Social Dumping and the EU Integration Process\textsuperscript{1}

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Abstract
This paper proposes a conceptualization of social dumping and applies it to the analysis of EU integration process. Building on recent contributions in the fields of economic theory, economic sociology and institutional political economy, it defines social dumping as the practice of undermining or evading the existing social regulations, undertaken by self-interested market participants with an aim of gaining a competitive advantage. The paper also argues that market actors’ social dumping practices are encouraged by policy initiatives of liberalization and deregulation. To illustrate this point, it shows how two major European integration projects - the creation of the Internal Market and EU enlargement to the east and the south - have made social dumping more pertinent and provided market participants with new strategic opportunities to contest social norms.

Keywords
social dumping, marketization, competition, Internal Market, EU enlargement

Introduction\textsuperscript{2}

In his Toulon speech on 1 December 2011, French President Sarkozy expressed his discontent with ‘social and fiscal dumping’ in Europe and condemned EU member states’ ‘disloyal competition’ practices (\textit{The Economist}, 2011). At about the same time, the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) launched consultations with its member organizations in preparation for a pan-European drive ‘against wage and social dumping’. Among the initiatives envisaged in the campaign, ETUC intended to publish a black book revealing instances of social dumping in EU member states, which could then be used as a shaming device in the battle against attempts ‘to destroy national social and labour standards’ (ETUC, 2011). The business community seemed equally concerned, if for a different reason: in its 2012 Annual Report, the European Federation of Construction Industry argued that preventing social dumping was crucial for the preservation of the sector’s competitiveness (FIEC, 2012).

FULL PAPER AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

\textsuperscript{1} This paper is a draft version of the introduction to the book ‘Social Dumping and Market Expansion in Europe’, edited by Magdalena Bernaciak and forthcoming with Routledge. It also presents some of the book’s conclusions.

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