"Discursive evidence and interpretive research methods"

Joint Ghent-Kent workshop 2018
16-17 April 2018, University of Kent in Canterbury

Call for Participation

We are happy to announce a Call for Participation for a joint Ghent-Kent PhD workshop, to be held on **16 and 17 April 2018** at the University of Kent, Canterbury (UK). The workshop, funded through the Ghent-Kent Cooperation Fund, aims to bring together PhD students from the University of Kent and Ghent University. The workshop builds on a series of successful joint PhD workshops previously organised by Kent BSIS and Ghent. The event will give PhD students the opportunity to present their work and to receive feedback on their projects from peers and senior researchers.

The theme of the workshop is 'Discursive evidence and interpretive research methods'. We want to take a closer look at the use of non-material forms of "evidence" obtained through among others discourse analysis and narratives-based research. While these are popular qualitative approaches in political studies, they may be more open to criticism of subjectivity than more 'classical' forms of research methods, such as quantitative analysis or content analysis.

The workshop would allow us to have discussions and share advice on how to overcome these issues. Several concrete questions we hope to address are:
- How can we ensure that data obtained through (inherently subjective) interpretation is presented as unbiased as possible?
- How to use 'fluid' concepts (e.g. identity, perceptions) in a sound way, especially when they form the foundation of an analysis?
- How can we make sufficient and credible references to sources such as anonymised interviews?

Programme
We aim to bring together 10 PhD students (5 from Ghent, 5 from Kent) to present their work. Each participant will be asked to submit a paper beforehand - either a draft research paper

or a reflection paper relating to a particular methodological issue (max. 7,000 words, including references). Each paper will be allocated about 45 minutes for feedback and discussion.
On the first day, there will be two parallel sessions in the afternoon. Participants will be required to read each other's papers beforehand, to allow for in-depth feedback.

The next morning, a <u>roundtable discussion</u> will bring the two panels together. Here we will first present the main discussion points of both sessions and discuss some relevant issues that were raised in the parallel sessions. We will end with evaluating the workshop discussions, drawing some general conclusions, and identifying possible steps for future cooperation (either in the form of further skills training or concrete cooperation initiatives).

The workshop will start at 13:00 on 16 April and will end at 13:00 the following day.

There will be a joint lunch and additional socialising opportunities in the evening of 16 April.

Logistics
To apply, please fill in the online application form (which can be found [here](#))[1] before 5th February. Submission of papers will be invited by **2nd April**.

Places are unfortunately limited. With the funding we received from the Ghent-Kent Cooperation Fund, we are able to cover the travel costs of five students from Ghent, and one student from BSIS. We furthermore have four places reserved for PhD or MRes students from SPIR.

Travel arrangements are to be made by the sending institutions. The students traveling from Brussels and Ghent will have to spend one night in Canterbury, for which they will need to request additional funding from CEUS or BSIS.
There is no participation fee, and lunch will be provided.

If you'd have any questions, please get in touch: Prof Dr Fabienne Bossuyt (fabienne.bossuyt@ugent.be) or Dr Eske van Gils (e.van-gils@kent.ac.uk).

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[1] Full link:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/13ML0rYpmTidaXbz9rhKipODc5XLZB3rZ2YI09vkD_5U/edit?usp=sharing