

ECPR STANDING GROUP
ON SOUTHERN EUROPEAN POLITICS

**SOUTHERN EUROPE AND THE EUROPEAN UNION:
A RELATIONSHIP UNDER STRESS**

Panel Proposal for the 46th Annual Conference of UACES
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Panel I: Responding to the Crisis

The Differentiated Politicisation of Eurozone Crisis Policies in Greece and Germany

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The Eurozone crisis contributes to unforeseen levels of public attention for European affairs and to contentious debates on a European scale. Whereas the general argument of this increasing politicization is widely accepted, empirical assessments of the antagonism between creditor and debtor countries are missing. Building on a Greek-German research project, this paper compares the politicization of European crisis politics in newspaper reporting in Germany and Greece between 2009 and 2014.

In how far does the politicization of Eurozone crisis policies differ in Germany and Greece and over time? What explains these differences?

Politicization describes a societal process of transforming seemingly a-political matters into the objects of public controversy which involves an increasing issue salience, an expansion of debates beyond a narrow circle of actors and processes of actor polarization. Degree and direction of these three sub-processes are described and explained by two dimensions, derived from the political opportunity structure approach and the deprivation approach: Firstly, the institutionalized openness of the political system and secondly, the socio-economic and political crisis impacts. First results surprisingly suggest a strong but rather domestically oriented politicization of Eurozone crisis policies in Greece with relatively little reference to European institutions.

Beyond its empirical contribution, the paper proposes an innovative operationalization of politicization which focuses on the contested debate about the public attribution of responsibility. Claims about who is responsible for failures and successes in politics form the backbone of a political discourse and are the core unit of the quantitative content analysis applied in this research.

Keywords: Politicization; Eurozone Crisis; Greece; German; Attribution Analysis

Perceptions of Government, Attitudes to the European Union, and Political Efficacy: Understanding Protest Potential in Southern Europe in Times of Crisis

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The economic crisis starting in 2008/09 has led to unemployment growth and shrinking GDP across Europe. There is great variation in the extent to which the crisis impacted on the economic conditions of different countries in Europe. Particularly Southern European countries where the crisis hit hardest, have witnessed an important wave of anti-austerity protests. In this paper, we compare Southern European countries where the crisis hit hardest with Northern European countries that were less affected to examine citizens' motivations for engaging in protest and how this relates to attitudes to government, the European Union and feelings of political efficacy. We also examine the role of deprivation, political values, associational membership and social embeddedness for political involvement. In particular, we investigate what drives individuals to participate in protests to pressure politicians to make things change and the extent to which views of government and politicians as well as the European Union in terms of their receptivity to the public impacts on citizens' protest potential. We also examine the role of emotions in this mobilization process and aim to assess whether the factors precipitating citizens' activism are different in countries that have been harder hit by the crisis relative to less affected ones. Our analysis aims to speak to theories in the literature explaining why citizens decide to join demonstrations and suggest new avenues for theorising the relative role of factors in situations of crisis. We test these hypotheses by analysing a unique and novel dataset containing data from over 10,000 protestors from 72 demonstrations (2009-2013).

Keywords: protest, demonstrations, Southern Europe, attitudes to government, attitudes to the European Union

Portuguese Trade Unions' Responses during the Great Recession: Facing Troika Conditionality

Angie Gago, *University of Milan*

During the Great Recession Portugal was put under a regime of harsh austerity. The implementation of three PEC (Stability and Growth Program) in 2010 and the bailout and the imposition of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) by the Troika in 2011 have led to a dismantling of social and labour rights. Portuguese trade unions, as the defenders of the constituencies mostly affected by these changes, have reacted not only vis-à-vis their national governments but have also given a response at the supranational level.

This paper attempts to analyse the impact of EU-enforced austerity measures, the bailout and the implementation of the MoU on Portuguese trade unions' responses. The objective is to explain the interplay of national and supranational trade union's responses by observing both, national and supranational political dynamics and conditions. In so doing, special attention will be paid to national and supranational policymaking styles, the division of action of the main Portuguese trade unions and the political exchange between the latter and political parties.

This paper aims to argue that Troika conditionality has altered supranational and national policymaking processes. On the one hand, there has been a shift from “symbolic corporatism” (Bieler, 2007) to “liberal intergovernmentalism” at the supranational level that has led to the politicization of conditionality as trade unions have developed collective actions and campaigns. On the other hand, the unilateral policymaking style of national governments has forced trade unions to explore creatively alternative strategies to stop austerity measures such as the use of Constitutional Courts.

Keywords: Portugal, Troika, conditionality, trade unions, European Union

From Protest to Party: Horizontal and Vertical Politics on the Slovenian Left
Lasse Thomassen and Alen Toplisek, *Queen Mary, University of London*

One of the key characteristics of recent forms of protest is the rejection of vertical structures in favour of horizontal structures. This takes many forms, but it is evident in, among others, the Spanish indignados, Occupy and the Gezi protests. In this paper we analyse and discuss the politics of verticality and horizontality through the case of the 2011-13 protests in Slovenia. We develop a theoretical framework through a critical analysis of the work of Marina Sitrin, showing that there is no horizontality without verticality. This then serves as the theoretical framework for our analysis of the protests in Slovenia in 2011-13 and of the emergence of a new political party on the left, Združena levica (United Left). The Slovenian case is illustrative because we can trace the emergence of the United Left from protest through movement to party. Since we believe that horizontality and verticality are present in both movements and parties, we argue against a simple opposition between movements and parties. We will categorise the main radical political initiatives in Slovenia in this period according to their use of either/or horizontal and vertical forms of politics. We will then proceed to analysing the organisation and composition of the 2012-2013 Slovenian protests and outline the reasons for change in political strategy of the main protest committees, one of which resulted in the creation of Inicijativa za demokratiÄni socializem (the Initiative for Democratic Socialism [IDS]). In particular, we will be focussing on the reasons for the move from horizontal ways of political organising to vertical structures.

Keywords: public opinion; horizontality, representation, Sitrin, Slovenia

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Panel II: Reshaping Orientatons

Greek Foreign Policy and Europe after the Eurozone Crisis
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This paper examines whether and how key aspects of Greek foreign policy have been transformed in the years of the crisis, and especially the relationship between Greek foreign policy interests and practices and the EU framework. Foreign policy has been

a little-researched area in terms of the impact of the Eurozone crisis on the Greek polity. Yet, given that the crisis has affected precisely Greece's relationship with its main strategic anchor of the last 20 years – Europe – it is surprising how little attention the question of the evolving relationship between Greek foreign policy and the European framework has received. The paper will theorize about ways that the Eurozone crisis can affect the strategic relationship between national and EU foreign policies (both in the uploading and the downloading sense): Increasing difficulty to formulate common policies on the EU level; more emphasis on immediate political and economic returns on the national level; and a change of the political context (e.g. strengthening of antisystemic parties) in crisis-stricken countries. The empirical focus of this paper will be on two of Greece's most significant bilateral relations (Turkey and Russia), and on two areas of Greece's external relations that are of increasing importance in recent years (energy and migration). These are all areas where the European framework plays a major role in the conduct of Greek foreign policy, but where tensions have appeared or intensified in recent years.

Keywords: Greek foreign policy, crisis, energy, migration, Europeanization

The EU and Turkey: Norms or Geostrategy?

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The EU's need for Turkish cooperation on security issues is as high as it has ever been. Not only is the EU dealing with the acute issues of migration and foreign policy/counter terrorism (ISIS), it has the underlying issues of energy security and matters of justice and home affairs to take into consideration as well. All require a high level of cogent cooperation from the Turkish government. This has historically been secured with the promise of accession "progress" into the EU.

However the Turkey-EU relationship has reached stalemate because of residual member state opposition and the illiberal nature of current Turkish democracy. Ankara shows no sign of implementing constitutional change in accordance with the Copenhagen criteria. Day to day freedoms of expression, protest and the news media are heavily curtailed and the rule of law compromised by the Ergenekon/Balyoz investigations and the Kurdish issue. Hence the EU cannot meaningfully offer accession progress and is "rhetorically entrapped" by its previous insistence on the Copenhagen criteria.

However, it increasingly seems the European Union will need to choose between its principles, which have formed the core of its liberal democratic identity, and raw security need in the case of Turkey. This paper analyses the EU's interactions with Ankara in the face of the Syrian civil war and migration crises 2013-2015. Taking a qualitative, process-tracing, approach and a Normative Institutional theoretical framework, it assesses the implications of these events for Turkey-EU relations going forward - and the EU itself.

Keywords: Turkey, EU enlargement, EU foreign policy, Security, Normative Institutionalism

Reassessing the EU in Cyprus and Malta: The Impact of the Eurozone Crisis on Popular Attitudes towards European Integration

Susannah Verney, *National and Kapodistrian University of Athens*

Southern Europe has traditionally been perceived as a region of strong pro-European sentiment. However, Cyprus and Malta, both late entrants which joined the EU in 2004, initially appeared to be exceptions. In Malta, whose EU entry referendum produced the lowest pro-accession vote of all the 21st century entrants, public opinion was for long polarised on the EU issue. In Cyprus, where accession became linked to the rejected Annan Plan for the solution of the Cyprus problem, support for integration was also below the EU average. Subsequently, the Eurozone crisis affected these two countries very differently. Malta was the South European state which suffered the least impact from the crisis. In contrast, Cyprus, like several other South European member-states, became the recipient of an EU-IMF bailout which in the Cypriot case also included a particularly controversial bail-in of bank depositors. The differential impact of the crisis in Cyprus and Malta offers the basis for an interesting comparison. Using Eurobarometer data, the paper will investigate the evolution of attitudes towards European integration during the crisis period in these two countries. By examining one bailout and one non-bailout state, the paper aims to illuminate more broadly the changing patterns of support for European integration in crisis era Southern Europe.

Keywords: Southern Europe, Public opinion, Eurozone crisis, Euroscepticism, Eurobarometer, EU/IMF bailout

Turkey and the EU: Strategic Partnership in Action

Beken Saatçioğlu, *MEF University, Istanbul*

This paper analyzes the implications of the November 2015 EU-Turkey agreement addressing Europe's "refugee crisis" for the nature and evolution of Turkey-EU relations. It makes two specific claims. First, in sharp contrast to normative institutionalism, the agreement was driven by a process of "rhetorical entrapment on reverse" which is conceptualized as the EU's entrapment in its strategic security interests as opposed to official normative discourse reflecting democratic criteria and values. These strategic motivations practically coincided with the Turkish government's political demands (in exchange for its agreement to host the refugees and help stem the refugee flow to Europe) prior to the deal. Consequently, this convergence of interests between Brussels and Ankara enabled the deal while signaling the EU's inclination to deal with Turkey as an interest-based rather than a value-based actor. Second, and as a result, Turkey-EU relations are evolving towards a de-facto "strategic partnership in disguise" rather than full integration. While the formal accession process is kept open, in reality, both sides are aware that accession is no longer likely, which results in a realistic re-focusing of relations on the benefits of cooperation. The paper uses process-tracing and discourse analysis to trace and demonstrate these claims.