

Introduction

This is the third issue of the “Lisbon Watch”, an annual report mapping the state of the art of and progress on research and teaching regarding the new legal foundations of the European Union: the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), referred to as “Lisbon Treaty” in short. As integral part of the LISBOAN project, the Lisbon Watch offers a unique multi-disciplinary perspective on the Lisbon Treaty’s impact on integration studies.

27 LISBOAN member institutes from 23 countries have answered an open questionnaire which was distributed in January 2013. The contributions cover activities at the respondents’ own institutes, but also address research efforts and political debates in each country as a whole. While the focus is on the period of summer 2012 - spring 2013, developments around the coming into force of the LT in December 2009 are also included whenever applicable.

Following the structure of the questionnaire, the report is divided into four parts. These are also published separately, as they address different target groups. Parts one and two cover the teaching and research activities at each contributing institution. This pertains both to EU studies in general and the Lisbon Treaty in particular. In addition to the heuristic element, the aim is to foster exchange among researchers with similar research interests. Moreover, contributors have been asked for examples of research-based teaching in order to lessen the gap between the two dimensions addressed by LISBOAN. Part three deals with the debate on the Treaty of Lisbon in the respective country. In order to allow for a more structured approach, the questionnaire enumerated several issues and asked contributors to address them in the pre-given order. Finally, part four provides the contributor’s personal assessment of topical issues linked to the EU’s new legal foundation. Have there been remarkable/counterintuitive developments following the Treaty’s coming into force? What challenges will the EU have to face in the short term, and does the Lisbon Treaty offer a better framework to cope with these challenges? In which areas are pressures for continued treaty reform likely to emerge? These open questions are complemented with a simple scale model which, while acknowledging the technical difficulties of this approach, allows for a more comparative perspective on the contributor’s personal assessment of trends in EU studies in general and research and teaching of the Lisbon Treaty in particular.

The Lisbon Watch is produced annually over the full life span of the LISBOAN project from October 2010 – September 2013. All contributions are synthesised by the project management team at the University of Cologne, Germany. Contact persons are Tobias Kunstein (tobias.kunstein@uni-koeln.de) and Sebastian Reiter (sreiter@uni-koeln.de). Feedback, as always, is very welcome.

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Executive Summary

The first part of the Lisbon Watch focuses on teaching activities at partner institutes. Just as in the previous years a wide variety of activities related to the Lisbon Treaty can be observed. There was one example of a course dedicated exclusively to the treaty (Lithuania), and partners from the discipline of law unsurprisingly addressed the EU's legal basis throughout their teaching. For other partners, while the treaty was not present in all parts of courses dealing with the EU, it nonetheless formed an important element. The regular course programme offered by partners was in almost all cases complemented with additional activities in which the Lisbon Treaty played a role, for example guest lectures and panel discussions. Besides students, these often included practitioners, external experts and the public.

In terms of innovative teaching methods, we find study visits to Brussels (2), lectures with MEPs broadcast live over the internet (1), simulation sessions (4) and teaching based on research results (2). Moreover, several partners published (or are in the process of doing so) textbooks on the Lisbon Treaty which they use in their teaching. Also noteworthy are training sessions for junior diplomats from abroad offered by two partners, and teaching of the EU at secondary schools. However, continuing education was not mentioned this year. All in all, "classical" forms of teaching (classroom seminars) are still prevalent as far as EU studies in general and the Lisbon Treaty in particular are concerned. For example, the share of simulation exercises has not increased from previous years.

Part two of the report deals with research activities of LISBOAN institutes. With a view to the Lisbon Treaty, the EU's foreign policy was again mentioned most frequently as main area of interest (31% of all 26 respondents). The EEAS, Articles 23–55 TEU and changes related to the CFSP were mentioned most frequently in that regard. In contrast to the previous year, the "Arab Spring" did not play a role anymore, whereas the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, greater role of the European Court of Justice; relationship of the ECJ with the European Court of Human Rights and migration policy were mentioned several times. Energy Policy was also a subject of research, as well as national parliaments and questions of representative democracy. These were, however, not linked to the euro area crisis as much as in the previous year. The euro area crisis itself was mentioned less frequently as primary area of interest (15%).

Part three of the Lisbon Watch deals with the national perspective on the Lisbon Treaty. It focuses on the academic debate in the home country of each contributor since the treaty's coming into force in December 2009, and links its innovations to topical issues that have been discussed in their respective political arena. As in the previous year the financial crisis commanded most attention in national EU-related discourses analysed in the Lisbon Watch Report. In this context (for example where the question of solidarity with the countries in financial difficulties is concerned) the growing nationalism in the EU was mentioned. This can also be linked to the topical issue of immigration and the Schengen Area, as well as the perception of German hegemony.

According to the contributions, the role of national parliaments played a role in the debates in Germany, the Netherlands and Croatia, but was apparently not very high on the agenda in other national arenas. Moreover, the subsidiarity protocol was mentioned as a major element in national debates in Denmark and Malta. Energy policy played a role in the debate in countries with an eastern dimension (Lithuania, Poland and Denmark). The Arab Spring was mentioned in only one country (Malta), as was the Citizens' Initiative (Slovenia) and Euroscepticism (Finland). Also the EEAS seems to be an object of interest rather for academics and was mentioned only once as far as national debates are concerned (Czech Republic). Linkages to the Lisbon Treaty are evident for only few of these

debates. In the public debate in general, the Lisbon Treaty seems to play a minor role only compared with topical issues such as the financial crisis, which absorb much of the public attention.

However, turning to the results of the scaled questions in part five of the Lisbon Watch, the number of respondents agreeing with the statement that “The Lisbon Treaty plays a less important role in the public discourse on the EU in my country compared to the time of its ratification and coming into force” decreased markedly. Bearing in mind the rather low number of respondents and other possible sources of bias, this would indicate an opposite development. Compared to the previous year, the answers to question 5.5 of the questionnaire indicate that respondents feel that the case for a complete revision of the EU treaties, possibly using the Convention method, has been strengthened over the past 12 months. Concerning teaching, respondents continue to believe that there is a need for improving this particular dimension of EU studies: The majority agrees to the statements that “EU teaching must become more research-based” (question 5.1) and “EU teaching must focus more on non-academic target groups” (question 5.2).