



# IBEI RESEARCH SEMINAR

22 May 2015, 2pm  
Room 24.120 – IBEI (1<sup>st</sup> Floor)

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## *Between Politicization and Independence: Agencies and Parties in the Regulatory State*

The past decades have seen a dramatic increase in the number of regulatory agencies (RAs) across countries and policy domains. To establish credible regulatory regimes, many RAs are formally shielded from direct political influence and thus enjoy high levels of legal autonomy. The consequences of this development for politicization are twofold. On the one hand, granting formal independence to an agency erects an institutional barrier that makes politicization harder. On the other hand, formal independence also generates strong incentives to appoint ideologically likeminded individuals to the agency leadership. An analysis of top-level appointments to over 100 regulatory agencies in 16 West European countries between 1996 and 2013 shows that individuals with ties to a government party are much more likely to be appointed as formal agency independence increases. However, the analysis also shows that high levels of agency independence protect incumbent agency CEOs with opposition ties from early removal. While agency independence may therefore increase politicization in the appointment process, the empirical evidence also suggests that it constrains politically motivated removal of agency managers.

### **Dr. Laurenz Ennser-Jedenastik**

Laurenz Ennser-Jedenastik is Assistant Professor at the Department of Government in the University of Vienna. Studies in political science at the University of Vienna (Diplom in April 2010, Doktorat in January 2013). From September 2009 to March 2013 researcher with the AUTNES Supply Side at the Department of Government (University of Vienna). In 2013, he was Erwin-Schrödinger-Fellow at Leiden University. His research interests are Political Parties, Coalition Research, Political & Administrative Elites, Political Appointments, Party Patronage, Regulatory Agencies. He has published in *European Journal of Political Research*, *Party Politics*, *West European Politics*, and *Governance* among others.

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