

Dear Colleagues,

we are pleased to announce that at the next General Conference of the ECPR, Bourdeaux, September 4-7 2013 we are organizing a panel on Parliamentary Opposition in Europe and we invite you to submit an abstract and participate. Please, find the abstract below. THE DEADLINE for abstract submission is February 1st.

You can submit your 300 word abstract on the following link (after subscribing to MyECPR):

<http://www.ecpr.eu/Login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fMyEcpr%2fForms%2fPaperProposalForm.aspx%3fEventID%3d5&EventID=5>

**Abstract:**

Parliamentary opposition has been frequently classified according to its nature, composition and behaviour. It has been defined as either responsible or irresponsible, cohesive or fragmented, alternative or permanent (Duverger, 1951; Sartori, 1966; Oberreuter, 1975; Pulzer, 1987), but there has been such a great variety of oppositions in democratic systems that no single prevailing pattern has ever been determined.

According to Robert Dahl (1966), analysing parliamentary opposition falls into two different sets: patterns within countries and comparisons among countries. These two sets consist of different kinds of question: the first is more focused on the main characteristics of parliamentary opposition, its role, goals and strategies, developed in each country; the second seeks to understand whether we can distinguish any pattern of parliamentary opposition in the different countries and which factors seem to account for variations between different democracies. The aim of this panel is to cover both sets of analysis.

Given the substantial changes that have taken place in European politics due to both economic hardships and political transformations, the role and functions of parliamentary opposition undoubtedly deserve renewed attention: how have the opposition parties' behaviour changed? Have they become more issue oriented or rather have the classical competition patterns (left vs. right) prevailed? Has the parliamentary opposition opened up to extra-parliamentary pressures and started to play on a broader ground? Have the approved parliamentary reforms also been aimed at modifying the government-opposition dynamics? All in all, does parliamentary opposition sell well and, if so, under which intra-and extra-parliamentary conditions?

Paper proposals are invited from new and established scholars focusing on the study of legislatures, legislative parties and legislative politics. Interested participants are invited to submit empirically well founded papers adopting either a case study approach or a comparative perspective.

Gabriella Ilonszki  
Elisabetta De Giorgi