

EWIS 2019 Call for Papers

Foreign policy change – From policy adjustments to fundamental reorientations

Workshop Convenors:

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Workshop Summary

The rise of China, the resurgence of Russia, the election of Trump... In recent years, states have been faced with an increasingly turbulent and changing international environment. In consequence, we would also expect them to fundamentally change their policies to deal with this environment. Within the field of Foreign Policy Analysis, surprisingly little research has focused on foreign policy change specifically. 'Change' has been, and still is, too often conceptualized as a vague catchall concept. The goal of this Workshop is to address this topic directly, examine different types of change, and specifically dig into the potential drivers of change, as well as its inhibitors and veto players. Therefore, the workshop aims to accommodate case-specific, as well as comparative, studies focusing on the domestic and international mechanisms and dynamics of foreign policy change.

The workshop focuses on more fundamental redirections in foreign policies, ranging from the complete restructuring of a country's foreign policy to fundamental changes in the goals of one or several of a country's main policies, like trade, development aid, military and security policies. Next to identifying instances of foreign policy change, the aim is also to establish the conditions under which such changes can occur. Change can be incited and inhibited by a complex interplay between international-level factors, domestic-level factors and individual-level factors. While several studies have examined such drivers and inhibitors, scholarship has largely refrained from developing integrated theoretical frameworks that capture this complex interplay.

The workshop, therefore, aims to examine which combinations of external, domestic and individual conditions lead to foreign policy change. To this end, papers should focus on unravelling the processes that lead to a fundamental restructuring of a country's foreign policy or a significant change in a specific foreign policy domain. The workshop would particularly welcome papers that compare instances of foreign policy change with cases of continuity in order to derive the core ingredients of causal recipes that lead to change. Rather than focussing on individual conditions, papers are encouraged to combine explanations from different levels of analysis, in order to arrive at a more comprehensive understanding of foreign policy change. With respect to methodological approaches, this workshop aims for a mix of qualitative and quantitative techniques. Innovative and multi-method papers are strongly encouraged. To that end, we also welcome papers that integrate frameworks and approaches beyond the traditional FPA toolbox, looking at public policy theories and concepts, as well as useful frameworks from the other social sciences. Theoretically, the workshop also takes a pluralistic approach and welcomes different perspectives that further our understanding of foreign policy change.