including migration flows, are challenging modern welfare societies including existing relations between state, market and civil society. These changes affect the conditions for providing and financing social benefits and services, they also impact the perception and understanding of welfare, and the conditions for the good life. In sum, we are currently seeing the development of new types of multidimensional collaboration between social partners, corporations and welfare institutions. Consequently researchers at the department are engaged in analyzing the impact of this development on the central themes of justice, recognition and equality.

Research into the conditions and possibilities for citizens' more active involvement in Europe and its various countries have been paralleled by a revitalization of the role played by citizens in the South in influencing and regulating the economy and society at local, national, and regional levels. The role of civil society is of equal significance in Asian, African and Latin American societies – some

of them still characterized by authoritarian regimes, or by state institutions that have little outreach and capacity to secure the welfare of citizens, however, they present different challenges for theoretical analysis and policy intervention.


In many cases, the civic organizations in the non-Western countries are based on demands for the recognition of groups and individuals as citizens with full human and social rights, and on struggles against discrimination based on criteria of ethnicity, gender, race or other markers of cultural identity. Such struggles for citizenship, recognition, and participation are in many respects parallel to those pursued by organizations in Europe and are closely linked to more global social and cultural developments and dynamics of state-civil society interaction. Therefore a crosscutting research priority is the identification and analysis of various forms of diversity with a special focus on gendered aspects of social, cultural, political and economic realities.

## 1.2 Key research issues

- The conditions for participation, citizenship, and welfare under different societal conditions – how to cope with social inequality, marginalization, and exclusion,
- Recognition and citizenship – the combination of diversity and equality in relation to ethnicity, gender, age, social class, and other social categories
- How do state policies – at national or international level – contribute to or constrain social rights and active citizenship for citizens as well as non-citizens?
- What consequences are changing perceptions of welfare and welfare policies having for the ongoing restructuring of the relationship between state, market and civil society
- How is the relationship between employment, voluntary work, welfare services and families changing under the pressure from globalization.

## 1.3 Existing research competences

The research into citizenship, participation and civil society builds on the Department's well established track record of seminal work in social policy, critical theory, civil society, citizenship, migration, ethnicity, intersectionality, and



labour market and family relations. The comparative approach to social and cultural issues has been a central characteristic of the work done in these areas, and has, in part, been realized through the CINEFOGO Network of Excellence, the ESPA-network and latest through the Centre for International Studies in Citizenship, Democratic Participation, and Civil Society (CIPACI).

#### **1.4. Major research themes**

- How can we conceptualize citizenship and participation in a way which embraces their embeddedness in life experiences, democratic institutions, historical and cultural processes and innovative institutions?
- What are the main determinants of civic participation and social cohesion under the conditions of greater individualization, diversity and flexibility in social and economic relations?
- Which type of policy and which organizational measures at the local, national and global level are feasible for dealing with issues related to access to services and other benefits given the diversity of the welfare models, and how are citizenship rights, social equality and civic participation affected by these policies and measures?

#### **1.5. Other Important research themes**

- How should/can we deal with the combination of diversity and equality that exists in the development of societies to be characterized by sustainability and prosperity in economic, social and cultural institutions?
- How do state policies contribute to or constrain the active citizenship of different social groups where the dimensions of ethnicity, gender, age, and social class are important either in themselves or in combination? Can we identify different strategies for specific groups concerning citizenship at the micro level?
- How do the conditions for prosperity and active citizenship differ in various social and economic systems – the condition for flexibility, universalism in social welfare, gender equality etc in different welfare systems?

## 2. Politics, Governance and Democracy


### 2.1 Societal relevance

The traditional view that policy is a result of politics that takes place within a stable polity, which provides the rules of the games in the political struggles, is increasingly questioned by political and societal developments.

The idea of a stable and unified policy is exhausted as new and old state powers are displaced upwards to international and supranational organizations, downwards to local governments, public institutions and user boards, and outwards to new forms of interactive governance based on networks, partnerships and quasi markets. This predicament calls for studies of how relatively stable institutional frameworks for political decision making are shaped and reshaped through political struggles taking place at multiple levels and involving a plurality of actors. It also calls for the analysis of how political actors interact to produce particular policies within precarious institutional arenas in which rules and norms are constantly renegotiated.

At the same time, the modern foundation of politics in reason, rights and clear-cut socioeconomic interests is increasingly undermined by postmodern sentiments, multiculturalism and new forms of identity politics. Political agency can no longer be taken for granted, but is constructed around different points of identification such as ethnicity, gender, religion, locality, etc. This development calls for studies of how new political identities, ideas and discourses are articulated and communicated, and how they come to play a role in public policy and governance.

The formulation and implementation of public policy is caught in a crossfire between the growing demands and steering ambitions and the increasing ungovernability of society. The fulfilment of the citizens' demands for welfare and the achievement of the political quest for a more efficient, flexible, targeted, responsive and knowledge based governance are hampered by the growing fragmentation and complexity of social and political life that tend to make society



more and more ungovernable. Also, new modalities of public administration with its increased focus on proactive policy development and strategic control are developing implying a shift away from traditional bureaucratic functions, hierarchical control and detailed regulation. New forms of interactive governance through networks, partnerships and quasi markets aim to resolve this dilemma by involving, mobilizing and activating the knowledge, resources and energies of a plethora of public and private actors in the production of welfare, societal regulation and concrete problemsolving. This solution calls for the analysis of how interactive governance arrangements are functioning, how they contribute to effective, democratic and innovative policy making, and how their performance can be assessed and improved through different kinds of meta-governance. There is a need for thorough studies of the current transformation of the modes of functioning of public administration as well as of public policy. Also, comparative studies of the changing boundaries between state, labour market and other social partners in the delivery and financing of welfare are needed.

## 2.2 Key research questions

Our research into the changing conditions for politics, governance and democracy will focus on the following research questions:

- How are the new institutional and discursive conditions for politics affecting the production of public policy and governance in the modern welfare state?
- How can we assess the form, functioning and impact of the new forms of interactive governance, and how is it possible to improve their performance and reduce the risk of governance failure?
- What are the consequences of transformation of public administration and public policy following from the possible (re-)politisation of the public administration
- What are the implications of the new forms of politics and governance for democracy and what can democracy mean today?



## 2.3 Existing research competence

The research on politics, governance and democracy builds on: a long history of research in public sector reforms and the shifting institutional foundations of politics; a strong collective competence in discourse analysis, social constructivism, gender studies and political theory; and the multi-faceted research activities of our internationally recognized Centre for Democratic Network Governance. More secondary research competences include individuals' expertise in political communication, e-government and e-democracy.

## 2.4 Major research themes

- The development, functioning and impact of new forms of polity, politics and policy in Denmark compared with other countries in the European Union.
- The formation, development and metagovernance of interactive forms of governance that bring together different kinds of public and private actors in different arenas and at multiple levels.
- Democratic renewal and the development of institutional arenas of participation that can help to break policy deadlocks by facilitating creative learning and innovative policy making.

## 2.5 Other important research themes

- Administrative reforms and new roles of politicians, public administrators and citizens in Denmark and the European Union.
- The formation of political discourses and ideologies and their role in mobilising actors and shaping actual forms of governance.
- The role of political communication and ICT in connecting actors, sites and levels in public policy making and public governance.

### 3. Globalization, Regionalization and Local Responses

#### 3.1 Societal relevance

The processes of globalization are reshaping political, economic and social orders, and expanded markets give rise to new ethnic, social class and gender formations. Global flows include new forms of cross-border movements which have consequences on regional and national levels. Globalization challenges the Westphalian international order as global regimes progressively encroach on national sovereignty. Simultaneously, the units of the international system are being redressed as the image of sovereign states presiding over national economies is contested by the expansion of global economic flows.

Responses to globalization vary within, between and across regions. Diverse approaches to managing state-market relations have been identified, major examples include National Business Systems and the Varieties of Capitalism. A central theme of this research is to assess the tolerance of globalization regimes for national political-economic diversity.

Regionalization is strongly associated with globalization although observers are at odds as to whether the formation of e.g. the European Union and ASEAN are best understood as defensive responses to, or as mediators of, or even the key drivers of globalization. It is thus an important aspiration of our research to position state action and regionalization in the context of globalization and in particular examine whether regional cooperation enhances or diminishes the scope for national diversity in view of globalization. Also, the increasing global flow of human beings across borders (for example, trafficking in women and the care drain of female workers) calls for an examination of the factors influencing these processes and the responses at global and national levels.

### 3.2 Key research issues

Our research on Globalization, Regionalization and Local Responses focus on:

- The role of global institutions in shaping homogeneity and standardization of economic regimes, political orders, and social forms.
- The broader role of regions in global economic and political change including the impact of regions on shaping economic regimes and political orders.
- The impact of globalisation and regionalization at the national level – including how it is mediated by domestic political, economic and socio-cultural institutions.
- National and local strategies for achieving growth, defining development and promoting redistribution in view of the opportunities and challenges posed by globalization and regionalization.
- Gendered effects of globalization and regional, national, and local responses.

### 3.3 Existing research competences

The research on globalization and regionalization builds on strong competences in Asian and European Union Studies. Ongoing research analyses how Asian countries adjust and respond to regional and global challenges emphasising the global and regional dynamics of trade, finance and technology. The institutional basis for the research activities within the theme is the newly formed research Centre for Global Politics and Economics. The interaction of state agencies, local firms and local institutions in advancing industrial upgrading and the consequences on labour markets, skills development, and human resource capabilities figures prominently among the research competences. In the European context emphasis is on the effects of europeanization and globalization on politically sensitive markets such as those for labour, finance, agriculture and defence equipment. Research activities across regions share a focus on the apparent endurance of diverse statemarket relationships in spite of the pressures for adaptation posed by globalization and regionalization. In addition, important research activities trace the dynamics of global regime formation and the role of regions in the process stretching from the domains of trade through welfare to security.



### 3.4 Major research themes

- Unveiling global political-economic trends and forces shaping international regimes subjecting national and local models to pressures for adaptation.
- Analysing the conflictual transformation of Asian varieties of market economies and governing practices – as a response to and a contributor to global changes.
- Gauging the relative impacts of respectively Europeanization and globalisation on small EU member states.

### 3.5 Other important research themes

- The role of transnational networks in regimes and in production systems.
- Regionalization of Security – the role of regional bodies as external actors and mechanisms of détente.
- Globalization and regionalization of national welfare regimes: implications for socio-cultural power relations in the fields of ethnicity, gender and social class.


## 4. Global/Local Development Challenges

### 4.1 Societal relevance

In many parts of the world, authority is fragmented and contentious, even though powerful myths proclaim the contrary. Governing the global world order has proven increasingly difficult in a context where one international crisis appears to follow another. The widening, deepening and accelerating world-wide interconnectedness has increased economic, political, security and ideological interdependency. Yet, the globalised world remains characterised by deep-seated inequalities of ethnicity, gender and class. The perceived global order has proven much less orderly than complex, as all countries are exposed to structural changes that affect societies and states in fundamental ways. New forms of politics of identity are gaining prominence and discourses of culture are mobilised as alternative fields for political contestation, or as strategies in response to the emergence of various global insecurities. Simultaneously, conventional understandings and types of explanation are being challenged, reflecting the need for paradigmatic changes. And efforts in governing the global development challenges are questioned, for instance within the field of public or private aid, humanitarian responses or other capital transfers, as management-oriented, blueprint approaches generally fail in not properly addressing contextuality, local complexities and variability.

Globalization challenges established orders of authority at all levels. Hence, governance understood as state and non-state efforts to govern is multilayered as well as multidimensional, existing within and between international, national and local levels. How politics are formed, values are endorsed, and ideas are validated in response to globalization requires the analysis of global and local development challenges. The increasing interaction between private and public actors may contribute to increase legitimacy by means of more active participation, yet it may exacerbate existing global or local inequalities. Also, it may contribute to new solutions to rising global challenges such as climate change, natural resource conflicts, political instability and human insecurity, etc.

Rising powers from diverse constituencies challenge current systems of global governance. This sets fundamentally new agendas for existing governance ac-



tors such as the United Nations, regional organizations, and transnational social movements and NGOs. The changing global power relations have an impact on current and future conflict patterns as well as the prospects for understanding development. New development actors in the realm of religion, media, and private enterprise challenge us to move beyond existing paradigms and produce critical, cross-disciplinary scholarship. The complex interactions of socio-cultural change must be understood as simultaneously global and local. Agendas for development, international and subnational alliances, and global/local actors are thus set in a rapidly changing, complex and often unpredictable context which we strive to analyse.

#### **4.2 Key research questions**

Research under the above umbrella will seek to address some of the following research questions:

- How are we to understand current changes in the global, institutional settings and their local manifestations, and what are the prospects for establishing the preconditions for a more balanced and less unequal world order?
- How can we assess the forms, functioning and impact of the new global/local actors on the international development scene, and how might we understand the outcome for improved governance, local responses, and global stability?
- Considering that globalization is about power and inequality, what are the different possibilities for socio-political actors, such as individual countries, regional organisations or transnational social movements/NGOs, to influence the impact of globalization? And what are the implications of ethnicity, religion, and gender in this context?

#### **4.3 Existing research competence**

The recently created Centre for International Development Studies (CIDEs) is built on the International Development Studies (IDS) Masters' programme and its connected Graduate Researcher School which were founded in 1989. The staff at the centre has a well established research and teaching record in Development Studies. The team is multi-disciplinary comprising sociologists,

anthropologists, political scientists, economists, etc., as well as researchers with a background from IDS itself.

Research has concentrated on the role of institutions in development. More specific research areas include the environment and natural resource management, institutional issues in industrial development, and the role and function of cultural institutions in development.

#### 4.4 Major research themes

- Governing international environmental and human security issues: Climate change and adaptation. Assessing risks and adaptation policies and regulatory frameworks in selected risk prone developing nations.
- Governing international aid: New actors, new forms and constellations of aid, new con-straints and possibilities.
- Multi-layered state formation and the politics at the margins of the state: New opportunities, new threats?
- Politics of culture and local/global interactions: Understanding the dynamics of new battlefields of power in a globalized world.
- The “New Tigers” in the world economy: Governing or being governed? Existing he-gemonies and power constellations challenged?

#### 4.5 Other important research themes

- Local responses to global challenges: Prospects for forming new political movements/civil society organizations, migration and transnational flows and their impact on global governance systems.
- North/South political contestations and postcolonial critiques.
- States and other forms of authority, human security and governance: Civil society, the war on terror, challenges to power from above and below.



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