

Section 10 – Studi regionali e politiche locali

Panel 8. The Politics of Local Government.

Chair: Raffaele Bazurli, Matteo Bassoli, Fred Paxton

The most profound consequences of the increasing interdependence of global markets and societies have landed in urban environments. A simultaneous process of institutional rescaling has also resulted in the devolution of greater power to sub-national political institutions in many European countries.

These dramatic global trends present urban society with new challenges, but are not ungovernable at this level. On the contrary, European cities have the capacity to complement (or contradict) national urban policy in a variety of fields, such as migration, housing, health and security, despite the restrictions of a context of austerity and shrinking resources. On this regards, scholars focused both on policy rescaling and on multi-level governance issue, not to mention the subsidiarity mantra.

In the period since the Great Recession, cities are at the centre of contentious developments as well. Movements on both the (radical) Left and the Right are increasingly mobilising based on local concerns. In some cases, radical parties across the political spectrum have even become incumbents of local institutions. Local political actors also discursively intervene in arenas that are beyond their administrative competences: a further facet of the interlinking of the local level with politics at large.

This panel welcomes papers to develop that address the political consequences of the contemporary economic and institutional changes to the urban environment, too often neglected by functionalist orientated local government literature. This section aims to explore issues from such perspectives as:

- Political opportunity structures of local government
- The relevance of ideological categories to local government
- Impact of new and radical parties in local government
- The consequences of urban movements for local policies
- The connections between social movements and parties in cities
- Tensions between local and national party organisations
- Multi-level governance and conflicting issues
- Urban regimes and political implications
- The politics of local electoral systems

The list is only for illustrative purposes; papers related to other aspects of the politics of local government – either comparative or single case studies – are very welcome. Papers can be submitted in either English or Italian.

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