

Adriana Mica (University of Warsaw), Anna Horolets (University of Warsaw), Mikołaj Pawlak (University of Warsaw) and Paweł Kubicki (Warsaw School of Economics)

a.mica@uw.edu.pl

### **Possibility - the Story: Economic Sociology, Anthropology, and Beyond**

The notion of possibility has acquired greater visibility and wider application recently. In this article, we draw an encompassing picture of the research of the possible in economic sociology and anthropology.

We bridge these contemporary possibilist approaches with the possibilism in public policy and development research, which was initiated by Albert O. Hirschman a few decades ago. This exercise allows us to confirm and reevaluate some of the initial findings regarding the study of possibility in economic sociology and anthropology. As well as to sketch the profile of the inquiry into what is possible in social sciences more generally. We present three characteristics: (1) the analysis of the possible as something new and contrarian; (2) the conflation and shifts of meaning; and (3) the fit. On this basis, we conclude that the discovery and attempt to come to terms with possibility and being possibilist opens the key to encompassing processes of historical genealogy in relation to knowledge.

The possibility theory is also useful in discussing processes of reification of future in relation to contemporary phenomena. As an illustration we discuss the attitudes (in terms of projecting future possible scenarios) of political and ruling parties towards the migratory and asylum seeking processes, as well as the various solutions advanced in relation to the so called European refugee crisis (2015). We zoom in on Poland, Hungary and Romania.