



- Symposium 2021 -

Resilience for a post-pandemic economy

Lessons, challenges and opportunities

Programme

Thursday 28 October 2021 (10h30-17h)

Room Rossier (2nd floor), Ancien Hôpital des Bourgeois, Fribourg

[Zoom](#) (see connection details below)

Introduction

The coronavirus pandemic has disrupted the economic and social processes of societies around the world. Mainstream economists tend to see the Covid-19 pandemic as an “external shock” that bears no particular lessons for their discipline. But the Covid-19 pandemic is caused by various dysfunctions of the global economic system: deforestation, biodiversity losses. Loans provided by the financial sector to the Brazilian agribusiness sector, for example, is a factor of deforestation in Amazonia. The spread of a pandemic is linked to the globalisation process. To analyse the causes and not only the consequences of pandemics is therefore essential. The structural weaknesses of the global economic system are salient. These circumstances raise some fundamental questions about the role of the market and the public sector and call for a reassessment of some of the basic tenets of the economics discipline. In particular, the idea that the state needs to be restrained and that the economy should be organised on the basis of a purely efficiency-based approach has created vulnerabilities, leaving us unable to respond adequately to the pandemic and possibly to other future global crises.

1). Efficiency versus resilience in a post-pandemic economy

Mainstream economists’ view of Covid-19 as an “external shock” is revealing of their perception of the economy as separate from the rest of society and above it. In this light, the pandemic appears as an “externality” disrupting the effective functioning of markets. However, the notion that the economy can be analysed independently of the public health, political and social processes – often promoted by the dominant tradition in economics and reflected in general equilibrium theory – is invalidated by the deeply interconnected and embedded nature of the pandemic. Thus, it is now more than ever important to open up the debate about how to understand and tackle these crises, with a view to make economies more resilient, rather than simply more “efficient.” The pandemic experience indicates that society becomes vulnerable to systemic shocks if the processes on which it depends excessively prioritize system efficiency and financial market liquidity. Building resilience does not mean abandoning efficiency, but rather maximizing socio-economic systems’ long-term sustainability in the face of future disruptions such as new pandemics or climate emergency.

2). Public financial management through and beyond the pandemic

Governments around the world responded to the Covid-19 pandemic by deploying conventional revenue and expenditure interventions alongside innovative policies, such as furlough schemes that subsidise firms to keep employees on their payrolls, taxable grants paid to self-employed workers affected by the virus, and large scale loan guarantees to support struggling firms. This expanded set of measures seeks to minimise the long-term economic damage of the crisis, but might put the long-term sustainability of public finances at risk. Indeed, the rise of government expenditures combined with decreasing tax revenues pushed governments to borrow at unprecedented levels, which caused a huge increase in global public debt. The record high levels of public debt raise the question of effective post-pandemic recovery, long-term growth prospects and sustainability of the public debt in the future. In addition, the institutional architecture for global macroeconomic recovery turns out to be inadequate, with the IMF and other regional financing arrangements lacking the resources and the ability to deal with a crisis of this scale.

Programme:

Zoom link (morning) :

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85621541535?pwd=Y2x4Z2RSMkp5bndHYWc4Vy9KZ3lOZz09>

Passcode: AREF28AM

10.30 Word of welcome of AREF's President
Prof. Marc Chesney (Uni-Zurich)

Efficiency versus resilience in a post-pandemic economy

10.35 Dérèglements climatiques et inégalités sociales: les leçons à tirer de la situation actuelle
Prof. Marc Chesney (Uni-Zurich)

11.15 Multidimensional resilience building for economic success
Keynote address: Prof. Lino Briguglio (Uni-Malta)

12.00 Présentation du Rapport du sondage sur le Bachelor HEC Lausanne
Andreas Stoller (Rethinking Economics Lausanne)

12.30 *Lunch*

Public financial management through and beyond the pandemic

Zoom link (afternoon) :

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86474996661?pwd=amE2U3ZqVU5TSXpkUnlqRDJhMVdHQT09>

Passcode: AREF28PM

14.30 Les conséquences économiques de la pandémie
Prof. Sergio Rossi (Uni-Fribourg)

15.15 *Break*

15.30 On the ever closer links between monetary and fiscal policies. Towards a post-pandemic policy-mix. Prof. Lukasz Hardt (Uni-Warsaw)

16.15 Situation actuelle et perspectives de développement de l'AREF

17.00 End