Invitation to the Lauder School of Government, Diplomacy and Strategy Faculty Seminar

A lecture by:

Dr. Jacky Zvulun
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On:
The implementation of the “new” electoral system in New Zealand local elections in the 21st century

Monday, May 23rd 2011, 11:45 a.m., Faculty Club

Abstract:
Participation in elections is a significant exercise in democracy for both citizens and their representatives. Elections can be at the national level or local level. However at a local level, citizens may have a better chance of engaging with democracy; voting locally may advance their political skills and may reinforce wider aspects of democracy, including participation at national level, yet, at a local level, generally speaking, turnout has tended to decline further than at a national level. (Hajnal & Lewis, 2003)

In New Zealand, the discussion around elections at the local level has not yet generated significant debate. The local level case study may improve the understanding of both voter turnout, and the nature of New Zealand democracy. There has been a change in the electoral system at the national level from FPTP to MMP in 1996. At local level there has been an opportunity to change the electoral system from FPTP to STV. From 2004, New Zealand local elections were unique in the world in that local councils can choose to use two different electoral systems: plurality majority and proportional representation. This presents a great opportunity to study more about New Zealand local elections and the changes in the electoral systems.

This lecture is seeking to fill that gap by examining local electoral participation in New Zealand. It will explain the process of the implementation of different electoral system, the Single Transferable Vote (STV) at the local level.

“The choice of a particular type of electoral system depends on the society that has to use it, on the nature of its institutions and on the relationships among its political forces”.

(Duverger 1984, 36)

The lecture will be conducted in English.

To the Seminar Homepage: www.idc.ac.il/lauderschoolseminar
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