



PhD Scholarship (3 years, full time) in Political Science in Comparative Approaches of Direct Democracy at ESPOL (Catholic University of Lille)

Scholarship details

Employment level in days per year: 200 days (full-time) on site in Lille or on mission elsewhere

Work location: ESPOL, Catholic University of Lille (France), <https://espol-lille.eu/research/>

Registration: Doctoral School PHF – Polytechnique Hauts-de-France

About the Project

Direct democracy includes a set of institutions that allow voters to initiate and veto legislation. Over the past thirty years, these institutions have emerged in many young democracies, particularly in Latin America and Eastern Europe (Qvortrup 2017, Magni-Berton and Egger 2019). Survey data in established democracies regularly show high levels of support for direct democracy (Werner et al. 2020). In recent decades, large social movements such as the Indignados in Spain (2011), the Sunflower Movement in Taiwan (2014), the Yellow Vests in France (2018), or the Chilean protests (2019) have also called for more direct democracy. This increase in comparative data on these methods of governance allows scholars to better understand how these institutions work and why they emerge.

The PhD student will join a consortium composed by the Catholic University of Lille (ESPOL), Democracy International, the Liechtenstein Institute, and the Swiss Democracy Foundation for a three-year research project on direct democracy (2023-2026). The project aims to conduct a comparative design that exploits the data produced since 2010 by the Direct Democracy Navigator (<https://direct-democracy-navigator.org/>). This database, funded by the Lucerne-based Swiss Foundation for Democracy, Cologne-based Democracy International and the Liechtenstein Institute based in Gamprin/Liechtenstein, currently contains over 2,000 legal forms of direct democracy in more than 100 states, and includes the circumstances in which these institutions were set up. By integrating these data into more comprehensive dataset, the aim of this research is to determine the conditions that favour the emergence of specific types of direct-democratic arrangements.

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The recruited PhD student will be an integral member of the consortium, coordinate with her/his supervisors the collection of comparative data, collect herself/himself secondary data by collaborating with other close research projects in Europe. This stimulating environment will allow the PhD student to end her/his thesis project in 3 year. The first year of the project will be dedicated to the refinement of the research design and the collection of data. The second year is dedicated to the quantitative analysis of the data and communications in conferences. During the third year, the PhD student will complete her/his PhD dissertation which will be defended in Lille.

Organisation

The PhD student will be mainly located at the Catholic University of Lille (ICL, European School of Political and Social Sciences). She/he will benefit from an office in the Liechtenstein Institute. This position is co-funded by Democracy International and the European School of Political and Social Sciences. Travels and research costs will be also supported by the members of the consortium.

The PhD diploma will be delivered by the PhD Scholarship Programme “Polytechnique Hauts-de-France” (ED PHF n°635). The supervisor will be Prof Dr Raul Magni-Berton (ICL, Political Science) and the supervision committee of the PhD student will involve Dr Clara Egger (Democracy International), Dr Christian Frommelt (Liechtenstein Institute), and Bruno Kaufmann (Swiss Democracy Foundation).

About the University

Young, diversified and growing, ESPOL's mission is to contribute to the excellence of interdisciplinary research and the quality of training in the social and political sciences. Created in 2012, ESPOL offers a multidisciplinary and bilingual training (French / English) focused on professions covering politics, Europe, and international affairs.

The Catholic University of Lille includes faculties of medicine, law, economics, engineering, and humanities, with an enrollment of over 40 000 students it is the largest private university in France. It brings together five Faculties (Law, Letters and Human Sciences, Medicine, Management, Economics and Sciences, and Theology), 20 Schools and Institutes including ESPOL, six engineering schools, three business and management schools, medical and paramedical schools, social schools, tertiary management schools, a Hospital Group, and in all, nearly 15 research teams. Collaborative research at ESPOL-LAB revolves around three broad thematic axes, ‘the

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quality of democracy’, ‘reconfigurations of the international’, ‘and the politics of the anthropocene’, providing platforms for faculty members to participate in common events and projects, next to their own research, which ESPOL also supports through travel funds.

Qualifications

The candidate will have a background in political science, economics, sociology, or other similar disciplines. Only MA graduates with some research experiences are eligible for this position.

While a good command of English is required for the position, some knowledge of other languages (in particular French and German) or a willingness to acquire such skills are an asset.

The successful candidate is intellectually curious and enthusiastic about working in an international team on institutional aspects of democratic life. In particular, she/he has a strong interest in the comparative studying of democratic regimes in Europe and theorizing the causes and effects of direct-democratic institutions. Excellent and demonstrable skills in quantitative research designs are required.

Start Date

1st September 2023

Benefits

The successful applicant for this PhD scholarship will receive the following support:

- A stipend for 36 months at a minimum salary (as of 1 January 2023) of 2044 euros gross per month; along with office access and a computer.
- The employment package includes public and additional private health insurance, a pensions scheme, and other benefits.

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- Access to university services (Library, language courses, etc.) and funds for stays abroad, fieldwork, conference trips or transcription costs
- integration in the work of [ESPOL-LAB](#), which organises seminars and conferences
- the ability to follow methods training courses
- the possibility of a paid teaching contract towards the end of the PhD project

How to Apply

Applicants are required to submit the following documents with application:

- a letter of motivation of a maximum of two A4 pages, explaining your interest in the project and detailing your suitability for the Scholarship
- a recent curriculum vitae
- a copy of your diplomas with a list of course grades and a copy of your master thesis (or equivalent)
- contact details for two to three personal references
- a writing sample (Master Thesis, dissertations, publication).

Applications to be submitted to raul.magniberton@univ-catholille.fr and espol.recrutements@univ-catholille.fr by **1st July 2023, 11:59pm (UTC+2)**.

For additional queries please contact raul.magniberton@univ-catholille.fr.

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