

Research Project: Electoral Control in Eastern Europe

Report on Workshop 3 and Specialized Course, “Electoral Control in Eastern Europe”

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December 15, 2014

Introduction

This two-day international workshop and specialized course was held at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences, December 12 - 13, 2014. Workshop 3 brought together scholars who are currently analyzing data on candidates and parliamentarians in Eastern Europe to address critical questions on electoral control and accountability, political and party systems, representation, and political inequality. The focus was on the analysis of the Eastern European Parliamentarian and Candidate Database ([EAST-PaC](#)), a dataset on parliamentary candidates for all post-Communist elections in Poland, Ukraine and Hungary. Workshop 3 was also an opportunity to invite new scholars to join the Project Team and to use these data.

Building on the theoretical, methodological and empirical discussions of Workshop 1 and Workshop 2, Workshop 3 featured (a) intensive discussions of empirical research that uses EAST PaC data, as well as similar data in Romania and Nepal; (b) methodological discussions on collecting and analyzing candidate, contextual and electoral data; and (c) networking and planning of academic products that present the empirical analysis of EAST PaC to be published in 2015 and beyond.

Workshop 3 also functioned as a Specialized Course for PhD students on theoretical issues in electoral control and political inequality, as well as the methodology and analysis of EAST PaC data. We invited PhD students from the Graduate School for Social Research to be part of the two-day proceedings. Attending the Specialized Course, like the Workshop, was free of charge.

Funding and Organizational Support

This event was funded by a grant from Poland’s National Science Centre (“Who Wins and Who Loses in the Parliamentary Elections? From Formal Theory to Empirical Analysis,” Sonata Bis decision number 2012/05/E/HS6/03556) and with additional support from the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology (IFiS) and the Graduate School for Social Research (GSSR) at PAN, and organizational support from Cross-National Studies: Interdisciplinary Research and Training Program (CONSIRT) at The Ohio State University and PAN. As this Workshop 3 can attest, events and the administration of international research projects at IFiS PAN are enhanced by the cooperation of IFiS PAN, GSSR and CONSIRT.

Participants

There were 21 participants for the event. We hosted seven international participants, including one from the U.S., two from Hungary, three from Ukraine and one from Romania. We also hosted two Polish scholars who traveled from the University of Zielona Gora. In addition, we welcomed Mikolaj Cesnik and Michal Kotnarowski from the Institute of Polish Studies.

There was a large participation of PhD students from the Graduate School for Social Research. We regularly and actively recruit GSSR students to our projects, and the Electoral Control in Eastern Europe project is indicative of our ongoing efforts. There were eight GSSR students in attendance, many of whom are contributing members of Project Team of this grant. I would like to highlight two students: Nika Palaguta (Ukraine) is an exceptional student who will be contributing to a group publication on electoral politics in Ukraine, and Sanjaya Mahato (Nepal) is adapting the methodological knowledge created by the Project Team to collect a unique matched dataset of candidates and parliamentarians in Nepal that spans from the 1990s to the present. Other students, such as Olga Zielinska (Ukraine), Kateryna Gryniuk (Ukraine), Marcin Slarzynski (Poland) and Anastas Vangeli (Macedonia) have and continue to contribute to the project. GSSR has successfully attracted excellent students from around the world; for the well-being of GSSR and of international research projects at IFiS PAN, we hope this trend continues.

Structure of the Workshop: Information, Communication, Networking

Dr. Joshua Kjerulf Dubrow began with an overview of the status of the project and a review of Workshop 2. This gave event participants the opportunity to discuss various issues on project administration and the production of articles and books. These topics were discussed again in the concluding section of the event. The text of that report and the following discussions is available on the project website. The first day and a half consisted of presentations on Electoral Control in Hungary, Ukraine, Poland and Romania, and also a special presentation on the collection of parliamentary and candidate data in Nepal.

The last half of the second day consisted of two working sessions. We began with a discussion of the big questions that can be asked and addressed with EAST PaC data. We then narrowed our focus to discuss the links between individual papers of Project Team members. As a group, we decided to pursue two major publication strategies in 2015: a guest edited ISI journal consisting of five to six articles, and a group publication on electoral politics in Ukraine from the 1990s to the 2010s, both featuring analysis of EAST PaC data.

We actively created an atmosphere that encourages cross-national and multi-disciplinary collaboration and open communication among social scientists. Formal and informal discussions allowed event participants to continue to build a scholarly network. We have built internet platforms for project participants to directly share ideas for the project, and we encouraged their continued use.