

**Pre-conference workshop: The Politics of the long-term  
Lisbon, 28th June 2022**

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Public Investment, prevention and foresight are buzzwords in the public discourse today. Ambitious Green ‘Deals’ are on agenda in Europe, the United States and beyond, and several important laws have been passed in the last few years. The EU, in particular, is currently borrowing on the financial markets to implement a new instrument, NextGenerationEU, that will increase (Green) investments in all the 27 Member states. Such actions and discussions, however, contrast with the decline in national public investment and policy-makers’ relative inaction on alarming long-term trends such as the sophistication of cyber-attacks or the resistance to antibiotics. Many argued that this is because long-term policies involve an intertemporal trade-off: their benefits are allocated in the long run, while their provision may require a tax increase or a cutback in other policies providing short-term benefits.

Those questions bring our attention to the crucial problem of governments’ capacity to adequately invest and prevent future challenges. **Our workshop addresses this question and aims to assess, compare, and explain the extent to which and the manner in which governments and international organizations invest and prepare for the future.**

We are especially interested in papers addressing the following issues using a variety of methodological approaches, from case study research to statistical analyses.

- There is no consensus in the burgeoning literature on long-term investments about the **measurement of the dependent variable**. Indeed, most public policies generate some short-term positive effects, even those policies whose main benefits are allocated in the long-term. Can we identify policies characterized by an intertemporal trade-off, i.e. sacrificing short-term benefits to generate long-term gains? Can we consider low public debt and balanced budgets as a long-term investment? How to properly measure investment in environmental protection?
- The literature on long-term investments has been concerned by the **political and institutional determinants of long-term investments**. Some authors have highlighted the role of electoral competitiveness in impeding long-term investments. There is also a debate between scholars about the virtue of power-sharing institutions, such as constraints on the executive, proportional electoral systems and corporatist interest group representation, in promoting long-term investments. What are the political and institutional determinants of the provision of long-term oriented public investments? How do different factors interact to explain governments’ failure to adequately address future challenges? What are the different paths of successful investment and prevention? Which factors make long-term policy solutions more viable than others?

- Some individuals are more patient than others; they may accept to pay higher taxes today or to sacrifice current consumption in order to implement long-term investments. What explains **individuals' support for long-term investment** relative to other policies?
- Many **practical experiences and theoretical suggestions have endeavoured to enlarge the temporal scope of some of contemporary democracies' foundations**, for instance by claiming that future persons should be represented in democratic institutions. Which are the effects of those institutions? How to ensure that democratic governance is legitimate?

The conference will take place at the NOVA University of Lisbon, just before the Council of European Studies conference (CES) which will take place in Lisbon from July 29th 2022. If you are interested please send an abstract of a paper (maximum 250 words) **before 31st of January 2022** to the organizers.