

# ELECTORAL COMPETITION AND VOTING BEHAVIOUR IN MULTILEVEL SYSTEMS

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## 1. OVERVIEW

This course focuses on the most relevant aspects of the electoral competition and voting behaviour. We will start off with a introductory revision both of the main approaches trying to explain voting, and some others factors such as the impact of the economy on election outcomes, the role of leaders in voting behaviour and the tactical voting. In the second part of the course we will enter in the discussion of one of the recent opened lines of research in the field of political behaviour: Multilevel political competition. Regarding this topic we will focus on the study the role of both parties and voters as main political actors in a specific political opportunity structure characterized by a multilevel institutional organization (local, regional, state, European).

## 2. PREREQUISITES

1. A basic knowledge on the field of political behaviour (political culture and public opinion, political participation and electoral behaviour), and political parties.
2. A basis knowledge on the organization and working of a multilevel systems (regional, federal), be in general or a specific one.
3. Basic skills of understanding of statistical techniques and the use of software for statistical analysis.

## 3. COMPETENCES TO BE ACHIEVED IN THE SUBJECT

The scientific contents and the organization of the work along the course are oriented to the development of instrumental, interpersonal and systemic competences, and specific competences as well:

### *General competences*

- Ability to analyse and synthesise.
- Information management abilities (ability to search and analyse information coming from a variety of sources).
- Critical and self-critical ability.
- Interpersonal abilities: Ability to cooperate and communicate well with fellow students.
- Ability to put knowledge into practice: Problem solving, Decision-making
- Ability to hold in-class presentations
- Ability to generate new ideas (creativity).

### *Specific competences*

- Advanced knowledge on Electoral competition and voting behaviour, mainly applied into multilevel competition scenarios.
- Advanced knowledge on the dynamics of political competition in multilevel systems.

- A thorough understanding on the old and new aspects related to the role of the “territorial factor” in political competition.
- A thorough understanding on the central topics (multilevel voting, territorial cleavage, territorial identities, institutional dynamics).
- Ability to apply established theories, methods and techniques to the analysis of political competition in multilevel systems (factors, resources, strategies).
- Ability to reflect critically on major issues on multilevel political competition
- Ability to write well-reasoned critical reflections on selected topics in the field

#### **4. ORGANIZATION, REQUIREMENTS AND ASSESSMENT**

##### **4.1. Organization of the sessions:**

The course is organized in a 3 different kind of sessions: Lectures (10 hours), Seminar (14 hours) and Tutorial (9 hours). The class sessions will develop all in Wednesday (18:00-21:00 hours) from 9th April to 11th June.

The 1st session will be entirely organized as a lecture; however, the first set of reading should be read in advance of the class.

The Sessions will be normally divided in two parts:

- Seminar: It will be develop mainly through presentation and discussion of the assigned readings (1:45 hours).
- Lectures: The second part of each session will be organized as a lecture, closing possible opened questions of the previous debate, and introducing the main aspect of the further readings and session.
- Tutorial: The final sessions will be organized as tutorials of the final research paper.

##### **4.2. Requirements**

Students are expected to attend class sessions, read carefully the required readings, present the resume/critique of the specific papers assigned, participate in the discussion, and elaborate a research work as a final assignment.

**Weekly discussion of readings:** Students are expected to complete the assigned readings before class each week and to contribute to discussion during seminars. This is a seminar course and active, thoughtful, and regular participation is required. Good participation does not presume you understand everything in the reading – in fact, good questions make for good participation.

**Presentation and discussion:** Each week, there will be two student presentations on questions that are posed on the syllabus, and two students will act as discussant of them. The basis of the presentations and discussions is the readings assigned for each session. In the case of the role of the discussants, students are expected to criticize and comment the content and technical elements of the paper (opening room for underline elements that have not been introduced or commented in the presentation), and not the colleague’s presentation itself. The presentations should be 15 minutes each, and the discussions 10 minutes each. This will work best if you each prepare material that

covers the whole topic, and meet beforehand to divide up the presentation to minimize repetition and overlaps.

**Tutorial:** Sessions will be devoted to problem solving and give orientation to the research work in process. The sessions will focus systematically in each of the research papers that are being done but trying to adapt to the needs of the students.

#### **Individual final research work**

The assessment of the research work is based on:

- The extent to which the paper conforms to the assignment's requirement that is a short piece of research on some aspect of political behaviour.
- The quality of the composition of the paper.
- The appropriate use of sources and data.
- The relevance and originality of insights.

The format, referencing and organization etc. must be according to an established academic convention.

#### **4.3. Assessment and grading**

The overall grade for the course is based on:

- General class participation: 20%
- Resume/critique of readings submitted, in-class presentation and discussion: 40%
- Research work: 40%

### **5. CONTENTS**

- Main approaches explaining voting decision: political sociology, social psychology and rational choice influenced approach.
- Others factors to explain electoral behaviour: the impact of the economy on election outcomes, the role of leaders in voting behaviour and the tactical voting.
- Multilevel electoral competition. The lectures and discussions will deal with the main approach in the analysis of the electoral competition and voting decision in multilevel systems.

### **6. METHODOLOGY**

The course is based on a balance between conceptual and empirical approaches.

Session 1-2: Introduction. The beginning of the course is designed to ensure a common basis for dealing with theoretical and conceptual issues on electoral behaviour. In the first session, topics for the presentation will be assigned.

Sessions 4-9: Students are expected to complete the assigned readings before class each week and to contribute to discussion during seminar. Each week, there will be two student presentations on the required readings and topics of the syllabus. The presentations should be 20-25 minutes each.

Sessions 3-4: These sessions of the course will be addressed through tutorial discussions on how to draft the final paper. In parallel, the last 30 minutes of sessions 5-8 will be devoted to address questions of students about their final research work.

## 7. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A large data base will be available containing electoral returns of the elections in Spain at different levels of aggregation and individual data from surveys on public opinion and electoral behaviour in Spain and the Autonomous Communities. .

Other sources of data (other countries) may also be used depending on the research work subject.

## 8. THE PROGRAMING OF ACTIVITIES

<i>Week</i>	<i>Classroom activity</i>	<i>Activity outside the classroom</i>	<i>Results that are object of assessment</i>
<b>Week 1</b>	Lecture		Participation
<b>Week 2</b>	Seminar session Lecture	Required readings 1	Presentation/Participation
<b>Week 3</b>	Open tutorial session	Required readings 2	Presentation/Participation
<b>Week 4</b>	Open tutorial session  Seminar session	Required 1 <sup>st</sup> draft of the research work	Presentation/Participation
<b>Week 5</b>	Seminar session Lecture	Required 1 <sup>st</sup> draft of the research work Required readings 4	Presentation/Participation
<b>Week 6</b>	Seminar session Lecture	Required readings 5	Presentation/Participation
<b>Week 7</b>	Seminar session Lecture	Required readings 6	Presentation/Participation
<b>Week 8</b>	Seminar session Lecture	Required readings 7	Presentation/Participation
<b>Week 9</b>	Seminar session Lecture	Required readings 8	Presentation/Participation
	Final research work		Paper

## 9. STRUCTURE OF PROGRAMMING OF ACTIVITIES

Week	Activity in the classroom			Activity outside the classroom			Assessment activities	
	Learning activities	Didactic resources	Time scheduled	Learning activities	Didactic resources	Estimated time	Items for assessment	Estimated time
1	Lecture: Introduction to the field of political behaviour Readings 1	--	3 hours*		Readings 1		Participation	
2	Seminar. Readings 2	Readings 1	3 hours*		Readings 2	2 hours	Presentation/Participation	
3	Open Tutorial Session	Readings 2	3 hours*		1 <sup>st</sup> draft of the research work	4 hours	Presentation/Participation	20 minutes each
4	Open Tutorial Session	1 <sup>st</sup> draft of the research work	1 hour		1 <sup>st</sup> draft of the research work		Presentation/Participation	
	Seminar. Readings 4		2 hours		Readings 4	2 hours		
5	Seminar. Readings 5	1 <sup>st</sup> draft of the research work	3 hours*		Readings 5	2 hours	Presentation/Participation	
		Readings 4						
6	Seminar. Readings 6	Readings 5	3 hours*		Readings 6	2 hours	Presentation/Participation	
7	Seminar. Readings 7	Readings 6	3 hours*		Readings 7	2 hours	Presentation/Participation	
8	Seminar. Readings 8	Readings 7	3 hours*		Readings 8	2 hours	Presentation/Participation	
9	Seminar. Readings 9	Readings 8	3 hours*.		Readings 9	2 hours	Presentation/Participation	
10	Final research work						Paper	25 hours

\*Break. 15 min.



## 10. SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READINGS

Classes will take place on Wednesday from 18h to 21h with a break of 15 minutes.

### **Session 1 / April: 09.**

- Presentation of the course.
- Analyzing electoral behaviour (I): Main approaches to explain voting decision (Political sociology; social psychology, and rational choice derived approaches.
- The final Research work: themes, data, timing, etc. (proposals are welcome)

### **Session 2/ April: 16.**

Analyzing electoral behaviour (II): Other approaches to explain voting behaviour. Issue voting, Economic voting, Tactical/Strategic voting, Candidates; the role of leaders in voting behaviour, and tactical voting.

Required readings:

**Dalton, Russell J.** *Citizen Politics. Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies.* Washington D.C.: CQ Press, (preferably 2006 edition) (Chapters 7-10)

### **Session 3/ April: 30.**

Research work proposals (open tutorial session of 3 hrs.)

Presentation of the 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the final research work.

### **Session 4/ May: 07.**

- Research work proposals (open tutorial session of 1 hr.)
- Introduction to multilevel electoral competition: .....

Required readings:

- **Bartolini, Stefano.** (2000) 'Old and new peripheries in the European processes of territorial expansion', *Juan March Institute*, Working Paper, junio 2000/153.
- **Benz, Artur and Burkard, Eberlein.** (1998) 'Regions in European Governance: The Logic of Multi-Level Interaction', *European University Institute*, Working Paper RSC No. 98/31.
- **Hough, Dan and Jeffery, Charlie** (2006) An introduction to multi-level electoral competition (2006), en: Hough and Jeffery (eds), *Devolution and electoral politics*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

### **Session 5/ May: 14.**

- Political parties in multilevel systems (State-wide parties and non-state-wide parties)
- Questions (theory and applied research). Last 30 minutes of the session.

Required readings:

- **Biezen, Ingrid van and Jonathan Hopkin**, (2006). “Party Organization in multilevel contexts” Hough, Dan and Charlie Jeffery (eds.) *Devolution and electoral politics*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- **Pallarés, F., Montero, J.R. and Llera, F.J.** (1997) ‘Non State-wide Parties in Spain: An Attitudinal Study of Nationalism and Regionalism’, *The Journal of Federalism*, 27:4.
- **Lehmbrunch, Gerhard.** (1978) ‘Party and Federation in Germany: A Developmental Dilemma’, *Government and Opposition*, Vol.13, 2.

**Session 6/ May: 21.**

- Party systems: dimensions of competition.
- Questions (theory and applied research). Last 30 minutes of the session.

Required readings:

- **Thorlakson, Lori (2006).** “Party systems in multilevel contexts”, in: Hough, Dan and Charlie Jeffery (eds.) *Devolution and electoral politics*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- **De Winter, L., M. Gómez-Reino, P.Lynch** (2006) “Introduction: Autonomist Parties in European Politics”. De Winter, L., M. Gómez-Reino, P.Lynch (eds.) *Autonomist Parties in Europe: Identity Politics and the Revival of the Territorial Cleavage*. Barcelona: Institut de Ciències Polítiques i Socials.
- **Gómez-Reino, M., L. De Winter, P.Lynch** (2006) “Conclusion: the Future Study of Autonomist and Regionalist Parties”. De Winter, L., M. Gómez-Reino, P.Lynch (eds.) *Autonomist Parties in Europe: Identity Politics and the Revival of the Territorial Cleavage*. Barcelona: Institut de Ciències Polítiques i Socials.

**Session 7/ May: 28.**

- Integrating different levels of elections: The organization, possible reciprocal influences, and relationship between first-order and second-order elections.
- Questions (theory and applied research). Last 30 minutes of the session.

Required readings:

- Reif, Karlheinz. ‘Ten second-order national elections’
- Marsh, Michael. (1998) ‘Testing the Second-Order Election Model after Four European Elections’, *British Journal of Political Science*. 28, 591-607.
- Anderson, Christopher. (1996) ‘Barometer Elections in Comparative Perspective’, *Electoral Studies*, Vol.15, No.4, 447-460.

**Session 8/ June: 04.**

- Multilevel voting: dual vote, voters’ identification, and tactical vote.
- Questions (theory and applied research). Last 30 minutes of the session.

Required readings:

- **Cotter, P. and Stovall, J.G. (1992)** ‘Party Identification and Level of Government: The Validity of Mixed Party Identifications’, *The Midsouth Political Science Journal*, Winter, Vol.13, 515-534.
- **Maggiotto, M. and Weekin, G. (1992)** ‘Segmented Partisanship in a Federal System’, *The Midsouth Political Science Journal*, Winter, Vol.13, 425-443.
- **Pérez-Nievas, S. and Fraile, M. (2000)**. ‘Is the Nationalist Vote Really Nationalist? Dual voting in Catalonia 1980-1999’, *Juan March Institute*, working Paper 2000/147.
- **Riba, Clara. (2000)** ‘Voto dual y abstención diferencial’, *Revista Española de Investigaciones Sociológicas*, 91/00, 59-88.
- **Llera, F. (2002)** “La polarización vasca: entre la autonomía y la independencia” Safran, W. and R.Maiz (eds.): *Identidad y autogobierno en sociedades multiculturales*. Barcelona: Ariel Ciencia Política

### **Session 9/ June: 11.**

- Identities and political culture in multilevel systems.
- Conclusions and general discussion.

#### Required readings:

- **Martínez-Herrera, Enric. (2002)**. ‘From nation-building to building identification with political communities: Consequences of political decentralisation in Spain, the Basque Country, Catalonia and Galicia, 1978-2001’, in: *European Journal of Political Research*, 41, 421-453.
- **Curtice, John (2006)**. “A Stronger or Weaker Union? Public Reactions to Assymetric Devolution in United Kingdom”, in: *Publius. The Journal of Federalism*. 36-1, 95-114.