
Sant'Anna Political Science Seminars

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Sant'Anna School of
Advanced Studies

A Generative Theory of Party Systems

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I present a generative model of party systems. For a given system size N , the model generates shares and positions of parties on an economic left-right dimension. The model first generates shares with a mean vector as described in Taagepera and Allik (2003) drawn from a Dirichlet distribution as described in Cohen and Hanretty (2024). Positions are then drawn according to four mechanisms. The model is trained on data from over 300 elections. I discuss the implications of this generative model for party system congruence and for polarization.

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