P11 / Democratic Resistance: Domestic and International Policy Strategies

Topic : COMPARATIVE PUBLIC POLICY

Chair : Rachel Riedl (Cornell University, US)

Second Chair : Dan Slater (University of Michigan)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Domestic and foreign policy are powerful tools to arrest democratic backsliding and support democratic resilience. The panel emphasizes policy responses in the following domains in moments of democratic backsliding: legislative and executive lawmaking and candidate eligibility rules, judicial appointments and domains of jurisprudence, regulatory agencies (particularly tax, audit, and communications/ media sectors) of the state, political party registration, candidate selection, and competitive activity policies, labor and private sector rights and regulations, and foreign intervention rules. To create opportunities for democratic resistance and recovery, policy interventions will generally focus on the subsectors within the ”democracy, rights and governance” frameworks. The panel participants will specify the theory of change which connects the pathways of democratic backsliding with the policy programming responses (foreign and/or domestic) that identifies how these changes can support democratic goals and practice. The general framework of the panel suggests that these theories of change lie in the power of vertical responsibility (the masses putting limits and accountability on the rulers, either through elections or contentious politics), horizontal accountability (checks and balances of other institutional sites of power), and diagonal accountability (formal civil society and media audits and investigations) (Riedl et al 2024). Such policy interventions have the potential to recover or even deepen democracy in the face of such specific threats to civil liberties and political rights.

Existing research has tended to focus on either the drivers of democratic erosion, or the strategies that key actors – such as judiciaries and civil society groups – can employ to resist this process (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018; Waldner and Lust 2018; Arriola, Rakner, and van de Walle 2022; Elischer and Lawrance 2022). This panel will identify the policy responses and which policy actors/ institutional sites can undertake such reforms given the particular pathways of democratic backsliding underway.

CALL FOR PAPERS

We welcome papers that use empirical assessments of policy responses to democratic backsliding, to assess the mechanisms of policy reform and their relative efficacy across different contexts.

? How should we conceptualise or categorize the policy menu of programming responses to democratic backsliding, and how do they relate to theories of change for democratic resistance and sources of resilience?

? What, if anything, is distinctive about policy targeted to address democratic backsliding in cases that have eroded to competitive autocracies, versus those that remain (limited) democracies ?

? What policies can pre-emptively support democracies to more resilient to future authoritarian threats?

? What particular policy challenges and opportunities do episodes of re-democratisation generate, given the tensions inherent in pro-democracy coalitions, governance expectations, and a need to reform institutionalized sites of autocratic capture?

? How does democratic backsliding and resistance relate to other intersecting policy priorities, such as reducing corruption and enhancing state capacity?

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Session 1

Thursday, July 3rd 10:15 to 12:15 (SME-F4)

Democratic Resilience in Lithuania: Perspectives of Academic to Civic Communities

Egle Butkeviciene (Kaunas University of Technology)

Vytautas Valentinavicius (Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania)

Egle Vaidelyte (Kaunas University of Technology)

Multilateral decentralized cooperation for bettering democratic resilience. The case of the European Association for Local Democracy (ALDA) and the LDAs.v

Francesca Gelli (Università Iuav di Venezia)

Examining Educational Development in Taiwan: A Reform Phase Analysis

Warangkana Lin (I-Shou University)

Reigniting enthusiasm?Polarization and political participation in the U.S

Muxi Li (Nankai University)