

## **CALL FOR PAPERS AND PANELS**

### **SOUTHERN EUROPE: MAPPING CHANGE AND MOVING ON**

*Section convened by the Standing Group on Southern European Politics*

EUROPEAN CONSORTIUM OF POLITICAL RESEARCH  
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### **SOUTHERN EUROPE: MAPPING CHANGE AND MOVING ON**

Southern Europe has experienced a decade of dizzying developments, some triggered by the region's position in the frontline of major European crises (eurozone turmoil, refugee/migrant influx) and some essentially domestically driven. Events have sometimes been dramatic, including regime change (Turkey's move to presidentialism), possible state breakup (the Catalan demand for independence from Spain) and party system collapse (in austerity-struck Greece). Looking back over an often tumultuous period, the question arises how much in the region has changed and how much has stayed the same. Meanwhile, national experiences have been far from uniform. For example, while much of the southern eurozone has undergone austerity, Malta essentially escaped the economic crisis and Turkey has enjoyed significant economic growth. This Section offers an opportunity for a 'stocktaking' of where the region finds itself today and where it might be headed in the future.

The Section will focus on delineating the discontinuities in Southern Europe, their extent and content over the past decade. It invites proposals for papers and panels addressing this issue across a broad range of fields. A non-inclusive list of possible areas for investigation might include:

#### Societal change

How has the Great Recession (or the Turkish experience of economic growth) impacted on South European societies? Are we seeing a new picture of redistribution and inequality? If there is increased social mobility, what are the political consequences? What are the effects of

demographic change, immigration and changing patterns of employment and unemployment? How significant is generational change, including the emergence of a youth politicised by crisis?

#### Attitudinal change

To what extent have the experiences of this period altered elite attitudes on key issues including institutional change and European integration? How significant are the shifts in public opinion? Is Southern Europe becoming a region of dissatisfied citizens? How extensive are the growth of (among other potential themes) political discontent, euroscepticism and opposition to immigration?

#### Participation and mobilisation change

Which are the new patterns of electoral participation and preferences? Have social media encouraged or discouraged political participation? Which other new modes of political mobilisation and communication have emerged? Has South European civil society grown stronger or weaker? What have protest movements achieved in terms of citizen engagement, organisational innovation and influence on policy outcomes?

#### Institutional change

What have been the experiences with constitutional reform (e.g. in Italy and Turkey)? Which changes have occurred with regard to institutional autonomy (e.g. central bank independence) or inter-institutional balances (e.g. weakening of parliament in an era of EU/IMF bailouts or facing a strengthened Turkish executive)? What have been the consequences of crisis for (re)centralising versus centrifugal dynamics and how have they been playing out?

#### Political party and party system change

How have South European political parties responded to the challenges of the past decade? What kind of ideological/programmatic, organisational and personnel changes have occurred? What are the main features of party system change during this period? What kind of new parties have appeared including nationalist and extremist parties? What has been the role of the radical left? How significant is populism in today's Southern Europe? And what are the implications for governmental stability?

#### Policy change

To what extent has the recent period seen the emergence of new policy priorities and policy agendas; amendments to policymaking processes including participation by new actors; and new policy outputs? How has this period impacted on particular policy areas including social policy and welfare provision? How far has externally-mandated structural reform been effective? Has radical left participation in some South European governments produced policy change?

#### Democratic change

Overall, has this period resulted in more democratic defeats or democratic advances? What have been the experiences with direct democracy including referendums? Have there been specific improvements in democratic quality? What has been the role of external actors in domestic politics and what have been the systemic consequences? Which South European

countries have experienced democratic backsliding and why? Has crisis reduced corruption or stimulated its growth?

### Framing change

Besides mapping specific processes of change, the Section also seeks to understand how they have been perceived and presented. What kinds of discourses, narratives and frames have been employed to discuss, promote or oppose change in Southern Europe?

In all cases, besides recording and analysing change, participants are invited to discuss where this leaves Southern Europe today and the implications and prospects for the region 'moving on' beyond its recent past. In pursuing its goal of investigating change across South European states and societies, the Section aims to highlight similarities and differences in national experiences, through comparative research and single country case studies. In addition to addressing the varied national impacts, the Section also hopes to encourage consideration of the region as a whole, including perceptions of its changing image and identity and of converging or diverging national destinies.

The Section offers a forum for innovative empirical research and encourages a range of disciplinary perspectives and methodological approaches. Regarding geographical scope, the Section covers Italy, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Turkey, Cyprus and Malta. Intra-South European comparative studies are particularly welcome.

*The Section is proposed on behalf of the ECPR Standing Group in Southern European Politics and welcomes proposals for panels and papers from members and non-members of the Group.*