

Political Conflict in Western and Eastern Europe

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Class Room: Bergheimer Str. 58, Room 02.034 Class Hours: Wednesdays 09:15-10:45

Description

The social and institutional bases of political conflict in Europe are in a state of flux. The declining electoral support of mainstream parties, such as the Social Democrats, and the rise of new parties, such as the Greens and the radical right, point to a fundamental shift in the composition of post-war electoral coalitions. Class-based mobilization and conflicts over welfare state policies are less influential in driving political behavior. Preferences over immigration, Europe, or climate change are forming new group-based alliances that cut across economic considerations and realign the social basis of politics. Scholars disagree about the driving forces behind these developments, with explanations ranging from re-alignment rooted in a backlash against globalization to de-alignment resulting from increasing individualization. This seminar will examine these explanations through the lens of cleavage politics. We will first conceptualize and discuss the measurement of political cleavages. We differentiate between quantitative and qualitative approaches. Second, we zoom in on the sociological, identity, and organizational elements of the new cleavage. We devote separate sessions to all three aspects. Third, we focus on mobilizing actors. We discuss the transformation of social democracy and the increasing popularity of green and radical right parties. Fourth, we map the geographical variations within Europe and expand the analysis to the Central and Eastern European region. Fifth, in the final sessions of the seminar, we discuss the role of crises in driving cleavage formation, using the examples of the Great Recession, the Covid-19 pandemic, and the War in Ukraine as case studies.

Course Objectives

This seminar is designed for MA students. The seminar assumes no previous knowledge of the literature. By the end of the seminar, students:

1. will familiarize themselves with the main theoretical approaches in the study of cleavages, political mobilization, and participation.

2. will familiarize themselves with the main methodological approaches in the study of cleavages, political mobilization, and participation.
3. will be able to evaluate research related to the themes in the seminar
4. will be able to pose a research question related to the themes of the seminar
5. will be able to argue with the analytical concepts learned in the seminar

Course Requirements

Weekly attendance is desired. If you cannot attend, please email me before the respective session.

For 2 credit points	For 4 credit points	For 2 + 6 credit points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active participation in class Reading the literature In-class presentation (15 mins) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active participation in class Reading the literature In-class presentation (15 mins) Reading notes for 4 sessions (max. 800 words each) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active participation in class Reading the literature In-class presentation (15 mins) Term paper (6000 words)

Office Hours

I offer my office hours based on prior agreement. Email me if you would like to meet. To sign up for an office hour, you might need to make an appointment using Calendly: <https://calendly.com/endre-borbath/office-hour>

We can meet on-site, in room 03.033 (Bergheimer Str. 58, 69115 Heidelberg) or online, using the heiCONF link: <https://heiconf.uni-heidelberg.de/tgad-fzyq-7j9g-zcdh>

Online Learning

I provide the course literature via Moodle (<https://moodle.uni-heidelberg.de/>) and also use the platform for general course information. Please contact me with any questions regarding the course literature, technical problems with Moodle, or other organizational issues.

Student Presentations, Readings Notes, and Final Paper

Presentations

Every student receiving credit points for the seminar must present in one of the sessions. The presentation is on the theme of the respective session. Therefore, it should reflect on **all readings assigned for the respective week**. We divide up the presentations during the first session.

The presentation should be **no longer than 15 minutes**. You are asked to email me your slides **before the session** so I can save them on the laptop we use in class. The presentations will also be uploaded to Moodle and made available to all students in class.

A successful presentation addresses the following points:

- What is the central research question of the respective study?
- Is the study's contribution theoretical, empirical, or both?
- What are the main theoretical propositions advanced by the study?
- In case of an empirical study: what research design and methods do the authors use to examine their research question? Do these fit the theoretical ambition? Does the empirical evidence provide enough support for the thesis the authors advance?
- In case it is a theoretical study: what debate does the study contribute to? What are the central theoretical ideas introduced? What are the key analytical concepts introduced? Do these travel beyond the context of the respective study?
- What is the central comparison the study relies on? Both in theoretical terms (different scholarly traditions) and empirical terms (space, time, meso-level actors, individuals, etc.)
- How does this study relate to the overall theme of the seminar and other readings we have previously discussed?
- How do you evaluate the study? Do you find it convincing? If so, why? Or why not?

Reading notes

Reading notes summarize and take a position on one or more of the readings for the respective week in a maximum of 800 words/ 3 paragraphs. **The reading note should go beyond a summary and evaluate the respective text(s).**

As a suggestion, a reading note might answer some of the questions below:

1. What is the text's central theoretical/ analytical thesis? (first paragraph)
2. What type of empirical/ other evidence is provided in support of this thesis? (second paragraph)
3. How do you evaluate the text? To what extent does it succeed in 'proving' its thesis? How does it compare to the existing literature? What is your key takeaway from the respective text? (third paragraph)

Term Paper

A term paper comprises 6000 words, including references. The deadline for this paper is the end of the summer term, **the 30th of September 2024**. The paper is the final 'product' of the seminar, allowing you to showcase what you have learned throughout the semester. **The term paper should present a central thesis in an argumentative form.** This is the critical requirement for how the papers will be assessed. You are encouraged to discuss the topic of your paper with me in advance!

There are usually three types of papers: 1) a literature review, 2) the analysis of an empirical case, or 3) a book review. In the first type of paper, the student makes a theoretical proposition, often a set of hypotheses based on a critical review of a relevant strand of literature. In addition to what we have discussed in the seminar, the paper should also refer to further reading. To the extent possible, it should go beyond summarising existing studies by critically engaging with them and using the debate to frame an original argument or a set of hypotheses. You can also think of this type of term paper as the first part of a journal article, containing the introduction and the theoretical/ analytical framework but not the empirical analysis.

The second type of paper provides an overview of an empirical case. This case would typically be participation in a specific context (critical election or a wave of protest mobilization) or form (online, offline, etc.). In this type of paper, the student applies the analytical framework and theoretical approaches reviewed in the seminar to classify the case they are examining and to tease out a ‘message’ about what the case teaches us. The guiding question is: What is this case about? In order to answer this question, the essay should reflect on the classification of the case from a comparative, generalizable perspective.

The third type of paper is a review of a book published in the last 15 years by a major university press on a topic related to the seminar. A book review is expected to summarise the book’s central argument, review the structure in which the argument is presented, and consider the extent to which the empirical evidence supports the main argument. A vital element of a successful review is to situate the book within relevant debates/literature. The purpose of this is to assess whether the contribution the book claims to make is indeed new to the literature and to what extent it represents a ‘breakthrough’ or an incremental step in relevant debates. Reading some existing reviews to familiarise yourself with the genre may be helpful. Three journals that regularly publish book reviews are Comparative Political Studies, Party Politics, and Social Movement Studies.

Academic Writing and Reading

I strongly recommend taking part in the academic writing course offered by the Heidelberg University (Institute for German as a Foreign Language Philology). For more information, see: <https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/en/study/advisory-services/service-and-events-of-the-international-relations-office/academic-writing-english-spoken-offer>

On writing research papers:

Minkoff, Scott L. 2012. “A Guide to Developing and Writing Research Papers in Political Science,” https://kevinlyles.digital.uic.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/minkoff_researchpaper_guide_v4.pdf.

On writing a good abstract:

Gilardi, Fabrizio. 2021. “Good Abstracts: A Template,” <https://www.fabriziogilardi.org/resources/papers/good-abstracts.pdf>.

Templates for writing:

Graff, Gerald, and Cathy Birkenstein. 2018. *They Say, I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*. Fourth edition. New York: W. W. Norton. ISBN: 0-393-63167-2. <https://tinyurl.com/bdec4eex>.

On reading efficiently:

Pacheco-Vega, Raul. 2020. "Reading Strategies," <http://www.raulpacheco.org/resources/reading-strategies>.

Note: Raul Pacheco-Vega's blog is a valuable resource for academic writing in general!

Software recommendation:

I use Google Scholar and Zotero (freely available) for literature search. For note-taking, I use Obsidian (freely available). I recommend that you learn how to use these software (or their alternatives), as the investment pays off later during your studies. YouTube has many videos introducing Zotero and Obsidian's different elements. I am also happy to help if you have questions.

Academic Integrity and Mental Health

Plagiarism

Students must comply with the university policy on academic integrity found at <https://www.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/en/service/detecting-plagiarism>. In addition, please also familiarize yourself with the Study Guide https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/politikwissenschaften/master_recht.html. Not knowing the rules is no excuse for plagiarism!

Use of AI

If you use AI (chatGPT, Claude, etc.) to write your term paper, you are required to be transparent about it. More specifically, list the prompts and answers in a separate appendix at the end of the term paper. This appendix does not count towards the word count. You do not need to list the use of AI for coding, data analysis, and grammar corrections (e.g., DeepL Write, Grammarly, etc.). Please remember always to respect the rules of academic integrity and honesty!

Mental Health

Many students feel overwhelmed by the tasks and responsibilities during their studies, mainly if they are new to Germany and Heidelberg. That is normal! If you feel that you are not able to cope alone, please consider approaching the psychosocial counseling service offered free of charge by the student services organization at <https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/en/study/advisory-services/psychosocial-counselling-for-students-pcs>. If you are having difficulties, e.g., with the term paper, please do not hesitate to approach me.

Schedule and Readings

Week 1, 17.04.2024 - Introducing the seminar

- Introduce the syllabus
- Clarify expectations
- Divide up the presentations

Week 2, 24.04.2024 - Old cleavages

- How to define cleavages and what elements do they have?
- What cleavages are traditionally distinguished in Europe?

Required:

Lipset, Seymour Martin, and Stein Rokkan. 1966 (1990). "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments." In *The West European Party System*, edited by Peter Mair, 91–138. Oxford: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 978-0-19827-583-1.

Recommended:

Bartolini, Stefano, and Peter Mair. 1990. "Cleavage systems." In *Identity, competition and electoral availability: the stabilisation of European electorates 1885-1985*, 212–249. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 0-521-38292-0.

Week 3, 08.05.2024 - Quantitative approaches in the study of the new cleavage

- To what extent can we talk about a new 'cultural' cleavage emerging?
- What are the distinguishing elements of this new cleavage?

Required:

Hooghe, Liesbet, and Gary Marks. 2018. "Cleavage theory meets Europe's crises: Lipset, Rokkan, and the transnational cleavage." *Journal of European Public Policy* 25 (1): 109–135. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2017.1310279>.

Bornschier, Simon. 2010. "From Structure to Culture and Back The Perpetuation and Transformation of Historical Cleavages." In *Cleavage Politics and the Populist Right The New Cultural Conflict in Western Europe*, 53–70. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. ISBN: 978-1-4399-0192-2.

Recommended:

Kriesi, Hanspeter, Edgar Grande, Romain Lachat, Martin Dolezal, Simon Bornschier, and Timotheos Frey. 2006. "Globalization and the transformation of the national political space: Six European countries compared." *European Journal of Political Research* 45 (6): 921–956. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6765.2006.00644.x>.

Week 4, 15.05.2024 - Qualitative approaches in the study of the new cleavage

- How can we study the new cleavage using qualitative methods?
- What does interviewing radical right supporters tell us?

Required:

Off, Gefjon. 2024. "Multidimensional and intersectional cultural grievances over gender, sexuality and immigration." *European Journal of Political Research* online first. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12665>.

Damhuis, Koen. 2020. "Hard-done-by-ness." In *Roads to the Radical Right: Understanding Different Forms of Electoral Support for Radical Right-Wing Parties in France and the Netherlands*, 118–140. Oxford: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 978-0-19-886363-2. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198863632.003.0006>.

Recommended:

Damhuis, Koen, and Léonie de Jonge. 2022. "Going Nativist. How to Interview the Radical Right?" *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* online first. <https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069221077761>.

Week 5, 22.05.2024 - The sociological element of the new cleavage

- To what extent is the new cleavage rooted in sociological structures?
- What are the main 'variables' that distinguish the new cleavage?

Required:

Häusermann, Silja, and Hanspeter Kriesi. 2015. "What do voters want? Dimensions and configurations in individual preferences and party choice." In *The politics of advanced capitalism*, edited by Pablo Beramendi, Silja Häusermann, Herbert Kitschelt, and Hanspeter Kriesi, 202–231. New York: Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 978-1-107-09986-9.

Hooghe, Liesbet, Gary Marks, and Jonne Kamphorst. 2024. "Why It Makes Sense to Consider Field of Education to Predict Political Behavior: The Case of Gal/Tan Voting." *American Political Science Review* forthcoming. https://hooghe.web.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/11492/2024/03/Hooghe-Marks-Kamphorst_field-of-education.pdf.

Recommended:

Ares, Macarena. 2022. "Issue politicization and social class: How the electoral supply activates class divides in political preferences." *European Journal of Political Research* 61 (2): 503–523. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12469>.

Week 6, 29.05.2024 - The identity element of the new cleavage

- To what extent do the identities associated with the new cleavage define citizens' self-identification?
- What methods are available to study the identity element of the new cleavage?

Required:

Zollinger, Delia. 2023. "Cleavage Identities in Voters Own Words: Harnessing Open-Ended Survey Responses." *American Journal of Political Science* online first. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12743>. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/ajps.12743>.

Damhuis, Koen, and Linus Westheuser. 2024. "Cleavage politics in ordinary reasoning: How common sense divides." *European Societies* online first. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616696.2023.2300641>.

Recommended:

Bornschier, Simon, Silja Häusermann, Delia Zollinger, and Céline Colombo. 2021. "How "Us" and "Them" Relates to Voting Behavior-Social Structure, Social Identities, and Electoral Choice." *Comparative Political Studies* 54 (12): 2087–2122. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414021997504>.

Week 7, 05.06.2024 - Social movements as the organizational element of the new cleavage

- Going beyond political parties, to what extent do movements and other civil society initiatives contribute to the organizational element of the new cleavage?
- Does that differ between the left and the right?

Required:

Kriesi, Hanspeter, Ruud Koopmans, Jan Willem Duyvendak, and Marco G. Giugni. 1992. "New social movements and political opportunities in Western Europe." *European Journal of Political Research* 22 (2): 219–244. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6765.1992.tb00312.x>.

Berman, Sheri. 1997. "Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic." *World Politics* 49 (3): 401–429.

Recommended:

Hutter, Swen, and Endre Borbáth. 2019. "Challenges from left and right: the long-term dynamics of protest and electoral politics in Western Europe." *European Societies* 21 (4): 487–512. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616696.2018.1494299>.

Week 8, 12.06.2024 - Social-democracy

- How is social democracy affected by the rise of the new cleavage?
- How are the two perspectives on the transformation of social-democracy distinguished?

Required:

Berman, Sheri, and Maria Snegovaya. 2019. "Populism and the Decline of Social Democracy." *Journal of Democracy* 30 (3): 5–19. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2019.0038>.

Abou-Chadi, Tarik, and Markus Wagner. 2019. "The Electoral Appeal of Party Strategies in Postindustrial Societies: When Can the Mainstream Left Succeed?" *The Journal of Politics* 81 (4): 1405–1419. <https://doi.org/10.1086/704436>.

Recommended:

Bremer, Björn, and Line Rennwald. 2023. "Who still likes social democracy? The support base of social democratic parties reconsidered." *Party Politics* 29 (4): 741–754. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13540688221093770>.

Week 9, 19.06.2024 - Greens

- How are green parties and voters embedded in the emerging two-dimensional structure?
- How does the rising salience of climate change affect the space of party competition/ voters' preferences?

Required:

Dolezal, Martin. 2010. "Exploring the Stabilization of a Political Force: The Social and Attitudinal Basis of Green Parties in the Age of Globalization." *West European Politics* 33 (3): 534–552. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402381003654569>.

Farstad, Fay M. 2018. "What explains variation in parties climate change salience?" *Party Politics* 24 (6): 698–707. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068817693473>.

Recommended:

Kenny, John, and Peter Egge Langsæther. 2023. "Environmentalism as an independent dimension of political preferences." *European Journal of Political Research* 62 (4): 1031–1053. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12549>.

Week 10, 26.06.2024 - Radical right

- How are radical right parties embedded in the emerging two-dimensional structure?
- How do radical right parties mobilize their supporters?

Required:

Bornschier, Simon. 2010a. "The New Cultural Conflict and the Populist Right in Western Europe." In *Cleavage Politics and the Populist Right The New Cultural Conflict in Western Europe*, 17–31. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. ISBN: 978-1-4399-0192-2.

———. 2010b. "The Extreme-Right-Wing Populist Party Family." In *Cleavage Politics and the Populist Right The New Cultural Conflict in Western Europe*, 32–49. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. ISBN: 978-1-4399-0192-2.

Recommended:

Pirro, Andrea, and Pietro Castelli Gattinara. 2018. "Movement parties of the far right: the organization and strategies of nativist collective actors." *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 23 (3): 367–383. <https://doi.org/10.17813/1086-671X-23-3-367>.

Week 11, 03.07.2024 - Cleavages in Central and Eastern Europe

- To what extent can we distinguish cleavages in Central and Eastern Europe?
- What are the main divides in Central and Eastern European politics & society?

Required:

Deegan-Krause, Kevin. 2013. "Full and partial cleavages." In *The handbook of political change in Eastern Europe*, 3rd edition, edited by Sten Berglund, Joakim Ekman, Kevin Deegan-Krause, and Terje Knutsen, 35–50. Elgar original reference. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Pub. Ltd. ISBN: 978-0-85793-537-3.

Coman, Emanuel. 2017. "Dimensions of political conflict in West and East: An application of vote scaling to 22 European parliaments." *Party Politics* 23 (3): 248–261. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068815593454>.

Recommended:

Enyedi, Zsolt, and Kevin Deegan-Krause. 2018. "Voters and parties in Eastern Europe." In *Routledge handbook of East European politics*, edited by Adam Fagan and Petr Kopecký, 169–183. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge. ISBN: 978-1-138-91975-4.

Week 12, 10.07.2024 - Critical junctures and agency in Central and Eastern European cleavage formation

- How do Central and Eastern European countries differ?
- What is the role of market reform, ethnic minorities, and political agency in cleavage formation in Central and Eastern Europe?

Required:

Binev, Binio S. 2023. "Post-Communist Junctures, the Left, and Illiberalism: Theory with Evidence from Central and Eastern Europe." *Comparative Political Studies* 56 (4): 465–502. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00104140221109432>.

Rovny, Jan. 2014. "Communism, Federalism, and Ethnic Minorities: Explaining Party Competition Patterns in Eastern Europe." *World Politics* 66 (4): 669–708. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0043887114000227>.

Recommended:

Enyedi, Zsolt. 2005. "The role of agency in cleavage formation." *European Journal of Political Research* 44 (5): 697–720. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6765.2005.00244.x>.

Week 13, 17.07.2024 - Polycrisis & cleavage formation

- How do transnational crises contribute to cleavage formation?
- What are the differences in the political consequences of the Great Recession, the Covid-19 pandemic, and of the War in Ukraine?

Required:

Hutter, Swen, and Hanspeter Kriesi. 2019. "Crises and the Transformation of the National Political Space in Europe." In *European Party Politics in Times of Crises*, edited by Swen Hutter and Hanspeter Kriesi, 3–32. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 978-1-108-65278-0.

Rovny, Jan, Ryan Bakker, Liesbet Hooghe, Seth Jolly, Gary Marks, Jonathan Polk, Marco Steenbergen, and Milada Anna Vachudova. 2022. "Contesting Covid: The ideological bases of partisan responses to the Covid-19 pandemic." *European Journal of Political Research* 61 (4): 1155–1164. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12510>.

Recommended:

Hooghe, Liesbet, Gary Marks, Ryan Bakker, Seth Jolly, Jonathan Polk, Jan Rovny, Marco Steenbergen, and Milada Anna Vachudova. 2024. "The Russian threat and the consolidation of the West: How populism and EU-skepticism shape party support for Ukraine." *European Union Politics* online first. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14651165241237136>.

Week 14, 24.07.2024 - Concluding discussion

- Roundtable/ feedback round: What did we learn from the seminar?