

Section 10 –Studi Regionali e Politiche Locali (regional studies and local policies)

Chairs: Patrizia Messina, Mattia Casula

Panel 10.10 Changing dynamics of territorial politics: regional adaptation and competition in decentralised systems in an age of uncertainty

Over the last decade European countries have faced significant economic, social and political challenges. The effects of these have been visible not only at the national level but also at the subnational one. Indeed, these challenges have affected the structures and processes that oversee the vertical allocation of power within nation-states, giving rise to a variety of changes, or demands thereof, within national, regional and local architectures. In some cases, central states have sought to strengthen their hold over the sub-national level, seeking to recentralise powers. In other cases, or sometime concurrently, sub-national institutions and actors have challenged the authority of the centre, calling for further autonomy within or against extant constitutional arrangements. As a result, we now see the emergence of new dynamics of territorial politics that have the potential to transform in a most profound way existing national/sub-national systems, and thus require in-depth academic investigation. Against this background, the aim of this panel is to assess and explain processes of political, policy-making and institutional adaptation to the changes occurred since the start of the financial crisis and in the aftermath of the Great Recession across and within European countries. We welcome papers that focus on, but are not necessarily limited to, the following three key dimensions: 1) changing regional governance and recalibration of policy priorities set by regional governments responding to austerity and fiscal constraints; 2) changing dynamics of territorial party competition (i.e. rise or decline of centre-periphery tensions and territorial mobilisation as a consequence of the crisis); 3) reconfiguration of institutional relations between central government and regions/local authorities (i.e. processes of/demands for constitutional reform and increasing or decreasing self-rule/shared-rule). Contributions can concentrate on more than one of these dimensions, for instance by linking changing territorial party competition to the reconfiguration of institutional relations or by looking at how centralisation/decentralisation impacted on sub-national policy responses to austerity. Papers can cover one or more case studies and combine cross-national and cross-regional comparisons. We also embrace methodological pluralism.

Chairs: Arianna Giovannini, Davide Vampa