

PARTY POLITICS IN EUROPEAN MICROSTATES

POSTGRADUATE SEMINAR SERIES 2016-2017

20 OCTOBER 2016

MAISON DES SCIENCES HUMAINES, 11, PORTE DES SCIENCES L-4366 ESCH-BELVAL

Despite the fact that in the current academic world scholars are highly preoccupied with the representation, variation, and generalizability of their studies, most comparative political studies have continuously ignored the “smallest of all states” (i.e. microstates, those with less than one million inhabitants), incomprehensibly excluding up to 20 per cent of their possible units of analysis.

If smaller states have similar political arrangements to larger ones, we are thus wasting a lot of valuable data, and if these turn out to be different – which we may reasonably expect given differences in terms of informational transparency, uncertainty, expertise, sanctioning capacities, action competence, vulnerability to name a few – then we would be missing out on the insights such potentially extreme, deviant, or most different cases can offer (Venendaal and Corbett, 2015; Dumont and Varone, 2006; Thorhallsson 2006). In either case, the virtual exclusion of microstates states in comparative studies is likely to have serious consequences on what we know about policy or democratic outcomes.

So far most of what we have learnt about smaller countries concerns the institutional choices made by these open economies (Katzenstein 1985; Alesina and Spolaore 2003), rather than what the smaller size of society and collective actors or the greater proximity between the electorate and political elites imply for questions related to the quality of representation or satisfaction with democracy. Focusing on European microstates, this symposium will aim at filling this gap.

In the morning, presentations will center on why we want to study small states at all, different ways of setting a comparative project, the place of case studies in comparative research, and related projects that saw a link between the size of polities and how democracy is organized and sustained. The afternoon will be dedicated to country case studies. Contributors will provide for a historical and in-depth examination of the most important issue(s) affecting party and party system development, including transversal questions such as how party politics has been affected by their special relations with their larger neighbours, by European integration at large, the management of the economic crisis, etc.

MORNING SESSION

- 9.30: Welcome address and programme of the day. Patrick Dumont (University of Luxembourg)
- 9.45: *Why should we study smaller states?* Wouter P. Veenendaal (Leiden University)
- 10.30: *La théorie consociative: origines et développements dans les travaux d'Arend Lijphart.* Franz Clément (Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research)
- 11.15-11.30 : Break
- 11.30: *Party politics in European microstates: a research project.* Fernando Casal Bértoa (University of Nottingham) and Patrick Dumont (University of Luxembourg)

LUNCH BREAK 12.15-13.30

AFTERNOON SESSION

- 13.30: *Party politics in Malta.* Roderick Pace (University of Malta)
- 14.15: *Party politics in Cyprus.* Direnç Kanol (Near East University)
- Break 14.45-15.00
- 15.00: *Party politics in Iceland.* Ólafur Þórður Harðarson (University of Iceland)
- 15.45: *Party politics in Montenegro.* Nemanja Batricevic (Central European University)
- 16.30: Wrap up session: Round table with European microstates experts: Félicitas Guillot (Monaco), Juli Minoves (Andorra), Fernando Casal Bértoa (San Marino), Wouter Veenendaal (Liechtenstein)