Course description

After the turbulent years of the 1990s marked by state disintegrations and the ensuing ethnic conflicts, more peaceful mobilizations followed reaching well into the 2000s leading to further state fragmentations. During the last decade, new nationalisms have sprung up in the EU and elsewhere. Currently, ethnic majorities are mobilizing against immigrants and minorities, while some national minorities like the Catalans and Scottish are raising demands for independence. Other minorities in Western and Central Eastern Europe are seeking new ways of recognition and minority protection through legal mobilization. The aim of this course is to explore the phenomenon of nationalist mobilization from various angles, and to discuss nationalist mobilization by both ethnic majorities and minorities. The scope of our investigation will include but also reach beyond the study of ethnic conflict, by also considering reasons and effects of minority and majority mobilization under conditions of peace.

The course will examine how and why ethnic majorities choose to include minorities or opt for their exclusion, and how the framing of national identity influences the dynamics of independence movements. We will review the main theories of ethnic conflict and secession. A special attention will be given to theories that explore the implications of changing opportunity structures. In most cases, nationalist mobilization does not evolve into violence, whereas in some cases violent conflict ensues. By reviewing theories of civil wars, we will address the question why violence occurs in some cases. We will apply theories of mobilization and ethnic conflict in the Yugoslav context to test elite theories, economic explanations and ethnic fears arguments. In a separate class we will investigate how security studies can help us better understand ethnic conflict dynamics. This will be followed by a seminar on contemporary nationalism in the Balkans in the context of EU integration: how the EU is dealing with ethnic tensions, unresolved statehood issues and authoritarian nationalism in the region. A separate class will be devoted to the securitization of ethnicity and populism in Europe through looking at the case of Hungary. The last two sessions will look at the agency of national minorities in Eastern and Western Europe by examining experiences and possibilities of legal mobilization.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be familiar with the different modes and explanations of nationalist mobilization. They will be able to apply the various theories discussed during the course to explain specific events and cases. They will also gain a deeper understanding of how the politicization of ethnic differences plays out in various contexts and leads to different outcomes.

Assessment
Students registered for this course are expected to attend classes and participate in the discussions. All students must read all the mandatory readings, and give two presentations: one in-class presentation of a reading specifically assigned for presentations and one presentation during the last seminar where students will present their final paper. Students will be encouraged to choose a reading for presentation connected to their final paper and critically present it by proposing some questions to the class for discussion.

Seminar paper requirements

Students are to prepare a final paper (minimum 2,500 words plus bibliography) on a subject connected to the topics discussed in the course. Students will be encouraged to offer single case studies, cross-country comparative studies, or focus on the specificities of a certain region, and apply a theory for interpreting their case. Papers should analyze empirical cases of nationalist mobilization and include ideas on the applicability of the readings. Papers submitted after the deadline will be marked down by half of a letter grade per day. Final grades will be calculated on the basis of the above; also, class attendance, preparation and participation will be factored into the final grade.

Schedule and readings

Class 1: Introduction: ethnic exclusion of inclusion in nationalizing states

Reading


Further reading


Class 2: The framing of national identity and its effect on mobilization patterns 1.

Readings


Film: Tone Bringa “We are all Neighbours,” 52 minutes / Colour / 1993, available on Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ui50amKMdW
Further readings


Class 3: The framing of national identity and its effect on mobilization patterns II.

Reading


For presentation:


Further readings


Class 4: Theories of ethnic conflict, violence and mobilization: opportunism

Reading


For presentation:

*Further reading*


**Class 5: Theories of civil war: economic causes and environmental factors**

*Reading*


*For presentation*


*Further readings*


**Class 6: Nationalist mobilization in the former Yugoslavia: competing explanations**

*Reading*

*For presentation*


*Further readings*


**Class 7: Ethnic security**

*Readings*


For presentation


Eva-Maria Asari, Daphne Halikiopoulou & Steven Mock (2008) British National Identity and the Dilemmas of Multiculturalism, Nationalism and Ethnic Politics, 14:1, 1-28,

Further readings


Class 8. The securitization of ethnicity as an instrument of nationalist mobilization in modern Europe

Invited guest speakers: András Szalai (CEU/ELTE) and Zselyke Csáky (Freedom House)

Readings


Further readings


Gábor Bernáth and Vera Messing, Infiltration of political meaning-production: security threat or humanitarian crisis? The coverage of the refugee ‘crisis’ in the Austrian and Hungarian media in early autumn 2015. Center for Media, Data and Society, CEU School of Public Policy. 7.12.2016.


**Class 9: Nationalist mobilization and EU integration in the post-Yugoslav space**

*Readings*


*For presentation:*


*Further readings*


**Class 10-11: Minorities in the EU: mobilized in the West, demobilized in the East?** The problem of agency of minority communities in Eastern and Western Europe and possibilities for legal mobilization.

**Class 10: Minorities in Eastern Europe**

*Readings*


*For presentation:*


*Further readings*


**Class 11: Minorities in Western Europe and Canada**

*Readings*


*For presentation:*


*Further readings*


*Class 12: Student presentations*