

The Governance E-Gazette



Maastricht Graduate School of Governance

27 April 2006



'Our girl at Harvard'

Since March 10th, our PhD fellow Geranda Notten has replaced her home in Maastricht with a temporary one in Cambridge (USA). She is working as a Research Fellow at the Wiener Center for Social Policy at the Kennedy School of Government. The main reason for her visit to the USA is to work on one of her PhD projects. A short impression by 'our girl' at Harvard: "The facilities of Harvard University are amazing; the library facilities are huge, the wireless network allows you to work wherever you want, every day there are many interesting seminars to attend and at the Forum in the Kennedy School you can listen to political leaders and experts from think-tanks (last week the president from Peru, Alejandro Toledo, came to report on his achievements during his four year term). I am working here on a comparative poverty study between the European Union and the United States which is a joint project with prof. Chris de Neubourg. The objective of this study is to compare the official poverty methodologies of the USA and EU by applying them on datasets of both countries. Official poverty methodologies differ from other poverty measurement methods in the sense that the official ones are more often used as a benchmark to develop new policies as well as to evaluate the performance of existing programs. Europe has the tradition and the practice to use relative poverty as "official" poverty estimates; the USA use an objective method to estimate official poverty. Although related, each approach portrays different dimensions of poverty. We compare poverty trends in the USA and EU in relative and absolute terms on a national level, for various subgroups of the populations and we analyze individual poverty dynamics. Our results so far point to considerable, but often puzzling differences between the estimates these indicators. In that respect, even our preliminary findings point to the desirability of involving both relative and absolute poverty concepts into official poverty assessments.

Summer School 2006

From 26 June to 1 July, the MGSOG organises a six days summer school in cooperation with its partner universities, the institutes of the Isprit network and the US-based network of the Multidisciplinary and Comparative Program in Inequality and Social Policy of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. The 2006 Maastricht Summer School is structured around two lecture series, presentation of research papers and workshops.

The key lecturers of the summer school are:

- Dr. Rick van der Ploeg, Professor of Economics, European University Institute in Florence

- Dr. Bas Jacobs, Professor of Economics, CENTer Tilburg University and University of Amsterdam
- Dr. Gerard de Vries, Professor of Philosophy and Science, University of Amsterdam and Visiting Research Fellow Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) in The Hague
- Dr. Patrick Schrauwen, Human Biology, Maastricht University
- Dr. Sape Miedema, Mechanical Engineering, University Delft

The objective of the Summer School 2006 is to bring together a large number of junior researchers and PhD students with senior researchers to study state-of-the-art theory and empirics of a selected subject related to governance and social protection and to develop academic skills and methods. So far we have 23 students visiting from all over the world of which 11 will present a research paper. For more information, please [click here](#)

Piranhas Royal

As you are probably accustomed to by now, our PhD fellows undertake quite some exhilarating journeys around the globe to explore their scientific, and as most certainly in Melissa Siegel's case, also their personal boundaries.

A short report from our ESPP Research fellow, Melissa Siegel of her field trip to Suriname:

"I recently traveled to Suriname to do both qualitative and quantitative research on remittances in Suriname for one month. This trip was also part of a World Bank Remittances Corridor study I am currently working on with Utrecht School of Economics and the Dutch Ministry of Finance. I conducted several interviews with the major bank directors, government officials, remittance service providers and academics and cooperated with Anton de Kom University to administer a small remittances household survey. This in depth research included a number of interesting experiences including being locked in the Surinamese Central Bank toilet and having to be rescued, a trip to a casino owned by a known drug lord and meeting two ex-ministers and ex-bank officials there, going to an extremely mafia-like underground money exchange office, etc. I did have some time away from work during which went hiking in the jungle, took a boat trip down the Surinamese river, swam with piranhas and ran a charity race for the Surinamese blood bank. Field work is fantastic!



Nice to meet you...

**Jaap Hoogenboezem
(Track coordinator of
Governance within Public
Policy and Human
Development)**

Two years ago I was quickly going through my e-mail at the tourism office in Aosta, and fell into a string of reply's and forwards with the subject "global governance". I didn't quite get why this was forwarded to me, but some sort of appointment was in the making and since I was on vacation, amidst the beautiful Aosta Valley mountains, I was in such good spirits, that I agreed to be present at that meeting.



This is how I became track-director of the governance track of the MPP. .Of course I like to think that my qualifications also have something to do with it; I have a master degree in public administration from Leiden university, and a doctorate in politics from the university of Hull, but universities are a classic example of what Cohen, March and Olsen (1972) termed “garbage can organizational choice” so I don’t take anything for granted. My home base is the department of politics of the faculty of Arts and Culture, where I teach mostly in the European Studies programs. My main research topic now is leadership in politics. So I am currently writing papers on Roosevelt and Churchill, but my main research project is the writing of a political biography of general Kruls, a Dutch senior officer who was, after the liberation in 1944-5 (we were liberated in parts), the chief of staff of the Military Authority. This institution had the task to get civil authority and organizations going again, oversee the “purification” of civil administration (there were quite a number of collaborators who had to be removed) and make sure the country did not fall prey to communism. All this amidst political chaos; the government was still in exile in London, parliament had not met for 5 years, and in what is now Indonesia a rebellion against the Dutch colonists started to speed up. To get a grip on all this I spend a lot of time in our National Archives, read old newspapers, and spend a considerable amount of time drinking tea with ladies and gentlemen in their nineties who try to remember what it was like, back in the 1940s. A slightly disconcerting aspect of this research is that quite a few of my respondents have died within a year of having been interviewed by me, so I spend a lot of time cycling the hills and rowing on the Maas to forget about these victims of research.

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