Measurement

by Levente Littvay (Central European University)

15 – 22 – 26 April 2021 (10:00 – 13:00)

Register [online](#)

Contact: Monika.Rzemieniecka@eui.eu

Measurement is a topic that, with few exceptions, receives less attention in political science than adjacent fields like psychology. This is a mistake. Careful **conceptualization** and **operationalization** is a crucial part of **empirical** analysis both in **qualitative** and **quantitative** research approaches. This workshop is designed to raise awareness to the issue of measurement and to equip its participants with both theoretical and empirical **tools** to carefully think about how to conceptualize, operationalize and measure their **constructs** of interest.

This course is designed for online delivery. It consists of (1) **readings**: readings that we can discuss are available on the Brightspace platform (more info here: https://mycourses.eui.eu/d2l/le/lessons/7853/units/22632), (2) pre-meeting **video lectures**: expositions of readings we cover mostly in the form of a conversation with the authors or other experts of the topic. (These videos will be formatted so that they can also be casually listened to in a podcast style and do not necessarily have to be watched.) Finally, we will have three **meetings** (2 x 75 minutes each) to discuss the topics further, or, in the case of the last session, do some hands-on work.

The *first* session will focus on the theories of measurement. Starting from **Sartori**, going through **qualitative** and **quantitative** conceptions of operationalization, **reliability** and **validity**. In the *second* session we follow the evolution of conceptualization and measurement strategies of a specific concept: **populist attitudes**. This was selected as it is heavily **contested** (some argue it should not even exist), it is **multidimensional** and it does not follow straightforward rules of **conceptual aggregation** of its underlying sub-facets. (It also helps that I have personally done research on its measurement.) Through this case study we will think about the problems that emerge from conceptualization to measurement. Finally, in the *third* session we will review the empirical tools, mostly borrowed from **psychometrics**, that are commonly used in measurement studies: **reliability** analysis, exploratory **factor analysis**, structural equation models such as confirmatory factor analysis and **measurement invariance** approaches. (This review will be done in *R*, though the focus will be more on the tools and less on the specific code that utilizes these tools. It is worth joining the workshop even if you are not on top of your *R* game.)