

Change and continuation

This new issue of *Finnish Journal of Social Research* marks a new beginning for the editorial team. Having successfully steered the journal for several years and strengthened its position as a Finnish-based social science journal with international reach, the previous editors Elina Kilpi-Jakonen and Outi Sarpila together with Iida Kukkonen as editorial assistant have passed on the baton to us. From updating the digital presence and editorial processing of the journal (helped by joining the journal.fi -platform), gaining approval as a recognized peer-reviewing journal by the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies (TSV), and renewing the visual appearance of the journal, to attracting high-quality articles from a diversity of perspectives in the social sciences – the previous editors' achievements make our tasks of stepping into the editorial role of this journal significantly easier. At the same time, their accomplishments set out high expectations and large boots for us to fill. We thank Elina, Outi and Iida for their substantial work and are determined to continue developing the quality and reach of this journal.

Central to the mission of *Finnish Journal of Social Research* throughout its history has been to publish high-quality empirical research that is relevant to Finnish society, but without confining itself to narrowly defined disciplines within the social sciences or to a particular theoretical-methodological paradigm. While remaining anchored to the Finnish context, this journal's ambition is not to promote excessive inward-looking, but rather to highlight how both social research and social phenomena in Finland are interconnected with discussions and developments beyond its national borders.

The contributions in this current and first issue of our editorship continue in this tradition. While diverse in their scholarly angles and emphases, a concern with social inequality recurs in both the research articles and discussion pieces published in this issue. Emily Vuorenlinna, Mikael Nygård, and Janne Autto study which concepts of poverty are mobilized in parliamentary debates on social policy, and how they are framed by opposing political ideologies. Although austerity discourse has strengthened its foothold also in Finnish politics over the years, the authors find a degree of consensus on the structural dimension of poverty across political divisions among members of parliament in Finland.

Constructs of poverty and the poor as part of political discourse can have tangible and material effects through the social policy shaped by such discourses. At the same time, the socioeconomic structures affected by policy also feed back into people's cultural perceptions of inequality in their daily lives. In their content analysis of a sample of young people's everyday perceptions of social class, Katja Lötjönen and Jari Martikainen highlight the diversity and contradictions in how young people perceive class in Finland, stressing the significance of political-economic dimensions of inequality for cultural processes of boundary making among young people.

In a global world, social inequality is a pervasive force that transcends national borders. While the football World Cup may seem distant from the daily struggles of political economy, Vesa Vares' Mauno Koivisto lecture discusses how large-scale and global disparities in political power and economic wealth are reflected in professional sport. The hosting of the 2022 World Cup in Qatar is a good example of this, shedding light on human rights issues and deep gaps between the elite and the wider population. Impor-

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tantly, Vares reminds us that the selection of Qatar as the organising country is, however, rooted in a historical context that is mainly Western, and highlights the permanent intertwining of politics and sport, which also represents continuous confrontations around social divisions.

Jukka Sivonen turns our lens on citizens' attitudes toward environmental policy, and his lecture based on his dissertation explores the complex social factors that shape these perspectives. His research confirms previous findings and highlights that trust in political institutions is a key factor predicting a greater willingness to adopt tough climate measures at both individual and national levels. In this respect, Sivonen's text emphasizes the aspects of political decision-making that also came to the fore in Vares' writing. In particular, trust depends on how politicians respond to citizens' expectations and is thus closely linked to low corruption and low-income inequality at the country level. Taken together, these writings make us reflect on the importance of political decisions that affect different groups in societies, and citizens' influence in this context.

As social scientists, we also have a fundamental role here to provide policymakers with the tools necessary for constructing a socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable society. Knowledge based on high-quality and unbiased research plays a pivotal role when politicians and bureaucrats weigh the significance of various decisions. Simultaneously, research-based knowledge may also help citizens evaluate the actions of politicians and advocate for change. Achieving these goals collectively demands accessible, high-quality, and reliable scientific research, with a key responsibility resting on well-managed scientific publishing channels.

In recent years, the landscape of scientific publishing has emphasized not only academic quality, but also commercial interests. Discussions have surfaced regarding the editorial processes of rapidly growing open-access journals, exposing weaknesses in their editorial procedures (Brainard, 2023). Such unethical practices are regrettable and can have far-reaching consequences for people's trust in science. Over the years, *Finnish Journal of Social Research* has pursued the aims of the open access movement without jeopardizing research integrity in its editorial practice. As the new editors of this journal, we are committed to continuing on this path.

With best wishes for the new year,

Aki Koivula & Irene Prix, co-editors

Anna Grahn, editorial assistant

References

Brainard, J. (2023, March 23). *Fast-growing open-access journals stripped of coveted impact factors*. Science <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.adi0098>