

ecpr news

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European Consortium for Political Research

encouraging the training, research and cross-national co-operation of political scientists

Networking the next generation of political scientists



EJPR back in the top 10, while *EPS* continues its ascent

The Thomson Reuters Social Sciences Citation Index for 2013 has now been published and its good news for the ECPR's journals.

The increase in the ECPR's flagship journal *EJPR*'s Impact Factor has been such that it is now back in the top 10 – at number 8, with an IF of 2.152, an increase of 56% from the 2012 IF (1.382).

EPS, the ECPR's professional journal, received its highest Impact Factor to date; a significant increase on 2012 which has led to a move up in the rankings from 118 to 69. With its unique mission, *EPS* is an unusual addition to the Index, but it continues to fare extremely well, demonstrating its unique value to the political science community.

Unfortunately, the news from *EPSR* was not so good with a fall from last year's high - down from 1.125 to 0.816. Preliminary analysis shows a small drop in citations during the latest 2-year window but also that the 2013 figures seem to have been very strongly influenced by the movement outside of the impact factor window of one particular article.

Vivien Schmidt's piece 'Taking ideas and discourse seriously: explaining change through discursive institutionalism' from issue 2:1 (2010), which has received 80 citations to date - a very impressive figure.



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GRADUATE STUDENT NETWORK

ECPR Graduate Student Network
– Bringing young political scientists
together

The GSN promotes interaction, support and exchange of ideas and experiences between junior researchers in the field of politics and social sciences. Membership is on an individual basis, and free! Any graduate student, PhD candidate or postdoctoral researcher enrolled at an ECPR Member institution is eligible to join.



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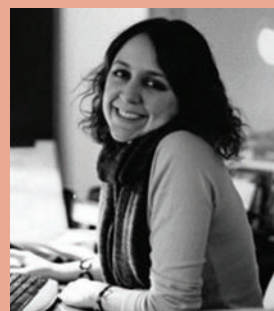
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Would you like to join our Committee?

The GSN Committee is looking for two new members in 2015, when two of the current members will be stepping down. If you are a PhD student from an ECPR Member institution, and would like to stand for election, please email Louise Soper – lhawk@essex.ac.uk – an expression of interest. This should contain your name, institution and email address, a description of what you can contribute to the GSN, examples of relevant experience, and any other information to support your application. Expressions of interest should be received by 1 October and will be posted on the GSN website. Online elections will take place via MyECPR between 15 October and 15 November.

Meet the Committee

The GSN is overseen and directed by a Co-ordinating Committee of graduate students – see above for our current members. This Committee is also closely involved in the organisation of the biennial ECPR Graduate Student Conference.

‘Our long-term priorities are to promote the welfare of graduate students, to strengthen ties between scholars across the world and, through the wider political science community, to build professional networks. Thanks again for supporting us!’



ECPRGraduateStudentNetwork

www.standinggroups.ecpr.eu/gsn

Email gsn@ecpr.eu and we'll add you to our mailing list

Could you shape the future of the ECPR...?

As the current three year Executive Committee (EC) cycle draws to a close in April 2015, preparations are being made for the election process that will select the EC that will take the organisation through to 2018.

At the end of March 2015, the term of office expires for the members of the Executive Committee who were elected in 2009, and for the members of the Executive Committee who were co-opted to vacancies on the EC after the elections of 2012.

The members of the Executive Committee whose terms expire are: Simona Piattoni, André Kaiser, Niilo Kauppi, Manuel Sanchez de Dios, and Jonas Tallberg.

The members of the Executive Committee who were co-opted to vacancies that occurred after the elections of 2012 are: Mary Farrell, Birgit Sauer.

The Members of the Executive Committee who will continue to serve on the Executive Committee are:

Rudy Andeweg, Klaus Goetz, Olafur Hardarson, Richard Katz, and Luca Verzichelli.

This means that seven new members of the Executive Committee must be elected.

Any individual from a Full Member institution can stand for election to the EC. The election will be split into three stages: Nomination, Endorsements and Ballot. For those wishing to nominate themselves this process starts on 1 November and closes on 31 December. More information about eligibility criteria and the rest of the process can be found on the website.



ECPR looks into Open Access at APSA

The ECPR's panel at APSA this year discusses the issues surrounding one of the most controversial developments in academic publishing for some time - open access. With the UK leading the way in making open access publishing mandatory for publicly funded research there are opportunities for some, threats for others. ECPR Director Martin Bull chairs the panel.

Panel title: Open Access in the Social and Political Sciences: Threat or Opportunity?

Date: Thursday, 28 Aug 2014, 4:15 PM-6:00 PM

Chair: Martin J Bull, University of Salford

Authors:

'Open Access in the UK and its Implications',
Terrell Carver, University of Bristol

'Open Access and its Implications for American Political Science',
Jennifer L. Hochschild, Harvard University

'Open Access in US Publishing in the Social and Political Sciences',
Alex Holzman, Temple University Press

'Open Access in UK Publishing in the Social and Political Sciences',
David Mainwaring, Cambridge University Press

'Open Access and the Implications for Academic Associations',
Martin J Bull, University of Salford



Meeting the challenge of effective graduate training

With the ECPR's latest Graduate Student Conference a great success (see following pages for full report) and the Summer School in Methods and Techniques concluding as this issue goes to press, training the next generation of political scientists continues to be a key challenge for the ECPR. Mary Farrell, Executive Committee Member with responsibility for graduate matters looks at the options available for young scholars in Europe.

The summer of 2014 may be fading into distant and hopefully pleasant memories as students and teachers begin the new academic year. While some people may have opted for time at the beach, others will have caught up with the conferences, summer schools and the many academic activities aimed at developing or renewing the skills needed in today's academic world. The increase in the number and variety of summer schools around Europe testifies to the popularity of this medium for graduates, early

career researchers and established scholars. Indeed, the state of graduate training in Europe reflects this diversity as individual countries retain their distinct national educational traditions and government policies while adapting to the developments in European policy and particularly EU programmes supporting research and training.

Since the Bologna process was adopted by the European states in 1999, significant progress towards a harmonisation of the 'architectures' of higher education is evident amidst

a sharp increase in the mobility of postgraduate (and undergraduate) students throughout the European Union. Universities and national education ministries have put in place the necessary arrangements to facilitate the standardisation of qualifications across the European landscape, including the adoption of the Diploma Supplement (an EU document attached to the graduate student's higher education diploma which facilitates the academic and professional recognition of the





another institution under a structured training programme.

Graduate training in Europe is offered across a variety of channels, including the national higher education establishments and in the various mobility schemes that have emerged as a result of the Bologna process, the activities of the European Commission, and the possibilities available through the EU multiannual research programme, Horizon 2020 (2014–2020). Some graduate programmes offer specific training related to the requirements specified by the regulatory and professional bodies, while in other areas such as social sciences and humanities the graduate training is more general. However, the expansion in the demand for postgraduate taught programmes combined with the emphasis on employability has raised the expectations of both students and employers regarding the outcomes of a postgraduate training. In an increasingly globalised world, Europe is attracting more international graduate students than ever before, bringing with them the anticipation of receiving an excellent education that reflects a ‘fitness for purpose’ within the global marketplace. Retaining the best graduate students (wherever they might originate from) is an aim that is now shared by the European universities, and by the European Commission with the goal of creating a European Research Area.

Graduate training is more important than ever, and not just as an add-on to a formal Masters or PhD programme. In some countries, the national funding councils led the way in encouraging institutions to provide a formal graduate skills training as an integral part of doctoral training programmes. This trend towards the provision of formal research training has spread as the European Commission and representative bodies such as the

League of European Research Universities (LERU) and the European University Association (EUA) have all endorsed the move towards formal training. Whether the student is on a Master’s programme or a doctoral pathway, the essential viewpoint is that graduates make a significant contribution to innovation and can do so over the long-term if they are provided with the right skills. In this context, the abilities to be fostered encompass skills that enable ‘doing research’ (qualitative and quantitative research methods) and the more general, transferable skills for career development. Though there is no agreement among the European university sector (still staunchly national in regard to education policy) on the appropriate common framework or the range of transferable skills, universities have nonetheless made significant changes to the graduate training provision – both individually and in collaboration with partner institutions across the European Union.

The European Science Foundation’s definition of transferable skills - ‘skills learned in one context (for example research) that are useful in another (for example future employment whether that is in research, business, etc.). They enable subject- and research related skills to be applied and developed effectively. Transferable skills may be acquired through training or work experience’ – is in tune with societal, policy makers’ and the international research community’s expectations. Graduate training undoubtedly has a fundamental contribution to make to the European scholarly and research community, and in the broader context of fostering innovation for future growth and prosperity it remains to be seen how European providers can work together to deliver the most effective graduate training that meets standards of excellence in a global arena.

qualifications in any other European country) and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation Scheme (ECTS) which allows for the comparison of attainment and performance of higher education students across the European Union. Postgraduate students have embraced the mobility opportunities offered throughout the European higher education arena, and many doctoral students have benefited from the European Commission’s Marie Curie programmes which facilitate a stay at

Political science and 'all that jazz'...

The University of Innsbruck in Austria played host to the latest edition of the ECPR's conference event aimed exclusively at students, giving all who attended a week to remember

Now in its fifth year, the ECPR's Graduate Student Conference (GSC) took place at the University of Innsbruck, Austria this year. Located in the heart of

the Alps, in the Inn Valley on the German-Italian border, participants were able to experience the beautiful scenery and fascinating architecture of Innsbruck alongside a stimulating academic programme – all in glorious

sunshine (as luck would have it).

The aim of the GSC is to give students their first taste of an international, academic conference. This year's conference format was



designed to meet students' need to discuss the most pressing political and social issues of our time in an academically stimulating manner. The Call for Panels was open to suggestions aimed at making the conference programme more in tune with current developments in political research and in the end resulted in a series of Panels covering topics that demonstrated the diversity and multi-disciplinarity of the ECPR community.

While students take on every role,

from Section Chairs through to Paper presenters, their work is supported by the expertise of the ECPR's conference organisers and Executive Committee members responsible for the area (currently Mary Farrell) to ensure that every part of the event runs smoothly. This team, along with the local hosts, also plan an exciting complementary plenary programme, designed to give a fully rounded conference experience.

This year's Keynote Lecture was given by Alan Scott (University

of Innsbruck). His lecture 'Seeing like a Political Scientist' examined some of the dilemmas that face social scientists in general and political scientists in particular. He spoke about the division of labour between the social sciences, how it is challenged by changes in governance of higher education and science; the growing demand for demonstrable 'impact' and barriers to innovation. All of these are pressing issues for planning to establish a career in the social sciences.



GRADUATE STUDENT CONFERENCE

Alongside the Keynote Lecture, four Roundtables took place, each featuring high profile speakers and each looking at subjects close to the hearts of those at the beginning of their careers: 'Being on the academic job market' (looking at styles of interviews in both the US and Europe); 'How to write a research proposal' (strategies, skills, expectations and common pitfalls associated with writing a grant application); 'Research funding from the European Union' (discussion of funding options available); and last but not least, the ever popular 'How to get published' (how to present a manuscript to give you the best chance).

On top of these events were plenty of opportunities to make friends with future colleagues during

informal drinks receptions and social gatherings all in the beautiful Austrian weather. The highlight being the opening reception and BBQ with the convivial atmosphere helped along by the music of an excellent local jazz band.

Not just an opportunity for graduate students to meet, talk and network, the GSC helps instil the academic ethic of commitment and mutual responsibility, and is supported by the Graduate Student Network, which nurtures the next generation of European political scientists. It is hoped that students leave knowing that they have contributed to lively debates, have learned something new about the world and have made contacts that will lead to fruitful professional collaboration at the next stage of their career.







Experts on hand to help shape your career

Supporting a plenary programme designed to provide the skills and knowledge young political scientists will need in their careers were a group of experts from both the host institution and beyond, including members of the ECPR's Graduate Student Network (below far left).

These lectures and roundtables are vital to ensuring a rounded programme for participants that not only provides first hand conference experience, but also advice on establishing a successful career in political science.



The people

Nearly 400 students from across the world came together in Innsbruck to share ideas, learn from one another and forge relationships that could last a lifetime. Here are some of them...



Christiane Grill
University of Vienna

'A week ago I attended a conference in Paris where the Papers were given by senior professors. The Papers presented at this conference were far superior – the quality from us students is really high, even the younger MA students. When I was doing my MA there's no way I would have had the confidence to present in a context like this so I'm really impressed.'



Sanja Hajdinjak
Central European
University, Budapest

'People in the Panels are genuinely interested in the contents – they actually bother to read the Papers! Discussants give ample feedback. One criticism: there are so many Panels I want to clone myself so I can attend more than one at the same time!'



Edina Kőműves
Eötvös Loránd University,
Budapest

'The conference organisation was very good in the sense that the Panels started and ended on time – there was no shifting. After each Session there was always a half-hour break for networking so we didn't have to run in-between. I've found the feedback really useful – everyone seems keen to improve other people's work.'



Jean-Thomas Martelli
King's College London

'This is my second ECPR event – I was at the Summer School in Ljubljana last year. I've found this conference very useful; not just the presentation of Papers but the discussions afterwards over coffee. It's fun, professional, and intense!'



Ricardo Vicente
European University
Institute, Florence

'Some of the Papers are at project stage, and some are complete – but everything I've heard so far has been strong.'



Stefanie Walter
University of Mannheim

'I was surprised by the quality of the presentations. Everyone came well prepared and the event itself was really well organised. And... the view!!'

See you in Tartu...?

The next Graduate Student Conference will take place between 10 - 13 July 2016, at the University of Tartu in Estonia. More information about calls for Sections, Panels and Papers will be on the ECPR website soon. www.ecpr.eu

Moving minds, crossing boundaries, experiencing Europe

The best way to understand something is to see it at work first hand, and a group of students did just that at the European Parliament in July. Petra Guasti (Convenor of the Standing Group on Central and East European Politics) and Jasmin Fitzpatrick (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz) share their experiences

The relevance of the European Union (EU) is beyond question. Important political decisions in many policy areas are made for the 28 member states and more than 500 million Europeans in Brussels, Strasbourg, and Luxemburg. At the same time, the EU is frequently described as a contested polity. This contestation is growing as the European integration process evolves. Most recently, the degree of contestation was reflected in the outcome of the eighth elections of the European Parliament in May 2014, where for the first time parties opposed to the ongoing integration process established themselves as a force of contention (growing from 32 to 48 seats and 4.3% to 6.4% respectively).

The inherent and growing complexities of the EU represent a challenge for teaching and studying European integration. And while mobility and student/staff exchange programmes, such as Erasmus, facilitate a better comprehension of the EU by combining knowledge

acquisition with experiencing Europe, the requirements and pressures of knowledge-based society push for ever more active learning in preparing students for the European labour market. These competences and skills include, among others, the ability to work autonomously, problem solving and teamwork orientation, flexibility and a practice orientation.

In order to allow students of political science a first-hand experience of European politics, the local alumni association Friends of Political Science in Mainz (FPSM) organised an excursion to the constituting session of the European Parliament in Strasbourg on 1 July 2014. This new co-operation at the Institute of Political Science (JGU Mainz) made it possible for 40 students and members of the political science department to experience the first general session of the eighth directly elected European Parliament.

The group consisted of 34 bachelor and Master's students, including students enrolled onto the new tri-national Master of European Studies (collaboration among universities

of Mainz/Opole/Dijon). The students were accompanied by six researchers, among them members of the Jean Monnet Chairs and two board members of the FPSM. Prior to attending the constitutive session, the group had the opportunity to meet MEP Birgit Collin-Langen (CDU-CSU, Germany, EPP) and to discuss the changes, which the 2014 electoral results and new distribution of seats in the EP brought about. The discussion also included general questions about the work of an MEP, especially engagement with citizens in his/her constituency, and work in committees and delegations. With regards to the latter, MEP Birgit Collin-Langen shared that her major concern in the upcoming term is the growing tensions in the European neighbourhood, especially at the Caucasus.

Following this, the participants attended the constitutive meeting as guests of MEP Birgit Collin-Langen and at 10am were able to witness the speech of Martin Schulz and his election to the President of the European Parliament. Given the



presence of multiple euro-sceptic forces, the atmosphere on the floor of the EP was electric, and the authority of the main candidate was challenged (most notably by German Euro-sceptic AfD). However, this allowed students to experience not only the outcomes of democratic political processes, but also the culture of an institution in *statu nascendi*. This fact was also echoed in the discussion with both MEPs, who noted that the strong presence of Euro-sceptics will contribute to stronger co-operation across the political lines between the mainstream parties.

Afterwards MEP Julia Reda (Pirate Party, Germany) met with the group for Q&A. Reda, herself an alumna of political science at Mainz University was recently elected for her first term representing the German *Piratenpartei* and is the vice chair of The Greens/ European Free Alliance. In her vivid discussion, Reda described her way into the EP, the process of (choosing) and joining a parliamentary group, and the first tasks facing a new MEP. Reda, full of enthusiasm and energy to bring issues close to her heart to the agenda (such as information networks and transparency), showed herself

as well-versed on the challenges facing her in politics, and agreed that studying political science gave her an expertise beneficial for parliamentary work. The contrast between the experienced MEP Collin-Langen and the energetic newcomer MEP Reda, who both dedicated quite some time to the group's questions, showed two interesting facets of political life at the EP.

It is thirty-one years after the Schengen Agreement crossed geographical borders within Europe to become natural and almost automatic. However, the constituting session of the European Parliament shows that new political boundaries are emerging, and deepening between the proponents and the opponents of further political integration of Europe. For the students of political science, Jasmin Fitzpatrick (FPSM Programme Co-ordinator) said 'this trip was beneficial, as it added a component of reality to the theoretical analyses of classroom knowledge. We are definitely going to offer this again'. The trip fully reflected the motto of the University of Mainz – moving minds, crossing boundaries and allowed all to experience Europe.

A conceptual framework to assess governance in and through human rights

Convenor of the Standing Group on Human Rights & Transitional Justice, Anja Mihr (The Hague Institute for Global Justice & Utrecht University) discusses key issues facing this field

To assess and research the violent developments in Colombia, Syria, Israel, Ukraine or Central African Republic, or the efforts to democratic transition thereafter, demand analytical frameworks that help to benchmark institutions, actors and developments against human rights. Members of the Standing Group on Human Rights and Transitional Justice have often shown in their presented work that human rights based or benchmarked comparative cases on conflict affected countries and environments, as well as during the transition periods thereafter, give the most comprehensive account of political development. But there is more need for comparison and analytical assessment of social movements and networks, CSOs and the role international organisations play both in human rights promotion and/or violations as well as during transitional justice processes. Thus the developments of analytical conceptual frameworks in social sciences has always been pertinent.

There are two challenges for social science research in the field of human rights and governance. First, how to assess what these new societies that already act and work beyond national governance or nation states

are composed of, and second what comprises their needs and ways to govern. The analytical benchmarks for assessing best global governance are that of an inclusive and yet equal society that enjoys diversity, differences, languages, and traditions the same way as mutual respect, tolerance and pluralism. Good governance principles on the one side and human rights principles on the other side, define the margins on this analytical frame. Human rights norms and standards can help as benchmarks to take forward the actions needed to realize these goals and ask the following questions: (1) whether and to what extent governance regimes take decisions, and therefore have an effective outcome in compliance or correlation with human rights norms and the growing demand by citizens to comply with them; or (2) whether such human rights based governance regimes are indeed more successful in attaining sustainable and change orientated development for equal, non-violent and fair societies?

I propose an analytical conceptual framework to analyse governance mechanisms in and through human rights. The inter-linkage between governance and human rights principles is neither systematically analysed nor assessed in social

science area studies. Principles and dimensions of good governance, in particular, such as (1) accountability through responsiveness, (2) transparency through open access and (3) participation through inclusion, are assumed to be paired with human rights principles, norms and institutions. However, their correlation or mutual impact has not been investigated. Human rights expansion and dissemination of ideas, norms and standards have led to a so called 'human rights generation' or generation 2.0 that is expected to have significant impact on the way we will take decisions in the 21st century.

Over the last decades, human rights have become the benchmark against which we assess our political, economic and educational decision making as well as behaviour in the future. Thus, human rights are seen as guiding principles when exercising good governance. Accordingly, the main unit of analysis is the common human rights framework (awareness, knowledge, understanding and behaviour) of citizens around the world who claim that 'whoever decides' finds innovative and different solutions to problems always in accordance with human rights principles, norms and standards. That is a recent development in civic



mobilisation that has by now reached a critical mass and therefore has to be taken seriously under investigation. We do not know what this human rights awareness will lead to, but we know that the human rights idea will reach an ever larger growing constituency and stakeholders in the future.

Citizens no longer obey or trust in the same rules, belief systems or governmental regimes defined by selective or exclusive and often traditional elites in which they previously trusted over the past centuries. Instead, their belief system has dramatically changed over the past two to three decades and is today more than ever dominated by the principles of human rights, its norms and mechanisms. Curiously enough, this form of civic 'disobedience' or mistrust towards traditional role models, institutions and governance occurs across nations, cultures and belief systems. We notice them in autocratic or democratic political regimes alike. Citizens seek more control over decisions and implementation. They do so by organising themselves in informal but social networks and CSOs/NGOs whereas governmental regimes – regardless of how democratic or autocratic they are – exercise less and

less control over societal development and movements. Traditional control seeking governance and governmental institutions such as the three main ones: political/judicial, economical/financial and religious/educational; trigger inequity and inequality among citizens through direct, indirect and systematic (institutional) discrimination based on exclusive or elitist behaviour.

Citizens of all ages and backgrounds are part of this new 'human rights generation'. They perceive exclusions, inequality and injustice in a more sensitive way than all previous generations. They are informed, educated and aware of their human rights, use them as a 'toolbox' and means to manage their lives, professional and private environments and thus believe that if they take decisions in coherence with human rights principles they will attain better governance outcomes and implementation that lead to sustainable, long-lasting peaceful, fair, equal society that promises maximum political, social, economic benefit for all – without exceptions for a few or exclusion.

It goes in line with observations in social science over the past ten

years. Since around 2005 we have observed a certain human rights norm-saturation with the demand for massive reforms in the international human rights regime, i.e. reform of UN Human Rights Council; slowing down of international human rights conventions; establishment of the ICC and the demand for more human rights implementation instead of more norms and standards. This has become particularly pertinent during the many research projects on transitional justice in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East after the Arab Spring.

We also observe a rapid dissolution of traditional governance methods, locally, nationally and internationally which is dramatically influenced through human rights standards widely spread through better communication tools. There are various international initiatives on global governance reforms. Simply speaking, people have more than ever the opportunity to compare their lifestyle and their chances for development and prosperity with others elsewhere in the world and hence start questioning how effective their own governance regimes are to deliver their needs for development. At the same time, what becomes prominent in human rights research is looking at the sequencing and timing of the implementation of human rights or transitional justice tools in any particular country or region. It takes about a generation to see the fruits of these instruments and mechanisms and their impact or correlating effect on social change, behaviour and culture – let alone peace and institutional stability. Democratic institutions might establish elections or other formalities, but any new evolving regime ought to stand the test of time through at least one generation, that is to say 20-25 years, to see the actual change in people's behaviour and therefore trust in these newly established institutions.

Governance in and through human rights encompasses all principles

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of good governance, such as accountability/responsiveness, transparency and participation, as well as the major principles of human rights such as freedom, equality and development. These principles shape and define the analytical framework to better understand whether, how, and to what extent, the inter-linkage between good governance principles and human rights standards according to international human rights law in fact leads to effective governance or not. They are earmarked, agreed on, investigated and ratified in over 300 international agreements, treaties or conventions. Both governance and

human rights are political, provide legal guidance and often bear a binding nature.

But social science research still has to determine to what extent the principles, norms, standards and instruments of the human rights and transitional justice are taken into account by decision makers and processes. It needs to assess the correlation between human rights and good governance principles, and measure the variances and effectiveness of stable institutions that are resilient enough against future violent outbreaks and fragility – as

seen in the Ukraine, Israel, Syria or Egypt over the past years.

The Standing Group encourages its members and researchers in the area of human rights and transitional justice to further develop analytical frameworks that see human rights instruments and transitional justice measures as neutral tools which mark the conceptual framework for research and assessment of current developments and processes.

At the General Conference

The Standing Group will be organising a Section at the Glasgow General Conference this September, details are below and more information can be found on the website and in the Conference app

Section: Varieties of Transitional Justice (Number S066)

Panels:

After Authoritarianism: The Arab Spring
Comparison and Conceptual Openings
New Developments in Transitional Justice
Regional Focus Africa
The Construction of Victim-Perpetrator Identities in Transitional Justice

Forthcoming events

**4th Winter School
in Methods and Techniques**
13 – 20 February 2015
University of Bamberg, Germany

43rd Joint Sessions of Workshops
29 March – 2 April 2015
University of Warsaw, Poland

5th Research Sessions
30 June – 3 July 2015
University of Nijmegen, Holland

**10th Summer School
in Methods and Techniques**
July – August 2015, dates tbc
University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

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9th General Conference
26 – 29 August 2015
University of Montreal, Canada

6th Graduate Student Conference
10 – 13 July 2016
University of Tartu, Estonia

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Thompson, slthomp@essex.ac.uk**

Research Sessions enjoy second year at Essex

The University of Essex played host once again to the ECPR's Research Sessions - the event where selected small groups come together for three days of intensive work



The Research Sessions are one of the oldest ECPR events, first taking place in 1978. After a short hiatus they were re-established and now provide a unique opportunity for new and established groups to meet to further their work together.

Six groups of up to eight scholars met at the University of Essex this June for three days of intensive work. With the ECPR providing the space to meet, food and accommodation for the duration, the Research Sessions are a key membership benefit which can get new projects

off the ground, or provide an opportunity to bring the last strands together and hone a publishing proposal. Over the following pages we profile the six groups that met this year and their different research agendas.



The groups

Meet the six groups that took part in this year's Research Sessions...



Zac Green (University of Mannheim), Andrea Ceron (Università degli Studi di Milano), Gijs Schumacher (University of Southern Denmark), Sofie Blomback (University of Gothenburg), Maoz Rosenthal (Binghamton University), Wolfgang Müller (University of Vienna)

Group one

Talking to the Party: A Cross-Country Collection of Intra-Party Debates

Group one used the Research Sessions to establish a new cross-national research group. The project aims to collect cross-national data on intra-party actors' policy goals, and then develop tools to analyse this data and apply it to test theories of party politics. The group's primary innovation lies in its interest in speeches and documents oriented towards an intra-party audience. In particular, it will aim to collect and analyse data on intra-party debates at parties' national meetings.



Julien Navarro (Lille Catholic University), Francesco Marangoni (University of Siena), Thomas Daubler (University of Mannheim), Federico Russo (University of Siena), Zsófia Papp (Hungarian Academy of Sciences), José Real-Dato (University of Almería)

Group two

Parliamentary Activities, Career Tracks and Accountability (PACTA Project)

Group two met to work on the PACTA project, which analyses the interactions between legislative behaviours and incumbent MPs' career tracks. The project will more precisely deal with the effects of parliamentary performance on the re-selection and re-election of legislators, with one important goal being to identify the factors mediating on these interactions, especially electoral rules.



Francisco Panizza (London School of Economics), Christian Schuster (London School of Economics), Petr Kopecky (University of Leiden), Maria Spirova (University of Leiden), Jan-Hinrik Meyer-Sahling (University of Nottingham), Gerardo Scherlis (University of Buenos Aires)

Group three

Beyond Jobs for Votes: Party Organisation, Patronage Forms and the Quality of Democracy

Group three used the Research Sessions to to examine the above theme. They note from their abstract that ‘scholars increasingly recognise clientelism as one of the central challenges to the quality of democracy in developing and emerging economies. Within this literature, a subset of studies has focused on the exchange of one particular type of benefit – public employment – in return for votes or electoral support more generally.’ This was the focus of their discussions.



Sorin Baiasu (University of Vienna), Elizabeth Ashford (University of St. Andrews), Ruhi Demiray (University of Keele), Saladin Meckled Garcia (University College London), Adina Preda (University of Limerick), Alice Pinheiro Walla (Trinity College Dublin). [Full group not pictured]

Group four

Rights and Imperfect Duties in Political Philosophy

Endorsed by the Standing Groups on Political Theory and Kantian Political Thought

At the forthcoming General Conference, the Section ‘Political Theory: Issues and Challenges’, organised by the SG on Political Theory, includes a Panel on imperfect duties. The relation between rights and imperfect duties is also one of the central issues in Kantian studies today. The respective Standing Group convenors have therefore used the Research Sessions as an opportunity to start a framework for long-term collaboration between members of the two groups to carry out in-depth analyses of these issues.



Pinar Donmez (Central European University), Caroline Kuzmenko (University of Exeter), Ross Beveridge (Central European University), Adam Standring (New University of Lisbon), Jim Buller (University of York), Matthew Wood (University of Sheffield)

Group five

Anti-Politics, Depoliticisation and (Re-)Politicisation

Group five is an example of the Research Sessions also supporting the work of other, national, political science organisations. The Anti-Politics and Depoliticisation Specialist Group (APDSG) is part of the British Political Studies Association (PSA) and is in the very early stages of a new research project. The group used the Research Sessions to draft a proposal for submission to a funding organisation.



Erik Gartzke (University of Essex), Scott Desposato (University of California), Clara Suong (University of California), Jason Reifler (University of Exeter), Catarina Thomson (University of Exeter), Ali Çarkoğlu (KOC University), Thomas Scotto (University of Essex), Belgin Şan Akça (KOC University)

Group six

International Institutions and Public Opinion in Interstate Conflict

Group six used the Research Sessions to discuss the following abstract: 'Recent events such as the invasions of the Crimea and Georgia suggest the importance of public opinion in shaping uses of force. Yet, evidence of the impact of popular preferences is difficult to distinguish from other factors, such as elite foreign policy decision making and the role of supra-national institutions. Researchers have begun to apply survey experiments of public opinion in an attempt to better understand the effect of international institutions on decisions to use force. Extensive theoretical research identifies the approval of international institutions as a key factor in determining popular support for war.'



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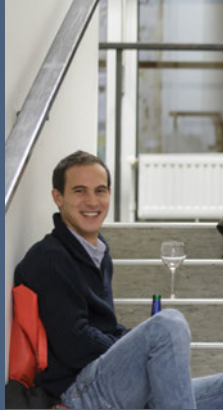


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Dates for diaries

Warsaw Joint Sessions

1 Oct 2014	Funding applications open
1 Dec 2014	Paper proposals close
2 Dec 2014	Registration opens (TBC)
19 Jan 2015	Funding applications close
31 Jan 2015	Registration closes (TBC)

Montreal General Conference

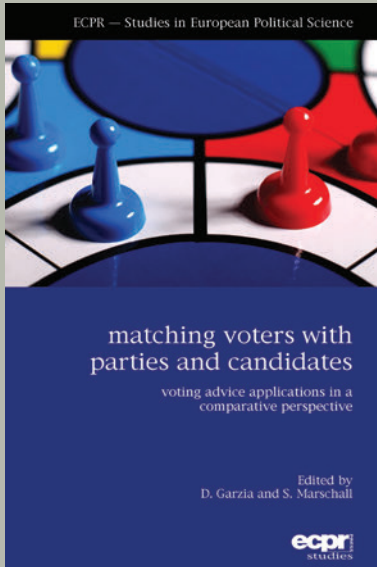
15 Sep 2014	Call for Sections opens
17 Nov 2014	Deadline for Sections
2 Dec 2014	Call for Panels and Papers
16 Feb 2015	Deadline for Panels and Papers
10 Mar 2015	Deadline for Section Chairs to accept/decline Panels and Papers
2 Apr 2015	Online registration begins
15 May 2015	Deadline for registration and payment for participants in the programme
1 Jul 2015	Deadline for programme amendments

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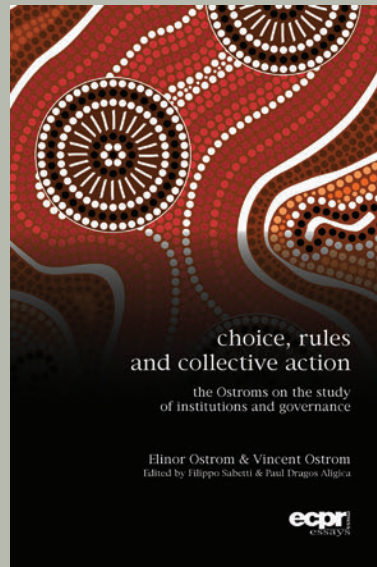


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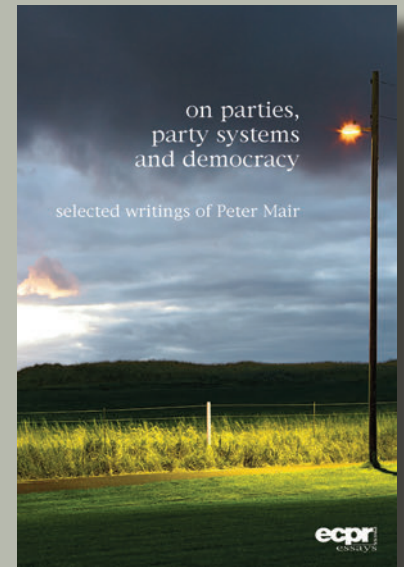


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