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Panel:

Vice presidents and deputy prime ministers: Rules, Resources and Roles

Some countries do not know the position of vice president or deputy prime minister at all. In some parliamentary democracies, in particular from the Westminster family, the office of deputy prime minister has been established, abolished and revitalized – reflecting the diverging strategic considerations of governing parties and elites. In others, however, the vice prime minister is almost a ‘second prime minister’ operating only slightly below the level of the prime minister, which is a delicate role to perform in coalition democracies where vice or deputy heads of government normally come from a different party than the head of government. The overall picture in presidential democracies is barely less complex and confusing. In some of the older presidential systems, such as in particular the United States, the office has changed dramatically since its inception, with increasingly important roles of contemporary vice presidents (or vice presidential candidates) both in and beyond the electoral arena. In Argentina, the current vice president Cristina Fernández de Kirchner attracts the attention of media at least as much as President Alberto Fernández does and her influence on national politics is undoubtedly high. Moreover, some younger presidential systems, such as Zanzibar or Zimbabwe, have even had two vice-presidents, pointing to the major importance of representational issues in organizing and staffing this part of the executive branch. Thanks to isolated recent research (see e.g., P. Mieres and E. Pampín, ‘La trayectoria de los vicepresidentes en los regímenes presidencialistas de América’, *Revista de estudios políticos*, No. 167, 2015; L. Marsteintredet and F. Ugglá, ‘Allies and Traitors: Vice-Presidents in Latin America’, *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 51, No. 3, 2019), some comparative insights into these issues are available, but overall the whole field has remained largely uncharted territory. To help overcome this unsatisfactory state of affairs, this panel invites papers that look into the career pathways of vice presidents and deputy prime ministers (including both the ways into this position and its possible ‘springboard potential’), and their formal and informal roles in the executive branch and beyond. Papers applying novel theoretical and methodological approaches, and/or pursuing (either historically or internationally) comparative agendas, are particularly welcome.