Special Issue

Government and Coalition Formation

Message from the Guest Editor

In parliamentary democracies, political parties bargain over the allocation of cabinet portfolios when forming coalition governments. For this reason, most theoretical models of government formation focus on the assumption that agents (the legislative parties) are primarily office-seeking. However, office-motivated politicians are interested not only in maximizing their office benefits but also in minimizing the "transaction costs" of the bargaining process over the government coalition policy. Two major research areas of government formation have emerged from this consideration. On the one hand, what coalition of parliamentary parties is more likely to form and what are the features, as size, ideological congruence, or previous government experience, that determine whether a coalition is more likely to emerge? One the other hand, what features make a government coalition more likely to survive and be stable?

Guest Editor

Dr. Anna Bassi

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC, USA

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Editors-in-Chief

Prof. Dr. Ulrich Berger
WU Vienna, Department of Economics, Welthandelsplatz 1, 1020 Wien,
Austria

Prof. Dr. Kjell Hausken
Faculty of Science and Technology, University of Stavanger, 4036
Stavanger, Norway

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