

ZSÓFIA BARTA

Assistant Professor of Public Policy
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ACADEMIC POSITIONS

University at Albany, State University of New York.

2013- Assistant Professor

European University Institute

2011-2012 Max Weber Postdoctoral Fellow

The Bologna Center, The Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University

2011-2012 Adjunct Assistant Professor

European Institute of the London School of Economics and Political Science

2009-2011 Lecturer

EDUCATION

PhD. Political Economy, London School of Economics and Political Science (2012)

Supervisors: Willem Buiters, Erik Jones, Waltraud Schelkle

Examiners: Daniel Wincott, Dermot Hodson

MA. International Economics, Johns Hopkins University – Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (2007)

MSc. Business Administration, Budapest University of Economics (2001)

RESEARCH

Book

In The Red: The Politics of Public Debt Accumulation in Developed Countries (forthcoming at University of Michigan Press)

In the Red explains why several prosperous developed countries accumulated so much public debt between the 1970s and the 2000s that they became vulnerable to sudden changes in financial markets and exposed themselves to the risk of default. It compares and contrasts the politics of debt accumulation in Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Greece, Ireland, Italy and Japan since the 1970s to identify factors that differentiate countries that accumulated dangerous amounts of debt from those that kept their debt under control. It challenges the received wisdom that persistent borrowing reflects the recklessness of governments who indebt their countries in order to please their voters in the short term. The book documents that policy makers invariably initiate painful adjustment measures to correct budgetary imbalances when debt grows at an alarming rate for several years in a row, but the success of adjustment attempts depends on the degree of social support for the spending cuts and/or tax increases proposed. In countries where existing fiscal policies generate intense conflicts of vested interests, mustering the necessary social

consensus behind any adjustment package is exceedingly difficult, especially if large parts of society remain unaffected by the negative economic side effects of fiscal imbalances. In countries where existing fiscal policies are less polarizing and fiscal problems negatively affect economic performance, fiscal correction is swift.

Journal articles

Zsófia Barta and Alison Johnston. (forthcoming) 'Rating Politics? Partisan Discrimination in Credit Ratings in Developed Economies' *Comparative Political Studies*

Zsófia Barta and Waltraud Schelkle. (2016). 'At cross-purposes: commercial versus technocratic assessments of sovereign debt in the EU' *Journal of European Integration* **37**(7): 833-846

Zsófia Barta. (2015) 'Fiscal sustainability and the welfare state in Europe' *ACRN Oxford Journal of Finance and Risk Perspectives* **4**(3) p135-147

Working papers

'Rating politics – The political bias of rating agencies' *EUI Working Paper* 2012/08
cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/22385/MWP_Barta_2012_08.pdf

'Belgium's fiscal performance in EMU – An unlikely success story of the EU's budgetary surveillance' with Waltraud Schelkle (Working Paper published in the EU Newgov Project in 2008)

AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS

Martin Edelman Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching (2017)
Center for Policy Research - Rockefeller College Research Incentive Fund (2014)
University at Albany Faculty Research Awards Program (FRAP- B) (2014)
Max Weber Postdoctoral Fellowship (2011-2012)
Abernethy Dissertation Fellowship (2010-2011)
The London School of Economics Research Studentship Award (2007-2011)
London School of Economics and Political Science Economics Department Teaching Prize (2009)
Alfred Zauberman Award (2007-2009)
Stavros Niarchos Foundation Fellowship (2006-2007)
Parachini Family Fellowship (2006-2007)
Tesluk Fellowship (2005-2006)

TEACHING

Undergraduate courses
 Comparative Public Policy
 The Welfare State
 Public Finance and Fiscal Policy
 Great Ideas in Political Science
Graduate courses
 Comparative Policy Systems

Comparative National Systems
West European Politics and Political Economy
Public Finance
PhD. dissertation committee member for Heather Bennett, Injeong Hwang, Xiaoye She
Comparative exam committees
Comparative Politics
Public Policy

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Invited presentations

‘Rating Politics? Partisan Discrimination in Credit Ratings in Developed Economies’
Union College Economics Seminar Series, April 7, 2017

‘Flirting with disaster: The curse of public debt in prosperous developed countries’
Political Science Department, Oregon State University, February 27, 2015

‘Rating politics: The political bias of rating agencies’ Central European University on
January 16, 2012

Conference presentations

‘Why Do Consolidations Persist? the Political Economy of Fiscal Adjustment in a Long-Term Perspective’ to be presented at the 24th International Conference of Europeanists, Glasgow, July 11-14, 2017 (with Lukas Haffert, University of Zurich)

‘Constructing Creditworthiness: Differing Conceptions of "Sound Public Finances" in Credit Ratings and in European Fiscal Surveillance’ to be presented at the 24th International Conference of Europeanists, Glasgow, July 11-14, 2017 (with Waltraud Schelkle, London School Economics and Political Science)

‘Arbiters or Meddlers? the Political and Policy Agenda of Sovereign Credit Rating Agencies’ to be presented at the 24th International Conference of Europeanists, Glasgow, July 11-14, 2017 (with Alison Johnston, Oregon State University)

‘The Societal Bases of Fiscal Adjustment: Responses to Fiscal Crises in Belgium, Ireland and Italy in the Past and Present’ 23rd International Conference of Europeanists, Philadelphia, PA, April 14-16, 2016

‘New crisis, new realignments, new solutions: Time for another breakthrough in Italian politics and public policy?’ 22nd International Conference of Europeanists Paris, France, July 8 - 10, 2015

‘In the Business of Meddling with Politics? Sovereign Rating Agencies and Elections’ 22nd International Conference of Europeanists Paris, France, July 8 - 10, 2015 (with Alison Johnston, Oregon State University)

‘Social Polarization and Public Debt: Austerity in Ireland and Italy Redux’ European Studies Association conference, Boston, March 3-6, 2015

‘Playing the market or played by the markets? Financial market discipline and public debt management in the EU’ presented at the 21st International Conference of Europeanists in Washington, D.C., March 14-16, 2014 (with and presented by Waltraud Schelkle)

‘When is debt a real menace? The political aspects of debt sustainability’ presented at the 2011 EUSA Conference in Boston

‘Rating agencies as enforcers: Do sovereign ratings respond to European fiscal surveillance?’ presented at the 2010 CES Conference in Montreal

‘Belgian public finances caught up in a war of attrition’ presented at the 2009 ECPR Conference in Potsdam

DEPARTMENTAL, COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY, AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Department of Political Science

- Director of the Honors Program in Political Science (2016-2018)
- Undergraduate Committee (2016-2018, member)
- Strach Promotion Committee (2017, member)
- Graduate Program Reform Committee (2016, member)
- Public Policy Search Committee (2015, member)
- Peer Observation Committee (2015, member)
- MIA Economist Search Committee (2014, member)
- Ingram Contract Extension Committee (2014, member)
- Online Education Committee (2013, member)

Rockefeller College

- College-wide Committee on Online Education (2013, member)
- Discussant, Institutions & Societies Graduate Conference co-hosted by the Rockefeller College Graduate Association of Political Science (GAPS) and the Students of Educational Administration for Change (SEACHange) February 28, 2014

Professional

- Occasional reviewer: Comparative Political Studies, International Studies Quarterly, Journal of Common Market Studies, Government and Opposition

Conference organizer: The Embeddedness of Markets Today: Returning to Polanyi to rethink Development, Markets & Financial Crisis, 2nd May 2012, European University Institute

MEMBERSHIPS

- American Political Science Association
- Midwest Political Science Association
- European Studies Association
- Council for European Studies