The Europeanization of parties and party competition

Elective M.A. course, Winter 2018

Instructor
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Class meetings: Thursdays 15:30-17:10
Office hours: TBA
Credits: 2 CEU credits, 4 ECTS credits
**Course description**
The process of European integration has affected political parties, leading to noticeable organizational and programmatic changes as well as to altered patterns of party competition in some Member States. Scholars have even argued that the constraints the EU places upon the freedom of manoeuvre of governments have hollowed out party competition and limited the policy instruments and policy repertoires that parties can rely on. The course provides an up to date review of the literature that deals with these developments, while also addressing the role Euro-parties play in party change in new democracies and in domestic (party) political crises. With respect to party organizational changes the course will analyze the variation in how national parties adapt their structures to cope with EU politics and policies and the extent to which the European integration process has produced changes in the parties' internal balance of power. Moreover, we will examine the parties' use of selection, scrutiny and control mechanisms of their own members involved in EU processes (e.g. Members of the European Parliament), as well as of government members on EU affairs. Given its focus on the interactions between national parties, European Union institutions and Euro-parties, the course targets both students of party politics and those more interested in the political system of the EU and its functioning.

**Learning outcomes**
At a general level, the elaboration and feedback received on the position papers, research proposal and final essay will help students improve their analytical and critical writing skills, while their oral communication and presentation skills will benefit from presentations and in-class activities. The course will help student improve their skills regarding the formulation of research questions, the choice of adequate research designs and their sound execution. At a more specific level, the course readings are selected and the discussions are structured so as to increase the student's capacity to understand the main arguments and evidence brought forward in the scholarship on Europeanization and party change and to provide constructive criticism of this literature. Moreover, the course will also help students become familiarized with the main debates regarding intra-party democracy, the formulation of party manifestos for national and European elections, and how delegation and accountability functions within parties. Some of the instructor's own articles and work in progress will be integrated occasionally in lectures so as to make students aware of the practical challenges faced when researching and publishing on political parties in general and Europeanization of party politics in particular.

**Evaluation**
Class activity: 15%
Presentation: 10%
Two position papers: 35%
Final essay: 40%

*Class activity.* Students are expected to participate in the discussion of the topic the session deals with, sharing their insights and intuitions. The discussion will also serve as a medium for clarifying any questions arising from the readings. For a high quality discussion, it is essential
for students to complete the assigned readings. Activity in the classroom can be complemented with questions, suggestions and comments (maximum 200 words) sent to the instructor via e-mail or uploaded to the e-learning site 24 hours prior to the meetings.

**Presentation.** Students are requested to give a 10 minutes presentation on one dimension or strand of research included in the session's topic. For this, they should rely on one or more of the recommended readings.

**Position papers.** Students are requested to submit two of them and at least one in the first half of the course (i.e. before session 7). The position papers shall have no more than 800 words and students will use them to summarize and comment critically on the mandatory readings assigned for the session. If only one mandatory reading is assigned for the session, the position paper needs to also address one of the recommended readings. When choice is available, i.e. among recommended readings, the position paper should focus on research articles, not on review articles. Students will present the main arguments, methods and findings of the reading while reflecting on how convincing the authors' choices and claims are, and identifying potential flaws.

**Final essay.** It may be of a quantitative or qualitative nature. This paper will follow the structure of an academic article and its length will be between 3000 and 3500 words. Both quantitative and qualitative papers would draw on theories and scholarship studied during the course, either to test a particular hypothesis or to generate new hypotheses about the Europeanization of party politics. The topic of the final paper needs to be discussed and agreed in advance with the instructor. Students are asked to contact the instructor as soon as possible in order to discuss the content of the final paper. In the last session of the course students will present the research proposal or work-in-progress final essays and provide feedback to their colleagues.

For the final essay participants should consult additional literature, surveying both theoretical and empirical studies. Specialized journals include: *Party Politics, European Union Politics, JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* and *Journal of European Public Policy*.

Potential sources for the empirical analyses include party *manifesto data* from national and European elections, *expert* survey data on party positions, *European Parliament data*, behavioral and survey data from the Hungarian and *Romanian legislatures* (more to be provided by the instructor upon request), or replication data posted by authors on their personal websites or archives such as the *Harvard Dataverse*. Other potentially useful political science datasets can be consulted [here](#).

Possible qualitative analyses may take the form of a comparison of changes in party statutes regarding the role and power of European specialists, or of an in-depth (comparative) case study of the usage by parties of control and accountability mechanisms (e.g. instructions, reporting requirements etc.) for their elites who participate in European political decision-making. The deadline for submitting the final paper is *April 11*.

The departmental policies regarding attendance, late submission and plagiarism will be applied.
Course structure and readings

1. What is Europeanization and how it affects parties?
Mandatory readings

Recommended readings
Ladrech, R. 2009. Europeanization and political parties. Living Reviews in European Governance, 4(1)

2. The Europeanization of party systems and the legitimacy of the EU
Mandatory readings

Recommended reading

3. The Europeanization of party manifestos
Mandatory readings

Recommended reading

4. Party organizational changes in response to Europeanization: party leaders (the executive bias) and EU specialists
Mandatory readings


**Recommended reading**


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**5. The selection of MEPs, their control and their role in party politics**

**Mandatory readings**


**Recommended readings**


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**6. The Europeanization of party competition in the national arena I**

**Mandatory readings**


**Recommended readings**


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**7. The Europeanization of party competition in the national arena II**

**Mandatory readings**


**Recommended readings**

**8. National parties and the use of parliamentary means to scrutinize EU affairs**

**Mandatory readings**
Winzen, T. 2013. ‘European Integration and National Parliamentary Oversight Institutions’, *European Union Politics* 14(2), 297–323

**Recommended readings**


**Mandatory readings**

**Recommended readings**

**10. The role of Euro-parties in party building and party change in EU candidate states**

**Mandatory readings**

Recommended readings

**11. The role of Euro-parties in domestic (party) political crises**
Mandatory reading

Recommended readings

**12. Research proposal/ drafts discussion**
Students will present their research proposals or draft papers and provide feedback for their peers’ work. They should submit their research proposal to all the course participants and instructor by noon on March 26th. The proposal should include at a minimum a research question, a brief discussion that places the research question within the context of the larger literature, and a section on how the question will be answered.