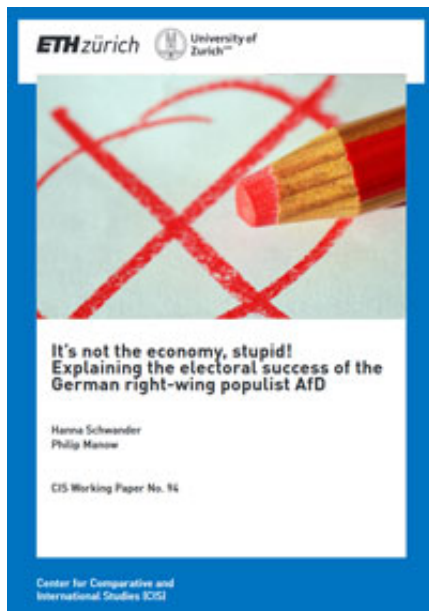


News

- 4 News

22.09.2017

Political Science Study: Alternative für Deutschland (AfD)-voters have right-wing tendencies



Universities of Bremen and Zurich compare election outcomes / AfD-supporters not "victims of modernization".

Right-wing populism is on the rise. Everywhere? Until recently, the resilience of the German party system to such a party has been an exception to this general trend. The establishment of the Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) in the wake of the Eurozone crisis put an end to this German exceptionalism.

This paper tests the 'losers of modernization'-thesis, one of the most dominant explanations for right-wing populist voting, for the case of the AfD. Based on district level data from the Federal

Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development and official data on electoral outcomes at the district level, we examine whether the socio-economic characteristics of a district yield any explanatory power for the AfD's electoral success in the federal elections of 2013 and the elections to the European Parliament in 2014. With this data, we avoid problems of representativeness and reliability of survey data with respect to socio-economically marginalized groups and their voting behavior. Our findings suggest that the modernization thesis bears little relevance for the success of the populist right in Germany. By contrast, we find a strong correlation between the AfD's electoral success in a district and the success of radical right parties in previous elections in the same district. We explain this intriguing finding with a "tradition of radical right voting" and a specific political culture on which the AfD has been able to draw once the broader political and social context allowed for the creation of a right-wing populist party in Germany.

More information:

Study: [It's not the economy, stupid! Explaining the electoral success of the German right-wing populist AfD](#)

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09.10.2014

Party competition and voter de- & re-alignments in times of welfare state transformations

Conference held by Centre for Social Policy Research and Sciences Po, Paris on September 25-26, 2014.

The aim of this workshop was to bridge the research on party competition, electoral politics and welfare state transformations. With quite some cross-country variation, we witness major changes in the welfare state arrangements all over Europe since the beginning of the new millennium. In Continental Europe, for example, reputed for its reform incapacity, large parts of

the welfare state underwent substantial reforms in the recent years. Even more profound reforms have been provoked in the wake of the European sovereign debt crisis in Spain, Portugal, and Greece. The welfare state was not only the 'principal institution in the construction of post-war capitalism', but also helped to underpin stable party-voter alignments when the cultural milieus on which given parties were based started to erode in the 1970s. Today, these stabilizing resources are largely depleted as the need to reform, recalibrate and retrench now meets a much more volatile electoral environment. We want to reflect on the effects of these welfare state transformations on party competition in a broader perspective. Given the importance of welfare states for structuring political contestation and the magnitude of recent reforms, our starting hypothesis is that the transformations of the welfare states should impact on various aspects of political competition.

A recent literature is concerned with the electoral consequences of such reforms. It asks whether governments will indeed be punished for retrenching the welfare state or whether welfare state friendly parties are spared from such punishment. But more encompassing analyses looking at the effects on party competition, the consequences for voter behavior and new reform coalitions are still lacking. This is surprising considering that the welfare state is one of the major objects of political contestation and the economic dimension of political competition is largely structured by attitudes and positions towards the (welfare) state. At the same time, the redistributive and thereby political consequences of reforms are complex, since social policy is multidimensional: Many reforms cut back on passive protection against 'old' risks while implementing new schemes to cope with 'new' social risks and reinforcing the employment orientation of social policies.

Yet, party competition is changing as well. Research on changes in party systems often emphasizes the effects of long-term structural trends on the structuring capacity of traditional conflict lines on party-voter alignments or party competition. The welfare state's influence on potential reconfigurations of these party-voter alignments or party competition is, however, often neglected. Yet, welfare state changes impact party competition as well as party-voter links. Losers of the recent welfare state reforms, for example, might vote increasingly for parties at the poles of the party spectrum. Potentially, this leads to a stronger polarization and fragmentation of party systems, but it could also lead to a lower legitimacy of governments as larger parts of the population are not represented in governments. Hence, we are interested in the effects of welfare state reforms on political alienation and vote abstention, on political polarization and the rise of radical left and right parties, as well as on the potential re-positioning of mainstream parties as a reaction to these new challengers – a repositioning that might also take place on 'non-economic' dimensions of party contestation. Has the 're-moralization' of politics to do with the depletion of politics' material resources?

Thanks to the generous funding of the CRC "Transformations of the State" and Sciences Po, Paris, the following group of scholars were invited to discuss the above outlined questions:

- Alexandre Afonso, King's College, London, UK
- Ben Ansell, Nuffield College, Oxford University, UK
- Silja Häusermann, University of Zurich, Switzerland

- Carsten Jensen, University of Aarhus, Denmark
- Herbert Kitschelt, Duke University, USA
- Johannes Lindvall, University of Lund, Sweden
- Kimberly Morgan, George Washington University, USA
- Jonathan T. Polk, University of Gothenburg, Sweden
- Philipp Rehm, University of Ohio, USA
- Jan Rovny, Centre d'études européennes, Sciences Po, Paris, France
- Allison Rovny, Centre d'études européennes, Sciences Po, Paris, France
- David Rueda, Nuffield College, University of Oxford, UK

Conveners:

Philip Manow, Centre for Social Policy Research, University of Bremen, Germany

Bruno Palier, Centre d'études européennes, Sciences Po, Paris, France

Hanna Schwander, Centre for Social Policy Research, University of Bremen, Germany

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18.08.2014

Professor Manow is on leave in the academic year 2014/15

He has been invited as a fellow at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin.

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16.09.2010

Philip Manow becomes cohead of the Economics Department at the ZeS

Professor Philip Manow has accepted an offer from the University of Bremen.

Philip Manow will start his new position as a professor in the Political Science Department in October 2010. Together with Professor Stefan Traub he will head the Economics Department in the Centre for Social policy Research.

Philip Manow's research focusses on issues of political economy, the welfare state and political institutions. He has previously worked at the University of Heidelberg, the University of Konstanz and at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies in Cologne.

During his work for the Centre for Social Policy Research, Philip Manow will particularly examine the link between economic structural change, social policy, and party politics.

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