

General statutory minimum wage debate in Germany: Degree of political intervention in collective bargaining autonomy

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Abstrak

This article traces the pattern of conflict, collaboration, and compromise among trade unions, employers, political parties, executive branches, and economic research institutes in Germany, all of which have different stances regarding the introduction of a general statutory minimum wage there. This article examines the degree of political intervention in collective bargaining autonomy. First, it identifies the factors that bring about differences in stance. Second, it addresses the issue of actor independence—in particular, that of service trade unions—despite the placing of institutional factors, to establish a reference standard for the debate behind forming social movement alliances. Third, it examines the manner in which the policy's economic legitimacy is earned. We conclude that the emergence of a statutory minimum wage in Germany reflects the dynamic mix of postwar political practices in its own context with the effects of modern neoliberal economic policies.