

**Netherlands Institute of Government
Centre for the Study of Democracy, University of Twente**

Lecture announcement

Political Choice Matters: Explaining the strength of class and religious cleavages in cross-national perspective

Nan Dirk de Graaf (Nuffield College, Oxford)

In many societies and to a varying degree religion and social class are cleavages that shape political party choices. Understanding the extent to which party choices are structured by social cleavages and the factors that account for changes in the extent and patterning of such divisions is arguably an important issue to be addressed in the social sciences. However, studies of the social bases underlying political preferences in contemporary democracies have focused on describing cleavages rather than understanding the processes that account for their evolution. The question I will try to answer is how socio-economic development and political strategy interact to produce changes in the social bases of political choices. More specifically, how do the policy and programmatic positions adopted by political parties provide voters with choice sets that can accentuate or diminish political cleavages? The empirical analysis involves evidence from surveys of populations, party programmes and official data from 15 countries through time.

Note: The project was made possible by the EQUALSOC network of excellence funded by the European Union's Sixth Framework Programme

The lecture takes place on Wednesday, **14 September, 16.00-17.15**, in the VIP room in the Ravelijn building at the **University of Twente**. The talk and subsequent discussion will be in English.

Further information:

<http://www.mb.utwente.nl/csd/events/>

Directions and maps:

<http://www.utwente.nl/contact/route>