

New DiSP Young Researchers' Seminar Series

A.Y. 2022-2023 | Semester I

The New DiSP Young Researchers' Seminars are held regularly in both semesters and they provide a forum for presentation of work in progress, be it by members of the PhD community, Postdoctoral fellows, or invited speakers, as well as an opportunity to discuss academic and administrative matters of mutual concern.

Thursday 13 October 2022, 11:30 – 13:00 | Room S02, basement of the Luiss Residence, Via Lisbona, 7

➤ **Federico Bonomi, PhD Candidate, XXXVIII cycle**

“Tying hands or sharing risks? Explaining the evolution of the EU fiscal governance from the financial crisis to the pandemic.”

Abstract: the provisional research proposal inquires the introduction and reform of independent fiscal institutions and fiscal rules at the level of member states in the EU after the financial crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic. In order to assess the rationale of such institutional innovations, two alternative theories will be tested based respectively on functionalism and on liberal intergovernmentalism. The research design relies on qualitative methods, i.e. interviews and documentary analysis of selected case studies.

➤ **Mattia Gatti, PhD Candidate, XXXVIII cycle**

“Filling the Political Supply Gap? Western European Radical Left Parties targeting the Left-Authoritarians' Quadrant”

Abstract: Left authoritarians, namely those voters expressing left-wing economic preferences together with right-wing cultural stances, account for a significant portion of citizens around Western Europe. Yet, they are constantly underrepresented, as (almost) no party displays this combination of positions. This research project tries to unveil the political strategies employed by the heterogenous family of Western European Radical Left Parties (RLPs) in an effort to tap into this plethora of voters.

➤ **Ivan Zaccagnini, PhD Candidate, XXXVIII cycle**

“Industrial Policy in the Age of Complexity: Emerging Technologies and the International Competition in Commercial and Defence Markets.”

Abstract: What role can states still play in achieving technological goals? Is today industrial policy still effective like it was in the past? Starting from these questions my PhD project focuses on the efficacy of industrial policy in the so-called age of complexity and aims to answer these questions exploring the dynamics of the defence and commercial industry throughout the first machine age (1915-1960) and the second machine age (1982-2020). The goal is to contribute to a central debate in the social sciences, outlining the role of the government in promoting economic and technological development and explaining success or failure of industrial policy.

In order to achieve that I introduce an often-neglected variable in the debate on the efficacy of industrial policy: technological complexity. I assert that the change in technology may directly affect the outcome of industrial policy in multiple ways. Finally, I propose four case studies, two from the first machine age and two from the second machine age, to maximize variation and with the intention of putting my theory to hard test and competing theories to easy test. My preliminary cases focus on the EU attempts to catch up (in particular with China and US) in emerging technologies. Specifically, I propose to study and compare industrial developments of drones, fighter-jets, cloud computing and automotive

➤ **Debora Del Piano, GEM DIAMOND PhD Candidate, XXXVIII cycle**

“EU grand strategy in a competitive system: European liberal democracy in a multipolar world”

Abstract: According to most literature on democratization, it is argued that civil society is essential in contributing to the establishment and maintenance of a stable democracy. Many have been the critiques to this approach with several authors increasingly questioning the embedded normative power of civil society, especially when externally promoted. By questioning its normativity, in fact, issues of power and power relations within the local and the international dimension, as well as between the two of them, arise. It is in this broad framework that this research aims at investigating EU democracy promotion policies (with a focus on civil society promotion) in the MENA, and analyse whether they might have (had) unintended outcomes in terms of adaptation or resistance from the societies in question.

➤ **Samir El Khanza, GEM DIAMOND PhD Candidate, XXXVIII cycle**

“Socio-economic contestation turned into democratic conflicts? EU comprehensive trade agreements in front of parliaments: the CETA CASE”

Abstract: This research aims to study the influence of public contestation on the European Parliament, Member States’ parliaments and Parliament of Canada, and how this impacts the European trade policy. Indeed, we will try to demonstrate that public contestation, through interest groups have a central role in EU policy negotiations.

➤ **Bosco Lebrun, PhD Candidate, XXXVIII cycle**

“Understanding Millennials’ Views on a World Parliament from the European Experience”

Abstract: Building on the normative political theory promoting cosmopolitan institutions, the planned research aims to understand the support or resistance for a World Parliament. The European Parliament has been so far the closest advancement to this old proposal. We therefore start from this experience to explain the reasons for encouraging or not the existence of a global parliamentary assembly within the UN. We carry out grounded theory research focusing on the generation of citizens born between 1981 and 1996. Data are collected thanks to in-depth interviews. Comparative analysis is used continuously. The first phase interviews a sample of European citizens on their views regarding the European Parliament. It confirms or not the quantitative studies already conducted on the subject. The second phase expands the sample globally, while ensuring representation from the five UN regional groups. It identifies similarities and differences with respect to Europeans’ views on an international parliamentary assembly. After effectively determining the reasons for support or resistance to a World Parliament, the third phase uncovers the conditions under which these views may change positively.

The research is undertaken within a liberal and cosmopolitan theoretical framework. It is committed to the neutrality inherent in the qualitative research method it uses and pays particular attention to avoiding cultural or research bias. It also develops an important comparative analysis to ensure valid comparisons between the European and global contexts. Thus, the planned research accomplishes a threefold originality compared to previous published work: to qualitatively understand Millennials’ views toward international parliamentary assemblies in Europe and around the world, to better explain the points of divergence between these two contexts, and to clarify the key issues that may affect public opinion. These results provide the foundation for public policies aimed at strengthening the legitimacy of international democratic institutions.

➤ **Lorenzo Santini, PhD Candidate, XXXVIII cycle**

“The Parliamentarization of EU Foreign Policy: Patterns of Institutional Leadership?”

Abstract: Most studies on the foreign policy of the European Union (EU) tend to neglect the institutional leadership role potentially played by the European Parliament (EP) and the impact of the possibly subsequent phenomenon of parliamentarization of EU foreign policy. By acknowledging the significance of the EP as a foreign policy actor, this research project aims at filling this gap in academic literature by proposing the elaboration of a comprehensive analytical framework for institutional leadership that would analyze resources, contexts, strategies and ideas to assess whether the EP is an institutional leader in the EU polity and whether this contributes to the parliamentarization of EU foreign policy. Methodologically, this research would rely on causal process tracing resulting from the recollection of EU institutional documents and structured interviews with EP Members and EU officers. The results of this research are expected to advance current knowledge on EU foreign policy by endowing it with a parliamentary dimension.

Thursday 17 November 2022, 11:30 – 13:00 | Room S02, basement of the Luiss Residence, Via Lisbona, 7

Dr. Megan Foster, Postdoctoral Fellow, Luiss University

“Legitimacy in the age of algorithmic governance”

Abstract: Governments around the world now increasingly rely on machine learning algorithms for variety of coordinating and rule-making functions. The main appeal of algorithmic decision-making is its efficiency—the ability to contend with the sheer size and complexity of contemporary societies and keep up in the rapidly evolving globalized world. The other great appeal, at least in democratic societies, is a perceived proximity to our ideal of pure procedural fairness, where systematic rule-making replaces the discretion of potentially biased and erroneous human judgment. But to what extent can governing decisions made on the basis of machine learning algorithms be considered legitimate? The aim of this research project is to build upon recent works in the field of philosophy of technology and critical algorithm studies, to begin to reimagine a framework of normative assessment for algorithmic governance and the problems of political legitimacy that arise in this context.

Thursday 1 December 2022, 10:00 – 11:30 | Room S02, basement of the Luiss Residence, Via Lisbona, 7

Paul Culley, EU Policy Advisor

“Institutional Responses to the Covid Pandemic: the Case of the EU Council”

Abstract: The eruption of the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic took the EU institutions and Member States by surprise. This Policy Insight maps how the European Council and Council of the EU adapted to the unprecedented challenges to their working methods. It looks at the procedures, technology and human resources used in the period between March 2020 and June 2021, when these institutions began to return to ‘business as usual’.

It then examines what we can learn from this period of improvised, pragmatic solutions to maintain policy- and lawmaking. It explores to what extent these solutions could play a part in improved decision-making and governance beyond the crisis.

The mapping exercise shows that the initial discussions were animated, and sometimes divisive, but led to an incremental process of adaptation. Different players showed a high degree of flexibility and political will to find pragmatic solutions. This allowed the two institutions to move relatively rapidly to an online mode and ensured continuity of the decision-making machinery.

This positive achievement, however, came at a price. The solutions often compromised the quality of established governance practices. The crisis legislative process weakened transparency, accountability and stakeholder consultation, particularly in the Council.

In interviewing key players and analysing data on meetings and legislative output, we focus on how the main elements of governance evolved during the period – efficiency, transparency, stakeholder consultation and accountability. Drawing from both positive and negative lessons, we offer recommendations in terms of procedures, working methods, technological issues and human resources.