



Brief Overview of the Research Workshop:

“The Violation of Human Rights in New Europe: A Cross-National Analysis” (4-5 July 2012)

After 20 years, the quality of democracy and democratic performance, in particular with respect to human rights, varies significantly across post-Communist Europe (BTI 2003, 2006, 2008, 2010, Freedom House 2010, Transparency International 2011). While existing analyses have concentrated on democratic performance, which is undoubtedly a key dimension of the quality of democracy, little systematic attention has been devoted to the comparative study of human rights and particularly to variation in the violation of human rights in new democracies across Europe.

The proposed project redresses this gap in existing research by concentrating on variation in the violation of human rights (under which we include rights outlined in the European Charter of Human Rights) based on a comparative multi-method study of cases brought to, and adjudicated by, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). The dependent variables in our study thus include the type, the extent, and the timing of violations of the European Charter of Human Rights across countries and over time. Since 1959, more than 10,000 judgments have been issued for the 47 member states. Yet the corpus of judgments is skewed towards some states, not only in the number of aggregate cases, but also in the type, extent and timing of violations. Explanations and distinctions derived directly from the literature on democratic performance cannot adequately account for these cross-country differences, however, and a new research agenda and theoretical framework is required.

The main goal of this workshop is to facilitate the finalization of this research agenda for subsequent project proposals, to investigate its theoretical assumptions and to discuss current work in progress as well as directions for future research. The workshop provides an ideal platform for presenting our theoretical framework and the first findings of the project. It also affords us with an opportunity to intensively discuss the project with selected experts of human rights and their violation. The proposed workshop will serve as a forum to advance the project's research agenda for subsequent DFG/NHS project proposals (to be submitted in summer and fall 2012).

The workshop will take place in two parts: (1) the internal part wherein the core project team will discuss the development of the project's explanatory framework, and (2) the public part aimed at exchanging ideas with selected experts and the broader community.

Introduction to Human Rights Research

Chair: Prof. Dr. David Siroky

Paper I. Dr. Petra Guasti (JGU): Explaining Variation in Human Rights Violation

Paper II. Prof. Dr. David Siroky/ John Cuffe (ASU/UC-Irvine) The Janus Face of Minority Rights

Coffee Break

Human Rights and Their Violation: Evidence from New Europe

Chair: Dr. Petra Guasti

Paper III. Dr. Aron Buzogany (University of Speyer): Human Rights Violations in New Member States

Paper IV. Dr. Lenka Siroky (ASU): Radical Right Politics and Human Rights in Eastern Europe

Paper V. Jessie Hronesova (BIRN) Human Rights and Transitional Justice in the Balkans.

13.00-14.00 Lunch

Human Rights and their Violation: A Roundtable Discussion (by invitation only)

NB: Members of the public would wish to attend should contact angelawa@students.uni-mainz.de for further details about the location and time.