



Call for Papers

“Democratic backsliding and public administration”

Jointly hosted by the Robert Schuman Centre and the School of Transnational Governance
European University Institute, Florence

31 January and 1 February 2019

Scientific Committee

Michael W. Bauer (Chair of Comparative Public Administration, German University of Administrative Science Speyer & School of Transnational Governance)

B. Guy Peters (Maurice Falk Professor of Government, Department of Political Science, University of Pittsburgh)

Jon Pierre (Research Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg)

Kutsal Yesilkagit (Professor of International Governance at the Institute of Public Administration, University of Leiden)

Liberal democracy appears to be at risk. Its hallmark institutions—political pluralism, separation of powers and rule of law—are coming under pressure, as authoritarian sentiment is growing around the globe. While this democratic backsliding features prominently in social science scholarship, the Public Administration community lags behind. Only a few contributions have so far addressed the administrative dimension of democratic backsliding. This shortfall impairs our understanding of this recent dynamic transforming the political landscape. For without considering their approach toward the executive, efforts of actual and aspiring authoritarians remain only partly understood.

The workshop therefore addresses the administrative dimension of democratic backsliding. What happens to state bureaucracies when authoritarian politicians enter office? How do they seek to use the administration to their ends, and how does it react? Literature on politicisation, reform and

administrative culture may provide clues; however, a systematic analytical framework for state bureaucracies in times of democratic backsliding is yet to emerge. What can we learn from current and historical examples, and what does normative public administration theory have to say about the relationship of liberal democracy and bureaucracy in turbulent times?

We invite scholars working on the relationship of democratic backsliding and public administration from theoretical, empirical or normative perspectives to submit an abstract. Special emphasis is also paid to country-specific case studies. We also encourage practitioners from international organisations or national administrations to share their experiences with democratic backsliding with regard to public administration.

Please send your proposals (500 words maximum) to the scientific committee no later than 19th of October 2018 (via michael.bauer@eui.eu and becker@uni-speyer.de). Financial support for travel and accommodation will be available; priority will be given to applicants without assistance from their home institution.

<p>Local organisation</p> <p>Professor Dr. Michael W. Bauer Jean Monnet Professor of Comparative Public Administration and Policy Analysis German University of Administrative Sciences Speyer</p> <p>Part-Time Professor School of Transnational Governance (STG) European University Institute (EUI)</p> <p>E-Mail: michael.bauer@eui.eu Tel. [+39] 055 4686 334</p>	<p>Mia Saugman Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies European University Institute (EUI)</p> <p>E-Mail: mia.saugman@eui.eu Tel. [+39] 055 4685 973</p> <p>Dr. Stefan Becker German University of Administrative Sciences Speyer</p> <p>E-Mail: becker@uni-speyer.de Tel. [+49]6232 654 265</p>
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