

**EPIC**  
**Second Cohort, 1<sup>st</sup> Advanced Research Workshop**  
**Corfu, 24 – 29 May, 2001**

**Structure of project proposal**

Below is the ideal model that we would like you to follow when presenting your research project to EPIC. Many of you may have problems following the outline, but try to stay as close to it as possible, since that will make it accessible even for those who are not directly working in your area.

**Your proposal should not be more than 3 pages.**

If it is longer, we will have to ask you to submit a more concise version !

**Deadline for submission is May 1 !**

If you require more information, take a look at these two books:

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sydney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Van Evera, Stephen. 1997. *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*. Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press.

**1. Theory / model.** What are you trying to explain?

- Question to be researched:
  - what is your empirical question or puzzle ?
- Historical / Economic / Political relevance:
  - Why is this question / puzzle important to research ?
- Theoretical Relevance:
  - What has been written on the question / puzzle ?
  - What is 'inadequate' that prompts the researcher to research it ?
- Proposed alternative theoretical solution:
  - What are the causal claims you are interested in?
  - What is the simplest model you can propose?
- Theoretical significance of the research:
  - Why do you like the model / In what ways is your model superior to what existed in the field / how does it advance our knowledge of the problem that you analyse ?
- Historical / Policy significance of the research
  - What policy implications can we draw from this research ?
  - How and where can they be applied ?
  - How could it change the policy making process and / or policy output and outcomes ?

## **2. Methodology: How to explain? Or what evidence you marshal to prove your point.**

### **2.1. Research designs:**

There are four basic conclusive research designs; make clear which one you are choosing for your project and why. Sometimes you rely on combinations of designs –make that explicit in your text and presentation.

#### *2.1.1. Critical or limiting case study*

- select a case where all the antecedent conditions for a theory to be right are present and then show that the data contradict (even in this most likely world) the theory; or
- inversely, select a case where none or very few of the antecedent conditions are present and demonstrate that here the data support your argument.

#### *2.1.2. Comparative method for 2 countries*

- **Most similar** cases design: Countries are similar in many respects; yet they differ on some crucial dimension(s) of interest to you.
- **Most dissimilar** cases design: Countries are dissimilar in many respects; yet they are similar on some crucial dimension(s) of interest to you.

#### *2.1.3. Multi-variate analysis*

A research design which builds on statistical analysis of many cases, clearly defined independent and dependent variables, and which is particularly suited for research questions where the effects of individual variables can easily be evaluated.

#### *2.1.4. Modelling*

Set out a few theoretical principles and deduce outcomes from those principles. This method may or may not be followed up with statistical analysis to check the outcomes against the data.

### **2.2. Sample: countries and time period**

**Countries:** on what bases are they similar or dissimilar?

**Time period:** which historical period(s) will you analyse and why?

- Synchronic? Similar shocks or events?
- Diachronic? Different historical periods within/ across countries? If so, make sure your case has both a beginning and an end.

### **2.3. Data and data sources: where will you get the necessary information?**