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AWI This Week

Monday, 1.12.14

Departmental Seminar

17.15-18.45

AWI 00.010

Christine Benesch, University of St. Gallen

"Online Information and Voting: The Effect of "Smartvote"
on Election Outcomes"

Tuesday, 2.12.14

Economics & Politics Seminar

14.15-15.15

AWI 02.036

Carl Christian von Weizsäcker,
MPI for Research on Collective Goods Bonn

"Die normative Ko-Evolution von Marktwirtschaft
und Demokratie"

Wednesday, 3.12.14

Internal Seminar

12.15-13.15

AWI 00.010

Jonas Hedlund

"Bayesian signaling: incentive compatible test design"

Departmental Seminar

Christine Benesch

"Online Information and Voting: The Effect of "Smartvote" on Election Outcomes"*

The advancement of the internet has not only changed the access to political information but also the structure of information costs for different voter groups. We analyze the effects of this change in relative information costs on voter turnout, voters' decision making and election outcomes by evaluating the introduction of the voting advice application *Smartvote* in Swiss cantons. The Swiss context offers an ideal setup to identify the causal effects of online information as *Smartvote* was introduced in different cantons at different points in time which allows us to analyze the effects of online information in a difference-in-difference framework. First results show that the introduction of *Smartvote* is not associated with higher turnout but with higher vote shares of the smaller parties (and hence lower vote shares of the bigger parties). This result is consistent with the idea that *Smartvote* does not lower general information costs enough to lead to a turnout effect, but mainly changes relative information costs. Small parties, individual candidates and challengers get an information advantage relative to the situation without *Smartvote*, because traditional media tend to focus more on larger parties and on incumbents.

*with Mark Schelker and Lukas Schmid

Economics & Politics Seminar

Carl Christian von Weizsäcker

"Die normative Ko-Evolution von Marktwirtschaft und Demokratie"

Die deliberative Demokratie setzt die Marktwirtschaft als ein System des wirtschaftlichen Wettbewerbs voraus. Dies kann anhand des Popperschen Konzepts einer Offenen Gesellschaft mit Piecemeal Engineering nachgewiesen werden. Denn die Kohärenz einer Offenen Gesellschaft setzt bei endogen beeinflussten Präferenzen voraus, dass diese Präferenzen adaptiv sind. Ohne Marktwirtschaft würden adaptive Präferenzen jedoch zu gesellschaftlicher Erstarrung führen. – Andererseits setzt die Legitimierung der Marktwirtschaft auch die deliberative Demokratie voraus. Denn die interpersonellen Einflüsse auf Präferenzen und Werte bedürfen zu ihrer Legitimierung des Wettbewerbs dieser Einflüsse, den es nur im Rahmen einer demokratisch strukturierten Öffentlichkeit gibt. Die Kohärenz eines solchen Systems wird gestützt durch die Tatsache, dass man interpersonelle Präferenzeinflüsse oft in Analogie zu adaptiven Präferenzen sehen kann. Das gilt insbesondere für das universelle Phänomen der Nachahmung.

Internal Seminar

Jonas Hedlund

"Bayesian signaling: incentive compatible test design"

This paper introduces private sender information into a sender-receiver game of Bayesian persuasion with monotonic sender preferences. I derive properties of increasing differences related to the precision of signals and use these to fully characterize the set of equilibria robust to the intuitive criterion. In particular, all such equilibria are either separating, i.e., the sender's choice of signal reveals his private information to the receiver, or fully disclosing, i.e., the outcome of the sender's chosen signal fully reveals the payoff-relevant state to the receiver. Incentive compatibility requires the high sender type to use sub-optimal signals and therefore generates a cost for the high sender type in comparison to a full information benchmark in which the receiver knows the sender's type. The receiver prefers the equilibrium outcome over this benchmark for large classes of monotonic sender preferences.

Talks and Research Visits

Jonas Dovern presented the paper "Does Joint Modelling of the World Economy Pay Off? Evaluating Multivariate Forecasts from a Bayesian GVAR" at the ECB workshop *Modelling Cross-Border Financial Channels: a GVAR Perspective* in Frankfurt, November 24.

Jonas Dovern presented the paper "A Multivariate Analysis of Forecast Disagreement: Confronting Models of Disagreement with SPF Data" at the *Internal seminar of the Oesterreichische Nationalbank* in Vienna, November 20.

Hans Diefenbacher gave a lecture on "Wie sich Wohlstand wirklich messen lässt – Alternativen zum Bruttoinlandsprodukt", Interdisziplinäres Kolloquium der Universität Flensburg, November 18.

Andreas Fuchs presented the paper "Aid on Demand: African Leaders and the Geography of China's Foreign Assistance" (joint paper with Axel Dreher, Roland Hodler, Bradley Parks, Paul A. Raschky and Michael J. Tierney) at the Annual Conference of the International Political Economy Society, Georgetown University, Washington, DC, November 14-15, and at the AidData Event "Where in the World is Chinese Development Finance?", OpenGov Hub, Washington, DC, November 18.

New Publications

Diefenbacher, Hans (2014): *Ten theses on a research agenda for sustainable development*, in: Enders, Judith C./Remig, Moritz: *Theories of Sustainable Development*. London/New York: Routledge, 188 – 195.

Visitors

James Tremewan, University of Vienna, stays at the AWI for research with Christoph Vanberg, November 25-28 (room 01.012a).

Miscellaneous

Christine Lenz successfully defended her doctoral theses on *Zur Durchsetzungsfähigkeit von Suffizienzstrategien – eine Analyse auf der Grundlage von Ansätzen der Neuen Politischen Ökonomie* (supervisor Hans Diefenbacher) November 7.

**Editorial deadline for issue 29/2014 of the newsletter:
Wednesday, December 3, 2014, 12 o'clock
newsletter@awi.uni-heidelberg.de**

If you would like to receive the newsletter by email,
please contact the address above.