

## Crisis, what crisis? Comparative research into hard policy problems

**Organised by Anton Hemerijck and Waltraud Schelkle**

**Thursdays, 9:00-11:00** (full schedule and list of venues are available [here](#))

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### Course synopsis

During the first quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, serious crises came to affect rich liberal democracies. For the first time in the post-World War II era, the banking system of the North Atlantic economies came close to collapse, causing a Great Recession. The vulnerability of European integration was exposed in the sovereign debt phase of that crisis in which the European common currency area was close to implode in 2012 and caused severe hardship in countries that needed a bailout. When Europe was finally on the way to recovery, the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world. The economic disruption of addressing the public health crisis had a surge in the cost-of-living in its wake that threatened the food security even in wealthy countries. This was exacerbated by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, a war that has upended principles of the geopolitical order. In the background of these more punctuated crises episodes, there are the 'slow' burning, erosion-type crises of rising inequality, demographic ageing and irreversible global warming. This cumulation of seemingly never-ending emergencies challenge the resilience of liberal democracies, both in terms of tabling effective policy solutions, and – no less important – in terms of mustering democratic legitimacy for institutional reforms with a long-term horizon.

This seminar offers a comprehensive introduction into comparative crisis research in rich liberal democracies. The aim is to introduce researchers to the state of the art in crisis research. When and how does a hard policy problem become a crisis? Is the crisis politics determined by features of a crisis, notably how common or country-specific, exogenous or endogenous to the reference system a crisis appears to be? Or is crisis politics determined by the policy capacities available and whether they can be deployed in the collective interest? Can crises be managed or are they largely contained by multi-functional, robust institutions? We answer such questions with respect to the political response dynamics of both 'fast' burning crises, such as the 2008-2009 financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic, and of 'slow' burning crises, such as population ageing and climate change. The course aims to provide researchers with advanced knowledge about crisis politics and policies across countries and the European Union (EU).

## Course objectives

The aim is to introduce researchers to the state of the art in comparative research on crisis politics, with a special emphasis on recent crises in advanced liberal democracies, such as the global financial crisis, the eurozone sovereign debt crisis, and the COVID-19 pandemic. In the first part, the Seminar aims to provide researchers with an advanced introduction in the basic literature on comparative crisis politics. Thereafter, the seminar shifts attention to the empirics of crisis politics, whilst paying explicit attention to the role of EU institutions.

The course will provide researchers with the conceptual and empirical background information to enable them to write focused Phd-theses, and to answer questions like:

- How have variegated crises dynamics impacted on domestic and European politics, especially with respect to reform responses?
- What drives crisis-induced reforms, which institutions, ideas and power resources help their enactment, and vice which institutional conditions frustrate transformative policy change?
- What motivates political actors to pursue structural reform or, vice versa, decline to ponder intrusive policy change, in the face of imminent crises?
- How are the political boundaries of EU and domestic social and economic policy challenged on the backdrop of crises?

## Learning outcomes

Researchers who have successfully completed this course should be able to:

- Produce well-structured academic response papers, employing the analytical tools of comparative political economy and public policy studies in conjunction with important theoretical understanding of EU social and economic policy coordination, drawing on a broad range of sources;
- Make clear and concise oral presentations based on the basis serious reading exercises, collection of relevant data on the changing nature of crises and associated political conflict and compromise national over reform, including at the level of EU policy-making;
- Design and write brief synopses on the multidimensional politics of structural reform in selected countries (of their own choosing) in the wake of the crisis instances discussed in the seminar.

## 1. Introduction (AH): crisis politics and policy crisis

In political science and public policy analysis, two broad alternative – yet complementary - approaches to questions of crises appear in the literature. The first branch emphasizes the impact of crises on the formation of political coalitions behind crisis management strategies. The classic “second image reversed” crisis politics contribution by Peter Gourevitch, perspective underscores how the changing nature in the international system in wake of major economic crises leads different socioeconomic groups to join up in various alliance to support particular policy responses at various ‘hard’ times. The second branch concerns policy(-crisis) feedback theories. In our seminar represented by a classic text of Paul Pierson, underscores how domestic institutional contexts shape policy response by political authorities. Once institutionalized, policy interventions create their own develop societal and professional support bases, which in due make it highly unlikely that political attacks on the policy status quo will succeed, even in times trouble. The texts of Gourevitch and Pierson (and Hacker and Pierson) are foundational readings to inspire on debate over the course of the seminar. There are both strengths and shortcomings in the crisis politics and policy crisis literature that we will discuss: Which can explain more constructively how crises create novel alliances and what role concrete policy responses play in creating new alliances? Can they make sense of recent episodes of crises politics, in which selected policy responses were filtered through and shaped by domestic and international institutions? How does the cognitive appreciation of a crisis figure in each theory, i.e. the responses of decisionmakers once they recognise a situation as threatening and urgent? We will discuss this with respect to Gourevitch’s example of the Great Depression and the emerging compromise of embedded liberalism.

**Gourevitch, Peter (1986). *Politics in Hard Times*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Chapters 1 and 2.**

**Hacker, Jacob S. and Pierson, Paul (2014). 'After the “Master Theory”': Downs, Schattschneider, and the Rebirth of Policy-Focused Analysis', *Perspectives on Politics* 12(3): 643-662.**

**Ruggie, John G. (1982) 'International Regimes, Transactions, and Change: Embedded Liberalism in the Postwar Economic Order', *International Organization*, 36 (2): 379-415.**

## 2. The financial crisis in 2008-9 (WS): interdependence and international cooperation

In this session, we discuss first what makes a hard policy problem a crisis, such as the repeated ‘manias, crashes and panics’ (Kindleberger) in financial markets, which the OECD world encountered in 2008-9. The concept of a critical juncture can help us to see the analytical use of the crisis lens for research, especially in the context of theories that stress status quo biases and continuity in historical development.

The latest edition of Kindleberger’s classic (with Robert Aliber and Robert McCauley as post-humous co-authors) is a good place to start with the question why systemic financial crises are actually such a hard, recurrent policy problem. The 2008-9 variety was an international crisis in wholesale banking markets, underestimated because of the fixation on current account imbalances from trade (net capital flows) instead of the purely financial transactions between transnational banks (gross capital flows). Financial innovation and leveraging catered to homeownership aspirations and easy public spending until it dragged households and governments into the abyss of systemic collapse.

But the past did not simply repeat itself. Coordinated international action, between central banks and Treasuries, much less national bank supervisors, managed to avoid catastrophic consequences similar to the Great Depression, like competitive currency devaluation, trade protectionism and go-it-alone nationalism. Financial interdependence was recognized as what it is: a transmission channel of mayhem that could overwhelm even the United States, the strongest economy with its exorbitant currency privilege, centralized fiscal powers and democratically legitimated government. Joint action was facilitated by already institutionalized venues of coordination, themselves legacies of previous crises, like the Bank for International Settlement (BIS) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In Kindleberger's classic account, central banks, with their deep pockets and at one remove from electoral pressures, play a crucial role in tidying economies over a financial crisis. The role of the U.S. central bank in the 2008-9 crisis – acting as the hub in a system of U.S. dollar swaps -- is therefore a pertinent way into questions that occupy us in other contexts as well: was the new institution of global liquidity provision a critical juncture for dealing with financial crises or did it sow the seeds of the next? Is it proof that lessons have been learnt (here: from Kindleberger's classic account) or that there are institutional limitations and path dependencies that militate against overcoming a hard policy problem like financial cycles?

**Aliber, Robert Z., Kindleberger, Charles P. and McCauley, Robert N. (2023). *Manias, Panics, and Crashes: A History of Financial Crises*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, Introduction and ch.13: 'The twenty-first century international lender of last resort'.**

**Capoccia, Giovanni and Kelemen, R. Daniel (2007). 'The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative, and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism', *World Politics* 59(3): 341-369.**

### 3. The euro area crisis since 2010 (WS): market integration and collective action failures

The voluntary introduction of a common currency in rich capitalist democracies qualifies as a truly radical innovation in monetary and political history. It almost came to an end in 2012. Capital flight out of the euro forced Mario Draghi to give his 'Whatever it takes' speech and the German and UK governments agree to a banking union against their expressed preferences. The sovereign debt-phase of the financial crisis started with a change in government in Greece, accusing its predecessors of having mis-reported the fiscal debt and deficit statistics to Eurostat. This was a known problem ever since Greece had entered the euro area. Greece is a small, peripheral economy whose default could hardly have brought down the common currency area. So what made the Greek debt crisis the trigger of an unprecedented crisis? We discuss two prominent theories of what was, and arguably is, the "root cause" of the euro area's vulnerability to crisis: politics or economics. Their dispute has a mirror image in the debate among European heads of state, in that one side accuses the governments that eventually needed a bailout programme of not playing by the rules to run a common currency and the other side accuses the disciplinarians that the economic regime governing the euro is rigged against them. There is also a third political-economy type of explanation in which monetary-financial integration may itself be part of the problem; when it manifested itself in a crisis, mutual support was given only under onerous conditions that did not calm markets but fueled panic.

Eventually, a crisis diagnosis was agreed that allowed to introduce a banking union and to tighten the fiscal surveillance regime (Shambaugh gives a widely cited account of this diagnosis). This happened

against the background of experts in technocratic venues, like the BIS and the IMF, who changed their policy paradigms and recommended interventions much more quickly than elected politicians. What does this mean for crisis politics, e.g. who is responsible and accountable in the perception of citizens who suffer the consequences? And how does a policy crisis, caused by a paradigm of market integration and national financial supervision, affect trust in experts and/ or elected governments? We will return to these questions repeatedly.

**Schelkle, Waltraud (2017). 'The Euro Area Crisis as a Stress Test for Monetary Solidarity', in: *The Political Economy of Monetary Solidarity: Understanding the Euro Experiment*. Oxford University Press, ch. 6 (pp. 158-198).**

**Shambaugh, Jay C. (2012). 'The Euro's Three Crises', *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity* (1): 157-231.**

#### 4. The social crises of austerity (AH): changing crisis narratives

The 2008 crash marked a critical stress test for European welfare states with dramatic repercussions, including a massive surge in unemployment, a widening in wage and income disparities, and rising poverty. Hikes in fiscal deficits and public debt, required to pre-empt an economic meltdown, forced policymakers to make painful cuts in welfare services to shore up public finances, thereby jeopardizing welfare support for vulnerable groups. The overall scope of welfare-policy responses, as detailed by three chapters from the upcoming Oxford University Press monograph *Who's Afraid of the Welfare State Now?* by Anton Hemerijck and Manos Matsaganis, was heterogeneous, disparate, and uneven. In some cases, the response to the Great Recession was accompanied by deep social conflicts, while in others unpopular crisis-management measures received broad consent from opposition parties, trade unions, and employer organizations. Alongside serious retrenchments, there have been deliberate attempts to rebuild social programmes and institutions, to accommodate policy repertoires—not merely domestically but also at the EU level—to the new realities of the knowledge economy and an ageing society. How to study the politics of mature welfare states with its plentiful policy feedback loops and numerous associated veto powers? Are they capable of crisis management by creative reconfiguration?

We will discuss the policy experiences of twelve countries since 2007 covering all of Europe's welfare regimes, including two Nordic dual-earner welfare states (Finland and Sweden), two liberal Anglo-Saxon regimes (Ireland and the UK), three mainland-continental social-insurance welfare states (France, Germany, and the Netherlands), three pension-biased Mediterranean welfare states (Greece, Italy, and Spain), and two welfare states from eastern and central Europe (Lithuania and Poland), representing respectively the largest Baltic and Visegrád countries that acceded to the EU in 2004. Two chapters of the book will be discussed. Chapter Five zooms in on immediate Great Recession management under the 'spell of austerity', and Chapter Six surveys the comparative reform dynamics under less dire economic conditions that potentially allowed policymakers to bring more coherence to domestic welfare provision.

In addition to discussing country experiences, and their political and institutional correlates, we add an assessment of the changing nature of the EU social policy initiatives the wake of the Great Recession. which exposes many parallels to EU-member state experiences. Strikingly, the empirics bring out a fundamental change in policy orientation by the mid-2010s, away from austerity at the level of domestic

welfare provision, a rediscovery of macro-economic discretion in monetary and fiscal policy, and a more ambitious social Europe agenda.

**Hemerijck, Anton, and Manos Matsaganis (2024). *Who's Afraid of the Welfare State Now?*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, chapter 5, 6, and 8. Proofs in PDF will be provided.**

**White, Jonathan (2015). 'Emergency Europe', *Political Studies* 63(2): 300-318.**

## 5. Refugee and migration crises (WS): political amplification of a hard policy problem

According to a survey among scholars on EU crises, the so-called 'refugee crisis' is generally considered to be the worst in terms of the legacy it left for European integration even though its threat potential was seen as lower than for the euro area crisis. This is the puzzle. Surges of humanitarian and illegal immigration are a well-known hard policy problem in major destination countries (e.g. Germany and Sweden) and in frontier states (e.g. Italy and Greece) to which they should by now have developed routinised responses. In others, transit states (e.g. Hungary and Poland) and by-stander countries (e.g. Czechia and Estonia), it is hardly a problem at all. Yet, almost everywhere, public opinion seems to be quite concerned about the influx of refugees and asylum seekers, often mixed up with economic migrants. A sizeable and rising share of voters is willing to vote for xenophobic challenger parties mobilizing around this issue. The EU has become increasingly active in this policy domain, assuming core state powers like border control. And yet, it could not implement a quota system for refugees that was adopted with qualified majority and is now confronted with open defiance of the rule of law, which it finds hard to sanction effectively. It seems to be evidence for a new phase of European integration in which identity politics dominates, creating a constraining dissensus for EU decision-making generally.

We will therefore discuss what exactly makes the repeated immigration crises of and in the EU so crisis-prone and disruptive for the entire integration process. Here are the candidates for an explanation that can be applied elsewhere: location in an unequal world (Europe's direct borders with much poorer and politically unstable, often war-torn countries); a general rise in identity politics (the anti-liberal backlash against European integration constraining collective problem-solving) and supranational institutions themselves (Schengen Area and Dublin Regulation). These are general categories of causation in crisis research (quasi-exogenous, symptomatic, endogenous) and we should consider whether they are likely to make a difference for crisis politics. For instance, do exogenous drivers of humanitarian migration, such as civil war or a natural disaster in the origin country, make citizens in destination countries more sympathetic to the plight of refugees?

**Goodman, Sara W. and Schimmelfennig, Frank (2020). 'Migration: a step too far for the contemporary global order?', *Journal of European Public Policy* 27(7): 1103-1113.**

**Niemann, Arne and Zaun, Natascha (2018) 'EU Refugee Policies and Politics in Times of Crisis: Theoretical and Empirical Perspectives', *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 56(1): 3-22.**

**Triandafyllidou, Anna and Ricard-Guay, Alexandra (2019) 'Governing Irregular and Return Migration in the 2020s: European Challenges and Asian Pacific Perspectives', *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies* 17(2): 115-127.**

## 6. Brexit: the membership crisis that wasn't (WS)

The outcome of the UK's in-out referendum in June 2016 raised alarm bells in EU capitals and in Brussels. It ended the EU's historical trajectory of ever expanding, ever closer union. A domino effect seemed to be in the offing, given that vocal Eurosceptic movements have become established in several member states' party systems. Yet, the opposite happened. There was neither contagion nor did the EU become more internally fragmented; instead, there has been a rapid attrition of Eurosceptic triumphalism especially by the far Right. The EU-27 showed surprisingly comprehensive unity that survived the next stress test, the COVID-19 pandemic that hit Europe during the final stages of the Brexit negotiations. Fending off a domino effect and forging unity in adversity arguably required a sustained collective effort at containing what had the potential of becoming a more wholesale crisis of EU membership. Hence, the notion that alarmism in European capitals was completely unfounded is a case of hind-sight bias. Brexit should be understood as a critical juncture for the EU in which a path to disintegration became conceivable but was not taken. In this session, we discuss the political and economic conditions that made this happen; the political dynamic that led, for now, to a hard Brexit which is costly for both sides; and the economic effects on the labour market were promised as a consequence of 'getting back control' of migration after Brexit.

**Hobolt, Sara, Thomas Leeper, and James Tilley (2021). 'Divided by the Vote: Affective Polarization in the Wake of the Brexit Referendum', *British Journal of Political Science*, 51:4, 1476–93.**

**Schimmelfennig, Frank (2022). 'The Brexit puzzle: polity attack and external rebordering', *West European Politics (online)*: 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2022.2132448>**

**Sumption, Madelaine, Forde, Chris, Alberti, Gabriella and Walsh, Peter W. (2022) 'How is the End of Free Movement Affecting the Low-wage Labour Force in the UK?', *Report The Migration Observatory*. Oxford: University of Oxford.**

## 7. The Covid-19 pandemic (AH): negative policy feedback and experiential learning

How the world changed in 2020! Still reeling from the aftermath of the global financial crisis, the Covid-19 pandemic confronted the globe with an even more dramatic shock. In Europe, the pandemic had by April 2022 resulted in close to two million deaths, threatened human health, cost livelihoods, isolated families from loved ones, condemned many workers to un- and under-employment, and driven many kids to home schooling, while most of those who managed to keep their jobs—except for frontline workers—shifted to remote work. Overnight, *annus horribilis* 2020 seemingly compelled a far more assertive reappraisal of the European welfare state for the twenty-first century. To manage the health crisis, policy makers rushed to introduce lockdown and other restrictions. Thanks to quasi-universal healthcare, EU governments were able quickly to mobilize medical support to save lives. The subsequent policy priority was to save livelihoods, and buffer people and the economy from the momentous pandemic shock. Social safety nets were strengthened, by broadening eligibility, extending duration, and increasing the generosity of benefits. Within a year the first vaccines were rolled out.

At the EU level, at first it seemed that the acrimony associated with the Great Recession was repeating itself, when the president of the European Central Bank, Christine Lagarde, said on 8 March 2020 that

the ECB was ‘not there to lower spreads’—the divergence in interest rates on sovereign bonds in the eurozone—with the implication that national governments should take individual responsibility. Already on 13 March 2020, Lagarde announced the expansion of the quantitative easing programme, saying that the ECB ‘will be there’ to face the economic and financial fallout from the emergency and to work against the fragmentation of the eurozone, adding that ‘there should be no doubt about that’. Truly unprecedented was the agreement of the European Council, on 21 July 2020, to mobilise common fiscal resources to repair the damage wrought by the pandemic and strengthen the recovery. The key novelty of Next Generation EU (NGEU) is the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), endowed with €800 billion, opening a door to fiscal solidarity through EU grants and loans, to be allocated to public investments in (among other things) health care, early childhood development and lifelong learning. A decade previously, similar proposals, discussed in the wake of the Great Recession, were rejected outright. Together with heterodox monetary policy on the part of the ECB, the new breadth of EU fiscal capacity, marks a bold step towards deeper European integration.

How do we make sense to make sense of this truly transformative—swift and decisive—watershed? Two explanatory factors join forces: one is strictly related to the *existential* impact of the pandemic, as an urgent health predicament; the second is best understood in terms of a longer-drawn-out *experiential* legacy of the Great Recession. We will discuss the ‘new politics’ of EU joined-up crisis management on the basis of two policy reports, one by the OECD (2022), and another put together by the European Social Policy Network (ESPN, 2021).

**OECD (2022) *First lessons from government evaluations of COVID-19 responses: A synthesis*. Paris: OECD.**

**Schelkle, W. (2021) 'Fiscal Integration in an Experimental Union: How Path-Breaking Was the EU's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic?', *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 59 (Suppl 1): 44-55.**

## 8. The war on Ukraine (debate): the demand side of crisis politics

The Russian aggression against Ukraine has all the symptoms of a crisis: considerable threat that calls for urgent action, surrounded by uncertainty about how this war can end. NATO allies, present and future, have reacted to this external threat with drastic economic sanctions short of direct military involvement. According to Tilly’s bellicist theory of state-building (‘states make war and war makes states’), the war on Ukraine should make citizens ready for a more centralized EU polity response, possibly even military capacity building. However, Tilly’s theory is based on historical evidence before the emergence of mass democracies and comparatively generous welfare states. The European communities have been formed to ensure peaceful co-existence among its members and its neighborhood. And EU citizens experience the threat that the Russian invasion of Ukraine poses primarily as one of their social security: prolonged inflation, especially in food prices, increases inequality; the uncertainty for businesses hinders the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic; and the struggle for energy security jeopardizes a fair transition to an ecologically more sustainable economy. These effects are uneven: the Eastern neighbors of Ukraine, above all Poland, have been strongly affected by refugee flows and the rerouting of agricultural commodities.

Given that the scholarly literature on the war on Ukraine is still sparse, we will read some of the first empirical results on citizens' responses to the impending social and refugee crises. Can concerns about social security be a unifying political force that helps overcome recent divisions in the EU polity, for instance regarding the democratic backsliding of Poland and Hungary? Or is renationalization more likely in a union of welfare democracies when dealing with a threat to livelihoods? To what extent should we even expect that public opinion has a decisive influence on EU polity formation in times of crisis? At least three volunteers should have a closer look at the survey evidence about the Ukraine war in several member states and discuss these questions regarding the longer-term effects of war on transnational versus national polity formation.

**Genschel, Philipp, Leek, Lauren and Weyns, Jordy (2023) 'War and integration. The Russian attack on Ukraine and the institutional development of the EU', *Journal of European Integration* 45(3): 343-360.**

**Natili, M. and Visconti, F. (2023) 'A different logic of polity building? The Russian invasion of Ukraine and EU citizens' demand for social security', *Journal of European Public Policy* 30(8): 1699-1713.**

**Truchlewski, Z., Oana, I.-E. and Moise, A. D. (2023) 'A missing link? Maintaining support for the European polity after the Russian invasion of Ukraine', *Journal of European Public Policy* 30(8): 1662-1678.**

## 9. Climate change (AH and Nina Lopez-Uroz)

Facing an immediate fast burning crisis, political actors do not have much time to adapt their policy repertoires to events in measured way. They must act quickly. Fast burning crises requires a shorthand way of evaluation option and making decisions, even in the absence of having a clear map. As we have seen during the Great Recession and the COVID-19 shock, policy makers – for better or worse – stepped into the breach. Arguably, with slow-burning crises, policy makers have more time to better study the policy predicament at hand and to design effective policy solutions. The irony, or rather tragedy, is that with slow burning crises, such as demographic ageing and climate change, having a diagnosis and a clear cognitive map to go forward is not the most pressing problem. As 2022 Summary to Policymakers of Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) states: *“The cumulative scientific evidence is unequivocal: climate change is a threat to human well-being and planetary health. Any further delay in concerted anticipatory global action on adaptation and mitigation will miss a brief and rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all”* (IPCC, 2022, p.35). Perhaps, without truly disruptive pressures, strong veto's and policy feedback effects, serious problems at hand are being ignored. What lies behind such political dissonance?

This week we will exemplify for the slow-burning problem of climate change and mitigation and adaptation politics, for which policy makers are only reactively, tentatively, and reluctantly put into motion. What is the role of political time-inconsistency in a democracy? Why is so difficult to venture into a politics of the long-term? Democratic mandates last for about four years, whilst most policy provisions are meant to produce long-term effects and benefits, even if this involves short term costs and sacrifices. How do policy makers balance the tension between short-term electoral gains or responsiveness with long-term policy gains and government responsibility?

We will also consider how the climate crisis has been framed as a policy problem, how these different framings have changed over time (e.g. collective action failure, market failure or domestic distributional struggle) and what their implications in terms of policy solutions have been (market, regulatory instruments, etc). Lastly, we will reflect on whether climate change is switching from “slow-burning” to “burning” crisis, with the multiplication of extreme weather events, sudden and disruptive political effects.

**ERCST (European Roundtable on Climate Change and Sustainable Transition) (2022), *Unlocking the governance challenges of Just Transition in the EU, Policy Brief, Brussels.***

**Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), 2022, *Summary for Policy-makers.***

**Finnegan, J. J. (2022). *Institutions, Climate Change, and the Foundations of Long-Term Policymaking. Comparative Political Studies*, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00104140211047416>**

**Aklin, M., and Mildenberger, M. (2020): *Prisoners of the Wrong Dilemma: Why Distributive Conflict, Not Collective Action, Characterises the Politics of Climate Change. Global Environmental Politics* 20(4), 4-27.**

**Meckling, J., and Nahm, J. (2022): *Strategic State Capacity: How States Counter Opposition to Climate Policy. Comparative Political Studies* 55(3), 493-523**

## 10. Crisis policymaking in time (AH & WS)

What have we learned? The two theoretical approaches to study crises and reform that we started out with, based on the evidence we have discussed, clearly complement each other. In the final seminar we would like to discuss how the approaches interrelate, how to improve theoretical perspectives on the comparative study of crisis politics, structural reform and continuity. Strong feedback effects can make the question of the beginning, politics (Gourevitch) or policy (Pierson), a matter of analytical convenience rather than theoretical divide. Crisis narratives that can mobilize or undermine collective, transnational, institutionalized cooperation play hardly any role in either. Yet, we have reason to believe that the framing of a crisis – and the form of solidarity requested -- affect the willingness of the public to support institution-building for this purpose. But then again, is the electorate really a constraining factor on crisis politics or is it the ability of decision-makers to find mutually acceptable policy solutions? The public’s skepticism may be regularly overridden by the rhetoric of emergency that calls for urgent action to address yet another unprecedented situation. In practice, fifteen years of recurrent severe crises have led to the build-up of an entire emergency regime, in the EU and beyond, that screens the horizon for the next crisis. This can undermine democratic processes with their routines and procedures which take time for deliberation. We will discuss the incentives of policymakers for and against circumventing democratic processes and the role that supranational technocracies play in this regard.

Ferrara, Federico M., Schelkle, Waltraud and Truchlewski, Zbigniew (2023). 'What difference does the framing of a crisis make to European Union solidarity?', *European Union Politics* 0(0).

<https://doi.org/10.1177/14651165231184641> ‘

Rauh, Christian (2022). 'Supranational emergency politics? What executives' public crisis communication may tell us', *Journal of European Public Policy* 29(6): 966-978.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2021.1916058>

Rhinard, Mark (2019). 'The Crisisification of Policy-Making in the European Union. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 57 (3): 616–33. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12838>

### Requirements for accredited seminar participation:

Every week, a seminar participant should upload a short response paper to the readings by noon on Wednesday.

A final reflection paper (of 1500-2000 words) is due in the week after the end of term: What do I see, and what do I miss, if I look at one of the phenomena discussed in the seminar through a crisis lens?

Both the short response papers and the final reflection paper can be uploaded on the course page in Brightspace.