

Schedule Panel 1:

Democratic and administrative reforms

Chaired by: dr. Veronica Junjan (UT), dr. Giselle Bosse (UM)

Friday 28 November, 10:30-13:00

Paper presentation: 10-15 min, followed by Q&A: 20min

1. The EU's Eastern Partnership and the disintegration of Eastern Europe: Unintended consequence of a technical process or deliberate political calculus?

- Giselle Bosse and Lelde Čukure
- g.bosse@maastrichtuniversity.nl, Maastricht University, Political Sciences

2. Organizational innovation in local government. The case of Romanian Local Development Agent

- Veronica Junjan and Marton Balogh
- v.junjan@utwente.nl, University of Twente, Public Administration/Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

3. Democratic Reforms in the Ukraine? Evidence from OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Missions, 2004-2014.

- Hans Schmeets and Max Bader
- hshs@cbs.nl, Maastricht University / Statistics Netherlands

4. Combating or Cultivating Climate Change? Russia's Approach to Renewable Energy as an Opportunity for the EU as a Facilitating actor

- Niels Smeets
- niels.smeets@soc.kuleuven.be, KU Leuven, Sociale Wetenschappen - LINES

ABSTRACTS

1. The EU's Eastern Partnership and the disintegration of Eastern Europe: Unintended consequence of a technical process or deliberate political calculus?

Giselle Bosse and Lelde Čukure

The current conflict in Ukraine has sparked a lively debate on the role of the EU in Eastern Europe, and the impact of its Eastern Partnership (EaP) policy as a potential cause of the crisis. A general consensus appears to have emerged that the EaP had by and large been left to the European Commission, which treated the policy as a technical exercise thereby ignoring the geopolitical and strategic significance of the policy. The dominance of technical concerns in the absence of high-level political involvement of the EU member states in the EaP are frequently cited as key factors which have contributed to the current crisis. In our paper, we question the assumption that the EaP was predominantly driven by technical process and intend. Instead, we argue that strategic interests, and in particular the interests of the Baltic EU member states, have played a crucial role in the decision-making process towards enhancing the EU's relationship with the six EaP countries. We draw on rational choice theory and the literature on policy entrepreneurship to show that individual Baltic states have created strategic alliances including Commission officials to drive the EaP forward at a time when the remaining majority of EU member states showed little interest in the policy. We demonstrate that these alliances not only strategically used the logic and language of technical/administrative process as well as that of 'moral duty' to justify enhanced relations with the EaP, and to persuade the remaining member states of this particular course of action. They also ensured that concerns about the EaP's implications for the EU's broader geopolitical and security interests were effectively sidelined and/or silenced.

2. Organizational innovation in local government. The case of Romanian Local Development Agent

Veronica Junjan and Marton Balogh

This paper investigates mechanisms that influence the process of transfer and of institutionalization of norms, values, and rules in the process of implementing reforms in public organizations. In order to do this, we have focused in this research project on investigating the factors that supported or impeded upon the exercising of the tasks associated to the position of Local Development Agent (LDA) in rural local governments in Romania. Romania joined the EU in 2007 and undertook a thorough transformation its public administration during and after the accession (Hintea et alli, in Dimitrova (ed. 2004). The current research project builds on the results obtained during research conducted by the DIOSCURI project (2005) in the subfield of public administration, project which analysed the process of institutional introduction and transformation, development of hybrid solutions, and reciprocal learning (Junjan and Nastase, 2009). The development and institutionalisation of a LDA in rural local government s in Romania, started in 2005, is followed by the current study which investigates (in 2013) the situation on the institutionalisation of the LDAs in the local government organizations and the transfer of norms, rules, values, in rural local governments in Romania.

3. Democratic Reforms in the Ukraine? Evidence from OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Missions, 2004-2014.

Hans Schmeets and Max Bader

Based on a number of framework documents, among which most importantly the 1990 Copenhagen Commitments, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) undertakes election observation in its 57 Member states. Each year, the OSCE deploys thousands of international observers (the Short-term Observers) who visit around twelve polling stations during the Election Day and record their findings in special observer report forms for each polling station. The OSCE releases preliminary statements shortly after Election Day, and a final report, including various recommendations as to reforms in governance and politics, some 2 months thereafter. In this paper we will focus on the nine EOMs conducted in the Ukraine in the 2004-2014 period. We will demonstrate trends of observers assessment of the voting and counting process, and will compare the findings with other democracy indicators, under which political stability, rule of law, and openness. Subsequently, we will explore observers' findings within various regions in the Ukraine, and will put the findings in the perspective of the current crisis.

Data and results: The paper deals with the analyses and interpretation of over 30,000 observer report forms in the nine Ukraine presidential and legislative elections: 2004(3); 2006, 2007, 2010(2), 2012 and 2014. The complete database contains detailed information on observations of the voting and the vote count. Apart from an overall assessment of the polling stations observed, observers reported on specific irregularities such as group voting, multiple, proxy voting, and breaches of the secrecy of the votes. In addition, observer teams' background information (deployment, gender, nationality, time spent in the polling station) is included. The data are enriched by the official election results. The results will be discussed in relation to the final OSCE/ODIHR reports of the various elections, available at the OSCE/ODIHR website. The newly compiled dataset can help increase our understanding of the conditions under which elections are particularly flawed. The paper presents preliminary findings from research that draws from the new dataset.

4. Combating or Cultivating Climate Change? Russia's Approach to Renewable Energy as an Opportunity for the EU as a Facilitating actor

Niels Smeets, KU Leuven, Sociale Wetenschappen - LINES

Although Russia would be one of the first countries to be severely affected by climate change since it is located close to the melting ice-caps, Russia's policies to combat climate change develop slowly. One of the long-term solutions in reducing greenhouse gas emissions would be to substitute fossil-fired energy blocks for renewable energy plants. Despite Russia's vast green energy potential, the electricity generation capacity on the basis of renewable energy sources remains underdeveloped. Russia's decision not to take on new reduction targets under Kyoto's 2nd commitment period (Kyoto-2) at COP 17 in Durban (2011) raises questions about EU effectiveness in 'pulling in' countries to climate change commitments. EU effectiveness is difficult to measure, and is often operationalised by internal variables, such as an increased actorness, the EU's negotiation strategy or a flexible mandate of EU representatives (Van Schaik, 2013). However, EU effectiveness in the international arena is not only contingent on its own resources and strategies. In a multipolar world, the EU has to take into account a complex of interests and perceptions that influence EU's effectiveness from the outside-in (Smeets, Adriaensen, & Reykers, 2013). Especially in foreign climate change policy, the EU attempts to lead by example in convincing other players, such as Russia, to reduce Green House Gas (GHG) emissions. This paper seeks to evaluate the EU's effectiveness through Russia's green energy policy. By identifying domestic challenges Russia faces in promoting RES, EU current policy action in convincing Russia to effectively reduce GHG emissions is scrutinized. Therefore, the paper first identifies the obstacles to promoting renewable energy in Russia, whereupon possible EU approaches to help overcome these hurdles are suggested.