

New Parties in Office: Parliamentary and Governmental Challenges

Marco Lisi
NOVA University Lisbon
marcolisi@fcsh.unl.pt

Michelangelo Vercesi
NOVA University Lisbon
michelangelo.vercesi@fcsh.unl.pt

CALL FOR PAPERS

In the 21st Century, one of the most recurring topics among scholars of political parties, party behavior, and executive politics in parliamentary democracies has been the decline of mainstream parties. This phenomenon has been examined mostly at the electoral or programmatic level, whereas the institutional arena has been largely understudied. At the same time, new parties have altered traditional patterns of competition, introducing new dynamics in both parliaments and governments. What is even more interesting is the fact that these new parties display very different features in terms of their organizational, ideological and strategic dimensions. Some of them are personal parties, characterized by direct links between leaders and supporters. Populist parties are a different category of new actors that have gained institutional relevance in the recent period. Finally, there are also 'new' centrist parties – the most evident case being the French *La République en Marche* led by Macron -, which have replaced traditional actors.

This panel aims to account for the causes of new parties' entry in parliaments and governments, as well as the consequences in contemporary European democracies. Possible research questions are: What is the impact of new parties in terms of descriptive representation? Do MPs from new parties behave in a different way compared to mainstream actors? Under what conditions do new parties enter government? What explains their bargaining power relative to their coalition allies? Looking at new parties as independent – rather than dependent – 'variables', further questions can be: what is the effect of new parties' participation in government in terms of its stability? Do these parties have any effect on the recruitment, composition, and professionalization of executive elites? Why? Are these parties responsive when in government? Is their behavior in the coalition and the behavior of their ministers in the cabinet different relative to their partners and other cabinet personnel? The panel welcomes empirical investigations of particularly interesting single cases as well as genuinely comparative studies. Moreover, scholars are encouraged to submit fine-grained conceptual and theoretical works on the topic, which can improve the state of the art. The panel is meant to be methodologically plural, as long as works are analytical and systematic.