



Institutskolloquium

IfP

winter semester  
2025/2026

## Institutskolloquium / DEPARTMENTAL SEMINAR

### Interest groups and the illiberal challenge: interest representation in backsliding democracies (focus on Hungary)

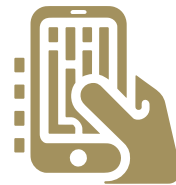
Wednesday, 19 November 2025 · 16:00 c.t.

Room 124, Institut für Politikwissenschaft

Or join online via Zoom: 930 8975 0663 (Meeting ID), 142311 (Passcode)



For more information



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How do interest groups cope with an increasingly hostile political landscape in a growing number of democracies? Democratic backsliding – the decline in democratic quality driven by illiberal populist governments – has become increasingly widespread over the past 20 years. So far, the formal institutional framework of liberal democracy has proven to be much more resilient than deliberative democratic quality, which erodes much faster and to a greater extent. That is, under illiberal populist incumbents, civil society organisations find themselves shut out of national, sectoral, and local politics. They face ever scarcer public funding, amid bureaucratic harassment, and as targets of media campaigns that paint them as enemies of the people. Although civil society in general and interest representation in particular are the hallmarks of democratisation and good governance, political science research has only recently begun to address this illiberal challenge. In this talk, I will present our suggested theoretical framework alongside our empirical studies on “backsliding lobbying” and explain why this is very timely and relevant in Germany. I will also discuss the latest developments in Hungary, arguably the world’s least openly repressive and most resilient competitive authoritarian regime, which serves as a critical case in many of our analyses. I will explain why Orbán’s grip on the country has never seemed to be so fragile, why this does not necessarily mean his downfall, and why he and his regime are at a crossroads.