

Abstracts

Georg Wenzelburger

Interactive, Indirect and in Some Cases (only): How Parties Influence Budget Consolidations

Do parties matter when it comes to fiscal policy? This is a controversial debate. Political economists show that fiscal policy is mainly driven by economic factors. Different studies reveal that especially problem pressure, unemployment and economic growth determine budget deficits, debt ratios and budget consolidations. Moreover, the logic of the “New Politics of the Welfare State” posits that party effects hardly affect political outcomes in times of fiscal austerity. However, this study claims that parties still matter when it comes to budget consolidations. But the impact of parties on budget consolidation policy is complicated: we find interactive relationships and level effects.

Martin Brusis

Concepts, Methods of Measurement and Validation of the Sustainable Government Indicators

A Reply to Sebastian Jäckle and Raphael Bauschke

The Bertelsmann Stiftung has developed the Sustainable Governance Indicators (SGI) as a means to evaluate government performance and political outcomes in 30 OECD countries. In contrast to Jäckle and Bauschke’s criticism in ZPol 3/09, I argue that it is possible to measure both democracy and performance. The questions on democratic quality are only designed to evaluate minimal standards in the context of the measurement of government performance. It is necessary to standardize evaluations by experts in order to link them to quantitative indicators. The method to do this is equivalent to a relative ranking. Due to their conceptual fuzziness the World Bank’s „Government Indicators“ cannot replace the performance measurement of the SGI, nor can it validate the SGI’s evaluation of government performance.

Jens Tenscher/Henrike Viehrig

International Political Communications Approaches to a Transdisciplinary Research Perspective

International political communication phenomena have become more and more relevant as processes of globalization and mediatization have been accelerating. Yet, these phenomena have only hesitantly been reflected in scholarly research and if so, they usually lack a unique international perspective. Against this backdrop, our paper bridges between International Relations approaches on the one hand and (Political) Communications on the other hand. We propose a transdisciplinary perspective to such political communications' phenomena which are characteristic for political decision-making in transnational and international contexts. In doing so, we provide a heuristic that identifies actors, structures, contents and perception patterns which are typical for the field of international political communications' research.

Markus Tepe/Sebastian Schneider

On Measuring the Reputation and Performance of Political Science Departments in Germany

On the basis of the CHE University Ranking this study explores two aspects of developing comparative measures on the reputation and performance of political science departments in Germany. Concerning the validity of subjective reputation evaluations, the regression analysis of 42 departments suggests that the individual reputation of a single researcher is the best predictor for the overall teaching and research reputation of the department (*pars pro toto* effect). Furthermore, we ask how the rank of a single department may change if the performance measure takes into account differences in the resources available to the departments. To do so, we estimate the technical efficiency of each department. Our comparison indicates that the ranking position of a single department heavily depends on whether the performance measure is based on a uni- or multidimensional measurement concept.