Representative Democracy in Danger?
The Impact of Populist Parties on the Powers of National Parliaments

Call for Papers

DAAD Workshop
By
The Willy Brandt Centre for German and European Studies in Wroclaw
5–6 December 2019

Over recent years no other phenomenon has received greater academic attention than populism. While the meaning of the term continues to generate deep controversies among scholars, there is a broad consensus on populism constituting one of the most serious challenges to contemporary politics. It may therefore seem surprising that one important aspect of the problem has so far escaped academic attention: comparative studies analysing whether (and if yes, how) populist parties influence the powers of national parliaments. This workshop therefore addresses the following questions: How does the presence of populist parties in national parliaments influence core parliamentary competences, namely law-making, scrutiny and representation? To what extent does the presence of populists in national parliaments erode representative democracy?

Why is this research question worth looking at? Firstly, for a democracy to thrive, national parliaments cannot be constrained in their capacity to control and to hold governments accountable and to debate and vote on legislative projects while also representing the variety of interests in the deliberative and law-making process. Secondly, we have no systematic knowledge regarding the impact of populist actors on national parliaments in Europe or elsewhere. In particular, we do not know which aspects of national parliamentary
competences have been predominantly affected by the presence of populist parties in the national parliaments of specific states.

The aim of the workshop is therefore to examine the *de facto practices of national parliamentary legislative, scrutiny and representative functions under the impact of populist parties* (our dependent variable). We are interested in examining the impact of populist parties as (a) the parliamentary opposition; (b) junior coalition partners in governments and (c) the major force in a government. We welcome papers focusing on European and non-European states, country case-studies and comparative papers employing either qualitative or quantitative methods. Regarding the topics of the papers, we welcome contributions focusing on any of the core aspects of national parliamentary powers (i.e. law-making and/or scrutiny).

The overall goal of this workshop is to bring together scholars who are interested in the impact of populist actors on representative democracy. The DAAD and the organiser of this workshop particularly welcome and encourage applications from junior researchers (PhD candidates). The workshop is interdisciplinary; hence it is open to researchers working in different subfields of political science and legal studies. As output from the workshop, the organiser is aiming for a special issue in an international peer-reviewed journal.

Please send your abstract (up to 500 words) to Aleksandra Maatsch (Maatsch@wbz.uni.wroc.pl) by October 15th, 2019. Travel and accommodation costs of contributing authors will be covered by the German Academic Exchange Service, DAAD.

Workshop Organiser:

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