

Politics in challenging times

Populism, protests and the crisis of representation after the Great Recession

« L'Europe se fera dans les crises et elle sera la somme des solutions apportées à ces crises »
Jean Monnet, « Mémoires ».

2^a Semester 2018
Wednesdays 18h-21h
Room 1.12 (B1 building)

Main instructor: Enrico Borghetto (enrico.borghetto@fcsb.unl.pt)
Office Hours: Wednesdays 17h-18h, Room 314 (3^a Floor) ID Building
Grading: 10 ECTS

I. Rationale:

The economic crisis which has struck the Euro area since 2009 is the greatest challenge the European Union has ever faced in its almost 60 years of history. There is no better time to learn about the crucial political, social and economic dynamics that are unfolding on a daily basis under our eyes. Although the second part of the course will focus on Southern Europe countries, the epicentre of the earthquake, the magnitude of the reverberations throughout the rest of Europe and the world will also deserve our attention. We will discuss, among other things, the rise of new and old populist parties, the new forms of protest movements and the ongoing destabilization of the party system. All these topics fall into the wider topic of the crisis of representative democracy.

II. Course Aims and Outcomes:

Aims

This course aims at providing students with both the conceptual tools and factual knowledge which are essential to understand the reasons and consequences of the Great Recession. On the one hand, priority will be given to acquire the basic terminology of

economics, finance and political science enabling the student to get a grasp of the main dynamics of the Great Recession. On the other, the student will be exposed to the latest research on the topic and will be invited to reflect and comment on the arguments presented.

Specific Learning Outcomes:

This course aims at introducing the student to the main lines of the current academic debate on the political and social consequences of the debt crisis. It is structured in two parts: concepts and case studies

CONCEPTS

In this first group of classes, the student is expected to develop a sound understanding of: 1) the economic and political dynamics which led to the euro crisis and how it was managed; 2) debate on how different theoretical approaches help us conceptualize the crisis; its impact on the EU democratic deficit and on citizens' attitudes; the rise of old and new Eurosceptic and populist parties; protest politics.

CASE STUDIES

This second part of the course discusses the impact of the debt crisis over selected Southern European countries, using the analytical tools developed in the first part.

III. Format and Procedures:

The two sections of the course differs in format:

CONCEPTS (Classes 2-9)

Each class is structured in two parts: a lecture, delivered by either the instructor or by one of the guest lecturers, and a class discussion on a specific theme. Themes will be communicated in advance of each class, to enable two or more students to prepare a short essay and a presentation to deliver in front of the class. This is followed by a class discussion. *Every student is required participate by asking questions in both parts of the class*, since this will count in the final assessment.

CASE STUDIES (Classes 10-13)

Each class is structured in two parts. In the first part, after a brief introduction of the main instructor, a group of students will present to the rest of the class their research on one of the country cases.

In the second part, the class will receive a country expert, who will present his/her own work on the topic and answer questions coming from the students. *All students have to prepare questions in advance, ask them in class and participate in the debate*, since this will count in their final assessment.

IV. Course Requirements:

1. Class attendance and participation policy:

Since there is no final exams and no course book, it is critical that students attend classes. When a student misses more than 2 classes because of an illness or unanticipated event, it

is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor and provide an explanation. Each additional unexcused absence will be penalized as follows: -3 points from the final grade. Five or more unexcused absences will result in automatic failure for the course.

2. Course readings:

There are no texts to buy, but in preparation of each class, the student will be required to read the required readings. All readings and the slides will be available in pdf.

3. Assignment and grading Procedures:

(a) Two 1500-word papers and presentations (60%)

(b) Group presentation about country case (30%)

(c) Participation to debates (10%)

Further information on assignments and grading procedures will be given during the first class.

V. Academic Integrity

Each student in this course is expected to ensure that any work submitted for academic credit will be the student's own work. Penalty for violation of this rule can imply the failure of the course.

VI. Course Schedule

DAY	SECTION	DATE	TOPICS
1		21-02-2017	Introduction
2	CONCEPTS	28-02-2017	The origins of the Great Recession
3		07-03-2017	The Great Recession and its societal impacts
4		14-03-2017	Changes in framing: conceptualizing the crisis
5		21-03-2017	Changes in citizens' and elite's attitudes: political discontent and euroscepticism
6		04-04-2017	Changes in parties and party system: the rise of populism
7		/	/
8		18-04-2017	Changes in institutions: new balances of power at home and in the EU
9		25-04-2017	Changes in protest movements and participation

10	CASE STUDIES	02-05-2017	National case study: Spain
11		09-05-2017	National case study: Italy
12		16-05-2017	National case study: Greece
13		23-05-2017	National case study: Portugal
14		30-05-2017	Future scenarios and the state of democracy

VI. Topics

21-02-2017	Introduction
Introduction of the main themes of the course.	
28-02-2017	The origins of the Great Recession
What are the origins of the Great Recession? Although the debate is still raging, a consensus has been growing about the long-term and short-term causes of the recent financial, economic and debt crisis. We need to clearly understand them before analysing the consequences.	
07-03-2017	The Great Recession and its societal impacts
We study the unrolling of the Great Recession, the start of economic adjustment programmes in crisis-laden countries and discuss its impact on societies from the point of view of redistribution and inequality, increased social mobility, demographic change, immigration and changing patterns of employment and unemployment.	
14-03-2017	Changes in framing: conceptualizing the crisis
We reflect on what kinds of discourses, narratives and frames have been employed to discuss, promote or oppose change in Southern Europe	
21-03-2017	Changes in citizens' attitudes: political discontent and euroscepticism
To what extent have the experiences of this period altered elite and public opinion attitudes on key issues including institutional change and European integration? How extensive is the growth of political discontent, euroscepticism and opposition to immigration?	
04-04-2017	Changes in parties and party system: the rise of populism
What kind of new parties have appeared, including nationalist and extremist parties? What has been the role of the radical left? How significant is populism in today's Europe? And what are the implications for governmental stability?	
18-04-2017	Changes in institutions: new balances of power at home and in the EU
Which changes have occurred with regard to institutional autonomy (e.g. central bank independence) or inter-institutional balances (e.g. weakening of parliament in an era of	

EU/IMF bailouts)? What have been the consequences of the crisis for (re)centralising versus centrifugal dynamics and how have they been playing out?	
25-04-2017	Changes in protest movements and participation
Which are the new patterns of electoral participation and preferences? Have social media encouraged or discouraged political participation? Which other new modes of political mobilisation and communication have emerged? Has civil society grown stronger or weaker? What have protest movements achieved in terms of citizen engagement, organisational innovation and influence on policy outcomes?	
02-05-2017	National case study
09-05-2017	National case study
16-05-2017	National case study
23-05-2017	National case study
30-05-2017	Future scenarios for democracy in the EU
Overall, has this period resulted in more democratic defeats or democratic advances? What have been the experiences with direct democracy including referendums? Have there been specific improvements in democratic quality? What has been the role of external actors in domestic politics and what have been the systemic consequences? Has crisis reduced corruption or stimulated its growth?	