

Workshop Outline form

Title of Workshop:	Spatial and Network Interdependence in Politics
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Outline of topic:	<p>This workshop brings together political methodologists and applied researchers who work in the areas of spatial econometrics and network statistics, exchanging ideas on the future of the statistical analysis of network interdependence in political science.</p> <p>The Arab Spring in early 2011 showed how popular protest can spread like wildfire across a region of countries. While the grievances were local and the main targets of the protests varied across national contexts, there were clear patterns of interdependence between the social events. Protests in one country sparked protests in another. Social processes in one country cannot be taken as an independent or interchangeable event, but only as one that is spatially, geographically, contingent on processes elsewhere.</p> <p>The last few decades have shown an increasing trend of globalization across the world. Economies become ever more interdependent and recent financial crises showed how closely intertwined the various financial systems have become. The “systemic risk” of banks has become a key political issue both in Europe and the US. Culturally, economically, financially – in many respects have countries become interdependent on a global scale.</p> <p>When Estonia adopted a flat tax in 1994, it was soon followed by its Baltic neighbours, Romania, Slovakia and other countries (Baturo & Gray 2009). The policy reform spread across countries much like the protest behaviour did later in the Arab Spring. Not only social processes and financial institutions, but also policy-making in a wide range of areas cannot be seen as independent events, but only as contingent on, learning from, emulating, or avoiding policies in neighbouring regions – either geographically or based on other types of ties.</p> <p>These three very different examples all point to the same issue: the increased recognition that many political processes and policy-making decisions cannot be seen in isolation, that what happens in other political units affects decision-making and social behaviour locally. Policy-makers and other actors learn from neighbours, they feel the competitive pressure from neighbours, they can be forced by neighbours, or they react to the same stimuli that neighbours react to. These patterns concern a wide variety of research areas, including comparative politics (e.g. the diffusion of democracy), comparative public policy (e.g. the diffusion of flat taxes), political economy (e.g. the contagion of crises) and international relations (e.g. the contagion of conflict).</p> <p>The underlying data structure in these studies is one of interdependence among neighbouring units – with proximity either defined in a geographical sense or any other social connection or similarity measure (see, e.g., Beck, Gleditsch & Beardsley 2006). The statistical methodology related to this interdependence is that of spatial econometrics or network statistics. The statistical analysis of spatial econometrics and of social networks are closely related, whereby the former is typically concerned with explaining variation in the units, taking account of the network interdependence, while the latter is typically concerned with explaining the variation in the connectivity, taking account of unit-level variables.</p> <p>Whereas so far most applications in political science have been straightforward empirical applications of existing techniques from the field of spatial econometrics and social network statistics, in recent years there has been more focus on developing new methodologies specifically of use to applications typical in political science. This is still in an early stage of development, however. The aim of this workshop is to bring together applied researchers and methodologists who work at</p>
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	the cutting edge of spatial econometric and social network statistical research applied to political science and international relations.
Relation to existing research:	Building on the seminal work by Anselin (1988), significant advances have been made in the development of methods in spatial econometrics, including significant contributions by political methodologists. Where originally the application of spatial regression models to political science research was key, now the extension of these methods to other statistical features of particular interest to social scientists is key, such as spatial interdependence with qualitative dependent variables (Franzese & Hays 2010; Calabrese & Elkink 2014); spatial interdependence with rare events data; spatial survival models (Darmofal 2009); dealing with multiple overlapping spatial interdependencies and their co-evolution (Hays, Kachi & Franzese 2010; Franzese, Hays & Kachi 2012); separating different types of spatial effects (Plümper & Neumayer 2010); and other innovations in the field by political scientists. Furthermore, recent research in diffusion has typically been concerned with refining the theoretical framework around diffusion and developing empirical models that go beyond the estimation of the level of spatial autocorrelation per se (e.g. Ward & John 2013).
Likely participants:	Potential participants would include: Anselin, Luc, Arizona State University Beardsley, Kyle, Duke University Darmofal, David, University of South Carolina Franzese, Robert, University of Michigan Hays, Jude, University of Pittsburgh Kachi, Aya, ETH Zurich Neumayer, Erik, London School of Economics and Political Science O'Loughlin, John, University of Colorado Plumper, Thomas, University of Essex Steinwand, Martin, Stony Brook University Ward, Hugh, University of Essex
Type of Papers required:	The types of papers envisaged for this panel are either methodological in nature, discussing innovations in spatial econometrics and network statistics as suitable to political science research, or applied papers that apply spatial econometrics and network statistics to political science problems.
Funding:	N/A
Biographical notes:	<p>Johan A. Elkind is lecturer in social science research methods in the School of Politics & International Relations at University College Dublin. His research interests include spatial econometrics, democratization, and the study of electoral behaviour, as well as the diffusion of democracy (e.g. Elkind 2011). His recent research focuses on the application of spatial regression models with binary dependent variables (e.g. Calabrese & Elkind 2014), including to rare events data.</p> <p>Kristian S. Gleditsch is professor in the Department of Government at the University of Essex and research associate of the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo. His research interests include conflict and cooperation, democratization, and spatial dimensions of social and political processes. He is the author of <i>Spatial regression models</i> (Sage, 2008) and <i>All politics is local: The diffusion of conflict, integration, and democratization</i> (University of Michigan Press, 2002), as well as numerous articles in many of the high impact journals in political science and international relations.</p>

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