

Comparing Political Systems in the EU
EuroMed Programme
Course Outline
Academic Year 2015-16

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Europe is a major political, economic and intellectual power in today's world. Its different member states offer significant variation in issues of comparative politics and historically have set trends in political organisation as well as political theory. Every student of political science and economics would need to know about the different types of European political systems, how the mechanics of such systems differ according to institutions, history, culture and socio-economic conditions. This would help any practitioner to explain events, phenomenon and differences based on the information acquired and knowledge gained.

I. Course Objectives:

1. Understanding the dynamics of European political systems, including their different institutional designs and historical settings.
2. Developing an ability to compare across European countries as well as researching within-country specifics.
3. Developing the ability to think critically in explaining facts and events, both within and across countries.
4. Developing skills of academic reading.
5. Enhancing your skills of academic writing.

II. What is required from you:

1. Attend all lectures. The knowledge that you will gain will not be covered just in the readings. This is not a text-book based course. Your attendance will help your analytical skills – which is a skill the course aim at developing and achieving high grades at the course requires.
2. Do the required readings. The readings aim at helping you not only to follow what is being discussed in lectures but also will definitely help you answer the exam questions (and eventually write papers with arguments). This course does not have one textbook but rather a number of journal articles and book chapters that are specified in detail (see below). Please do the required readings and also pick one additional reading to cover.

3. Challenge and speak up in lectures. Discussions are what make lectures a real learning experience.

III. Course Structure:

- Eleven weeks/lectures.
- This course will be divided into three parts:
 - a. First, we will try to cover some core topics of comparative politics across Europe (till lecture 5). These include the democratisation processes of Europe (West and East), the patterns of executive-legislative relationship, electoral systems, political parties and party systems.
 - b. Second, we will try to go deep inside four major political systems (The United Kingdom, France, Germany and Spain). These systems embody significant institutional variations that will increase your knowledge of the big players in European politics.
 - c. In the last two lectures, you will be asked to make presentations and respond to questions and comments on your term paper.

Lecture	Topic
Lecture 1	Course description Why do we need to compare between countries?
Lecture 2	Democratization in Europe over the years
Lecture 3	Dynamics of executive-legislative relations in European Countries
Lecture 4	Political Parties and Party Systems in Europe
Lecture 5	Electoral Systems in Europe
Lecture 6	The United Kingdom
Lecture 7	France (+ midterm exam)
Lecture 8	Germany
Lecture 9	Spain
Lecture 10	Students' presentations
Lecture 11	Students' presentations

IV. Office hours:

Mondays: 1:30 to 2:30.
 Thursdays: 12:00-1:00.
 Sundays : 5:00-6:00.

Room 82, floor 3. It is strongly recommended to email (m.hassan@feps.edu.eg) if you are planning to come to the office hours.

V. Evaluation:

Midterm exam: 5 grades.
 Term paper: 5 grades.

This will be a group term paper. Every 3 students will share a paper to be submitted by end of term. You will be asked to make 20 min. presentations of the paper in the last two lectures of the term (get prepared).

Final exam: 20 grades.

VI. Detailed Course Topics:

Course material (i.e. presentations, further readings, etc.) will be uploaded on Moddle. It is essential that you can log-in to Moodle. Some sudden communications (for example, lecture cancellations) would be announced on Moddle. Please check it regularly.

Lecture 1: Introductory Lecture (presorting course outline + discussing why we need to compare between countries)

Points to be covered include:

- What will be discussed in this course and how it will be discussed? Why are we covering these political systems and not others?
- What are the primary aims of comparative political analysis?
- What are the different research designs in comparative politics?

Required Readings:

Kenneth Newton and Jan W. Van Deth (2010), *Foundations of Comparative Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-10.

Additional Readings:

Caramani, Daniele (2008). 'Introduction to Comparative Politics' in Daniele Caramani (ed.), *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University.

Lijphart, Arend (1971) 'Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method', *The American Political Science Review*, 65:3, pp. 682-693.

Lijphart, A (1975). 'The Comparable-Cases Strategy in Comparative Research', *Comparative Political Studies*, vol 8, 158-177.

Lecture 2: Democratization in Europe over the years

Points to be covered include:

- How did democracy come about in Western Europe and Eastern Europe?
- Does the differentiated pattern of democratisation have post-transition consequences?

Required Readings:

Geoffrey Pridham (2003) Democratization in Central and Eastern Europe: A Comparative Perspective, in, Stephen White, Judy Batt and Paul Lewis, *Developments in Central and East European Politics 3*, New York: Palgrave, pp. 269-289.

Goldblatt, David (1997) 'Democracy in Europe: 1939-1989', in, David Potter et al., *Democratization*, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 95-117.

Lewis, Paul (1997) 'Democratization in Eastern Europe', in, David Potter et al., *Democratization*, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 399-420.

Additional Readings:

Teorell, Jan (2010) *Determinants of Democratization: Explaining Regime Change in the World, 1972-2006*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rueschemeyer, Dietrich et al. (1992) *Capitalist Development and Democracy*, Cambridge: Polity. (Chapter 4 'Advanced Capitalist Countries').

Huntington, Samuel (1991) *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Norman: The Oklahoma University Press.

Lecture 3: Dynamics of Executive-Legislative Relations in European Countries

Points to be covered include:

- What are the various dividing lines between the different types of political systems?
- Are there any consequences of certain institutional designs?

Required Readings:

Michael Gallagher, Michael Laver and Peter Mair (2011) *Representative Government in Modern Europe*, Fifth Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill. (Chapter 1 'The Executive' and 3 'Parliaments').

OCTAVIO AMORIM NETO and KAARE STRØM (2006). Breaking the Parliamentary Chain of Delegation: Presidents and Non-partisan Cabinet Members in European Democracies. *British Journal of Political Science*, 36, pp 619-643.

Additional Readings:

Lijphart, Arend (1999) *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*, New Haven: Yale University Press.

Krouwel, Andre (2003) 'Measuring presidentialism and parliamentarism; an application to Central and East European countries', *Acta politica*, 38 (4), pp. 333-364.

Gerring, John, Strom C. Thacker and Carola Moreno (2009) 'Are Parliamentary Systems Better?', *Comparative Political Studies*, Volume 42 Number 3, pp. 327-359.

Lecture 4: Political Parties and Party Systems in Europe.

Points to be covered include:

- What are the different party orientations and party families in Europe?
- How can we classify party systems in Europe?

Required Readings:

Michael Gallagher, Michael Laver and Peter Mair (2011) *Representative Government in Modern Europe*, Fifth Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill. (Chapters 7, 8 and 9).

Additional Readings:

Webb, Paul and Stephen White (2007) (eds.) *Party Politics in New Democracies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dalton, Russell, J. and Martin Wattenberg (eds.), (2001) *Parties Without Partisan: Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lecture 5: Electoral Systems in Europe

Points to be covered include:

- What are the different electoral systems in Europe and what are their consequences if ever?

Required Readings:

Michael Gallagher, Michael Laver and Peter Mair (2011) *Representative Government in Modern Europe*, Fifth Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill. (Chapter 11).

Additional Readings:

Farrell, David (2001) *Electoral Systems: A Comparative Introduction*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Lijphart, Arend (1994) *Electoral Systems & Party Systems: a study of twenty seven democracies 1945-1990*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Klingemann, Hans Dieter (ed.) (2009) *The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Lecture 6: The United Kingdom.

Points to be covered include:

- What is the historical setting and current institutional design of the British political system?
- What are the major issues in British politics today?

Required Readings:

Kesselman, Mark et al. (2013), *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, Boston: Wadsworth (Chapter 2)

Additional Readings:

Lynch, P., and Garner, R., (2005), 'The Changing Party System', *Parliamentary Affairs*. 58: 3.

Paun, A et al., (2010), 'Hung Parliaments and the Challenges for Westminster and Whitehall', *Political Quarterly*, 81: 2.

Sanders. D., (2005), 'The Political Economy of UK Party Support', *Journal of Elections Public Opinion and Parties*, 15: 1.

Heffernan, R., (2005), 'Why the PM Cannot be a President', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 58: 1, pp. 53-70.

Lecture 7: France

Points to be covered include:

- What is the historical setting and current institutional design of the French political system?

- What are the major issues in French politics today?

Required Readings:

Kesselman, Mark et al. (2013), *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, Boston: Wadsworth (Chapter 3)

Additional Readings:

R. Elgie *Duverger, Semi-Presidentialism and the Supposed French Architype* West European Politics Vol.32, No.2 (2009)

O. Protsyk *Intra-executive Competition between President and Prime Minister* Political Studies Vol.54, No.2 (2006)

S. Bornchier et al *The Evolution of The French Political Space and Party Structure* West European Politics Vol.32, No.2 (2009)

Blais, André (2010) 'The French electoral and party system in comparative perspective', *French Politics*, 8: 1.

Anne Stevens (2003) *Government and Politics in France*, London: Palgrave Macmillan. Chapter 3 and 4: pp. 63-105.

Lecture 8: Germany

Points to be covered include:

- What is the historical setting and current institutional design of the German political system?
- What are the major issues in German politics today?

Required Readings:

Kesselman, Mark et al. (2013), *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, Boston: Wadsworth (Chapter 4)

Additional Readings:

Schmidt, Manfred, *Political Institutions in the Federal Republic of Germany*, 2003, pp. 131-159.

Smith, G., 'Parties and the Party System', in S. A. Padgett, G. Smith and W. Paterson, eds., *Developments in German Politics 3*, 2003.

von Beyme, K., *The Legislator: German Parliament as a Centre of Political Decision Making*, 1998.

Schmidt, Manfred, *Political Institutions in the Federal Republic of Germany*, 2003, chapter 3.

Sturm, R., 'Divided Government in Germany: The Case of the Bundesrat', in Elgie, R., ed., *Divided Government in Comparative Perspective*, 2001. ALSO AVAILABLE ONLINE.

Lecture 9: Spain

Points to be covered include:

- What is the historical setting and current institutional design of the Spanish political system?
- What are the major issues in Spanish politics today?

Required Readings:

Almond, Gabriel, Russell Dalton, G. Bingham Powell and Kaare Strom (2013), *European Politics Today*, New York: Pearson Longman (Chapter 8)

Additional Readings:

Gunther, Richard, J. Montero and J. Botella (2004) *Democracy in Modern Spain*, New Haven: Yale University Press.

Gibbons, John (1999) *Spanish Politics Today*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Lectures 10 and 11: Students' presentations.