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## **About the *Kolleg-Forschergruppe* (KFG)**

The diffusion of ideas has become a central research theme in political science, sociology, law, history, and economics. The Kolleg-Forschergruppe (KFG) investigates how ideas spread across time and space. During its first phase of research, from 2008 to 2012, the KFG studied the diffusion of policy ideas and institutions within the European Union (EU) and its candidates and neighborhood. During the second phase, from 2012-2016, the KFG realigns its focus of interest on the diffusion of ideas, policies, and institutions beyond Europe (comparative regionalism) and the analysis of the EU at the receiving end of external influences.

The *Kolleg-Forschergruppe* is a funding program launched by the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft-DFG) in 2008. As a Research College, it is intended to provide a scientifically stimulating environment in which innovative research topics can be dealt with by discourse and debate within a small group of senior and junior researchers.

## EDITORIAL



Prof. Tanja A. Börzel & Prof. Thomas Risse

*Dear friends and colleagues of the Kolleg-Forscherguppe,*

Welcome to the eleventh edition of our newsletter informing you about what is going on at the Research College “The Transformative Power of Europe”!

As usual, you will find an overview of the ongoing activities at the KFG in this edition. In the last months the KFG was again very active and numerous events took place. One of the most important and prestigious events were the [KFG International Conferences 2013 and 2014](#) which have been aiming at developing the first Oxford

Handbook on Comparative Regionalism. Other workshops discussed “Western-centrism” of IR theories (“[Studying International Relations Scholarship beyond the West: Between Divides and Diversity](#)”) or shed light on the newly detected phenomenon on overlapping regionalism (“[Dealing with Overlapping Regionalism - Complementary or Competitive Strategies?](#)”). With the [KFG-CIFE Studentag](#) a very different type of event was held and gave student from all over the world a direct insight into the work of the KFG.

Furthermore, if you had the chance to participate in the FLACSO-ISA conference, held in Buenos Aires this year, we would be happy to welcome you at the KFG reception! You will find the [announcement and further details](#) regarding the reception inside this newsletter.

Yet [another contribution](#) in this edition honors Professor Stephan Clarkson’s research agenda and his current projects. He is a Konrad Adenauer Research Award winner and currently supporting the KFG with his expertise. Moreover, the new research project MAXCAP has been bearing fruits in the first year after its launch. Please find a [project review](#) which refers to some of the yielded highlights so far. Last but not least, Frank Schimmelfennig discusses the phenomenon and the relating impact of the so called “[Spitzenkandidaten](#)” for the European Parliament. With the help of this elaborated background report you will see clearly that even though the election of the European Parliament is over, the political decision processes have just started!

We hope that you enjoy reading this newsletter edition!

Best regards,

*Tanja A. Börzel*

*Thomas Risse*

**Research Directors**

## ANNOUNCEMENT

# KFG Reception At The FLACSO-ISA 2014

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

We kindly invite you to

the **FLACSO-ISA 2014 Reception of the Research College (KFG) "The Transformative Power of Europe"**, Thursday, July 24, 6:00 pm, at the University of Buenos Aires, School of Economics, conference building, room "SUM".

The KFG Research Directors **Tanja A. Börzel** and **Thomas Risse** will give a keynote speech on comparative regionalism at the reception.

It would be a pleasure to welcome you on this occasion and see you in Buenos Aires! (No RSVP required).

## REPORT

# KFG International Conferences 2013 and 2014 on Comparative Regionalism

*December 12-13, 2013, and June 6-7, 2014 in Berlin – written by Luisa Linke*

In contrast to previous years, the annual international conference of December 2013 "Comparative Regionalism: Towards A New Research Agenda" was an authors' conference in preparation for the first Oxford Handbook of Comparative Regionalism, co-edited by KFG research directors Tanja A. Börzel and Thomas Risse. The June 2014 conference "Oxford Handbook of Comparative Regionalism" continued this process. In a familiar and constructive environment, 20 authors, various KFG fellows and PhD students from the Berlin Graduate School of Transnational Studies were engaged in lively and fruitful debates on the state of the art of comparative regionalism. This field has been quickly expanding since the end of the Cold War when inter-state activities vastly increased at the regional level, and both regional and sub-regional groupings of states seemed

to gain momentum as a way of cooperation to ensure peace, stability, wealth and justice. Since this surge of regionalism worldwide has attracted growing scholarly attention, it seemed to be the right time to revisit the development and findings of the scholarly field and to develop a future research agenda.

As the first of a total of three authors' conferences, the December conference's major aim was to lay groundwork for the process to come: to find common grounds with regard to conceptual understandings central to the book, to focus and consolidate the direction of the chapters, and to develop a concrete agenda. Most importantly, the conference was to formulate both empirically and theoretically grounded questions and problems central to the field that would guide the book's sections,

rather than to find specific answers. Based on these issues, the June conference moved on to discussing draft chapters.

Both conferences were organized in six panels. In the *introductory panel*, Fredrik Söderbaum presented his view on the historic development of the field starting from the 1960s with European integration, continuing with New Regionalism Approaches of the 1990s and the currently growing debate on comparative regionalism.

Hancock/Alexander Libman), Asia (Anja Jetschke/Saori Katada), Northern Africa and the Middle East (Vera van Hüllen) and Sub-Saharan Africa (Christof Hartmann). In these panels, the most pressing issue was the very definition of the specific region: What defines the region and where and what are its borders? Also: How does regionalism look like in this specific region? Which developments are driving the regionalism process, in which policy fields does regional cooperation and integration occur, and how high is the degree of institutionalization?



The KFG Conferences at Seminaris Camus Hotel Berlin aimed at revisiting the development and findings of the scholarly field so far and at developing a future research agenda.

Credit: Businessfotografie Inga Haar

As a central question of this chapter, the debate evolved around where to locate comparative regionalism within the social sciences and what should be part of the field, both with regard to time and discipline. Etel Solingen and Joshua Malnight continued with the interplay between globalization, domestic politics, regional order and regional institutions.

The following two panels were devoted to *regionalisms around the world* discussing the findings of the scholarly fields on different parts of the world: North America (Francesco Duina), Latin America (Andrea Bianculli), Europe (Frank Schimmelfennig), Eurasia (Kathleen

What role do specific states play, especially regional leaders or hegemons? What is the role of regional identities and culture in the development of regionalism? These are just a few of many challenging questions voiced in the discussion.

The next panels adopted a sectoral approach and examined *regional governance*. A large range of issue areas was covered, from security governance (Arie Kacowicz/Galia Press-Bar-Nathan), trade governance (Soo Yeon Kim/Edward Mansfield/Helen Milner) and monetary and financial governance (Kathleen McNamara) to environmental governance (Peter Haas), development

governance (Laszlo Bruszt/Stefano Palestini Céspedes), human rights and democracy (Jon Pevehouse) and social and gender equality governance (Anna van der Vleuten). Apart from aiming at a clear definition of the policy field, these panels formulated questions of cross-regional comparison: How does regional governance in this specific policy-field look like across the globe with regard to institutional design and both depth and scope of cooperation? How can we compare different governance regimes across regions and how can we explain existing differences?

Cross-cutting themes were covered in two separate panels: First, the panel on *comparing institutions* entailed contributions on institutional structures, rules and decision-making processes (Tobias Lenz/Gary Marks), regional dispute settlement (Karen Alter/Liesbet Hooghe) as well as identities and communities (Jeffrey Checkel). Also, legitimacy, accountability and democracy (Berthold Rittberger) and interregional and transregional cooperation (Andrea Ribeiro-Hofmann) were discussed in this panel. Second, the last panel was directed towards *explaining regionalism*, including theories of integration and cooperation (Tanja A. Börzel), mechanisms of diffusion,

translation and adaptation (Thomas Risse) and non-Western approaches to regionalism (Amitav Archarya).

By the end of the two conferences' presentations and debates, a number of overarching questions and broader challenges had become clear: First, the largest challenge for all panels – and by extension, the field – appeared to be going beyond the well-known cases and including less apparent cases or even non-cases and failures. Yet, what do we consider non-cases and failures? Second, the role of interregional and transregional cooperation and overlapping regionalism was vehemently discussed – how do we account for them? Third, the role of the European case has been debated with regard to policy fields and the cross-cutting themes – how do we ensure that the “seniority” of the European case does not dominate over insight from non-European cases, both empirically and theoretically? Picking up these questions, the discussions on the June conference focused in detail on the development of the individual contributions, whereas the third and final authors' conference on 12-13 December 2014 will bring them together and formulate findings and an outlook.



## REPORT

# KFG & CIFE STUDIENTAG 2014

*Berlin, April 29, 2014 - written by Katja Pomianowicz*

The kick-off of this year's KFG summer term was accompanied by an exceptional event: The KFG & CIFE Studientag. Two weeks after the semester started, on April 29, 2014 the KFG had the pleasure to host around 25 students from the International Master's Program of Advanced European and International Studies, organized by the CIFE (Le Centre international de formation européenne), usually residing in sunny Southern France in Nice. Over the course of one academic year, lecturers and students of this program travel through Europe in order to get to know European and other international organizations. Within this "voyage d'études" the KFG constituted one destination as our research program was of great interest for the students.

Why was this event so special? Well, the audience of KFG workshops and conferences are mostly scholars with a strong background in regionalism research. Presentations are thus usually prepared in a very academic way – sure, that is what characterizes the KFG Research College in the first place. But if the audience changes from one that is highly specialized to a group of culturally diverse and curious master students, the nature of presentations needs to change, too. This made the presentations so special and particularly interesting for newcomers to the current KFG research agenda.

Thus, the aim of this afternoon was to present the KFG and its research program to these master's students. We were really happy to have won over three scholars to present an introduction of the regionalism research field, as well as to present the three different topics they have worked on and are still working on during their time at the KFG.

Majda Ruge, former KFG postdoctoral fellow, opened the event with some welcoming remarks and an introduction of the three presenters. First, Stephen Clarkson, who is a Konrad Adenauer Research Award winner at the KFG, talked about "The Inter-regional Diffusion of Norms and Institutions: The Case of Foreign Investment Protection in the Euro-Americas Triangle". His presentation gave a vivid introduction to the main research field of the second research period of the KFG by means of an illustrative example: The diffusion of foreign investment protection norms and investor-state dispute settlement institutions in the "Pacific Alliance," Latin America's newest region.

Afterwards, Frank Schimmelfennig, who is currently a visiting researcher at the KFG, gave an introduction to the "Differentiated Integration in the EU", a topic that formed the basis of the KFG research and is still relevant within the current research agenda.

KFG co-director Thomas Risse completed the Studientag by shedding light on the overall KFG research on comparative regionalism. Using several examples of how regional organizations are formed and shaped around the world, e.g. via diffusion processes, it was particularly interesting to see that students from all cultural contexts felt addressed when their regions were in focus.

All in all, the Studientag not only helped students to develop a better understanding of what the Research College does. It may also have generated some research interest in a comparatively new research field.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

# Konrad Adenauer Research Award Winner Professor Stephen Clarkson joins the KFG



In September 2013 current KFG Fellow Stephen Clarkson (right) was awarded with the Konrad Adenauer Research Award for his Project "North America's Engagement in a World of Regions: Bilateralism vs. Regionalism in Foreign Investment Protection Regimes (1988-2018)".

Credit: Stephen Clarkson

Professor Stephen Clarkson from the University of Toronto, Canada is a leading scholar of the political economy of North America, thus he has exceptional expertise on that continent's unique regionalism. Having completed his trilogy on the dynamics of North America's processes of both integration and disintegration in 2011, he worked with the KFG as a Visiting Senior Fellow for three months in 2012, when he started developing a five-year project that would connect with the Transformative Power of Europe's broader research program on the inter-regional diffusion of norms and institutions.

The norms he chose to study are the rules contained in foreign investment protection agreements that defend the overseas investments of transnational corporations (TNCs) against host-government measures which affect their subsidiaries' profitability. The associated institutions are the private international investor-state dispute

settlement mechanisms which empower TNCs to seek damages from host governments to compensate for their lost profits. The geographical area he selected for researching the inter-regional diffusion of and resistance to these norms and institutions is the historic triangle formed by Europe, North America, and Latin America.

His project has been greatly strengthened by being granted a Konrad Adenauer Research Award in August 2013. Established during a formal visit to Canada by former Chancellor Helmut Kohl to

honour post-war Germany's first Chancellor, the Konrad Adenauer Research Award is administered and funded by the von Humboldt Foundation to promote academic collaboration between Canada and the Federal Republic of Germany. One such prize is awarded each year to a Canadian in the humanities or social sciences in recognition of the scholar's entire academic record and to support his or her collaboration with academic counterparts in Germany. As official sponsors for Clarkson's award, we are glad to host him at the KFG and to discuss his work that contributes directly to our research agenda.

At the July, 2014 FLACSO-ISA conference in Buenos Aires, Professor Clarkson is contributing a paper on "Including North America in Comparative Regionalism: Researching the International Actorness of Lightly vs. Heavily Institutionalized Regions" to the KFG panel on "Comparing Regionalism around the Globe: Toward a Common Research Agenda."



## REPORT

# The Second Authors' Workshop "Studying International Relations Scholarship beyond the West: Between Divides And Diversity"

*Berlin, 2-3 May 2014 – written by Wiebke Wemheuer-Vogelaar*

**O**n May 2-3 2014, KFG hosted the second author's workshop of the book project "Studying International Relations Scholarship beyond the West: Between Divides and Diversity" in Berlin. The project itself is a result of two seminars on International Relations (IR) scholarship "beyond the West" taught by Dr. Ingo Peters and Wiebke Wemheuer-Vogelaar at Freie Universität Berlin in 2011 and 2013.

The two seminars, titled "Locating the 'I' in IR Theory: Non-Western Contributions to International Relations Scholarship", were inspired by a growing criticism towards the current state of the discipline. The intense engagement with (or the intense discussions about) the global(izing) discipline of IR gradually outgrew the classroom and developed into a publishing project. The aim of this project is to promote teachers' and students' research results by contributing to an edited volume with current intra-disciplinary debates.

In order to discuss the current state of the project and further discuss our objectives, we gathered the authors as well as external discussants from six different countries. While the first day of the workshop was spent engaging in panel discussions regarding the context of the book, the second day was aimed at forming informal "work-groups" to collect lessons learned from Day 1 and discussing a roadmap for the publishing process, as well as discussing other possibilities for the project.

The first workshop day was organized around three panels, arranged according to the book's three sub-sections:

**(1)** Divides of International Relations (theories) in the light of geo-epistemological diversity (Alina Kleinn, ENS Paris, Freie Universität Berlin; Ivan Lydkin, Freie Universität Berlin, MGIMO, Moscow);

**(2)** Characteristics of International Relations (theories) in different locations beyond the West (Chen Yi-Jiin, National Taiwan University, Taipei; Sabine Mokry, Freie Universität Berlin; Julita Dudziak, Jagiellonian University, Cracow; Luisa Linke, Freie Universität Berlin);

**(3)** Theoretical diversity instead of 'concepts that do not fit' (Sandra Bähge, Freie Universität Berlin; Laura Appeltshauer, University College London; Laura Kemmer, Freie Universität Berlin).

Those three sections reflect three different approaches towards dealing with the "Western-centrism" of IR: (1) identifying gatekeeping and "othering" mechanisms, and thus disciplinary divides; (2) engaging with the global diversity of IR theories; (3) unlearning the conceptual and methodological foundations of IR by approaching the discipline from alternative perspectives. Together they aim to overcome the commonly featured divide between the so-called "West" and "non-West" and to re-examine the conceptual and methodological foundations of IR.

After the panelists presented their research projects, external discussants – Christian Bueger (Cardiff University), Michael J. Tierney (College of William and Mary), Daniel Maliniak (University of California, San Diego), and Bilgin Ayata (Freie Universität Berlin) – provided questions and feedback to the panelists, as well as suggestions for the book project in general.

During the second workshop day, those suggestions were further discussed in three intra-panel working groups. After a series of animated discussions and intense feedback, each group developed their own ideas of "unique selling points" for their section of the book and for the volume overall. As a result, the aim of the project was significantly reevaluated and solidified.

Based on the discussions and working session outcomes, the participants closed the workshop with a final, successful plenary session. Given the positive feedback on the innovative potential of both the teaching and publishing project that was provided by participants and discussants alike, the project group decided not only to continue working on the substance of the edited volume

but also to disseminate the lessons learned from the project in a separate publication. A journal article on the pedagogical potential of the teaching project as well as an innovative panel at ISA 2015 are two most recent initiatives of the group and are both a direct result of the May 2014 author's workshop.

## PROJECT REVIEW

# Studying EU Enlargement and the Neighborhood Policy - MAXCAP'S first Accomplishments and Steps ahead

*Written by Julia Langbein, scientific coordinator of MAXCAP*



About a year ago we announced the launch of a new research project at Freie Universität Berlin in the KFG Newsletter. Maximizing the integration capacity of the European Union: Lessons and prospects for enlargement and beyond" (MAXCAP) is coordinated by KFG's director Tanja A. Börzel in cooperation with Antoaneta Dimitrova from Leiden University and funded under the '7th Framework Programme of the European Union'. The key questions our consortium seeks to examine are: How does the EU affect democracy and socio-economic development in the context of Enlargement and the neighbourhood and how can we isolate the EU as an explanatory factor for domestic change? How has enlargement shaped the conditions

for effective decision-making and implementation in the EU? What are the social limits to the EU's integration capacity related to citizens' perceptions of the last and future enlargements? How must the EU's past negotiation strategies in the context of enlargement be adjusted to changing conditions in the EU and the candidate countries? Is the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) successful in bringing countries closer to the EU?

Here are some highlights of what has happened since last spring:

Our partners started to collaborate in various research activities. Our teams from Leiden University, Sofia University and the Balkan Civil Society Network have started broad-scale empirical work in EU member states and current candidates. They have been conducting focus groups in small villages and large cities, asking citizens what they think of the Eastern enlargement and of possible enlargements to come. The team of Sabanci University analyzed Turcoscepticism in the EU, conducted research on the adoption of legislation in Turkey

in accordance with the EU acquis and has started its work on formal modeling of the EU's negotiation strategies during recent and current enlargements. The team of Freie Universität has started to coordinate a comprehensive review of the modes of integration developed and applied by the EU to foster the democratic quality and governance capacity of new member states, current and potential candidates, and the Eastern neighborhood countries. The teams from the EUI and CEU have been



The MAXCAP-Team at Freie Universität Berlin.

Credit: MAXCAP

collecting data on economic upgrading in the candidate and new member states at the national and the sectoral level, analyzing their position in the common European market. Comparative sectoral case studies will look into the mechanisms through which different modes of integration and different strategies exercised by the EU play a role in bringing about specific economic and social outcomes at the sectoral level. Last but not least, the team from ETH Zurich examines the impact of Enlargement on differentiated integration. Accession treaties contain numerous transition arrangements excluding new members from individual benefits of membership but also exempting them from some of the obligations of members. Our colleagues from ETH Zurich investigate the following questions: What drives the differentiated integration of new members? How does the differentiated integration of new members develop after their accession? How does differentiated integration affect policy outcomes both at the EU levels and the national levels?

Our first working papers resulting from ongoing research appeared and can be accessed through our website ([www.maxcap-project.eu](http://www.maxcap-project.eu)). Frank Schimmelfennig's working paper conceptualizes "integration capacity" and develops a dynamic model of enlargement in order to provide a basic framework for analysis for our research project. The working paper written by scholars from

Leiden University and the LSE takes stock of what existing public surveys and academic studies reveal about the state and about the determinants of the opinions, attitudes and evaluations of EU citizens about past and future enlargements of the EU. They conclude that citizens' opinions and perceptions of enlargement should be studied in the context of the discourses which influence them. MAXCAP Working Paper No. 3 by Tanja Börzel assesses the EU's external integration capacity in terms of the political change in new member states, current and potential candidates, and neighborhood countries. She finds that political change in post-communist countries after the end of the Cold War shows overall progress, which is more pronounced and less diverse with regard to democracy than governance capacity. Still, there are significant disparities in democratic quality and governance capacity that mark a rift between the "old" member states in Western Europe and the "new" member states and candidate countries in Eastern Europe, which becomes even more pronounced when the Eastern neighbors of the EU are included in the analysis. The publication of more working papers is currently under way.

The developments in Ukraine have put the EU's policy towards its Eastern neighborhood, one of MAXCAP's research themes, in the spotlight. We and our partners have followed the events closely: Our policy briefing on the Eastern Partnership summit in Vilnius in December

2013 discussed the reasons for the EU's failure to initiate the Association Agreement including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement with Ukraine. Through our blog, hosted and coordinated by our partners from Leiden University, we publish regular posts on the domestic situation in Ukraine as well as on the role Russia and the EU play in the region. In October 2014, some of us will travel to Tbilisi, Georgia to discuss the shortcomings of the European Neighborhood Policy and challenges ahead with experts from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Ukraine. We are keen to learn more about

local reactions to the regional integration offers from Russia and the EU!

*If you would like to be updated about the project's progress and events automatically, please make sure you subscribe to our MAXCAP mailing list via*

**[maxcap@zedat.fu-berlin.de](mailto:maxcap@zedat.fu-berlin.de)**

*or simply check our website: [www.maxcap-project.eu](http://www.maxcap-project.eu)  
Stay in touch!*

## WORKSHOP REPORT

# Dealing With Overlapping Regionalism - Complementary Or Competitive Strategies?

*Written by Merran Hulse (Radboud University Nijmegen), Sören Stapel (Freie Universität Berlin) and Kai Striebinger (Freie Universität Berlin), Workshop Organizers*

**T**oday, nearly every state belongs to several regional organizations (ROs); and these organizations do not have clearly separated mandates.

Overlapping regionalism, conceived of as overlap in both membership and mandate, can be the source of conflict and discord both between states and individual organizations and between organizations. The phenomenon has particularly been discussed in the African context, for instance the Democratic Republic of Congo is a member of nine regional initiatives, but is by no means limited to this world region. We find instances of overlap in all world regions, including Asia, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and the Post-Soviet Space.

While scholars of regionalism and regional integration have long noted the empirical phenomenon of overlap of various regional integration initiatives, the systematic study of overlapping regionalism is still a vast gap in the literature. Participants of the workshop "Dealing with Overlapping Regionalism - Complementary or

Competitive Strategies?" sought to overcome this gap and start a broader debate.

The workshop was opened by a keynote speech from Diana Panke (University of Freiburg) who summarized the sparse state of the art and outlined a more general research agenda on overlapping regionalism based on the contributions to the workshop. Detlef Nolte (GIGA Hamburg) and Frank Mattheis (University of Pretoria) then contributed to the demystification of the 'dysfunction' of overlapping regionalism. Both papers underlined that it may also be possible that overlap is not as problematic as commonly assumed, and may actually serve to reinforce or complement regional and global governance, resulting in more efficient provision of public goods at the national, regional and/or global level.

In a second set of papers, the workshop participants presented insights in the various forms of overlapping regionalism and factors that contribute to the

establishment and evolution of overlapping mandates and institutional designs of regional organizations. Kathy Powers (University of New Mexico) looked at complex interdependencies between regional organizations, focused on treaty linkages. Sören Stapel (Freie Universität Berlin) asked whether overlapping regionalism affects processes of policy and norm diffusion, and if overlapping regionalism even leads to increasing diffusion. Finally, Johannes Muntschick as well as Stephen Kingah (UNU-CRIS Bruges) and Harrison Kalunga Mwilima (Freie Universität Berlin) examined the effect of external actors on the creation of overlapping regionalism, and whether and how these external engagements increase the stalling of regional integration.

How do regional organizations react to overlapping mandates, and what are the consequences of so-called regime complexes? How do organizations with similar mandates cooperate or compete on providing a solution? These questions were taken up by a number of papers in this workshop. Simon Koschut (University of Erlangen-Nürnberg) looked at the interaction of ROs and member states in the field of security co-operation, while Andrea Gawrich (University of Gießen) and Alessandra Russo (Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies) presented a paper on the regional grid points in the Eurasian regional area. Anne Hofmann (GIGA Hamburg) examined UNASUR's sectoral policy-making in the social policy sector under the condition of overlapping regionalism in South and Latin America. Zooming in on the security sector, Yoram Haftel (Hebrew University of Jerusalem) presented his work on regional and security institutions.

Moreover, Anja Jetschke (University of Göttingen) and Kai Striebinger (Freie Universität Berlin) added yet another layer of overlap by also looking at the overlap with global institutions such as the UN and external actors such as former colonial powers.

Another set of papers was interested in the strategies and actions of states with multiple memberships. Under what conditions are actors able to exploit differences between organizational mandates in order to obtain preferential outcomes? Stephen Clarkson (University of Toronto) presented a paper on the newly established Pacific Alliance and Mexico's role as a norm taker from the 'North' and norm promoter to the 'South'. Benjamin Faude (WZB Berlin) examined the forum shopping behavior of states in trade dispute settlement, while Julia Gray (University of Pennsylvania) reminded us of the complexities of policy implementation.

Finally, the co-organizers drew a line from the initial keynote speech to a broader research project. They summarized the main points of the extremely rich presentations and discussions, which certainly opened a space for the discussion of overlapping regional organizations. To build up on this, the co-organizers pointed out several ways ahead in terms of follow-up and possibilities of further collaboration: the co-organizers will work on an integrated framework, and a second follow-up meeting shall be held, possibly at the ECPR Research Sessions that will take place at Radboud University Nijmegen, Netherlands, in 2015 and 2016.

## ANALYSIS

# The Spitzenkandidaten Plot - The European Parliament as a Strategic Competence-Maximizer

Written by Frank Schimmelfennig

**S***pitzenkandidaten* seems to have entered the English vocabulary as a new loanword of German origin – alongside *Angst* and *Schadenfreude* (and a couple of martial terms). Ostensibly, the European party groups nominated lead candidates for the post of European Commission President in order to raise the stakes of the vote, personalize the electoral campaign, and thus attract more voters to the polls. To some extent, this has worked for the candidates and their parties in their home countries. Voter turnout increased in Germany (the home country of the Social-Democrat candidate Martin Schulz and the Green candidate Ska Keller) and Greece (the home country of Alexis Tsipras, the candidate of the radical left). Syriza, the party of Tsipras, won a plurality of votes in Greece, and the German SPD increased its vote share by almost 7 percentage points. Belgium (the country of origin of the Liberal candidate Guy Verhofstadt) and Luxembourg (where the candidate of the center-right European People's Party Jean-Claude Juncker is from) have compulsory voting anyhow but their parties won a plurality of votes, too. Overall, however, turnout in the European Parliamentary elections has not increased from the 43 percent of 2009, and mainstream pro-European parties have seen their share of seats shrink from roughly 80 to 70 percent.

The real impact of the *Spitzenkandidaten* can be seen not in the electoral but in the institutional politics of the European Union (EU). The EU is a highly dynamic constitutional order, in which institutional actors – the Council, the Commission, the Court, and the Parliament – are not only engaged in conflicts about substantive policy, but also compete over the distribution of powers and competences. Over the past 20 years, the European Parliament (EP) has turned out to be the big winner in this competition. Starting out as an indirectly elected consultative assembly, it has acquired co-decision rights on the vast bulk of the EU's legislation, its budget, and

the appointment of the European Commission. The parliamentarization of EU governance has been one of the major structural changes in the EU's institutional system. How has this been possible?

The first thing to keep in mind is that parliamentarization in the EU is *not* a replication of nation-state parliamentarization one level up. To cut a long historical process short, national parliaments have gained power in two major ways: as representative assemblies that could provide monarchs with additional revenue in exchange for a greater say in the politics of the state and as a venue for integrating powerful social movements into the political system. By contrast, the EP does not have the power to tax, it does not engage in redistributive policies, and it does not have the broad and powerful popular support that it would need to put political pressure on Europe's governments.

The EP has benefited from two alternative mechanisms of parliamentarization: its normative bargaining power resulting from the EU's need to provide democratic legitimacy for supranational integration, and its inter-institutional bargaining power resulting from its cohesion and time horizon as an institutional actor. First, the increasing pooling and delegation of national sovereignty in European integration has undermined the indirect democratic legitimacy, on which the European Communities had initially rested. Democratically elected governments could be outvoted, and national parliaments lost power in the process. Because representative, parliamentary democracy is the accepted normative standard of legitimacy in Europe, a coalition of members of parliament and like-minded, integration-friendly governments has therefore pushed for compensation by empowering the EP. Most famously, the introduction and expansion of qualified majority-voting in the Council has been linked to the introduction and expansion of co-decision rights

of the EP. Governments have felt normatively compelled to make such concessions to the EP even though they reduced their own decision-making power.

Second, the EP has used the concessions it received in European treaties to bargain for more competences subsequently. The EP has benefited from a long time horizon (it is elected for five years whereas Council presidencies rotate every six months), a smaller sensitivity to failure (failures are attributed to governments, not the EP), and strong cohesion in institutional affairs (a super-grand coalition of the EP supports the expansion of its competences, whereas governments are often split on this issue). As a consequence, the EP has been able to expand its competences incrementally in return for its consent to decisions and policies the Council was eager to have.

The *Spitzenkandidaten* plot fits this time-honored pattern of institutional conflict in the EU. The Treaty on European Union reserves the right to appoint the President of the European Commission to the European Council, i.e. the heads of state and government of the member states. Whereas the Treaty obliges the European Council to take into account the elections of the EP and to seek approval by a majority of the EP, the EP cannot formally propose its own candidate. The nomination of *Spitzenkandidaten* was designed to bypass this constraint. Providing its own candidate with the democratic legitimacy conveyed by the vote of Europe's citizens would create enormous normative pressure on Europe's governments – above all those publicly committed to a democratic European Union – to nominate the elected candidate to accept informally, if not formally, the EP's parliamentary competence to appoint the EU's executive. Should normative power not suffice, the EP could credibly threaten to block any alternative candidate proposed by the governments.

Is the plot working? So far, yes. *Spitzenkandidaten Schadenfreude* on the part of the EP meets *Spitzenkandidaten Angst* on the part of the Council. A clear majority of the EP has thrown its weight behind Jean-Claude Juncker, the candidate of the winning party group, and threatened the governments to veto any alternative nominee. The European Council is split and



During the current summer semester 2014, Prof. Dr. Frank Schimmelfennig is visiting fellow at the KFG. Credit: Frank Schimmelfennig

hesitant. Predictably, the most outspoken opposition to Juncker comes from Euro-skeptic countries such as Britain, Hungary, and Sweden, which fail to command a blocking minority, however. Chancellor Angela Merkel is widely seen to be the pivotal actor – able to provide the necessary votes to either block or nominate Juncker. Concerned about open conflict in the Council and Juncker's supranationalist preferences, Merkel failed to endorse Juncker after the elections and sought to buy time. Her hesitation has, however, triggered a major rhetorical campaign in the German public and political sphere, transcending partisan divides, accusing Merkel of betraying the voters and democracy in favor of back-room deals, and in the words of the otherwise Merkel-friendly *Bild* tabloid, exhorting her to save the EU from turning into a banana republic. A few days later, Merkel declared that "I now lead all the discussions precisely in the spirit that Jean-Claude Juncker should be president of the European Commission" (Financial Times, 30 May 2014).

**WORKING PAPERS**

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## WORKING PAPER 58

### **Mission Impossible. Why Crisis Management Missions Do Not Increase the Visibility of the European Union**

*Stephanie B. Anderson - December 2013*

The European Union's (EU) Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and its accompanying Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) missions are tools used to increase the international profile of the EU. Using three different databases, this study features a content analysis that evaluates how much and what kind of media coverage CSDP missions receive. In general, the news coverage is positive, but limited. This article argues that the problem is structural: the very nature of the missions themselves, whether EU or NATO, makes them poor vehicles for EU promotion for political, institutional, and logistical reasons. By definition, they are conducted in the middle of crises, making news coverage politically sensitive. The very act of reporting could undermine the mission. Institutionally, all CSDP missions are intergovernmental; therefore, the member states control the coverage. Logistically, the missions are usually located in remote, undeveloped parts of the world, making it difficult and expensive for European and international journalists to cover. Moreover, these regions in crisis seldom have a thriving, local free press. The author concludes that although a mission may do good, CSDP missions cannot fulfill their primary political function of raising the profile of the EU.

## WORKING PAPER 59

### **Regional Organizations and Sanctions Against Members: Explaining the Different Trajectories of the African Union, the League of Arab States, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations**

*Elin Hellquist - January 2014*

The Organization of African Unity (OAU), the League of Arab States (Arab League), and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) were all established as post-colonial projects with the explicit aim to safeguard state borders and shield sovereign governments from external interference. Yet, their approaches to regional interference in domestic affairs have with time taken on different trajectories. This working paper traces the present diversity in regional approaches to negative sanctions against members back to formative events in the early days of regional cooperation. All three organizations had to confront political problems of substantial regional weight at an early stage: the OAU the apartheid regimes in Southern Africa, ASEAN the Vietnam War, and the Arab League the creation of the state of Israel. The analysis demonstrates that the concepts of the region the organizations articulated as they dealt with these problems continue to inform present positions on involvement in domestic affairs.



## WORKING PAPER 60

### Coordination of Social Security Schemes. The Case of SADC

*Ockert Dupper - May 2014*

This paper will explore whether and to what extent the (legal) rules of coordination that originated and developed in the EU can be transposed to SADC – a region characterized by high levels of migration, weakly developed social security systems and the absence of suitable portability arrangements. The principle of coordination of social security is primarily aimed at eliminating restrictions that national social security schemes place upon the rights of migrant workers to such social security. One of the fundamental principles of social security coordination is that of portability, which is the ability to preserve, maintain, and transfer vested social security rights or rights in the process of being vested, independent of nationality and country of residence. The best practice around the world to ensure portability of social security entitlements consists of multilateral and bilateral social security agreements. These agreements originated and developed in the EU, and EU coordination arrangements arguably still represent the most sophisticated and developed system of its kind, and one that is worth emulating. In this paper, it is argued that any future attempts at coordinating social security schemes in SADC should start with employment injury schemes, which is the only social security scheme common to all SADC member states. The paper considers some of the issues that should be taken into account in designing social security agreements in SADC along the lines of the EU model.