

## Séminaire Général

### *The Power of Economists within the State*

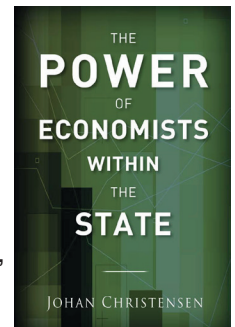
Johan Christensen, Stanford University Press, 2017

**Tuesday 10 April 2018**

**12.30 - 14.30 pm**

Sciences Po  
Salle du Conseil  
13, rue de l'Université  
75007 Paris

The spread of market-oriented reforms has been one of the major political and economic trends of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Governments have, to varying degrees, adopted policies that have led to deregulation: the liberalization of trade; the privatization of state entities; and low-rate, broad-base tax reforms. Yet some countries embraced these policies more than others. The book examines one major contributor to this disparity: the entrenchment of U.S.-trained, neoclassical economists in national bureaucracies. While previous studies have highlighted the role of political parties and production regimes, the book draws on comparative case studies of New Zealand, Ireland, Norway, and Denmark to show how the adoption of market-oriented tax policies depended on the historical entrenchment of economic expertise within the state. In countries where economic knowledge was granted a central position in the government bureaucracy after World War II, neoclassical economic ideas about markets and efficiency later broke through with greater force. And this conditioned the reform politics from the 1980s onwards. Drawing on interviews with 80 key policy-makers, the book examines also the specific ways in which economists shaped reforms, relying on an activist approach to policymaking and the perceived utility of their science to drive change. In doing so, the book highlights the relationship between expert professions and state institutions – and its decisive influence on the formation of public policies.



### Speaker

**Johan Christensen** is Assistant Professor at the Institute of Public Administration at Leiden University.

His research focuses on the role of experts and expertise in public policy-making, both at the national and European levels. In particular, Johan Christensen has studied the influence of the economics profession on market-oriented reforms. He has also examined the role of specialized expertise in recruitment to the European Commission. His work has appeared in many journals such as *Governance*, *Public Administration* and *West European Politics*.

### Discussion

**Denys Gorbach**, Sciences Po, CEE & MaxPo

**Matthias Thiemann**, Sciences Po, CEE

Compulsory registration on the link above - Contact: [tiago.moreiraramalho@sciencespo.fr](mailto:tiago.moreiraramalho@sciencespo.fr)