



COMPASSS Newsletter

<http://www.compass.org>

Issue 9, April 2005

The whole COMPASSS international resource site has just been updated. In particular, detailed information on no less than 7 activities (2005-2006) has been added.

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COMPASSS ACTIVITIES

Louvain-la-Neuve, 28 April 2005, 9:30-12:30 : COMPASSS "intimate seminar" :

Developing further TOSMANA & MSDO/MDSO modules

In principle, this seminar gathers only members of the COMPASSS "core teams" (UCL, ULB, UA, KUL, Marburg, Arizona). However a limited number of other participants may be accepted. To join the "intimate seminar", please send a message to Sakura Yamasaki (yamasaki@spri.ucl.ac.be), who will inform you whether or not room for some additional participants is still available.

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Louvain-la-Neuve, 28 April 2005, 14:00-17:00 :

Explaining political system performance, measuring party system configurations : current developments and challenges (with CPC & ABSP-CF)

Guest speakers :

Prof. **John Gerring** (Boston University, USA) &

Prof. **Rein Taagepera** (University of Tartu, Estonia, and University of California, Irvine, USA)

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TRAINING

Essex Summer School on Social Science Data Analysis 2005 :

"Systematic Qualitative Comparative Methods - Introduction to Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) and Multi-Value QCA"

25 July -> 5 August 2005

Deadline for registration : 2 May 2005.

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Training (...)

(continued from page 1)

Instructors :

Prof. B. Rihoux & D. Berg-Schlosser

Course Content :

In a 'small N' or 'intermediate N' research design, when a researcher has relatively few cases, both qualitative (case-oriented) and quantitative (variable-oriented) methods display clear limitations. This course introduces two newly developed methods being applied to a growing number of social science disciplines and research fields: Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) and Multi-Value QCA (MVQCA). These methods, based on Boolean logic, allow for reducing the complexity of data sets and to produce parsimonious 'explanations' in small-N and intermediate-N research designs. The commonalities and differences between these two methods and another newly developed method ('fuzzy sets') will also be examined.

Course Objectives :

The course aims to reflect on comparative research design, and to introduce participants to two specific methods to reduce the complexity of data sets and to produce parsimonious 'explanations' in small-N and

intermediate-N research designs. At the end of the course participants should be able to exploit the method (QCA or MVQCA) which best suits their data and research goals, probably in combination with other methods, whether qualitative or quantitative. Potential applications cover a very broad range of disciplines and research topics, whether at the macro-, meso-, or micro-level.

Course Prerequisites :

Participants are not expected to have any particular background methodological training in quantitative (i.e. statistical) methods, as QCA and MVQCA are not statistics-based methods. They should be open to reflection on the respective qualities and limitations of any method, whether qualitative or quantitative. They should be interested in concrete cases, and in engaging in a genuinely comparative research effort. They should also be ready to reflect not only in technical (practical) terms, but also in epistemological terms (e.g. what is 'causality'? what is a 'case?').

More information at:

<http://www.essex.ac.uk/methods/Courses2005/2K05.htm> ■



University of Essex

MEETINGS

29-30 April 2005, Liège, Belgium : Belgian Political Science Association (ABSP) 3rd Congress

Workshop on "Case-oriented, comparative and statistical methods : "one best way"...or mixing methods in political science ?"

Coordinators: Lieven De Winter, Patrick Dumont, Gisèle De Meur, Benoit Rihoux

Guest speakers : Prof. John Gerring (Boston University) & Bernhard Kittel (Free University of Amsterdam)



The ABSP-CF Congress workshop ambitions to tackle two key questions :

What are the key strong points of each methodological tradition for political science, particularly in comparative politics and in international relations ? Many criteria may be referred to in this respect, e.g. in terms of empirical value, generalizability, validity, robustness, theoretical value, "practical" – applied value for decision-makers, etc.

Confrontation : is one of these strategies "superior" to the 2 other ones? Or should one consider that each path displays its own, distinctive qualities ? Or, rather, should one prioritize the "mixing" of the 3 strategies ?

Paper Givers and Presentation Titles:

Prof. **John GERRING** (Boston University): *The Case Study: What it Is and What it Does*

Muriisa ROBERTS (University of Bergen): *A methodological approach to studying organisations: The value of mixed Methods in case Studies*

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COMPASSS activities (...)

(Continued from page 1)

Programme:

Lasse CRONQVIST : state of affairs and future developments of TOSMANA:

- State of the art; recent update
- Visualisation
- MSDO/MDSO
- « online QCA calculator » (demonstration)
- Others ??

Jean-Christophe BEUMIER and **Gisèle DE MEUR** : MSDO/ MDSO programming

- Initial choices
- State of affairs (first demonstration ?)

Open discussion :

- Most promising paths ?
- Including the time dimension ? How ?
- Limitations/ technical difficulties?

- Compatibility between TOSMANA and the ULB MSDO/ MDSO programming work ?

- Etc.

Venue:

Salle LECL 057 (ground floor, left end of the « secrétariat des étudiants POLS » corridor)

Université catholique de Louvain, 1, Place Montesquieu, 1348 Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium. ■

Meetings (...)

(Continued from page 2)

Vu TUONG (University of California, Berkeley): *Competing Methods and Modes of Knowledge Accumulation in the Study of Contentious Mass Politics in Southeast Asia*

Mehmet Yigit TEZCAN (Free University of Brussels (VUB)): *On causality and generalization in International Relations: Critical Realist answers to the positivist dilemmas of quantitative and qualitative research methods*

Prof. Bernhard KITTEL (University of Amsterdam): *Reflections on the strengths and limitations of the quantitative template*

Prof. Rein TAAGEPERA : (University of Tartu, Estonia, and University of California, Irvine, USA): *Beyond Regression: The need for Logical Models*

More information on the Congress is available at <http://www.absp-cf.be>.

24 May 2005, Science-Po, Salle François GOGEL, Paris, France [FRANCAIS] - Journée d'études (Sciences Po Paris, CEVIPOF, CSO, OSC, Association française de sciences politiques - Groupe «politique publique») : **"L'évaluation des politiques publiques: entre enjeu politique et enjeu de méthode"**

Organisation: Pierre Lascoumes et Frédéric Varone

Programme:

Matinée (9.30 - 12.30): **Bilan de démarches d'évaluation des politiques publiques**
Animation Frédéric Varone, UCL

Frédéric VARONE, professeur à l'UCL. *Introduction : L'institutionnalisation de l'évaluation dans une perspective comparée européenne*

Sylvie TROSA, conseiller technique, Ministère de la santé, de la cohésion sociale et de l'emploi. *L'évaluation dans les pays anglo-saxons: une évaluation au profit des "patrons" et de la productivité dans la fonction publique.*

Steve JACOB, professeur adjoint, Université Laval. *La pratique de l'évaluation au Canada : la recherche de la qualité.*

(Suite à la page 4...)

Meetings (...)

(suite de la page 3)

Florent LOISEAU, Assistant Evaluation Specialist, Unesco. *Les pratiques d'évaluation dans les organisations internationales.*

Jean Daniel DELLEY, Professeur Université de Genève. *Développement et bilan des pratiques d'évaluation au sein du Canton de Genève.*

Claire GUIGNARD HAMON, Inspection générale, Région Ile de France. *Développement et bilan des pratiques d'évaluation au sein du Commissariat général au Plan.*

Après-midi 14.00 - 18.00: **Les données, méthodes et démarches de l'évaluation**
Animation Patrice Duran , professeur ENS-Cachan,

- **Construction et usages des bases de données et des indicateurs statistiques:**

Sylvie LE MINEZ (Ministère des affaires sociales), *Eléments de réflexion sur la construction, les usages et la portée des indicateurs statistiques : une expérience professionnelle dans une administration sociale comme la DREES.*

Jean-Luc RICHARD, (Université Rennes 1 - CRAPE UMR CNRS). *La Statistique publique de la nationalité et des origines culturelles et géographiques à l'heure des politiques publiques de lutte contre les discriminations.*

Discutant : **Alain CHENU** (OSC, Sciences-po)

Pause

- **Les approches pluri-disciplinaires de l'évaluation :**

Benoît RIHOUX, Professeur, UCL. *L'Analyse Quali-Quantitative Comparée (AQQC-QCA) : promesses et plus-values pour l'évaluation.*

Discutants : **A. VAN ZANTEN** (OSC), **P. LE GALES** (Cevipof), **Ch. MUSSELIN** (CSO).

Inscriptions obligatoires auprès de : Pierre Lascoumes (pierre.lascaumes@sciences-po.fr) et Frédéric Varone (varone@spri.ucl.ac.be)

8-10 September 2005, Budapest, Hungary : 3rd ECPR General Conference.

Methodological Innovations and Dilemmas in Contemporary Political Research (10 panels, 43 papers).

Co-ordinators: **Bernhard KITTEL** (UVA), **Jonathan MOSES** (Norwegian University of Science and Technology), **Benoît RIHOUX** (UCLouvain)

This section aims to provide a venue for discussing and sharing current innovations and dilemmas in political methodology.

- a remarkable lack of consensus among researchers about the role of causation in political research
- showcase new methodological techniques, broadly defined, which may be of interest to more specific audiences within the community of research communities
- ontological or epistemological issues, and/or new approaches and techniques across a broad spectrum of research designs (e.g., small N, medium, N, large N)
- methodological issues that are common to researchers from diverse research communities. Thus, for example, new work that embraces multi-methods, multi-level analyses, and/or addresses themes of common interest can be seen as fruitful ways to bridge the gap that once separated researchers from different analytical traditions.

(Continued on page 5...)

Meetings (...)

(continued from page 4)

The panels are:

1. Causality and Big, Slow-Moving and Invisible Processes
2. Methodology and Political Science Standards: What Standards?
3. Solving Small-n Problems by Focusing on Sub-National Units
4. Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models (EITM) of Democratic Institutions
5. Looking at Methodological Issues Normatively
6. Innovations in (MV)QCA and Fuzzy Set application
7. Beyond Regression? Predictive vs. Postdictive Models
8. Mixed Methods Designs: Advanced Issues
9. Outliers: Concepts, Treatments and Uses in Different Methodological Approaches
10. Enlarging our Toolbox: Modeling Strategies in Political Science

More information can be found at <http://www.essex.ac.uk/ecpr/events/generalconference/budapest>

18-19 November 2005, Lausanne, Switzerland

Congrès commun Association Suisse de Science Politique (ASSP), Association Française de Science Politique (AFSP), Société Québécoise de Science Politique (SQSP), Association Belge de Science Politique - Communauté française (ABSP-CF)

[FRANCAIS -- but call for papers also open for English-language paper proposals]

Atelier "La comparaison aux échelons local, régional et supranational: quelles plus-values et limites théoriques et pratiques, quels défis méthodologiques?"

Délaï pour propositions : 15 septembre.

Responsables:

Dr. Marc BUEHLMANN, Université de Berne -- marc.buehlmann@ipw.unibe.ch

Prof. André LECOURS, Université de Concordia -- alecours@magma.ca

Prof. Benoît RIHOUX, Université catholique de Louvain -- rihoux@spri.ucl.ac.be

Prof. Fritz SAGER, Université de Berne -- sager@ipw.unibe.ch

Dr. Monika STEFFEN, CNRS, PACTE- IEP de Grenoble -- monika.steffen@upmf-grenoble.fr

Contact:

Prof. Benoît RIHOUX rihoux@spri.ucl.ac.be

Thématique:

(...) Ces diverses formes de comparaison aux échelons sub-national et supranational, et leur confrontation avec les comparaisons inter-nationales plus classiques, soulèvent de nombreuses questions (liste non exhaustive) :

- dans quelle mesure ces comparaisons diffèrent-elles, en substance et/ou en termes de méthodologie, des comparaisons inter-nationales ?

- ces comparaisons apportent-elles des plus-values particulières par rapport aux comparaisons inter-nationales ?

(Suite page 6...)

Didactics

<http://www.compass.org/Didactic.htm>

New section: Introduction to Multi-Value Qualitative Comparative Analysis (MVQCA).

Download the paper (PDF format) by Lasse CRONQVIST. The paper "highlights the main differences between QCA and MVQCA and

allows the researcher already introduced to QCA an easy access to the use of multi-valued variables within the ideas and principles of QCA".

The TOSMANA software (freeware) for MVQCA can be downloaded at <http://www.tosmana.org> . ■

COMPARATIVE METHODS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SYSTEMATIC CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS AND SMALL-N STUDIES

COMPASSS Research Group

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<http://www.compasss.org>

COMPASSS is a research group bringing together scholars and practitioners who share a common interest in theoretical, methodological and practical advancements in a **systematic comparative case approach** to research which stresses the use of a **configurational logic**, the existence of **multiple causality** and the importance of a careful construction of research populations.

Its main objective is to **further develop systematic comparative case analysis** as a genuine and established research strategy to study many different and diverse social phenomena. Its core disciplines are political science and sociology. Building from this core, the Centre is also open to the research community in neighbouring disciplines.

It is a place of dialogue and **fruitful confrontation between qualitative and quantitative methods**, as well as a locus for the integration of these methods and the further development and application of original approaches, methods and techniques, in an endeavour to develop an overall approach for systematic comparative case analysis.

It fulfils its mission through various activities, among which the development and maintenance of a resource website, scientific exchanges, a programme of research seminars and lectures, common teaching initiatives, scientific counsel for the research and policy communities, a documentation centre, and the active participation in fundamental and applied research projects at the national, European and international levels.

WORKING PAPERS

A new working paper has been posted :

WP2005-31 [Posted on 18-March-2005]

Gary **GOERTZ** (University of Arizona) and Jack S. **LEVY** (Rutgers University) : **CAUSAL EXPLANATIONS, NECESSARY CONDITIONS, AND CASE STUDIES: WORLD WAR I AND THE END OF THE COLD WAR**

NB: Forthcoming monograph

<http://www.compasss.org/WP.htm> ■

USEFUL LINKS

Link added to the recently launched **ECPR Standing Group on Political Methodology (EGPM) site** at <http://www.ecpr-sgpm.nl/> . This Standing Group is meant to provide a venue for methodologi-

cal discussions among European political scientists and interested scholars and students from adjoining disciplines. ■

Meetings (...)

(suite et fin de la page 5)

- comment procéder à des comparaisons d'entités sub-nationales impliquant plusieurs pays (par ex. régions françaises, Länder allemands, provinces canadiennes, cantons suisses) ?
- quelles sont les limites et les difficultés spécifiques de ce type de comparaisons ?
- etc.

Pour plus d'information, visitez le site COMPASSS <http://www.compasss.org> ou <http://www.afsp.msh-paris.fr/activite/diversafsp/lausanne05/lausanne05.html> ■