cordially invites you to the lecture by

Heike Klüver

(University of Bamberg)

Changing strategies?
How the electoral context influences party responsiveness in Europe

5:20 hrs, Thursday, 26th March, Nador 11, Room 004

Chair: Evelyne Hübscher

How responsive are political parties to issue priorities of voters? While there are numerous studies that examine policy position congruence between parties and voters or government responsiveness, we know little about the extent to which parties adjust their policy priorities to the issue concerns of voters. Following saliency and issue ownership theory, we argue that political parties listen to their voters by emphasizing policy issues in their election manifestos that have been prioritized by citizens. However, in line with second-order election theory, we expect that issue responsiveness varies with the electoral context. To test our theoretical expectations, we generated a novel dataset that combines data on issue attention of political parties from the Comparative Manifesto and the Euromanifesto projects with data on policy priorities of voters from the European Election Studies, the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems and various national election studies. We empirically test our theoretical claims based on a comprehensive analysis of 104 parties from 17 countries competing in 84 national and European elections from 1986 to 2011. Our findings have important implications for political representation and multilevel party competition in Europe.

Heike Klüver is Professor of Empirical Political Science at the University of Bamberg. Before coming to Bamberg, she was working as a Junior professor at the University of Konstanz and as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Nuffield College at the University of Oxford. Heike Klüver received her PhD from the University of Mannheim. Her research interests include European politics, interest groups, political parties, coalition governments and political representation. Her work has been published in the British Journal of Political Science, Electoral Studies, European Union Politics, West European Politics, Party Politics and the Journal of European Public Policy. She is author of Lobbying in the European Union: Interest groups, lobbying coalitions and policy change which has been published with Oxford University Press.

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