

## Programme

### Early Career Research Workshop (PhD and postdocs):

# Revisiting Linkages between Citizens and Politicians in Contemporary Europe

**Date:** 19 November 2020, 9:15–16:15 CET

**Place:** virtual workshop on zoom

**Keynote speaker:** Prof. Dr. Fernando Casal Bertoa, University of Nottingham *Party System Closure: Party Alliances, Government Alternatives, and Democracy in Europe.*

### Workshop theme:

What is the nature of citizen-politician linkages in the 21st century? This question is highly relevant today due to the crisis of representative democracy, decreasing trust in political elites and democratic institutions. At the same time, established parties are faced with the threat of populism. Ideologically footloose voters and weakening of traditional cleavage structures undermine programmatic appeals typical for the post-War era in Europe. In an era of rapid economic changes and globalization that cut across national boundaries, the linkage mechanism between the represented and their representatives are transforming.

Herbert Kitschelt challenged previous research that posited the programmatic linkage to be the only mechanism capable of safeguarding accountability and responsiveness. Reflecting on the challenges of the globalized economy, dealignment, and the welfare state crisis, Kitschelt has shown how, in the absence of a functioning welfare state, clientelistic linkage can functionally substitute programmatic ties, especially in new democracies. The third – charismatic linkage – outlined by Kitschelt is brought to the fore by the recent rise of populism. Populists build personalized linkages with voters using direct forms of online communication to foster a closer relationship with the people that bypasses traditional political parties. Populists create an illusion of responsiveness while simultaneously eroding accountability.

COVID-19 pandemic represents a new and unparalleled stress test for the already eroded citizen-politician linkages. Democracies worldwide are facing a simultaneous challenge to public health safety, economy, and democratic governance. Safeguarding responsiveness and accountability are central to maintaining the health of democracy amidst pandemic. Responsibility and responsibility might clash as public health measures create burden for citizens (school closures) and the economy (furloughs). Public safety measures, the increased importance of the executive, and the amplified role of experts (virologists, epidemiologists) might undermine accountability. Especially in the post-communist states, it is vital to prevent further democratic erosion amidst pandemic.

The workshop focuses on the nature of citizen-politician linkages. The core and the principal reference point is the book *Post-communist party systems: Competition, Representation, and Inter-party Cooperation* by Herbert Kitschelt, Herbert, Zdenka Mansfeldova, Radoslaw Markowski, and Gabor Toka. The book, published in 1999, examined the dynamic of citizen politician linkages in Eastern Europe. The workshop will reflect upon and revisit the events of two decades that have passed since the publication of this book through the lenses of citizen politician linkages. It will bring together a new generation of early career researchers and scholars of Central European politics in order to reflect on the book's legacy, impact, and relevance for today's research. It invites scholars to examine citizen-politician linkages before and during the COVID19 pandemic.

**The workshop is held online, in English, and registration is free.**

**The deadline for registration is November 12, 2020.**

## Programme:

### 9.00–9.15 Opening Remarks and Welcome

### 9.15–10.30 Keynote and discussion

*Party System Closure: Alliances and Innovations in Europe between 1848 and 2017*

Prof. Dr. Fernando Casal Bertoa, University of Nottingham

### 10.30–11.30 Panel 1. *Are parties as 'transmission belts' working?*

Chair and discussant: Dr. Petra Guasti, Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences

*Populist parties, digital platforms and dynamic representation: Exploring the Five Star Movement's "geometry" of representation mandate.*

Francesca Feo, Scuola Normale Superiore; Lorenzo Mosca, University of Milan; Davide Vittori, Université Libre de Bruxelles

*Inexperienced, therefore unsuccessful? Analysis of the effect of ministers' political and personal features on their ability to fulfil their party pledges*

Petra Vodova, University of Hradec Kralove

11.30–12.00 break

### 12.00–13.00 Panel 2. *Emergence of authoritarian linkages?*

Chair and discussant: Dr. Zdenka Mansfeldova, Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences

*The Contradictory Nature of Bureaucratic Authoritarianism in Russia*

Judas Everett, National Research University Higher School of Economics

*Adapting, Zig-zagging or Staying Put? Populist Supply, Welfare, and Cultural Divisions in Lithuania and Hungary*

Denis Ivanov, Corvinus University

13.00–13.15 break

### 13.30–14.30 Panel 3. *Linkages in non-European context: same or different?*

Chair and discussant: Doc. Dr. Marek Hrubec, Centre of Global Studies, Institute of Philosophy, CAS

*How Linkage to the West affect Electoral Manipulation*

Jaroslav Bilek, University of Hradec Kralove

*From Inclusive Development to Exclusive Nationalism. Exploring the Support Base of Narendra Modi's BJP in India*

Jiri Krejčík, Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences

14.30–14.45 break

### 14.45–15.45 Panel 4. *Linkages during pandemic: old wine in new bottles?*

Chair and discussant: Doc. Dr. Michel Perottino, Institute of Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

*Balancing technocratic and populist discourse: Andrej Babiš and COVID-19 pandemic response in Czechia*

Katerina Knapova, Faculty of Arts, Charles University

*Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the work of Czech legislators*

David Jagr, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

### 15.45–16.15 Concluding Discussion and sum up

## Abstracts:

### Keynote

#### **Party System Closure: Party Alliances, Government Alternatives, and Democracy in Europe.**

Forthcoming in 2021 Oxford: Oxford University Press

Prof. Dr. Fernando Casal Bertoa, University of Nottingham

The book maps trends in interparty relations in Europe from 1848 until 2019. It investigates how the length of democratic experience, the institutionalisation of individual parties, the fragmentation of parliaments, and the support for anti-establishment parties, shape the degree of institutionalisation of party systems. The analyses presented answer the questions of whether predictability in partisan interactions is necessary for the survival of democratic regimes and whether it improves or undermines the quality of democracy. The developments of party politics at the elite level are contrasted with the dynamics of voting behaviour. The comparisons of distinct historical periods and of macro-regions provide a comprehensive picture of the European history of party competition and cooperation. The empirical overview presented in the book is based on a novel conceptual framework. The central concept of the book, party system closure, is operationalised with the help of data pertaining to the party composition of more than a thousand European governments. Party systems are analysed in terms of poles and blocs, and the degree of closure and of polarisation is related to a new party system typology. The book demonstrates that information collected from partisan interactions at the time of government formation can reveal changes that characterise the party system as a whole. The empirical results confirm that the Cold War period (1945-1989) was exceptionally stable, while the post-Berlin-Wall era shows signs of disintegration, although more at the level of voters than at the level of elites. After three decades of democratic politics in Europe (1990-2019), the West and the South are looking increasingly like the East, especially in terms of the level of party de-institutionalisation. The West and the South are becoming more polarised than the East, but in terms of parliamentary fragmentation, the party systems of the South and the East are converging, while the West is diverging from the rest with its increasingly high number of parties. As far as our central concept, party system closure, is concerned, thanks to the gradual process of stabilisation in the East, and the recent de-institutionalisation in the West and South, the regional differences are declining.

#### **Panel 1. Are parties as 'transmission belts' working?**

##### **Populist parties, digital platforms and dynamic representation: Exploring the Five Star Movement's "geometry" of representation mandate.**

Francesca Feo, Scuola Normale Superiore; Lorenzo Mosca, University of Milan; Davide Vittori, Université Libre de Bruxelles

Populist parties depict themselves as the true and only representatives of the people's will and promise to transform politics by making it closer and more responsive to citizens' demands. The paper provides an empirical account of the representation practices of the Five Star Movement, a case of successful populist parties which relies significantly on digital tools (the platform Rousseau) to restore the transmission belt between citizens and representatives. Building on a revisited understanding of the "party mandate model" we explore the extent to which FSM representatives have received voters and members' demands in their political agenda, using an original dataset including all members' and MPs' law proposals advanced on the Rousseau platform between 2013 and 2019, as well as national party manifestos. Our results show that FSM MPs were only partially responsive to voters' priorities as well as moderately consistent with members' proposals. These results on the one hand help us assessing the potential impact of digital platform in the representation process; on the other hand, they help advancing our knowledge on how, in deeds, populist parties contribute – or not – to restoring the linkage between citizens and the political elites.

##### **Inexperienced, therefore unsuccessful? Analysis of the effect of ministers' political and personal features on their ability to fulfil their party pledges**

Petra Vodova, University of Hradec Kralove

The ability of political parties to fulfil what they promised to voters indicates the quality of democracy in a given country. Government parties in post-communist Europe are – compared to established Western European democracies – less successful in pledge fulfilment work. Because the post-communist parties differ in many ways from their Western

European counterparts, there is also a number of reasons for weak mandate responsiveness in post-communist countries. This paper looks on the level of party ministers. Personal and political features of politicians were found to influence the selection and survival of ministers in coalition governments. Politically experienced ministers are also expected to be more successful in pushing their party policy into reality. It was repeatedly confirmed that pledges have greater odds of fulfilment if the promising party has the corresponding ministerial portfolio. In the paper, I argue that the personal features and previous political experiences of ministers, such as ministerial or legislative work, can also influence the ability of ministers to push their party pledges. The analysis will be done on the dataset of pledges of coalition parties in three governments of the Czech Republic (created after 2006, 2010, and 2013 elections) that will be added by the personal and political data of ministers within these governments. The analysis will study if the features that usually predict the more successful ministers (such as, age, gender, previous political experience at local, parliamentary and government level) also lead to the better effectiveness in party pledge fulfilment. Because the political experience can be obtained in time and political work, the trend of new parties with politically inexperienced elites immediately entering the government can be dangerous for mandate responsiveness in postcommunist countries.

## *Panel 2. Emergence of authoritarian linkages?*

### **The Contradictory Nature of Bureaucratic Authoritarianism in Russia**

Judas Everett, National Research University Higher School of Economics

Bureaucratic authoritarianism is a feature of modern Russian politics, one which Lilia Shevtsova has done much to shine a light on, noting early in Putin's regime that Putin's brand of authoritarianism is arguably working to boost not his personal authority, but rather the power of the bureaucratic groups and institutions that act in his name. However, Russian bureaucratic authoritarianism is something of a contradiction, at least in terms of the relative weakness of Russian bureaucracy and bureaucratic structures. Stoner-Weiss, among others, have noted the central governing incapacity and the weakness of political parties in Russia and others have considered Russia a case of power in weakness. The bureaucracy represents a crucial linkage between citizens and politicians in contemporary Europe, the role of which should not be excluded from analysis or exploration merely due to a lack of democracy or the presence of a hybrid regime. However, the simultaneous weakness and strength of bureaucracy in Russia does represent a particularly curious example. There are echoes here of the bureaucratic-authoritarian communism which featured in Post-Communist Party Systems: Competition, Representation, and Inter-Party Cooperation, where it was defined as 'a form of political rule that coincides with a relatively advanced stage of capital-intensive industrialization and relies on a technocratic governance structure that tolerates no political diversity'. Czechoslovakia was an example of bureaucratic-authoritarian communism, this was evidence of this type of communism occurring in countries with considerable liberal-democratic experience in the inter-war period, an early and comparatively advanced industrialization, and a simultaneous mobilization of bourgeois and proletarian political forces around class-based parties beginning in the late nineteenth century. None of this particularly fits as a description of Russia and yet, since the rise of Putin, the development of a form of bureaucratic authoritarianism has, nonetheless, been noted. Therefore, this paper considers the contradictory nature of bureaucratic authoritarianism in Russia; firstly, in that it may be unexpected based on its communist past; and secondly, in that Russia combines elements of bureaucratic strength and weakness in its form of hybrid regime.

### **Adapting, Zig-zagging or Staying Put? Populist Supply, Welfare, and Cultural Divisions in Lithuania and Hungary**

Denis Ivanov, Corvinus University

The debate on the cause of the rise of populism between culturalists (Norris & Inglehart, 2018) and economists (Guiso et al., 2017) point to the fact that the demand side of illiberal politics is fueled by two growing divides along cultural and economic dimensions. The current paper introduces the supply side into the debate on the comparative example of Hungary and Lithuania. While both regions have experienced growing economic inequality within both the Baltic (Lithuania- GINI score: 0.37 – third highest in Europe) and Visegrad (center-periphery divide, growing GINI), they experience different outcomes - the former does not see constant success of populists in power, while the latter one does. The historical institutional approach is implemented through an analysis of the critical junctures on the path-dependency of the supply side of populism, including, but not limited how political parties adapt/fail to adapt to the new economic and cultural divides, through making key political decisions in terms of party strategy. The anticipated results are that through a mix of charismatic, clientelist and programmatic techniques, key political entrepreneurs in Hungary have managed to shift their positions on both dimension at the expense of niche parties. The Lithuanian counterparts, by

zigzagging on positions on cultural divide and welfare, have failed to offer a new social contract of loyalty to nativist values in return for minimal welfare, which led to their demise.

### **Panel 3. Linkages in non-European context: same or different?**

#### **How Linkage to the West affect Electoral Manipulation**

Jaroslav Bílek, University of Hradec Kralove

Research has highlighted the role of the linkage to the West in subverting contemporary authoritarian regimes. But how does linkage to the West affect autocrats during elections? Scholars have suggested that linkage to the West raises the cost of government abuse because it increases the probability of Western governments taking action in response to reported abuse. This assumption then suggests that incumbents should choose the forms of repression more wisely. Consequently, in cases of the higher level of linkage to the West incumbents are less likely to use the more visible forms of repression and manipulation. In cross-national analyses of 357 elections in 67 electoral authoritarian regimes between 1980 and 2020, the study finds only limited support for this argument. Extensive international relations to the West reduces the overall level of government abuse, nonetheless they do not affect majority of visible strategies. Furthermore, the positive effect of linkage to the West can be effectively compensated for via high level of economic nationalism or linkage to the authoritarian regimes. These results contribute to our understanding of international linkage as they show that linkage to the West provides only limited and conditional protection to opposition leaders and groups. Moreover, these findings unravel another reason of why linkage to the West often does not prevent consolidation of new cases of competitive authoritarianism in the Western hemisphere.

#### **From Inclusive Development to Exclusive Nationalism. Exploring the Support Base of Narendra Modi's BJP in India**

Jiří Krejčík, Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences

In the last decade, we could observe a clear rightward shift of the ideological centre of gravity in Indian politics, manifested in the landslide victories of the Hindu nationalist Bharata Janata Party (BJP) in the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections. Apart from the neoliberal approach to the role of state in the economy and the managerial model of democracy run as a business, the arrival of Narendra Modi as the party leader popularised the public expression of religiosity as a legitimate political action and made the ethnic and religious nationalisms more acceptable. Since in power, Narendra Modi's BJP has been gradually putting more emphasis on promoting Hindu majoritarianism and nationalism as the prevalent party ideology. From widespread bans on cattle slaughter to revoking the special status of Jammu and Kashmir, controversial Citizenship Amendment Act and National Register of Citizens, the attempts to redefine the very concept of the Indian nation in cultural and religious terms has not tarnished the image of the ruling party at the national level. The nationwide lockdown in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in March seems to even reinforce these tendencies despite its severe impact on Indian economy. To analyse the persisting support of the BJP, however, we must avoid the temptation to interpret its unprecedented victories as a result of the first-past-the-post electoral system, personal magic of one charismatic leader, or the sheer populist exploitation of existing caste and religious divisions. Focusing on the intersection of identity politics with the economic issues in current India, the paper will analyse the achievements of Narendra Modi's BJP as a result of successful building of a type of citizen-political linkage which intertwines the charismatic features of the populist leader with the programmatic and clientelistic elements.

### **Panel 4. Linkages during pandemic: old wine in new bottles?**

#### **Balancing technocratic and populist discourse: Andrej Babiš and COVID-19 pandemic response in Czechia**

Kateřina Kňapová, Charles University

Andrej Babiš is one of the representatives of technocratic populism in contemporary Europe. The technocratic political style has been deeply rooted in Czech and former Czechoslovakian communist regime and its reliance (or declared reliance) on expertise in decision making. It is not surprising that it is also a viable political strategy in the era of a collapse of traditional political forces. Technocracy is, however, just one aspect of the political style of Andrej Babiš – the second one is populist appeal based on a sharp distinction between essentially good “people” and corrupted “the elite”. Babiš claimed that he could be representative of the will of the first and able to fix problems in governance caused by the latter. Aim of this contribution is to examine the relationship between a populist and technocratic aspect of Andrej Babiš's discourse in case of the decision-making process during the COVID-19 outbreak. COVID-19 pandemics

presumably didn't bring any new developments in his political style. Still, it may have shown its contradictory features more clearly: on the one hand we could see his responsiveness towards popular demands (very often quite conflicting) and "folk wisdom" when it comes to COVID-19 response, and on the other, there are claims of the expert level, specifically in various government council bodies, that brings in solutions going against the will of "the people". The research question of the contribution is how Andrej Babiš balance those two aspects of his discourse and how justifies his response to COVID-19 outbreak responding to both "popular" and "expert" level.

### **Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the work of Czech legislators**

David Jágr, Charles University

The way of the COVID-19 pandemic resolution has raised society's expectations of politicians. At the same time, the new and, in the 21st century, the incomparable situation created space for a short national unification of the political spectrum and the entire population. The current agenda, disputes and discussions receded into the background. In situations of danger, citizens cling to their representatives with confidence to overcome the crisis in cooperation with experts. However, the unity that responds to the unknown threat is gradually weakening, and new cleavage may emerge on the basis of discussions on how to proceed. Attention thus shifts from the government back to other actors, including parliament. In the Czech Republic, the return to the classic political agenda is mainly represented by the regional elections (October 2020) and preparations for the elections to the Chamber of Deputies in the autumn of 2021. The rapid sequence of new events, emotions and tremendous pressure from society can have far-reaching effects on the functioning of parliament than it may seem at first glance. Should legislators act as delegates in the situation and follow the mood of the citizen? Should they act as trustee and add their arguments and independence to the public debate? Dilemmas about the style of representation in times of crisis, when unity is required, bring new perspectives. In addition, a pandemic can affect not only the perception of the work of the legislator as such but also the perception of its function and trust. So what is the relevance of every single legislator in the context of parliamentary life at the time of pandemic COVID-19? Can the new experience further strengthen the clientelistic way of politics, or does it represent an opportunity for personalities with erudition and their own independent opinion? And finally - in times of pandemic among legislators, does the apparent principle of joint action dominate or do they prefer particular interests?

The workshop is organized by Dr. Zdenka Mansfeldová, Doc. Dr. Michel Perottino and Dr. Petra Guasti.

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