

Workshop organized by the

**University of Cambridge**

On

**Political Parties and the European Crises - call for papers**

Cambridge, 26<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> November 2015

### **Call for Papers**

The re-election of a Syriza-led coalition government in Greece and the election to the leadership of the UK Labour Party of veteran left-winger Jeremy Corbyn indicate that the far left is alive and well in Europe. On the right, the resurgence of the Front National in France under Marine Le Pen and the success of populist politicians like Geert Wilders in The Netherlands indicate that the far right is becoming embedded in European politics. Neither trend was predicted; neither fits with the rather consensual, centripetal politics that characterised Europe for half a century.

For decades, European party systems seemed to have been frozen in the social cleavages of the past (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967). Social, economic and political change seemed to have little impact on the party systems. Nor did the creation and development of the European Union fundamentally reshape party politics for many years. And as dictatorships gave way to democracy in southern and central and eastern Europe, traditional left-right patterns of politics emerged there too, particularly in those states that had experienced pre- or inter-war democracy. The collapse of Communism in Europe saw far left parties decline and for many years far right parties were deemed to be outside the political mainstream, not acceptable to come into government coalitions.

Since the financial and Eurozone crises that started in 2007 and 2010 respectively, European politics has been fundamentally fractured and is currently being completely reframed. Parties of the far left have emerged or re-appeared to fight the narrative of austerity politics promoted by the EU, notably by Germany and the UK. Meanwhile, parties of the far right have gradually become more acceptable to voters frustrated by the twin pressures of globalisation and European integration. The recent, ongoing refugee crisis on Europe's shores brings a new sets of pressures to European politicians and is furthering impacting party politics as those on the left seek humanitarian responses, those on the right look for hard-nosed policies and tighter borders. Such changes are seen in national and European elections as well as referendums and raise interesting new questions about the future of European political parties.

The aim of this workshop, which is part of the EU-funded PADEMIA network under the Erasmus Lifelong Learning Programme, is to analyse the impact of these crises on European political parties. We would particularly welcome papers looking at 1) the (re-)emergence of the far right in a Europe which seemed to have left it far behind; 2) the resurgence of the far left or 3) the hollowing of the mainstream; 4) whether and how these party political changes affect European politics and governance. Comparative studies or single country case studies would be welcome.

**Robinson College, Cambridge, 26<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

Deadline for expressions of interest: **15<sup>th</sup> October**. We will inform you by 20<sup>th</sup> October if your proposal has been accepted. A limited amount of funding is available for travel expenses for participants. There may be an opportunity to publish some of the papers, which we will discuss at the workshop.

Please send abstracts or queries to Dr Julie Smith, Director European Centre, POLIS Department Cambridge, Alison Richard Building, 7 West Road, Cambridge CB3 9DT. **Email: [jes42@cam.ac.uk](mailto:jes42@cam.ac.uk)**.