



Vrije Universiteit Brussel

**22nd ECPR Standing Group Summer School  
“Political Parties in Modern Democracies”**

**Brussels 10 – 22 September 2012**

**Academic Programme**

**With special thanks to:**

- Académie Wallonie-Bruxelles
- Vrije Universiteit Brussel
- PARTIREP, Interuniversity research programme on Political Participation and representation
- Fonds de la recherche Scientifique (FNRS)
- The Institute for European Studies (IES)

## Summary of the programme

### **Monday September 10**

Arrival of participants / Welcome drink

### **Tuesday September 11**

Kris Deschouwer, Jean-Benoit Pilet & Emilie van Haute

*Basic concepts and measurements for the analysis of parties and party systems*

### **Wednesday September 12**

Romain Lachat

*Restructuring West-European Party Systems in the Age of Globalization*

### **Thursday September 13**

David Farrell

*Political Parties and Electoral System Change*

### **Friday September 14**

Daniele Caramani

*Nationalization and Europeanization of Electoral Politics*

### **Monday September 17**

Stefaan Walgrave

*Parties and the mass media: how parties react on media coverage*

### **Tuesday September 18**

Vello Pettai

*Parties and Party Systems in the New European Democracies*

### **Wednesday September 19**

Nonna Mayer

*Political Parties and the Challenge of Right Wing Extremism*

### **Thursday September 20**

Kenneth Carty

*Party organizations*

### **Friday September 21**

Susan Scarrow

*Political Parties' Internal Democracy: Important for Whom?*

### **Saturday September 22**

Departure

## DETAILED PROGRAMME

### Session 1: Basic concepts and measurements for the analysis of parties and party systems

**Lecturers: Kris Deschouwer (Vrije Universiteit Brussel), Jean-Benoit Pilet & Emilie van Haute (Université libre de Bruxelles)**

This session presents the basic concepts and main approaches of parties and party systems: What is a political party? How can we characterize party systems? How can we classify parties? The literature is rich with classifications and typologies. However, these typologies have different origins, are based on a wide range of (sometimes competing) criteria, and have constantly been updated since the early works of party scholars. Regarding to the literature, three main aspects will be covered.

The first aspect relates to the classification of party systems. Typologies of party systems try to capture the basic structure of the competition for power between political parties. The 'core' of party systems can be identified on the basis of different criteria: number of parties, ideological differences, alternation in power. Recent approaches also stress the importance of interactions between parties at different levels of political systems.

The second question refers to party types. Starting back from Duverger and discussing the structural-organisational approach of parties, this part of the presentation deals with ideal types and sequences of party organisational development. However, the focus will be put on the articulation of the three faces of party organisation (party in central office, party in public office, and party on the ground), rather than on the historical development of parties.

The third aspect focuses on party functions. Parties are often analysed as intermediate organisation performing (essential) functions in representative democracies. Scholars have developed classifications based on functional criterion, and the list of functions attributed to parties is plethoric. This part of the presentation will be organised around V.O. Key's three 'meta'-functions: parties in the electorate, parties as organisations, and parties in government.

The presentation will strongly emphasise the intertwined character of these three aspects. Certain party organisations tend to favour specific functions in the system to the detriment of others. Parties all perform system related functions, but these functions might vary according to the party system.

#### Core readings

Katz, Richard S. and Mair Peter (1995), "Changing Models of Party Organizations and Party Democracy: The Emergence of the Cartel Party", *Party Politics* 1(1): 5-28.

Sartori, Giovanni (2005), "Party Types, Organisation and Functions", *West European Politics*, 28(1): 5-32.

Mair, P. (2002), Comparing party systems, in L. LeDuc, R. Niemi & P. Norris, *Comparing democracies 2. New challenges in the study of elections and voting*, London: Sage, p. 88-107

#### Suggested reading

Gunther, Richard and Diamond, Larry (2001), "Types and Functions of Parties", in Diamond, Larry and Gunther, Richard (eds), *Political Parties and Democracy*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press: 3-39.

## **Session 2: Restructuring West-European Party Systems in the Age of Globalization**

**Lecturer: Romain Lachat (Pompeu Fabra University - Barcelona)**

The process of globalization has important consequences for the structure of party competition in Western Europe. From a Rokkanian perspective, the current processes of economic, cultural, and political denationalization can be viewed as a new “critical juncture,” leading to the establishment of new stable lines of division. The lowering of national borders and the emergence of new forms of competition create both “winners” and “losers” of globalization. The mobilization of these groups of citizens leads to changes in both the configuration of parties in competition and the nature of the main lines of political division. In particular, it is the new populist right which is expected to play a crucial role in this process. By appealing to the cultural preferences of the “losers” of globalization, it represents the driving force of this transformation. Focusing its mobilization on issues such as immigration and European integration, it transforms the meaning of the cultural dimension of the competitive partisan space and it leads to a reconfiguration of the parties on the right of the political spectrum.

The empirical results that will be discussed are based on a research project on the transformation of party systems in six West European countries (Austria, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the UK) in the 1970s, 1990s, and 2000s. The central hypotheses and the first results of this project can be found in the first text of the core readings. Additional results will be presented during this session.

### **Core readings:**

Kriesi, Hanspeter, Edgar Grande, Romain Lachat, Martin Dolezal, Simon Bornschieer, Tim Frey 2006. ‘Globalization and the transformation of the national political space: six European countries compared’, /*European Journal of Political Research*/ 45, 6: 921-957.

Kitschelt, Herbert 2007. ‘Review Article: Growth and Persistence of the Radical Right in Postindustrial Democracies: Advances and Challenges in Comparative Research’, /*West European Politics*/ 30, 5: 1176 1206.

Van der Brug, Wouter and Jost van Spanje 2009. ‘Immigration, Europe and the ‘new’ cultural dimension. / *European Journal of Political Research* 48(3): 309-334.

### **Session 3: Political Parties and Electoral System Change**

**Lecturer: David Farrell (University College Dublin)**

What role have/do parties play in (1) the design and (2) the reform of electoral systems? The first of these questions relates to ongoing debates over Duverger's laws about how electoral systems determine party systems (seen generally as the closest thing there is in political science to a 'social scientific law'). There are debates over the direction of causality, and particularly over whether the laws have things the wrong way around (or 'upside down'). The second question refers to reform of existing electoral systems. Given that electoral system determines who wins power, parties (certainly the established ones) are very nervous about any changes that might be proposed. Nowhere else does that adage of 'turkeys not voting for Christmas' fit better than this, which helps to explain why large-scale reform of electoral systems in established democracies remains rare. But changes there have been, and certainly there are plenty of instances (some still ongoing) about possible future reforms. Inevitably the available theoretical frameworks (most notably those from a rational choice tradition) place parties centre stage in the analysis.

#### **Core reading:**

Benoit, Ken (2007), 'Electoral Laws as Political Consequences: Explaining the Origins and Change of Electoral Institutions', *Annual Review of Political Science*, 10: 363-90.

Colomer, Josep (2005), 'It's Parties that Choose Electoral Systems (or, Duverger's Laws Upside Down)', *Political Studies*, 53: 1-21.

Leyenaar, Monique & Hazan, Reuven, *Reconceptualising Electoral Reform, West European Politics*, vol 34, no 3, 437-455

#### **Suggested reading:**

Gallagher, Michael and Paul Mitchell (eds), (2005, 2008), *The Politics of Electoral Systems* (OUP)

Renwick, Alan (2010), *The Politics of Electoral Reform: Changing the Rules of Democracy* (CUP)

Blais, Andre (ed.), (2008), *To Keep or to Change First Past the Post? The Politics of Electoral Reform* (OUP)

## Session 4: Nationalization and Europeanization of Electoral Politics

**Lecturer: Daniele Caramani (University of St. Gallen)**

The nationalization of electoral politics (electorates and party systems) is a process through which electoral behaviour, policy programmes, party organizations, levels of mobilization become increasingly homogenous across the territories of nation-states in the early phases of state formation, nation-building and democratization. This process took place to various degrees in different countries. A first goal of research in this area is to explain such cross-country differences using macro-sociological and institutional theories (cleavages and electoral systems). Even if to different degrees, nationalization processes have taken place everywhere. A second goal of this research is to explain such dynamics using rational-choice theories on competition and coordination across constituencies. More recently, many of the models that have been successful in explaining the formation, integration and consolidation of new political units at the national level have been transposed to the analysis of the process of European integration. In a number of papers an attempt is currently being made to describe explain the Europeanization of electorates and party systems in the European Union using similar methodological tools as in the analysis of nationalization, but also introducing new indicators to analyse cross-country convergence and homogenization. A comparison between processes of transformation of cleavages from territorial to functional at the national and European level is provided in the conclusion of the module.

The module will introduce participants to the most important contributions in this field of research. It will present the main empirical findings based on a variety of theories coming from various approaches, from Rokkan's tradition of comparative historical sociology to rational choice and new institutionalism. The goal is to provide participants with an overview on a topic that has relevance for the quality of democratic processes, the responsiveness of party systems, and the accountability of political systems.

### **Core reading:**

Caramani, D. (2004). *The Nationalization of Politics: The Formation of National Electorates and Party Systems in Western Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Caramani, D. (2006). Is There a European Electorate and What Does It Look Like? Evidence from Electoral Volatility Measures, 1976–2004. *West European Politics* 29(1): 1–27.

Caramani, D., 2011. The Europeanization of Electoral Politics: An Analysis of Converging Voting Distributions in 30 European Party Systems, 1970–2008. *Party Politics* (DOI: 10.1177/1354068810389640; print version forthcoming).

Camia, V. and D. Caramani, 2011. Family Meetings: Ideological Convergence Within Party Families Across Europe, 1945–2009. *Comparative European Politics* 10(1): 48–85.

### **Additional suggested reading:**

Bochsler, D. (2010). *Territory and Electoral Rules in Post-Communist Democracies*. Houndmills: Palgrave.

Chhibber , P. and K. Kollman (2004). *The Formation of National Party Systems: Federalism and Party Competition in Canada, Great Britain, India, and the United States*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Jones, M. and S. Mainwaring (2003). The Nationalization of Parties and Party Systems. *Party Politics* 9: 139–66.

Cox, G. (1997). *Making Votes Count: Strategic Coordination in the World's Electoral Systems*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

### **Literature by area:**

- Western Europe: Caramani (2004).
- US, India, Canada and Great Britain: Chhibber and Kollman (2004).
- Central and Eastern Europe: Bochsler (2010).
- Latin America: Jones and Mainwaring (2003); see also Alemán, E. and M. Kellam, 2008. The nationalization of electoral change in the Americas. *Electoral Studies* 27: 193–212.
- South-East Asia: Croissant, A. and T. Schächter, 2008. Die Nationalisierung politischer Parteien und Parteiensysteme in asiatischen Neo-Demokratien. *Politische Vierteljahresschrift* 49: 12–36.

## **Session 5: Parties and the mass media: how parties react on media coverage**

**Lecturer: Stefaan Walgrave (University of Antwerp)**

It is a truism that mass media have become more important in modern politics in general and for political parties more specifically. There are many aspects of the interplay between parties and the mass media. Parties try to impose their definition of the situation and 'frame' on the mass media and they react on interpretative frames newsmakers use to tell their stories. Party leaders' and other partisan actors' individual electoral fate is directly affected by media coverage and, in turn, partisans try to influence whom gets into the news and how. Parties adapt to the media logic and tailor their communication to the needs of the mass media while they at the same time undergo the mediatization and struggle to get the upper hand. Parties, finally, try to set the agenda of the media by feeding the media with issues that favor them and at the same time parties react to the issues covered by the media and let their agenda be influenced by the media agenda.

This presentation deals with the last of these processes: the political agenda-setting impact of the media. The question I tackle is to what extent, why, and under which circumstances mass media coverage exerts an impact on what issues parties talk about and deal with politically. In other words: the lecture is about the agenda power of the media. I show that media coverage does affect the political agenda, but that this impact is contingent: it depends on the issue, the party, the time, the type of coverage, and the media outlet. Parties are not reacting mechanically on media coverage. They process media coverage strategically and use media attention in a distinct and selective way.

### **Core reading:**

- Strömback, J. (2008) Four Phases of Mediatization: An Analysis of the Mediatization of Politics. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 13, 228-246
- Walgrave, S. & Van Aelst, P. (2006) The Contingency of the Mass Media's Political Agenda Setting Power. Towards A Preliminary Theory. *Journal of Communication*, 56, 88-109.
- Vliegenthart, R. & Walgrave, S. (2011) Content matters. The Dynamics of Parliamentary Questioning in Belgium and Denmark. *Comparative Political Studies*, 44, 1031-1059.



## **Session 6: Parties and Party Systems in the New European Democracies**

**Lecturer: Vello Pettai (University of Tartu)**

Political parties and party systems in new (i.e. post-communist) European democracies have a number of distinctive features. Parties are typically weak on the ground and suffer other forms of organizational difficulty. Yet they tend to still dominate their political systems in terms of setting the public agenda, determining public policy, and in some cases even moulding national identities. Party systems are characterized by considerable fragmentation and volatility, but the intra-regional differences are larger than one would expect given the common challenges and the similarity of historical backgrounds. Electoral accountability functions well: the electorates frequently oust the incumbents for weak performance. But only in a few countries do parties enjoy any kind of real popular support or legitimacy. Electoral turnout is low, the personalization of politics is high and corruption is endemic. Parties typically reach voters not through large scale bureaucratic organizations, but through postmodern media politics, and, in certain instances, by sponsoring pseudo-civic movements.

Research on parties and party systems in post-communist countries has used the region as a laboratory to test a large number of hypotheses derived from the general political science literature. Much of the attention has been focused on phenomena that are particularly salient in these countries: volatility, new parties, party system institutionalization and the colonization of the state by parties. Given the elitist nature of the transition to democracy and of decision making, many findings underline the relevance of the supply side of politics (i.e. parties and candidates) over demand incentives (voter preferences and alignment). This session will outline some of the latest scholarly findings across four sub-fields in the discipline: issue cleavages, electoral behavior, party organization, and party systems.

### **Core reading:**

Zsolt Enyedi 2006. Party Politics in Post-Communist Transition, in Richard S. Katz and William Crotty, eds., *Handbook of Party Politics*, Sage Publications, 228-38.

Ingrid Van Biezen 2005. On the theory and practice of party formation and adaptation in new democracies. *European Journal of Political Research*, 47: 147-74.

Petr Kopecky 2006. Political Parties and the State in Post-Communist Europe: The Nature of Symbiosis. *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, 22(3): 251-73.

Brad Epperly 2011. Institutions and Legacies: Electoral Volatility in the Postcommunist World. *Comparative Political Studies*, 44(7): 829-853.

Robert Rohrschneider and Stephen Whitefield 2009. Representational Consistency: Stability and Change in Political Cleavages in Central and Eastern Europe, *Politics & Policy*, 37(4): 667-690.

## Session 7: Political Parties and the Challenge of Right Wing Extremism

**Lecturer: Nonna Mayer (Centre d'Etudes Européennes de Sciences Po)**

One of the main political changes in Europe, in the last thirty years, has been the electoral dynamic of far right parties such as the French FN, the Flemish VB, the Danish People's Party, the Austrian FPÖ, the Swiss SVP, the Dutch Freedom Party or the True Finns Party, they form an heterogeneous group. But they lead a common nationalist battle against globalization, the EU, immigration and Islam, and they represent a challenge for the mainstream parties of the Left and of the Right. This course will show how and why this political family has developed, and how successful are the different strategies elaborated by their opponents.

### Core reading:

- Arzheimer, K., 2009, "Contextual Factors and the Extreme Right Vote in Western Europe, 1980-2002", *American Journal of Political Science*, 53(2) , 259-275.
- Downs W.M. (2001), 'Pariahs in their midst: Belgian and Norwegian parties react to extremist threat', *West European Politics*, 24(3), 23-42.
- Van Spanje J., Van der Brug W. (2009), " Being intolerant of the intolerant. The exclusion of Western European anti-immigration parties and its consequences for party choice", *Acta Politica*, 44, 353–384.
- Van Spanje J., 2010, "Parties beyond the pale: Why some political parties are ostracized by their competitors while others are not", *Comparative European Politics* , 8, 354–383

### Suggested reading

- Art, D. (2007), "Reacting to the Radical Right: Lessons from Germany and Austria", *Party Politics* 13 ( 3), 331-349.
- Bornschier S. (2010), *Cleavage Politics and the Populist Right. The New Cultural Conflict in Western Europe*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Capoccia G. (2002), "Anti-system Parties: A conceptual Reassessment", *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 14(1), 9-35
- Kriesi H., Grande E., Lachat R., Dolezal M., Bornschier S. et Frey T.(2008), *West European Politics in the Age of Globalization*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Rydgren J. (2005), "Is Extreme Right-Wing Populism Contagious? Explaining the Emergence of a New Party Family", *European Journal of Political Research* 44, 413-437.

## Session 8: Parties as Organizations

**Lecturer: Kenneth Carty (The University of British Columbia)**

In his classic book (still worth reading) Maurice Duverger asserts that “a party is a community with a particular structure. Modern parties are characterized primarily by their anatomy.” In this session we will consider the basic structural dimensions of party organizations using Katz and Mair’s notion of ‘three faces’ as a framework for considering the internal relationships that govern power and practice in as hypothesized by the models that seek to characterize distinctive party forms.

One of the central concerns of party studies has been the processes transforming political party forms, and consequent behaviours, over time. This has focused on both specific issues such as the apparent long term decline in membership as well as more general phenomena described as ‘contagion from the left’ (or from the right) that have led to altering the capacity of parties to perform the functions ascribed to them in a working democracy. Our discussion of these issues will complement Susan Scarrow’s session on the closely related issue of Intra-party Democracy.

### Core Reading:

- Katz, R. & P. Mair (2002), “The Ascendancy of the Party in Public Office: Party Organizational Change in Twentieth-Century Democracies”, in R. Gunther, J. R. Montero & J. Linz, eds. *Political Parties: Old Concepts and New Challenges* (OUP) 113-135
- Wolinetz, S. (2002), “Beyond the Catch-All Party: Approaches to the Study of Parties and Party Organization in Contemporary Democracies”, R. Gunther, J. R. Montero & J. Linz, eds. *Political Parties: Old Concepts and New Challenges* (OUP), 136-165.
- Katz, R. (2002), “The Internal Life of Parties” in K.R. Luther & F. Müller-Rommel eds. *Political Parties in the New Europe: Political and Analytical Challenges* (OUP) 87-118
- Carty, R.K. (2004), “Parties as Franchise Systems: the strataarchical organizational imperative” *Party Politics* 10, 15-24

### Suggested Reading:

- Duverger, M. (1954) *Political Parties* (Book 1: Party Structure) Methuen
- Dalton, R. & M. Watenberg (2000) *Parties without Partisans: Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies* (Part II: Parties as Organizations) OUP
- Levitsky, S. (2003) “Labor-Based Party Adaptation in the Neoliberal Era: Rethinking the Role of Party Organization” which is Ch. 1 of his *Transforming labor-Based Parties in Latin America* CUP

## **Session 9: Political Parties' Internal Democracy: Important for Whom?**

**Lecturer: Susan Scarrow (University of Houston)**

In recent years political parties around the world have been rapidly expanding opportunities for party members (and sometimes other supporters) to have a direct say about important party decisions. Political parties in established democracies are increasingly turning to internal ballots to select party leaders, to approve party programs and to select parliamentary and mayoral candidates. At the same time, democracy-promoting organizations have argued that such plebiscitary decision-making procedures are an essential feature for political parties in new democracies.

This session examines intra-party democracy from both a theoretical and empirical angle. We will first consider the normative arguments for intra-party democracy, however structured, asking whether intra-party democracy enhances or undermines electoral accountability. We will then examine some of the evidence about the impact of intra-party democracy on participation within political parties, and on electoral outcomes.

### **Readings:**

- Cross, William and André Blais. 2012. "Who Selects the Party Leader?," *Party Politics* 18: 127-150.
- Gauja, Anika. 2005. "The Pitfalls of Participatory Democracy: A Study of the Australian Democrats' GST," *Australian Journal of Political Science* 40: 70-85.
- Kenig, Ofer. 2009. "Democratization of party leadership selection: Do Wider Selectorates Produce More Competitive Contests?" *Electoral Studies* 28: 240-7.
- Rahat, Gideon, Reuven Y. Hazan and Richard S. Katz. 2008. "Democracy and Political Parties: On the Uneasy Relationships between Participation, Competition and Representation," *Party Politics*. 14: 663-83.
- Scarrow, Susan. 1999. "Parties and the Expansion of Direct Democracy," *Party Politics* 5: 341-62.