Birmingham Perspective

The School of Government and Societies contribution to the Birmingham perspective include:

Latest perspectives:

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Written by Dr David White. "The key challenge for Russia's broad opposition movement is to maintain consistently high levels of protest by mobilising passive opponents of the regime – not just as a response to specific events and outside of election periods."

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Dr George Kyris and Dr Sotirios Zartaloudis reflect on Syriza's victory in the Greek election and discuss what it might mean for the rest of Europe.

Thursday 5th February 2015

The arrival (and departure) of the parliamentary single-termers (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/parliamentary-single-termers-game.aspx)

Written by Chris Game. Chris reflects on those MPs leaving the Commons, adding to the standard categories of Seniority, Sin, or Stash.

Tuesday 20th January 2015

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Open all sections

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Tuesday 20th January 2015

2014

25 years after the Velvet Revolution, Czechs and Slovaks still search for truth and love (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/velvet-revolution.aspx)

Written by Dr Tim Haughton. It's now 25 years since the Velvet Revolution, or as it is known to Slovaks, the Gentle Revolution. At the time, Czechoslovak citizens congregated on the square to jangle their keys and express their support for change. They were ready to end communist rule and move towards democracy.

Monday 17th November 2014

The big winner of the congressional elections is... Hillary Clinton (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/hillary-clinton.aspx)

Written by Professor Scott Lucas. The new Senate majority leader, Mitch McConnell, proclaimed his party would 'turn the country around' after Republicans gained seven seats in the Senate and extended its advantage in the House of Representatives. However, beyond the rhetoric, there may be a far different story and a different victor from Tuesday night's vote: Hillary Clinton, the likely Democratic nominee for the 2016 presidential election.

Monday 10th November 2014

Jerusalem, Israeli settlements and why a third intifada could be about to kick off (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/jerusalem-israeli-settlements.aspx)

Written by Dr Asaf Siniver. Does this month's escalation in violence in Jerusalem and the West Bank mean that a third intifada – a Palestinian uprising against the Israel's occupation, following those of 1987 and 2000 – is imminent? The latest events in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict prove that the next round could kick off at any moment.

Friday 31st October 2014

Japan's Shinzo Abe will struggle to recover from ministerial scandal (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/japan-ministerial-scandal.aspx)

Written by Dr Julie Gilson. In a country that has had nine leaders since 2000, Japan's prime minister Shinzo Abe appeared to have found the recipe for longevity. But the resignation of two ministers from his government has left him in serious trouble.

Thursday 23rd October 2014

China-India border tension risks escalating into more intense conflict (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/china-india.aspx)

Written by Dr Tsering Topgyal. "Earlier this month the Chinese president, Xi Jinping, concluded a three-day trip to India. As he set off to meet Narendra Modi, Xi wrote in The Hindu that China and India "need to become co-operation partners."

Wednesday 8th October 2014

Lack of trust and tit-for-tat escalation brings Ukraine to the brink of all-out war with Russia (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/ukraine-russia-conflict.aspx)

Written by Professor Stefan Wolff and Professor Tatyana Malyarenko (Professor of Public Administration at Donetsk State Management University). The renewed escalation of the Ukrainian crisis, following the shooting down of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17, shows no sign of abating. Fighting in the east has continued both in and around the rebel stronghold of Donetsk and at the Russian-Ukrainian border where, according to reports, Russia has now started shelling Ukrainian military positions.

Tuesday 29th July 2014

Flight MH17 and Russia's 'little green men' (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/russia-mh17.aspx)

Written by Dr Kataryna Wolczuk. "The shooting down of the Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777 in Eastern Ukraine on 17 July has placed the conflict which has engulfed that part of Ukraine into an entirely new context. It has transformed the event from a localised, regional rebellion into a crisis that brings Russia's role into the open, writes Kataryna Wolczuk, of the Centre for Russian and European Studies."

Wednesday 23rd July 2014

A divided Ukraine could see two radically different states emerge (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/divided-ukraine.aspx)

Written by Dr Richard Connolly. "It is increasingly difficult to predict what the future holds for Ukraine. One scenario sees the country becoming divided along roughly ethnic lines, with an ethnic Ukrainian western state and a more Russia-oriented eastern state comprising today's southern and eastern Ukraine. So what would the economies of these potential new states look like?"

Wednesday 5th March 2014

Ariel Sharon dies at 85 after decades as polarising presence (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/ariel-sharon.aspx)

Written by Dr Asaf Siniver. "Described by Ronald Reagan as 'a bellicose man who seemed to be chomping at the bit to start a war' and by George W Bush as "a man of peace", few contemporary figures could match Sharon's talent for invoking such contradictory sentiments by two American presidents."

Friday 24th January 2014

2013

Autumn Statement 2013 - Response (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/autumn-statement-2013-response.aspx)

We asked six leading academics for their response to the government's Autumn Statement and the likely impact it could have on everything from taxes to local service provision, the high street to personal wealth.

Tuesday 10th December 2013

Autumn Statement 2013 - Expert Opinions (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/autumn-statement-2013.aspx)

We asked six leading academics for their expert opinions on this week's Autumn Statement and the likely impact it could have on everything from taxes to local service provision, the high street to personal wealth.

Wednesday 4th December 2013

The true impact of migration for the UK (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/immigration.aspx)

As immigration tops the news agenda yet again, three University of Birmingham academics examine the real issues behind the headlines and the true impact of migration for the UK.

Monday 21st October 2013

Testing the Diplomatic Path with Iran in Geneva (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/iran-diplomacy-wheeler.aspx)

Written by Professor Nicholas J. Wheeler. "Speaking before the UN General Assembly on 24 September, US president Barack Obama said that he was 'encouraged' that Iran's new president Hassan Rouhani was charting a course that could lead to a 'meaningful agreement' on the nuclear issue. But Obama cautioned that 'conciliatory words will have to be matched by actions that are transparent and verifiable.'"

Monday 21st October 2013

The ethics of warfare part 3: How does drone warfare change the debate? (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/drones.aspx)

Professor Stefan Wolff: "Much of the current debate about drones (or unmanned aerial vehicles, UAVs) is about whether their deployment to countries like Pakistan and Yemen is legal or ethical. This debate is predominantly focused on armed drones and their use to carry out targeted and signature strikes against known or suspected terrorists and insurgents."

Monday 23rd September 2013

Alexei Navalny and the battle for Moscow (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/russian-mayoral-election.aspx)

Ahead of Moscow's mayoral elections, Dr David White discusses the prospects of candidate Alexei Navalny, the only serious contender to challenge the pro-Putin incumbent, Sergei Sobyanin. Portrayed glowingly in the Western media, and with his sights set on the presidential elections of 2018, he divides opinion among Russia's disparate and fragmented opposition.

Friday 13th September 2013

Commons vote on Syria is a first step in the right direction (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/syria-vote.aspx)

Professor Stefan Wolff discusses the debate and vote in the British House of Commons on Syria and how it has demonstrated how little common ground there is between supporters and opponents of military action against the Assad regime in response to the use of chemical weapons.

Friday 30th August 2013

Military Intervention in Syria: the worst or just one among many bad options? (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/syria-military.aspx)

"As Western rhetoric and resolve to 'do something' over the use of chemical weapons last week in Syria harden, one of the increasingly dominant logics is that with all other means exhausted, a military intervention of some sort is the last resort."

Friday 30th August 2013

Syria casts its shadow as G8 leaders gather (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/syria-stefan-wolff.aspx)

Professor Stefan Wolff: Where does all this leave Syria and its people? The short answer is "on their own". The pursuit of self-interest by powerful outsiders overlaps only marginally with what Syrians need in order to achieve an end to the violence they have suffered for more than two years now.

Friday 21st June 2013

Foreign aid and whether breaking the 0.7% promise really matters (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/foreign-aid-jiesheng-li.aspx)

"At the last UK general election all three main parties pledged to spend 0.7% of Gross National Income on foreign aid. The 2010 Coalition government's agreement not only ratified this figure but vowed to "enshrine this commitment in law". Three years on, this bill has still not been enacted by parliament and was notably missing from the 2013 Queen's Speech."

Friday 31st May 2013

Local Elections 2013 (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/local-elections-2013.aspx)

Voters in 27 county councils and seven unitary authorities will head to the polls on Thursday 02 May. With 2,362 seats up for grabs, four INLOGOV academics examine the key issues.

Thursday 2nd May 2013

Thatcherism: A phrase coined here in Birmingham (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/thatcher-peter-kerr.aspx)

The debate over Mrs Thatcher's legacy is one of the most important political debates of our time. At stake is not simply an evaluation of recent history; it is as much about the current and future direction of Britain as it is about the past. Birmingham perspective by Dr Peter Kerr.

Thursday 11th April 2013

Libya two years on: The management of contemporary security challenges (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/stefan-wolff-libya-perspective.aspx)

Professor Stefan Wolff's perspective piece, reflecting on Libya two years after the NATO's military intervention in the country.

Monday 18th March 2013

Libya two years on: the African Union perspective (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/libya-two-years-on.aspx)

Professor Paul Jackson's perspective piece, reflecting on Libya two years after the NATO's military intervention in the country.

Monday 18th March 2013

2012

Autumn Statement 2012 (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/autumn-statement-2012.aspx)

Ahead of the government's Autumn Statement on Wednesday December 5, we ask six leading academics what they hope will be included and what the impact might be for everything from business and manufacturing to the high street and personal wealth.

Tuesday 4th December 2012

Birmingham perspective: Georgia's Parliamentary Elections - Democracy in Action? (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/georgias-parliamentary-elections-kemoklidze2.aspx)

"There is no doubt that the Parliamentary elections held in Georgia this autumn yielded to a new era in the country's politics. Despite the fact that it was the 8th Parliamentary elections conducted in the small post-Soviet state since 1990, they have been dubbed as 'landmark' and 'historic' since it is the first time that the transfer of power in Georgia has occurred through free and fair elections." Written by Nino kemoklidze, CREES PhD researcher.

Thursday 29th November 2012

Birmingham Perspective: UK aid to Rwanda (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/andrew-mitchell-dbeswick2.aspx)

"The question that must be answered is this: on what basis did Andrew Mitchell make the decision to restore UK aid to Rwanda?" by Dr Danielle Beswick, lecturer in International Development

Wednesday 17th October 2012

A new future for Egypt: Reflections on the Muslim Brotherhood's election victory (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/impact/perspective/reflections.aspx)

"On Sunday 24 June 2012, Egypt's presidential election commission announced that Muslim Brotherhood (MB) candidate Dr Mohamed Morsi won the presidency, defeating ex-premier Ahmed Shafiq. Morsi has thus become the first Islamist to be elected head of an Arab state." - Dr Michelle Pace

Monday 2nd July 2012

Birmingham Perspective: Elected mayor referendum (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/elected-mayor-bottom.aspx)

"Analysis in the aftermath of the referenda suggests that a number of factors contributed to the 'no' votes, but it is clear that the overriding sentiments within the electorate were uncertainty and confusion." Read the perspective...

Thursday 17th May 2012

Building Mutual Nuclear Security with Iran (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/nuclear-security.aspx)

Professor Nicholas Wheeler: "A fundamental problem of international politics is that we can rarely be sure whether we are dealing with aggressive or defensive states. Mutual security is possible between defensive states, and aggressors can only be balanced or deterred. But confusing these two types of states carry risks for national welfare and international security."

Monday 30th April 2012

Impact of Events in Egypt on the EU: Can any lessons be learnt from the Arab Spring? (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/impact/thebirminghambrief/items/2012/02/Impact-of-Events-in-Egypt-on-the-EU-Can-any-lessons-be-learnt-from-the-Arab-Spring.aspx)

2011 was a truly historical turning point – it was a year which fundamentally changed the European Union's (EU) previous assumption about the Middle East and North African (MENA) region – that the fall of Arab autocrats was not imminent and that the dictators of the region would remain the partners to cooperate with in the near future. The Arab Spring events in Tunisia, Egypt, and beyond since December 2010 have successfully challenged the institutional order. Egypt is now embarking on a long and uncertain journey towards a more democratic future. But questions remain regarding the role of the EU towards nascent democracies.

Friday 23rd March 2012

The Birmingham Perspective... The politics of sporting mega events (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/sport-grix.aspx)

"The London Olympics will undoubtedly be a spectacular success and bring with it a number of memorable sporting moments. Beyond the two weeks of action, however, it is worth reflecting on the increasingly political use of sport by a wide variety of states throughout the world."

Friday 6th January 2012

2011

Research diaries: Week in Nepal - six months on (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/blogs/nepal-six-months-on.aspx)

Six months ago Professor Paul Jackson visited Nepal as part of a long term project for the UK's Department for International Development and an international NGO, Saferworld. As an adviser to the secretariat he was charged with managing the Maoist combatants following the ten year war in Nepal. Professor Jackson had previously spent a week in Nepal in March/April 2011|, the following blog is concerning his return to the country.

Thursday 3rd November 2011

Perspectives: Three questions for Libya and one on the region (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/impact/perspective/libya-gaddafi.aspx)

"As Colonel Gaddafi's 42 years in charge of Libya draw to a seemingly climactic end – the dramatic scenes in Tripoli leave a series of questions that need to be urgently answered."

Friday 26th August 2011

Research diaries: Week in Nepal (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/blogs/nepal.aspx)

This visit to Nepal is part of a longer term project for the UK's Department for International Development and an international NGO, Saferworld. It supports me (Paul Jackson) as an adviser to the secretariat charged with managing the Maoist combatants following the ten year war in Nepal. Since the Comprehensive peace Agreement in 2006, the Maoist Army has been held in cantonments and, as part of the peace agreement, there have been discussions about what to do with them.

Friday 1st April 2011

Alternative Vote: An end to wasted votes and a triumph for democracy? (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/debate/av.aspx)

Dr Karin Bottom: "The Liberal Democrats have long voiced a wish to replace the UK's Single Member Plurality voting system, more commonly termed First Past the Post (FPTP), arguing that it discriminates against smaller parties by failing to convert their votes into seats.". Dr Peter Kerr: "Many keen supporters of electoral reform and, indeed, any constitutional reform agenda which aims to strengthen processes of representation and accountability, may find it difficult to feel overly excited about the prospect of the introduction of the Alternative Vote (AV) for UK general elections."

Wednesday 2nd March 2011

Birmingham debate: The Big Society: Can a Government change behaviour? (/schools/government-society/departments/political-science-international-studies/news/2011/02/big-society-can-government-change-behaviour.aspx)

Amidst recent controversy over how to get people to volunteer in the 'big society', Professor Kathryn Ecclestone and Dr Will Leggett outline some of the tricky questions that confront a government hoping to find effective ways to change our behaviour.

Friday 11th February 2011

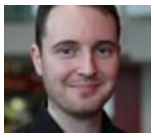
2010

Is WikiLeaks right to release confidential information? (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/debate/wikileaks.aspx)

Professor Scott Lucas: "The US State Department announced on Tuesday that it will host UNESCO's World Press Freedom Day event. On the same day, the US Government was pressing companies to withdraw technical, communications and financial services from WikiLeaks in the hope that it would knock the website out of existence.". Professor Stefan Wolff: "Misguided, irresponsible, reprehensible! These are just some of the words used by critics to describe the latest set of releases on the website, WikiLeaks. But is this more than hurt pride and should we really care one way or the other?".

Wednesday 15th December 2010

US midterm elections 2010 (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/debate/us-midterm.aspx)



What are the implications for Obama's Presidency? Professor Scott Lucas: "Nobody won on Tuesday evening in the US elections. That might seem a strange statement, given the biggest Republican gains in the House of Representatives since 1948 and some high-profile victories in the Senate as well as state governor's campaigns.". Dr Adam Quinn: "Are there times when it's better to secure a medium-sized victory than go all the way to maximal electoral triumph? For the Republican Party, this may be just such an instance and a perfect night, for two reasons."

Friday 5th November 2010

The Big Society debate (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/perspective/debate/big-society.aspx)

Launched in the 2010 Conservative manifesto, the 'Big Society' is an integral part of the UK coalition Government. But can the idea of taking power away from the state and the radical transformation of public services to empower local communities really work?

Friday 8th October 2010

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