Political behaviour and attitudes in times of new regionalism and mediatisation

Summary / Zusammenfassung
All around the world cities are growing and becoming “metropolitan areas”, vast urban regions that spread beyond the confines of cities, regions, and even nation-states. In the era of globalization, mega- and meta-cities are gaining in importance, just as political decision-making is increasingly shifting to the local and urban-regional level. The growing mismatch between urban sprawl and institutional organization has led to the emergence, in metropolitan areas, of new, complex governance structures beyond the state. These are challenging traditional political institutions and the democratic quality of policy-making in these areas.

How are the citizens, and local voters, able to deal with these complex structures, the shifting or fading away of territorial borders, and the emergence of new political levels? This project will explore this topic by studying eight European metropolitan areas with different types of governance structures: London, Birmingham, Paris, Lyon, Berlin, Stuttgart, Bern, and Zurich. In particular, the project will focus on the following questions:

• How do citizens perceive the political system of their metropolitan area?
• How are political behavior, attitudes, and perceptions of the legitimacy of the governance structures shaped by media systems and content?
• How do the different types of governance, as well as media reporting about them, influence citizens’ political attitudes, interest, and participation?

This project builds on two projects on the legitimacy of governance structures in metropolitan areas completed in Phases I and II of the NCCR Democracy. The aim of the current project is to use these results to examine the link between institutional design, media markets and content, and citizens’ political attitudes and behavior.

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