



HAMBURG POLITICAL SCIENCE SEMINAR SERIES – HPS³

INVITATION

Please be invited to the Hamburg Empirical Political Science Seminar Series - HPS³.

The seminar series features international speakers presenting cutting-edge research in empirical political science and political economy. It takes place on Wednesdays or Thursdays in person. We invite everyone interested to attend. For further information about dates and speakers, please refer to the [HPS³ Website](#).

We welcome on

15 April 2024, 17:15-18:45 CET in VMP9 A 411

[Raluca L. Pahontu](#) (King's College London)

Title: Resemblance and Discrimination in Elections *(with Stavros Poupakis, Brunel University London)*

Abstract:

Discrimination affects hiring, mating and voting decisions. Whilst discrimination in elections mainly relates to gender or race, we introduce a novel source of discrimination: candidate resemblance. When candidates' partisanship is not known, voters select those that resemble most elected co-partisans. Using a machine learning algorithm for face comparison among white male legislators, we find a stronger resemblance effect for Republicans compared to Democrats in the US. This happens because Republicans have a higher within-party facial resemblance than Democrats, even when accounting for gender and race. We find a similar pattern in the UK, where Conservative MPs are more similar looking to each other than Labour. Using a survey experiment, we find that Tory voters reward resemblance, while there is no similar effect for Labour. The results are consistent with an interpretation of this behaviour as a form of statistical discrimination.

Keywords: Voter Behaviour, Discrimination, Facial Resemblance, Low-Information Election, Partisanship

Please find the [seminar program](#) on the [HPS³ Website](#).

We invite everyone interested to attend!