Online Research Retreat
Political Parties and Membership
Organisations on the Digital Move

Scope and Program

Endorsed by the ECPR Internet and Politics Standing Group

NRW School of Governance, University of Duisburg-Essen

27th November 2020

Scope and Focus of Workshop

The manifold effects of the digital transformation on the social and political spheres pose challenges for political parties and other membership organisations, which they master with varying success. Parties like the Five Star Movement in Italy or Podemos in Spain, but also social movements like Fridays for Future use digital platforms to communicate and engage their members. Traditional parties and associations like unions or NGOs try to catch up and integrate digital tools into their organizational activities.

At the same time, these organizations emerge as constructors of digital change, as their development of digital solutions for organizational purposes give the digital transformation of the political sphere a specific direction. Until now, only little is known about how organizational transformations through digital tools and the digital transformation of democracy – through organizational action – will play out in the long run. During the Corona crisis, it became apparent that organizations equipped with digital tools at an early stage had a considerable advantage, as they could use their previously gained experience in digital collaboration. The consequences for democratic governance in an era that is more digital than ever, are yet to be discovered.

The research retreat aims at taking a closer look at how membership organizations are transforming in the digital era and how they shape a digitalized democracy. Special attention will be paid to developments accelerated by the Corona crisis. Contributions dealing with other and broader questions, methods and empirical material are also welcomed.

The retreat is hosted by the research project "DIPART - digital party research", which is based at the NRW School of Governance of the University of Duisburg-Essen in Germany.

As an introduction to the retreat, the research group of DIPART will present findings of their project and discuss the results and ongoing projects with participants of the retreat. Afterwards, participants will be able to present their work and ideas on the topic and engage in discussion with the research group and other participants. We are looking forward to an interesting and lively exchange with researchers from different countries.

Program

27th November 2020, 10am (CET)

How to participate:

Please follow the here provided Zoomlink.

Format of Panels:

25 minutes per paper: 5 minutes presentation, 20 minutes plenary discussion.
    Papers (if available) due to 20th November via dipart@uni-due.de. They will be provided via a cloud service as soon as papers are delivered.

Session	Topic
10.00-10.25	**Panel 1: DIPART Papers** Introduction to DIPART and its main achievements Isabelle Borucki, Dennis Michels *(NRW School of Governance, University of Duisburg-Essen)*
10.35-11.00	Digital Participation in Parties, *Stine Ziegler (NRW School of Governance, University of Duisburg-Essen)*
11.15-11.40	**Panel 2: Party Organisations and the Digital** Disruptive or sustaining innovations? Organizational reactions of political parties to the challenge of digitalization, *Francesco Raniolo, Valeria Tarditi (University of Calabria), and Davide Vittori (Université Libre de Bruxelles)*
11.50-12.15	Unidas Podemos: internal party democracy and deliberation at the crossroads. *Joan Balcells, Rosa Borge, Albert Padró-Solanet (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya)*
12.15-13.00	**Joint Lunch break**

Session	Topic
	Panel 3: Party Organizations and Movements
13.00-13.25	Is the party organization still relevant? Evidence from the discourses of French Presidential Campaigners, 2012-2017 *Fabienne Greffet (Université de Lorraine)*
13.35-14.00	Finally on the (far-)right track? How AfD's party organisation combines collective leadership, internal democracy, and 'movement-party' dynamics, *Anna-Sophie Heinze (Universität Trier) Manès Weisskircher (TU Dresden)*
	Panel 4: Parties in the Digital
14.15-14.40	Twitter adoption by political parties in Europe *Emilien Paulis and Awenig Marié (Université libre de Bruxelles)*
14.50-15.15	Using Twitter-Data to measure vertical and horizontal party integration *Niko Switek and Kristina Weissenbach (University of Washington)*
Afterwards	**Coffee and snacks or breakfast (depending on TZ) together**

Organisation   Contact in cases of questions etc.: Isabelle Borucki +49(0)1772588393