

Working Programme

Polarized Democracies: New Lines of Division in Europe

11-12 June 2026

MIDEM Research Centre, Würzburgerstr. 46, 01187 Dresden

Thursday, 11 June 2026

13.00 – 14.00

Arrival & Registration

Foyer / Meeting area

14.00 – 14.15

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Prof. Dr. Hans Vorländer (Director MIDEM)

14.15 – 15.45

Panel 1 – Behavioral and Observational Measures of Polarization

The Effect of Polarization in a Behavioral Experiment

Dirk Stierand & Jan Sauermann (University of Oldenburg)

Dictator Game and Polarization (working title)

Felix Hormig & Cyrill Otteni (MIDEM, TU Dresden)

Cross-Ideological Vote Splitting (working title)

Thomas Tichelbaecker, Lea Portmann & Daniel Auer
(Chemnitz University of Technology)

Do Referendums create issue-based Affective Polarization? Evidence from the 2026 Hamburg Olympic Referendum

Nelly Buntfuß & Arndt Leininger
(Chemnitz University of Technology)

15.45 – 16.15

Coffee break

16.15 – 17.45

Panel 2 – Affective Polarization: Mechanisms, Perceptions, and Normative Repertoires

Partisan Animosity Ideological Asymmetries and Democratic Support across Three European Countries

Gabriela Chehab & Mariano Torcal
(University of Pompeu Fabra Barcelona)

When Reason Bows to Emotion: Affective Polarization and Cognitive Bias in Party Evaluation

Sandro Lüscher (University of Zurich)

How the Political Becomes Personal: Exploring Citizens' Accounts of Out-group Dislike in a Context of Issue-based Affective Polarization

Lena Röllicke (Justus Liebig University Gießen)

Christianity as a Boundary Marker: Religious Framing and Affective Polarisation in Europe

Lucienne Engelhardt (University of Münster)

17.45 – 18.00

Break / transition

18.30 – 20.30

Workshop dinner

Garden

Friday, 12 June 2026

09.00 – 09.30

Arrival & Coffee

Foyer / Meeting area

09.30 – 11.00

Panel 3 – Migration, Radical Right Mobilization and Party Competition

Mobilizing for Remigration: Insights from Italy

Federico Taddei & Mattia Zulianello

(University of Milan / University of Trieste)

Reforms welcome? Evidence on the nature of asylum backlash and orderly admissions as a remedy

Tobias Hillenbrand (Maastricht University)

Immigration and the Radical Right in Portugal and Spain

Mariana Mendes (MIDEM, TU Dresden)

Using Migration to Rule: Aliança Catalana and Externalised Populism in Catalonia

Diego Caballero-Vélez & Leonardo Puleo

(University of Latvia / Université Libre de Bruxelles)

11.00 – 11.30

Coffee break

11.30 – 13.00

Panel 4 – Media, Discourse and Discursive Boundary-Making

Media Debates on Migration during Italy's 2018 Election

Catalina Meirosu (University of Bucharest)

Types of Intolerance in Elites' Political Rhetoric: A Proof of Concept for Studying the Targeting of Minorities

Caterina Mosca & Jérémy Dodeigne (University of Namur)

Ukrainian Refugees in German Online Media

Kristina Chmelar (MIDEM, TU Dresden)

Gendered Boundary-Making and Political Polarization in German Migration Debates

Heinrike Rustenbeck, Hennes Bollmeier & Heleen Matton
(University of Jena / Haus SoVi Leipzig / Humboldt University Berlin)

13.00 – 13.15

End of the Workshop

MIDEM