

How much planning? What role for markets?

Conference series: Normative and institutional fundamental questions of economics
March 4 to 6, 2026 – Protestant Academy Tutzing

CALL FOR PAPERS

Market coordination and planning are no longer considered irreconcilable opposites. In view of a political, economic, geopolitical, and ecological situation that is increasingly perceived as a poly-crisis, the question of how collective goals can be achieved democratically and efficiently is becoming increasingly important. Digital control instruments, demands for ecological economic planning in line with planetary boundaries, and the geo-economic orientation of global supply chains provide opportunities to reflect on the potential of markets and planning for coordinating economic processes. In addition to the hybrids mentioned above—planning elements in capitalist markets—alternative concepts of democratic economic planning, as initiated in the context of the post-growth debate in recent years, are also of interest. This opens up a field of two different yet combinable poles, whose history, variants, and theoretical foundations, as well as changes brought about by big data, algorithms, and artificial intelligence, offer a differentiated view of potentials and limitations in the face of transformative challenges.

Historical experiences with socialist economic accounting and planning, variants of planning in market economy contexts, and the theoretical history of planning debates reveal the opportunities and risks of different approaches. At the same time, complex transformation processes—from the energy transition to digital transformation—require specific solutions and analytical approaches. Experimental spaces and artificial markets can be part of the toolbox, but they also have their limits. How can planning and the market be combined in such a way that democratic processes become fully effective with regard to the major issues of the future that affect everyone? How should the market and planning be combined in a complex world of transformation in which technocratic planning concepts and perfectly functioning markets are equally obsolete?

The conference "What can planning do? What can the market do?" offers an opportunity to take up this debate and critically develop it further, both theoretically and in terms of its practical implications.

For the open section, we invite researchers from the fields of economics, social sciences, and cultural studies, as well as practitioners, to present their research in parallel panel sessions. **Please send an abstract by January 26, 2026, torichard.sturn@uni-graz.at and ulrich.klueh@h-da.de . Notification of acceptance into the open conference program will be sent by February 2, 2026.**

Submissions on the following questions and topics, among others, are welcome:

- Theoretical history of planning and economic accounting debates
- Historical case studies of planning and the market
- Variants of planning in mixed economies and types of capitalism
- Algorithms, data (processing), and digital technologies and infrastructures in planning processes
- Market functions beyond price-based allocation

- Potential and limitations of artificial markets/decentralized mechanisms in the implementation of societal goals (including mechanism design)
- Problems of planning in "complex environments" and their modeling
- Current problems and limitations of industrial and technology policy
- Approaches to the democratization of planning processes
- Participation and deliberative decision-making processes in economic systems
- Sectoral planning: energy, transport, housing
- Ecology, climate policy, and long-term planning
- Market mechanisms, price signals, and hybrid institutions
- Cooperatives, commons, and alternative forms of enterprise in the planning debate
- Financing and investment steering: public banks, investment funds, investment control
- Planning in the context of work, working hours, and social security
- Legal and institutional framework conditions for planning
- International dimensions: trade, supply chains, development cooperation under planned and market economy conditions
- Criticism of and risks associated with planning

For further information on the Protestant Academy Tutzing, see: <https://www.ev-akademie-tutzing.de>. Accommodation and meals are provided at the Academy's Tutzing Castle.

The academy is located in Tutzing, on the shores of Lake Starnberg, about 30 minutes from Munich in the direction of the Alps.