

Conference announcement

Beyond the credit crunch: local authorities' response to recession in the UK.

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*Conference organized jointly by the School of Political Studies and
the Center on Governance, Université of Ottawa.*

Date: Wednesday, April 14th, 2010

When: 12:00 – 1:30

Where: University of Ottawa, Desmarais Building (DMS) 3120

The presentation will be in English followed by a bilingual discussion.

La présentation sera donnée en anglais et sera suivie d'une discussion bilingue.

Abstract:

The UK has been strongly affected by the recession with the UK economy contracting for 18 months from April 2008 to September 2009. Unemployment rose from 5.2% in January-March 2008 to 7.8% in October-December 2009.

Due to their proximity to economic actors, local authorities are usually at the forefront of dealing with the impacts of recession on people and places. This is even more the case in the current recession as since the UK Local Government Act of 2000, local authorities have been charged with powers to promote the “well-being” of their population in terms of economic, social and environmental matters. With the shift from local government to local governance in the last 10 years, they also have an increasing role in terms of the coordination of various organisations in the delivery of local services. In the time of recession, they face important challenges: on the one hand they have to cope with increasing demand for services and on the other hand they face a decrease in their income due to the slowdown in the economy. In addition, there exist important variations in the availability of resources at the local level and some local authorities may be ill-prepared to manage the current recession.

Building on past and current literature, this presentation provides an overview of the impacts of the current recession on people and place and how it has affected local authorities in the UK. The presentation then discusses the potential interventions and responses that they can put in place on their own or in partnership with other local, regional and/or national actors. The presentation concludes by proposing a framework for intervention for local authorities in dealing with recession.

For more information, please contact Eric Champagne (Echampagne@uottawa.ca).