



FOUNDATION FOR EUROPEAN
PROGRESSIVE STUDIES
FONDATION EUROPÉENNE
D'ÉTUDES PROGRESSISTES



Oxford 2015

Progressive Politics in Fragmented Times

A Policy Network, FEPS and Renner Institut Conference, St. Catherine's College,
University of Oxford

6-7 July, 2015

This conference will offer a platform for political and academic reflection on the key structural trends which are shaping politics in Europe and beyond. The focus will be on understanding major new social, economic and political trends in western industrial democracies and how they impact on governance, party systems, elections and coalition-building, with a specific focus on social democratic and left-of-centre parties.

The event will follow the UK general election of May 2015, where the UK Labour party suffered a considerable defeat. The conference will open with a substantial overview and series of presentations on electoral developments and value shifts in European societies in recent decades before moving on to explore how key structural trends will continue to impact on politics and coalition-building.

Sessions will focus on how to come terms with social and economic change, with a focus on the need for striking institutional innovation and new ideas, policies and political narratives to meet the challenges of progressive governance in fragmented times. The Tuesday morning segment will focus on understanding the British election and the future of Labour politics in the context of the preceding analysis.

Participants

The seminar will bring together a group of political scientists, politicians, think-tank representatives, civil society representatives and experts from across the UK and Europe.

Agenda

DAY 1

08.30

Registration and coffee

09.00

Welcome remarks

Roger Liddle, chair of Policy Network
Ania Skrzypek, senior research fellow, FEPS

09.10-09.45

Introduction

Politics in the new hard times
Andrew Gamble, professorial fellow, Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute (SPERI)

09.45 – 11.00

Session 1: Europe's New Political Reality

The rise of challenger parties – and who votes for them
Sara Hobolt, Sutherland Chair in European Institutions, London School of Economics

Elections: failing instruments of democracy?
Jacques Thomassen, emeritus professor of political science, University of Twente

11.00 – 11.20

Coffee

11.20 – 13.00

Session 2: Transformations in European Politics

The triple challenge facing social democratic parties
André Krouwel, political scientist, University of Amsterdam

How working class voters are voting in Europe
Line Rennwald, lecturer, Department of Political Science and International Relations, University of Geneva

Party members in the 21st century- can't live with 'em, can't live without 'em
Tim Bale, professor of politics, Queen Mary University of London

Chair: **Ania Skrzypek**, senior research fellow, FEPS

13.00-14.00 Lunch

14.00 – 15.30 **Session 3: Understanding and Responding to Electoral Cleavages**

Generational strains in Europe – old and young political preferences and social attitudes

Bobby Duffy, global director, Ipsos Social Research Institute

The welfare state in European election campaigns

Staffan Kumlin, professor of political science, University of Gothenburg

Lead Comment

Kristian Weise, director of Cevea, a Danish thinktank

Michael Miebach, senior adviser to head of SPD-parliamentary group in the German Bundestag and senior editor of the Berliner Republik

Chair: **Monika Sie**, director, Wiardi Beckman Stichting, the thinktank of the Dutch Labour Party (PvdA)

15.30 – 16.00 Coffee

16.00 – 17.30 **Session 4: Ambitions for Progressive Politics in the 21st Century**

Andrés Velasco, professor at the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University and former finance minister of Chile

Liam Byrne, Labour MP and former chief secretary to the UK Treasury

Will Hutton, principal of Hertford College, Oxford and chair of the Big Innovation Centre

19.30 – 22.00 DINNER

DAY 2

09.15 – 10.45

Session 5: The UK Election

Part I: Analysis of the Result

The UK election: Discomfort on all fronts for Labour

Patrick Diamond, vice chair, Policy Network

Lead Comment:

Miranda Green, commentator and contributing editor, Newsweek Europe

Lucy Rigby, Labour parliamentary candidate for Lincoln in the 2015 UK election

Sarah Sackman, Labour parliamentary candidate for Finchley & Golders Green in the 2015 UK election

Chair: **Ben Jackson**, associate professor of modern history, University of Oxford and editor of *Renewal: A Journal of Social Democracy*

10.45 – 11.00

Coffee

11.00 - 12.45

Part II: The Future of Progressive Politics

Cosmopolitan futures in Europe - building new majorities in line with sweeping long-term attitudinal, demographic and economic trends

Jeremy Cliffe, Bagehot columnist, The Economist

Lead Comment:

Marc Stears, professor of political theory and Fellow of University College, Oxford

Small is powerful: why the era of big government, big business and big culture is over

Adam Lent, European Director of Research and Innovation, Ashoka

Lead Comment:

Alison McGovern, shadow Treasury minister and Labour MP

Chair: **Katrine Marçal**, columnist for Aftonbladet, Scandinavia's largest daily newspaper

12.45

Concluding remarks and final discussion

13.00

End and closing lunch