

GREEK POLITICS SPECIALIST GROUP
PANELS AT THE
60th ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE POLITICAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION
29 March – 1 April 2010, Edinburgh

GPSG PANEL 1:
International Roundtable – Public Policy in Southern Europe

This roundtable discussion aims to bring together scholars from South European countries (Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Cyprus and Malta) to discuss common problems and challenges in policy-making and implementation of state policies. South European countries have a lot in common such as authoritarian past and/or a turbulent history but they also have a lot of differences in their organization, institutions and political culture. For, example Spain and Italy have strong regional governments while Greece is a centralist state. All six countries are members of the European Union (EU) but they have entered the Union at different times. When compared, the picture that they present is not uniform and differences can be observed.

The goal of the roundtable is to move the discussion forward and to compare similarities and differences between the six countries. It aims to avoid the exceptionalism argument that has been widely used in single-country case-studies and to open the debate to common characteristics, problems and solutions. The roundtable is envisioned as an open discussion where the participants will present short papers and then they will engage to a debate between themselves but also with the audience.

Chair:

Dr. Stella Ladi, Lecturer, Panteion University

Discussant:

Prof. Claudio Radaelli, Professor of European Public Policy, University of Exeter,

Panellists:

Prof. Jacint Jordana, Professor, Institut Barcelona d' Estudis Internacionals,
Prof. Leonardo Morlino, President IPSA,
Prof. Dimitris Sotiropoulos, Associate Professor, University of Athens,
Prof. José Magone, Professor, Berlin School of Economics and Law

GPSG PANEL 2:
Greek Political Parties and Elections

This panel offers a comparative examination of three of Greece's major political parties (centre-right New Democracy, centre-left governing PASOK and left-wing Synaspismos) focusing on their internal structure and recent positioning on the ideological spectrum. The parties' strategies vis-a-vis the much-coveted median voter (or "middle ground") are examined, as well as their attitudes towards Europe. This debate will also be informed by a quantitative study of voter behaviour during the recent European Parliament (June 09) and general (October 09) elections.

Chair and Discussant: to be confirmed

Panellists:

1. Chrysa Lamprinakou, PhD Candidate, Brunel University

“Interpreting New Democracy through the Party Evolution Model: Why the ‘middle ground’ project was destined to fail”

In the aftermath of New Democracy's 2004 general election victory, numerous studies sought to dissect the underlying reasons for New Democracy's electoral revival. In fact, the party had run a highly effective and professionalised election campaign. On the surface, the party that won the 2004 landslide victory had little in common with the parochial, traditional, divided organisation of the 1990s. However, a closer examination of the nature and scope of the organisational and ideological reforms that were implemented under Karamanlis' leadership – the culmination of which rested on the 'middle ground' project - is indicative of the fundamental institutional deficiencies that were never addressed. Within such a context, the party was destined to fail as soon as the apparent - rather than real – unity faded away. This paper seeks to explain why New Democracy and especially, the party leadership failed to take advantage of the internally and externally driven sequence of events of the pre-2004 period and radically change the party. To this end, the main focus here is to expound the reasons why the middle ground project was destined to fail.

2. Dr Dimitris Tsarouhas, Assistant Professor, Bilkent University

“A modernized ‘contract with the people’? The Greek social democrats’ reforms on party renewal and public engagement”

The literature on internal party reform and empirical case studies reveal the significance of change in delivering electoral victories and rejuvenating the party machine. Rising electoral volatility and the loosening of party identification among voters has facilitated the quest for internal party changes as a precondition for success in party politics.

The 2009 Greek elections have led to the return of the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) in office. After assuming the party leadership in 2004, the new Prime Minister George Papandreou called for a new relationship between the party and party members/citizens based on transparency, democratic decision-making and horizontal forms of participation. This paper places PASOK's party reforms since 2004 in a comparative European context and assesses the extent to which the reforms introduced till now are a) isolated incidents or signifying a general trend among Greek political parties, b) crucial in electoral victory or a by-product of inevitable alteration in party structures, and c) important in terms of their internal party political value or indicative of an attempt by the Greek social democrats to use internal reform for wider changes in public policy.

3. Costas Eleftheriou, Researcher, University of Athens and Panayiotis Skevofylax, Researcher, University of Athens

“‘Endless debate’: Party-based euroscepticism and intra-party politics in Synaspismos”

Given the increasing intensity of the European integration process during the recent years, party-based euroscepticism has become a constant feature of party competition in Europe. In the relevant debate (Taggart & Sczerbiak, Kopecky & Mudde, Hooghe & Marks, Sitter etc.) the phenomenon is either attributed to party strategy or to certain ideological positions. In the current paper we shall examine euroscepticism as an intra-party strategy in a Greek radical left grouping (Synaspismos / Coalition of the Left, Movements and Ecology). We shall attempt to show that in some cases a party's stance towards European integration is determined by the internal balance of power within intra-party competition, despite the widespread perception whereby the parties of radical left are eurosceptic by position. The subject of the research consists of the internal party processes on the occasion of three Treaties -Maastricht, Amsterdam, Constitutional –, and the manner, in which, the relevant debate was conducted by the main factions of the party. It will be argued that the controversy, regarding the stance of the party towards European integration, serves the objectives and strategy each faction addresses. The purpose is to understand the relationship between intra-party political and party-based euroscepticism and how the latter can help us understand a party's ideological orientation and political strategy.

4. Dr Ioannis Andreadis, Lecturer, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and Prof. Theodore Chadjipadelis, Professor, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

“Comparison of Elections for the European and the National Parliament: the case of Greece”

Analysis of recent elections in Greece reveals two important issues: The first one is abstention. The number of votes cast for the 2004 parliamentary elections is about 7.6 millions. The number of those who participated in the 2004 elections for the European Parliament is about 6.3 millions. The number of voters rose again up to 7.35 millions in the parliamentary elections held in 2007, but it dropped to less than 5.3 millions at the 2009 elections for the European Parliament. The second important issue refers to the changes of the power of the two major political parties. The share of votes for New Democracy followed a declining route since the 2004 parliamentary elections from 45.36% to 41.84% in 2007 and 32.29% in the 2009 elections for the European Parliament. This declining route resulted to PASOK winning the 2009 elections for the European Parliament with a vote share of 36.64%.

In this paper we use the official results of the two latest parliamentary elections held on September 16th 2007 and October 4th 2009, and the official results of the elections for the European Parliament held on June 7th 2009. Applying quantitative methods on these datasets we provide estimates of voting behaviour and the profile of the Greek political parties in 2009.

**GPSG PANEL 3:
Developments in Greek Public Policy**

This panel focuses on recent developments in the field of public policy in Greece looking in particular at administrative reform and decentralisation.

The papers of this panel explore the role of citizens in public policy making and implementation (through public consultation, local mobilisation etc), as well as at the chronic weaknesses of Greek administration that act as obstacles to reform. The role of regionalism - both at the national and at the EU level - is examined through case studies.

Chair and Discussant:

Dr Dimitris Tsarouhas, Assistant Professor, Bilkent University

Panellists:

1. Dr. Stella Ladi, Lecturer, Panteion University

“Public Consultation, Participation and Administrative Reform: the Case of Greece”

The lack of trust to democratic institutions and to the effectiveness of governments has led to the search of a new contract between governments and citizens. Citizens' participation in the decision-making process but also in the implementation of public policy through consultation mechanisms is nowadays considered vital. The last two decades a diffusion of public consultation mechanisms can be observed in Western societies (e.g. US, UK, Canada) and in supranational and international organizations (e.g. OECD, EU). In Greece, discussions about the importance of public consultation have also increased in the last two decades but its application has been limited. This paper aims to analyze the types and examples of public consultation as well as the values behind it. Greece is an interesting case-study because similarly to many other countries implementing public consultation mechanisms has proven to be challenging. It is argued that establishing consultation mechanisms in Greece would signify a shift of administrative paradigm, given that the existing model is hierarchical.

2. Dr. Adamantios Dionysios Minas, Researcher, University of Athens

“Voicing to the regional, loyal to the international: European Union, International Maritime Organisation and Greek Maritime Interests”

The paper will try to explore the relations between the Greek maritime interests and the EU taking as case studies the accidents of the oil-carriers Erika and Prestige off the coasts of France and Spain in 1999 and 2002 respectively. The Commission responded to the accidents issuing proposals that would augment maritime safety and environmental protection. These proposals fuelled the reactions of (greek) ship-owning interests, which protested that regionalism would be imposed on an international industry. For the maritime interests IMO is the appropriate forum of addressing matters relevant to shipping. In Hirschman terms maritime interests used their voice against the Community and expressed their loyalty towards the IMO.

3. Vasilis Leontitsis, PhD Candidate, University of Sheffield

“Exploring Institutional Inertia and Change: Lessons from the Decentralisation of Greece in the 1990s”

Greece is one of the most centralised states in Europe, although during the last 30 years considerable decentralisation efforts have taken place. These changes are most notable in the period between 1994 and 1998, when a number of far reaching reforms affected all levels of sub-national government (regions, prefectures and municipalities). The effects of these reforms are still visible today. Nevertheless, although the changes have been considerable, the fundamentals of the polity have remained relatively untouched. This paper examines the causal factors that pushed for the decentralisation reforms throughout this period alongside the obstructing factors that resisted them contributing towards a relative inertia of the polity structures. Theoretically this paper draws on Historical Institutionalism arguing that the reforms of this period transpired mainly due to ‘unintended consequences’, ‘reactive sequences’ and ‘policy entrepreneurship’ by the then Minister of the Interior, Mr Alekos Papadopoulos. However, when one looks beyond the surface, a story of relative inertia and ‘path dependence’ emerges.

4. Prof. Fotini Papoudakis, Assistant Professor, Higher Technological Educational Institute of Kalamata

“The role of leadership in mobilizing collective will and the building of sustainable communities: the case of Anavra, Greece”

Institutional and economic weaknesses of local government in Greece have always been among the scholarly interests of students of Greek politics and public policy. The truth is that the devolution of powers to local government in Greece has not been followed by adequate fiscal competences while features of political culture connected to existing opportunity structures shape an unfavourable setting for sustainable local growth. The above context has been the excuse offered by local authorities in an effort to explain their inability to build sustainable communities. Nonetheless, the case of Anavra, a small mountainous village in Greece suggests that leadership and political determination can overcome the above mentioned negative factors by exploiting local comparative advantages and making the most of the opportunities offered by national and EU resources. While the case of Anavra would be rather common in other national contexts, it stands out as a unique and most amazing achievement precisely because it occurred in the Greek political and public administration environment.

Taking this case study as the starting point, this paper is exploring issues of trust in government, community participation, social capital mobilization and local government, collective will, political will and capacity, social development and sustainable economic growth.