

3. Current Academic and Political Debates on the Treaty of Lisbon

Guide questions:

The following is a (non-exhaustive) list of topical policy issues that have been discussed in the EU community over the past months. Please comment briefly on those where you believe important cross-linkages to the Lisbon Treaty have emerged in the debate in your country.

1. Eurozone crisis
2. Immigration and Schengen Area
3. Energy policy
4. External action (Eastern Partnership, Russia, Transatlantic, ...)
5. National Parliaments, Subsidiarity Check, Citizens' Initiative
6. EU enlargement

Have other academics/institutions in your country produced research results on the LT? Please give a few recommended readings (reference and one sentence why you liked this publication).

Belgium (Universiteit Ghent)

The public debate in Belgium essentially focused on the implications of the financial crisis and the problems in the eurozone, in particular regarding the problems of the banking sector in Cyprus, Spain, Portugal and Slovenia. In the context of the European Year of the Citizen (2013), several public debates on the future of the EU have been organised, focusing essentially on the impact of the eurocrisis and the growing nationalism in several EU Member States.

In the academic field, attention has been devoted to the evaluation of the European External Action Service (EEAS), in particular following the publication of the paper 'EEAS 2.0. A Legal Commentary on Council Decision 2010/427/EU establishing the organization and functioning of the European External Action Service', edited by S. Blockmans and C. Hillion and published as Working Paper No. 99 of the Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies as well as on the website of the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) (<http://www.ceps.eu>). This paper provides one of the first comprehensive reviews of the EEAS Decision, written by experts from various research institutes.

Bulgaria (New Bulgarian University)

The LT lacks deep and significant understanding. It is more or less perceived as a roadmap, rather than as a restructuring treaty, i.e. a necessary but intermediary step towards further integration and restructuring of EU corresponding to 21st century reality. The most discussed policy issue in regard of the Lisbon Treaty was the Financial Crisis and the further development of the stability mechanisms of the European Union. The new Fiscal Agreement reached last year, formally called 'Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union', drew high attention in the public debate, mainly in respect to the consequences for the national economy if joining the Euro-zone against the background of the worsening situation in Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal.

These discussions also included harsh criticism and suspicions whether the Treaty will actually solve problems or rather create even more. There is a strong desire against common EU nation, instead inclination towards a EU of strong nations. This is closely related to a strong feeling that the rules are

not the same for each member-state, but are selectively applied (Schengen criteria suitability and labour market availability). Current approaches focus more on studying extensively the status quo and the functionality, efficacy and efficiency needed in the EU. Another topic is also the quality of democracy within the EU.

Despite the fact that the LT is always present in the discussions on the EU institutional framework and politics, no follow-up on its provisions in terms of their applicability or possible amendments occurred. Instead, the debates in Bulgaria recently concentrated on the Treaty of Lisbon as an independent variable when processes, taking place in the EU, are discussed. This is the result mainly of the lack of sound knowledge in the Bulgarian society about the real and actual functioning of EU and the corresponding mechanisms regulating and organizing it. Although the other LISBOAN partner institutions in Bulgaria – the Bulgarian European Communities Studies Association and the Plovdiv University “St. Paisii Hilendarski” – organize regularly student discussions and provide expertise as NBU does, still the LT is not sufficiently communicated in the Bulgarian society.

Croatia (Institute for Development and International Relations)

In the following selection of events organized by other institutions in the city of Zagreb important cross-linkages to the LT have emerged as part of the debate.

“Future Scenarios for the Eurozone”

This public lecture was given by Maria Joao Rodrigues, author of the Lisbon Strategy, in Zagreb on July 13th, 2012 at the event organized by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung. She assessed potential scenarios how to resolve the sovereign debt crisis in the Eurozone. Her lecture included issues of the EU competitiveness, fiscal federalization and the recent development of the EU's economic governance regarding the public finances and banking sector. Consequently, she touched upon some of the most important LT-based provisions in the sphere of economic governance, that aim to improve economic policy coordination among the member states and strengthen the role of supranational EU institutions in managing economic policies and preventing structural imbalance.

“Towards Progressive Energy Policy and Systems in Croatia”

This presentation of the study issued by the Institute for Development and International Relations (IRMO) and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in Zagreb on October 30th, 2012 offered opportunity to analyse main challenges and policy recommendations for the Croatian energy policy, stemming from the important changes of the EU energy policy brought by the LT. Namely, the LT has introduced new article on the EU energy policy (Art. 194. TFEU), aiming to balance goals of sustainable development, fight against climate change and development of renewable energy sources with the functioning of the internal market. The LT has established EU's competences in the energy policy which has not previously been the case, paving the way for creation of the common EU energy policy in the foreseeable future.

“Twenty years of the Croatian diplomacy”

This conference held on the June 18th, 2012 in the Old City Hall in Zagreb was organized by the Institute of Public Administration and the Association of Croatian Diplomats. It reflected upon the genesis and development of Croatian diplomacy by particularly focusing on the challenges deriving from the upcoming EU accession and functioning of Croatian diplomacy within the EU's foreign and security policy. It convened debate about diplomacy of the small states within the EU. Croatian relations with the European External Action Service (EEAS) were directly linked to the LT-based provisions shaping the EU's external action and functioning of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).

“Scrutiny Process over European Legislation and Policies of the National Parliaments”.

The Croatian Parliament on January 28th-29th, 2013 organized this seminar as part of its efforts in informing the MPs and the broader expert public with the new roles of Croatian Parliament after Croatia becomes the 28th EU Member State which is set for July 1st, 2013. Speakers at this seminar were mostly practitioners; heads of the EU related parliamentary committees in several Member States parliaments as well as high ranking officials of the European Parliament. The new roles prescribed by the LT (Art. 12. TEU, Protocol on the Role of National Parliaments in the EU, Protocol on Subsidiarity and Proportionality) were in focus of many debates.

“Decision-making Procedures in the EU”.

On February 25th-26th, 2013 Croatian Parliament organized a seminar which was targeted towards the MPs and the broader expert public. Speakers at this seminar were practitioners from the Member States parliaments and the European Parliament. The seminar discussed many implications of the LT in the areas such as the co-decision procedure, conciliation procedure as well as the new roles for the national parliaments.

“The Western Balkans’ Tour of Confrontations Europe”

Zagreb hosted the conference on the June 22nd, 2012 being part of the “Western Balkans’ Tour”, serial of debates and events organized in the Belgrade, Zagreb and Sarajevo by the French think-tank “Confrontations Europe“ in cooperation with the European Commission, Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA), national governments and local partners, aiming to assess socio-economic challenges in the region. Zagreb convened the conference: “The role of Croatia in regional cooperation and its key role in relations between the European Union and the South-East European states” that fostered discussion about the EU enlargement perspectives in the SEE by gathering academics, policy-makers and civil society representatives from Croatia and the region. The conference confirmed importance of the LT which paved the way for continuation of the EU enlargement by overarching previously limiting EU institutional structure designed for the 27-countries block.

“Croatia in the European Union”

This public lecture was delivered by the Head of the EU Delegation in Croatia, H.E. Paul Vandoren on the October 16th, 2012 at the premises of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts. Lecture gathered distinguished academics and policy-makers, being part of the Academy's efforts to raise awareness of the EU-related issues in the Croatian academic and professional life. H. E. Vandoren touched upon the challenges and opportunities of the upcoming Croatian EU accession, emphasizing necessary reforms that Croatia must undertake in order to fully harness benefits of the EU membership. He also stressed importance of the Croatian accession for continuation of the EU enlargement process in the Western Balkans. His lecture restated importance of the LT-based institutional provisions for continuing the EU enlargement process in the Western Balkans.

Among publications from other Croatian institutions researching the LT three in particular should be mentioned:

Vlado Puljiz, Slaven Ravlji and Velimir Viskovi have edited the book “Croatia in the EU: How to Proceed Further” published in February 2013 by the Center for Democracy and Human Rights Miko Tripalo. This book in Croatian is composed of individual chapters written by Croatian social researchers. It examines some aspects of Croatian accession process as well as possibilities for reforming various domestic policies in context of the upcoming EU membership.

Damir Grubiša, Nataša Beširević and Hrvoje Špehar have edited the book “Political System of the European Union and Europeanization of Croatian Politics” published in September 2012 by the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb. This book written in Croatian is a collection of articles by Croatian researchers on the political system of the EU (particularly implications of the LT on institutional architecture of the EU) and institutional adaptations undertaken by Croatia on its path to the EU.

Dubravko Radošević has written a book “Capital Flows, Exchange Rate and the European Monetary Union” published in August 2012 by Jesenski i Turk. This book written in Croatian points towards sources of instability in the EMU such as: lack of coordination between the EMU and the national fiscal policies, democratic deficit of the European Central Bank and underdeveloped macroeconomic coordination mechanisms between EU member states. With this in mind the author proposes reforms in the area of Croatian monetary policy.

Ivan Koprić, Anamarija Musa and Goranka Lalić Novak have written the book “European Administrative Space” published in April 2012 by the Institute for Public Administration from Zagreb. This book which is written in Croatian explains reasons for creation of the European Administrative Space and perspectives for its future development. It places a particular focus on the EU accession and administrative adaptations related to this process.

Czech Republic (Institute for International Relations)

Most attention in the public but also in the academic and political debates has been devoted to the Eurozone crisis. Direct references to the Lisbon Treaty are made primarily in the academic debates, and sometimes in the political. The discussion then is often referring to the ESM and the amendments to the Article 136 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. This debate also received some coverage in Czech newspapers given that Czech President Klaus refused to complete the Czech ratification which was only completed in early April 2013 by his successor Miloš Zeman. Some attention in relation to the Eurozone crisis has also been given to the broader consequences for the institutional framework of the EU. The Fiscal Compact was discussed heavily in the Czech Republic given that the government decided not to participate, a decision which also caused tensions within the governing coalition. This in turn led to a debate about the consequences of diversified integration for the Czech Republic including references to the Lisbon Treaty, which gave formal legality to the Eurogroup and the plausibility of further Treaty revisions.

Immigration is not as heavily discussed in the Czech Republic given that the country has no external EU borders and rather limited migration. The changes made to the area of freedom, security and justice has outside of experts from ministries and academia not received much attention.

In the field of energy policy there were hopes in the Czech Republic, as elsewhere in East Central, Europe that the inclusion of the chapter on energy policy in LT would also have some concrete results in line with the goals formulated in Art. 194(1). The Czech discussion and concerns regarding energy is primarily about energy security. From this reason there is also a near to consensus that EU policy in the field should be strengthened. The hopes on the LT in this respect, however, have not been fulfilled.

The External Action Service received a lot of attention. In the initial period of the launching of the service discussion among diplomats but also academics often referred to how well represent the country would be in the new body. There was with some rights concerns that the more recent member states again would be underrepresented in the body. There were also discussions in particular within the MFA about if the EU delegations could be used for the optimization of the country's own foreign representation. The Eastern Partnership is considered a pet project of Czech Republic.

Primarily the upper chamber of the Czech Parliament, i.e. the Senate, has been very active in COSAC, and also previously one of the parliaments that most actively took part in the Commission initiated testing of the parliaments' reaction possibilities. There was also a domestic decision to strengthen the demands for a mandate of the two chambers of the parliament for some decisions taken in the council as a consequence of the entering into force of the Lisbon Treaty. In the academic debate increased attention has been paid the question if the national parliaments can contribute to solving the democratic deficit of the EU.

When it comes to enlargement from a Czech perspective there is a general view that the EU is able to absorb more member states. If there ever were any concerns about enlargement fatigue or integration capacity among the political elite of the country such concerns are believed to have been solved by the LT. The Czech Republic is pro enlargement in general but primarily concerned with the Western Balkans.

The think tank Europeum presented an interesting study on the role of national parliaments within the EU together with partner institutes in Germany and Poland. The report on the parliaments in the Czech Republic and Slovakia provides a detailed account of the possibilities of the involvement of national parliaments post Lisbon. Kral, David and Vladimír Bartovic *The Czech and Slovak Parliaments after the Lisbon Treaty* (2010) http://www.europeum.org/doc/publications/Narodni_parlamenty_ENG_Web.pdf.

Denmark (Danish Centre for International Studies)

Generally the EU debate in Denmark is of limited character which also concerns the domestic debate of the Lisbon Treaty. However, the Danish EU Presidency during the first half of 2012 has provided renewed dynamics to the EU debate. Because it was the first Danish Presidency since the Lisbon Treaty came into force, the debate has also centred on the new institutional landscape in the EU, including the changed role for the Presidency introduced by the Treaty.

Eurozone Crisis

One of the most debated policy issues with regard to the Lisbon Treaty has, once again, revolved around the European financial crisis and its potential solutions and consequences. A crucial issue on the agenda for the Danish Presidency was the need to address some of the challenges facing the EU Member States in handling the economic crisis. And indeed, the Presidency did present some tangible results in this regard, including the adoption of the pact for Growth and Jobs.

The general public debate in Denmark has, however, focused less on the concrete results of the Presidency, than it has on the more fundamental questions of what the future vision(s) for the Union should be and where Denmark belongs in such visions. With the agreement on the ECB banking supervision rules bringing the EU one step closer to having a banking union, a heated debate emerged regarding Denmark's future role in the EU system. Whereas this debate led to a renewed support for Denmark becoming a part of EU's core and hence joining close co-operation with Eurozone members and essentially working towards dissolving the four national opt outs and becoming a Eurozone member, amongst some of the EU-positive Danish Parties, it also entailed strong opposing views from the EU sceptical parties, arguing that Denmark should stand outside a more integrated European Union together with countries such as the UK.

Immigration and Schengen Area

During the Danish Presidency, a range of amendments was made to the Immigration and Schengen Area. What received the most media attention, however, was when the European Parliament (EP) decided to suspend negotiations with the Council in protest against the Council's decision to

unilaterally rewrite rules related to the Schengen Area. This Council Decision implied that the legal basis of the decision-making rules governing the evaluation of Schengen had been changed so that the Parliament could no longer co-decide on these arrangements, but instead merely be informed of the Member States' decisions. This led the Danish Presidency into a diplomatic crisis which is particularly interesting to mention since it spurred much national debate on the new role of the EP after the Lisbon Treaty came into force. Paradoxically, the Danish government had been very careful to acknowledge and articulate the fact that the EP's power position in the system had been raised considerably, and had created a new situation for the Presidency to spend the proper amount of time and energy in creating contacts in the Parliament and taking their views into consideration.

Energy Policy

Green growth has been one of the top priorities of the Danish Presidency, and thus created national debate on how European solutions are necessary when it comes to energy policy. During the Danish Presidency the Council and the EP concluded negotiations on the energy efficiency directive. According to the Commission, the directive will increase energy efficiency by more than 17 per cent by 2020 and thereby put the EU well on the way towards reaching the target of 20 per cent energy savings by 2020.

External Action

That the external dimension of EU foreign policy has become more efficient and visible with the innovations of the Lisbon Treaty, is not something that has received much attention in the public debate. However, Denmark holding the Presidency and working together with the European External Action Service (EEAS) have both led to a renewed focus in Denmark about EU external action in the sense that it was mentioned in the media that Denmark had a close cooperation with the High Representative and the External Action Service, and the Danish foreign minister had replaced Ashton on a number of occasions towards countries outside the EU and in relation to the EP. The Danish Presidency has not defined its own priorities within the foreign policy area, taking into consideration the High Representative's role as Chair of the Foreign Affairs Council. Hence, the new Lisbon structures have seemed successful during the Danish Presidency.

National Parliaments, Subsidiarity Check, Citizens Initiative

The subsidiarity protocol attached to the Lisbon Treaty, which sets out an early warning mechanism giving national parliaments an opportunity to object to legislative proposals, was invoked for the first time at the end of May 2012 with regard to a Commission proposal on EU regulation on the right to strike. The Danish Parliament was amongst the countries giving the Commission the "yellow-card" forcing it consider withdrawing or amending the proposed legislation. This received positive attention in the Danish public debate.

The Citizens' initiative has received some attention in the Danish media, after several actors who have themselves been involved in the launch of a citizens initiative, including Danish MEP Dan Jørgensen, have criticized the procedures for being too bureaucratic and too narrowly defined, and thus not creating the expected results of forcing a supra-national sense of European democracy amongst European citizens.

Another interesting matter related to the democratic aspects of the Union receiving much debate in the Danish media, was when a group of citizens sued the Danish state for signing the Lisbon Treaty without holding a referendum. They argued that the Treaty surrendered sovereignty to the EU and was thus unconstitutional. The final ruling on the case was made in February 2013, when the Supreme

Court decided that the Danish constitution had not been violated by the signing of the Lisbon Treaty in 2007.

EU enlargement

Enlargement has always been seen as one of the EU's most successful policies, contributing to creating economic and social reforms in the EU's neighbourhood, and such continuing work remained a top priority of the Danish Presidency. The countries of the Western Balkans have taken further steps towards making their European perspective more concrete during the Danish Presidency. Member State ratifications of the accession treaty which is to ensure the accession of Croatia as an official EU Member State as of July 1st, 2013 is well under way. Serbia was granted candidate status during the Danish Presidency and accession negotiations have been initiated with Montenegro. Furthermore, substantial progress has been made in the enlargement negotiations with Iceland during the Danish Presidency. This shows that despite the economic crisis and its consequences for the "external perception" of Europe, the EU is still attractive to new Members.

Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that the 20th anniversary for the Copenhagen Criteria will be celebrated at a forthcoming conference in Copenhagen, "20 years that changed Europe – the Copenhagen Criteria and the Enlargement of the European Union". Amongst the speakers of the conference, are EU Commissioner for Enlargement, Štefan Füle, Danish Minister for European Affairs, Nicolai Wammen, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of Slovakia, Miroslav Lajčák, Prime Minister of Serbia, Ivica Dačić, and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Nikola Poposki, to discuss how EU Enlargement has shaped and continues to shape Europe. The conference is organised by the Danish Foreign Ministry and the DIIS.

The DIIS considers the following recent Danish publications on the EU and the Lisbon Treaty to be important:

- Adler-Nissen, Rebecca (2012): "The EU's Diplomatic Service: Inventing a New Foreign Policy Elite" in: Kauppi, Niilo and Rask Madsen, Mikael (eds): *Transnational Power Elites: The New Professionals of Governance, Law and Security*. London: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group.
- Kluth, M. and Pilegaard, J. (2012): "The Making of the EU's External Action Service - A Neorealist Interpretation", in: *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol. 17, Nr. 2, 07.05.2012, pp.303-322.

Estonia (University of Tartu)

Within the EU, Estonia continued to champion initiatives to strengthen cyber security, energy security, the Eastern Partnership, the liberalization of the energy market, transparency, innovation, the single market (especially free movement of services), and remained a staunch proponent of enlargement. Cooperation with the other Baltic States and the Nordic countries as a regional bloc within the EU was further developed. The flagship initiative in Estonia's EU Policy 2011-2015 is to work towards the creation of an EU digital single market. The EU Agency for large-scale IT systems located in Tallinn became operational on December 1st, 2012.

For the first time since accession to the EU, a serious public debate about Europe arose in Estonia. The initiator was Legal Chancellor Indrek Teder who complained to the Supreme Court that one of the European Stability Mechanism's (ESM) procedures violated the Estonian constitution which gives sole competence for deciding budget matters to the Estonian parliament. On 12 July 2012 the Supreme

Court very narrowly decided in favour of the government, clearing the way for ratification of the ESM by the parliament. In order to mollify the opposition, the government broadened the role of the parliament in future ESM-related decision-making.

As the newest member of the Eurozone, Estonia was eager to be constructive. Nevertheless, there was growing public resentment that one of the poorest countries in the Eurozone would be obligated to help bail-out wealthier member states that broke the rules. The fact that a Greek pensioner earns more than the average salary of an Estonian became a prominent example widely discussed by ordinary citizens.

Estonia was quite pleased by the EU budget 2014-2020 agreed upon at the European Council on 8 February 2013. Though the budget will not increase, Estonia will receive more than it did in the previous period. Public attention was focused on two issues during the negotiations: the inequality endured by Baltic farmers and the Commission's Connecting Europe Facility for cross-border infrastructure which could fund Rail Baltic and a Baltic regional LNG terminal.

Finland (University of Tampere)

The national debate in Finland of relevance to the LT focused primarily on political economy. The role of Eurosceptic opposition (chiefly the Finns party and partly the Centre party) has pushed the Government for reserved and conservative, national interest dominated positions in EU matters in order not to appear weak when the opposition openly questions Finland's 'deal' with the EU. At the same time within the Government itself the National Coalition party has to accommodate the reservations of the Social Democrats who compete for votes with the populist EU critical opposition. Hence EU debate has become reactionary.

Regarding the EU budget for 2014 onwards, there was considerable pressure throughout the political spectrum for decreasing the EU member states' contributions to the Union budget. This was also the consistent line of the Finnish Government. At the same time the Government felt considerable pressure for defending the payments for agriculture and regional development from the EU, because ever since Finland's application for EU membership the backing of powerful agricultural lobbies has been much more important than the numbers of farmers or the share of agriculture of the GDP would suggest. These factors made the Government to adopt a somewhat paradoxical, conservative cost-cutting negotiation strategy where existing members would nevertheless maintain the lion's share of their entitlements from the EU budget. The nature of this cost-oriented debate became evident after the final agreement among member states on the budget, when opposition groups started questioning the figure the Government claimed Finland would receive from the EU. The debate hence focused mainly on the payments/returns ratio, and much less on the substantial or constructive issues of EU policy.

The national debate on the Eurozone crisis has calmed down from the last year as a result of ECB action in autumn 2012 that lessened nervousness in markets. The bailout of Cyprus was discussed without much controversy, which is an exception of sorts to the polarized debates of recent years. Finland declined to commit for the financial transactions tax planned by a consortium of member states, once more showing the relatively narrow, national-interest oriented line the country has adopted where minimum degree of risks are taken to show solidarity to the other member states staying outside such arrangements.

Germany (Humboldt Universität Berlin)

In 2012 the Eurozone crisis was still the dominant issue in the academic as well as in the political debate. The German Federal Constitutional Court had to decide if the rescue measures of the EU and the Member States were constitutional. It formulated limits for future measures and once again

strengthened the power of the national parliament (Bundestag) in EU matters, which was discussed politically and academically. Besides, the issue of the annulment of the restrictions for Bulgarian and Romanian workers to enter the German labour market was discussed. Furthermore, the inability of the Member States to find a common position as regards the conflicts (Libya, Syria) abroad was debated.

Germany (Universität Trier)

The debt crisis in the euro zone prevails as the dominating topic in contemporary European politics. Especially the coming into force of the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) and the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union (TSCG; short: Fiscal Compact) dominated last year's political and societal debate in Germany. The ruling of the Federal Constitutional Court (Bundesverfassungsgericht) in September concerning the conformity of the ESM with the German Grundgesetz received an extraordinarily high amount of media attention. Against the background of the persisting debt crisis in the Euro zone, the Lisbon Treaty has to act as legal framework. However, political necessities led to legal modifications: To ensure the legality of the ESM, regardless of the "no bail-out clause", a slight change in Article 136 TFEU was adopted by the European Council. Moreover, the instruments and mechanisms stabilising the common currency also break new ground in legal terms: The ESM and the TSCG, for instance, do not represent primary law, but international law referring to EU law and EU institutions. With regard to the Fiscal Compact, an attempt to integrate the TSCG into the European Union's primary law failed due to the veto of Great Britain and the Czech Republic, but it, however, represents so-called "complementary law".

In Germany, the public debate about the Euro crisis mainly focuses on the steadily growing total of German credits and guarantees. In addition, a fundamental question that refers to the limits of solidarity in the Euro zone emerged over time. Public scepticism as regards the Euro stabilising instruments and mechanisms is steadily growing. In return, the German public is aware of rising resentments against Germany among many Southern European member states. Put differently: While the German total of financial credits and guarantees in the context of the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) and ESM increased, the reputation of Germany among the beneficiaries decreased. In Greece, for example, it seems that Germany, but especially chancellor Merkel is held responsible for the imposed conditions of austerity. Similar developments are visible in Spain, Portugal and Cyprus. To put it another way: Germany, although only one among sixteen other states in the Euro zone, is made the scapegoat of reforms and austerity obligations initiated by the ESM and the Fiscal Compact. Obviously, the aim of stabilising the euro as common currency poses a serious threat to the solidarity between the EU's member states.

Furthermore, the European Central Bank's announcement of its willingness to buy state securities in unlimited quantities on secondary market in case of need raises the question of legal conformity with the regulations of the Lisbon Treaty. Is the ECB acting "ultra vires"? Even if the ECB is acting in a legal grey area, the conception of the EMU as a community of stability – a major requirement for Germany's participation – is at risk. Moreover, all rescue and stabilising actions taken so far follow a distinct path dependence that complicates policy changes. Ultimately, the potential exit of a Euro zone member state, which still seems to be a possible scenario, would mean a serious cornerstone of disintegration.

A look at the current developments in Cyprus and other Southern European countries provides evidence that the European Union has not yet succeeded in overcoming the Euro zone debt crisis' causes and effects. Furthermore, this crisis poses a serious threat to the process of European integration.

Greece (Institute of European Integration and Policy)

The Eurozone crisis, the domestic bad economic situation and the role of the so called Troika has monopolized the political and the academic debate in Greece. It seems that academic debate in Greece (but also in Europe) does not deepen on the role of the new European Service of External Action as well on the role of the President of the European Council and of the High Representative, significant innovations of the Lisbon Treaty neither on the reinforcement of the European Parliament. Academic and political discourse deals less with the institutional provisions of the Lisbon Treaty than with the notion of European solidarity and the several scenarios for the future (in or out the eurozone). During the period under examination (April 2012 - March 2013) the debate is still focuses on the economic governance of the EMU and the institutional set up governing the single currency (Euro). The question of Immigration and Schengen Area continues to prevail in the discussion in Greece due to the imminent nature of this problem for Greece. The contribution of the European Union is more or less contested and negatively judged. The energy policy and the issue of energy security in the region has emerged in discussions in Greece under the auspices of several research institutes (ELIAMEP, International Centre for Black Sea Studies- ICBSS etc.) mainly focused on the area of Southeast Europe and Black Sea.

The Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP) has some research projects on the Lisbon institutional reforms (European Seminars, Think Global Act European project, “An EU ‘fit for purpose’ in a global age” etc.). ELIAMEP has also contributed to the assessment of the EEAS organised by the European Policy Centre (EPC) and the Finnish Institute for International Affairs, and the project “Think Tanks at a Crossroads” led by the Centre for Liberal Strategies (CLS).

Hungary (College of Business and Communication)

The Eurozone crisis and the energy policy have been high on the agenda, both first of all as policy-related issues, i.e. discussed in the press or among experts. Hungary is less concerned by the immigration issue, being a transition-country, and even the Eastern Partnership and the EU enlargement have not been very attractive topics for research. These latter topics have usually been discussed in the International Relations Institute of the MFA from a closer practical perspective. BCE has a periodical in Hungarian on the EU (sometimes in English as Society and Economy). The MFA has also a periodical in Hungarian (Európai Tükör – European Mirror) that has regularly published the EU documents and analyses for practitioners. The latest issue is on Crisis Management in the EU. The European Mirror has regularly provided deep and correct information about the EU developments, including the LT process and afterwards, but it is not a special Journal for the academic research.

Hungary (Institute of World Economics)

The financial crisis actually shed light on the deficiencies of the LT and the EU institutions in general as regards the EU’s capacity to react fast to the crisis and to mitigate the negative impacts of it more efficiently. While some key measures could be adopted on the basis of the LT (e.g. the 6-pack) other measures had to be introduced outside the Treaty (e.g. Euro Plus Pact, TSCG). Moreover, Art. 136 of the TFEU had to be amended for the ESM to become operational. The LT has shortcomings in terms of tackling immigration challenges in a more integrated way. Related political sensitivities cannot be solved by the LT either (see the protracted veto on Romanian and Bulgarian Schengen membership). Energy policy is one of the big “winners” of the LT. Actually an unprecedented dynamism of energy policy cooperation was launched under the Hungarian presidency in 2011, and further promising developments can be expected in the near future. External action in general could become more efficient and more visible thanks to the innovations of the LT, but this is not widely perceived as such yet. The subsidiarity control of national parliaments is not really discussed by the domestic media. As regards the European Citizens’ Initiative, recently the “One of us” campaign was launched to collect at

least one million signatures against EU financing of embryonic experiments. This is rather well known in Hungary. Moreover, one of the seven organizers and coordinators is the Hungarian Edit Frivaldszky: <https://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/ECI-2012-000005/public/index.do> Enlargement has always been among the top priorities of the Hungarian governments, and Hungary has been doing a lot to promote the membership of especially the Western Balkan countries, both before and after the entry into force of the LT. One of the main merits of the LT in this regard is that enlargement becomes easier from the institutional point of view.

The following publications would be worth mentioning:

Institute of Legal Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

- Vörös, I. (2012): Az európai uniós jogfejlés irányai a Lisszaboni Szerződés után (Directions of European Union Law after the Lisbon Treaty), HVG-Orac Budapest. In this volume there are interesting studies on the LT focusing on the competences and the institutional reforms of the EU.

Hungarian Political Science Association

- Arató, K. – Enyedi, Zs. – Lux, Á. (2011): Structures and futures of Europe. Ad Librum Budapest, 2011. In this volume there are interesting chapters on the theoretical and practical implications of the LT in European integration dynamics.

Iceland (University of Iceland)

The Icelandic EU debate concentrates overwhelmingly on Iceland's own accession process and thus only on the most relevant issues for the nation: Eurozone crisis, fish, agriculture, and to a much lesser extent Schengen and migration plus scare-stories on defence. Only a small diplomatic elite is aware of the Western Balkan applicants and seeks good dialogue with them and there is no apparent interest in Eastern or Southern partnership, though Nordic cooperation remains popular. Further, the Icelandic approach to the EU generally disregards the legal and institutional aspect including the significance of the LT, to focus rather on concrete impacts, political relations, and a general political concept of 'sovereignty'. The only exception is when an opposition group (of the no movement) quotes something from the LT that they claim will damage Iceland, usually taken out of context and misinterpreted: but one may suspect many of these points are borrowed from anti-EU campaigns in neighbouring countries. The public is badly informed about the Treaty and the EU in general.

The IIA/ESS and associated academics have tried to do their best in informing the public objectively and encouraging serious debate. Its weekly lecture series is followed by the media and its speakers, mainly academics from abroad, are often quoted in the media.

Italy (Istituto Affari Internazionali)

The EU has played a major role in Italian politics during 2012 and in the first part of 2013 because of the constraining measures imposed to Greece and to other debtor countries, including Italy itself. For these (and other) reasons its image has deteriorated in the eyes of the public opinion. The Italian positive perception of the Euro has therefore further decreased, even though a IAI Working Paper has argued that Italians still trust the EU much more national institutions (see Michele Comelli, The Image of Crisis-Ridden Europe and the Division Between Creditor and Debtor Countries: The Case of Italy, IAI Working Paper 1217, June 2012, <http://www.iai.it/pdf/DocIAI/iaiw1217.pdf>).

The Italian political debate on the EU has revolved around very different issues: the survival of the Euro, the problems with the Italian public debt and the requests coming from the EU, the question of input/output legitimacy of the EU, the democratic issue, the Italian role in promoting further

integration. As it can be easily seen, few attention is paid to other thorny issues such as EU foreign policy capabilities and external action, mainly because of the scarce relevance they have in the domestic daily debate.

The main issues deal with the recently signed Treaty, the so-called Fiscal Compact. Italy, which had been considered a problem for EU and the eurozone, did in the end undertake the efforts required from her, in order to improve its economic and financial situation and reduce the spread between its national bonds and the German Bund, and is now on the way to recovery, even though the stalemate following February 2013 political elections worry many domestic and international observers as well as the financial markets. The political reforms upon which Monti's government has embarked upon are part of an attempt to reform a country that has too long avoided taking necessary but painful reforms. There has also been room for a number of appeals by some members of the European Federalist Movement and other personalities calling for more European integration, asking, for example, for the setup of a new reform of the Lisbon Treaty. While the Eurozone is currently facing a crisis that leads the EU to look for a systemic solution and a few months after the publication of a blue print for a deep and genuine Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), it is necessary to go further to deepen the EMU, making it the first step towards a possible political Union.

The results of the Italian election that were held on February 24th-25th, 2013 have not brought about the decisive clarity that many had hoped for. Italians overwhelmingly rejected Prime Minister Mario Monti's austerity policies in the February 24th -25th election. The centre-right, the centre-left and the newly formed "Five Star" movement has each obtained roughly a third of the vote and therefore no party was able to obtain a parliamentary majority, a fact that threatens prolonged political instability in the euro zone's third largest economy. In fact, 50 days since the elections a government has not been yet formed and is highly unlikely to be formed anytime soon. The situation is extremely complex, as any government needs a vote of confidence from both the Camera dei Deputati and the Senato. The euro-crisis and the austerity measures taken by the previous government were very central on the electoral debate. The result of the electoral consultation can be read as a dangerous disaffection of Italians to EU system and politics.

Lithuania (Institute of International Relations and Political Science)

Topic of the Eurozone crisis remains as a focal point in public debates in Lithuania. Crisis is discussed, assessed and interpreted in all means of mass media – be it live discussion TV shows, radio programmes or articles and commentaries in newspapers and online. Energy policy is seen as of strategic importance to Lithuania so on-going interest in this topic remains. As Lithuanian EU Presidency in 2013 is approaching debates about Lithuanian priorities, its preparations, etc. are becoming more and more important. Despite fruitful and on-going EU related debates no important cross-linkages to the Lisbon Treaty have emerged.

Luxembourg (Centre d'études et de recherches européennes Robert Schuman)

By far the most striking political issue being discussed in the EU community is the financial and sovereign debt crisis and the means set up in order to manage the crisis.

Financial crisis, TSGC, ESM

The Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union (TSCG) of March 2nd, 2012, although signed by the Luxembourgish executive, was subjected to harsh criticism by the Luxembourgish Minister of foreign affairs, Jean Asselborn. Prior to the signing of the compact, Asselborn prophesised in an interview given to the German Spiegel Online, "Mrs. Merkels Stability

Pact cannot work." However, his criticism was not primarily directed against the content of the fiscal compact, but against its legal form. Instead of an international Treaty between States, Asselborn would have preferred binding regulations enacted as secondary law and within the existing legal framework of the Lisbon Treaty. The Luxembourgish Minister argued that outside the EU legal framework the Commission would not be enabled to bring the treaty-breaching State before the European Court of Justice. However, on occasion of its ratification on February 27th, 2013 by the Luxembourgish Parliament, the required 2/3 majority was reached without problems. The ruling majority of Christian Democrats and Socialists were joined by the Liberal Party, sitting on the opposition benches, voted in favour of the Fiscal compact. The Greens, the left-wing party of Déi Lénk and the Eurosceptic party ADR voted against. During the parliamentary debate on the TSCG, the Minister of Finance from the leading Christian Democrats, Luc Frieden, defended the Treaty against reproaches of being "undemocratic" or the result of a "Franco-German diktat". On that occasion he deplored that the pact was not part of the EU legal framework, but instead took the legal form of an International Treaty due to the British and Czech refusal to participate in the arrangement. A large majority of the MPs insisted on the necessity to couple the austerity measures with measures stimulating growth.

The debate on the participation of Luxembourg in the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) (and the subsequent vote on June 26th, 2012) was less controversial than the vote on the TSCG. The Greens and the Liberal Party (DP) joined the majority parties, adopting thus the respective bills with a large majority, surpassing by far the required 2/3 majority. The proponents of the ESM underlined unanimously the necessity of the stability mechanism in the context of the crisis but considered the vote also as an act of solidarity with the people of EU Member States under pressure. Despite the fact that the per-capita contribution to the European bail-out fund is 65 per cent higher than the EU average, the large majority of the PM's saw "no real alternative at this point".

With a look back on years of cacophony and national egoisms in the management of the financial and the subsequent sovereign debt crisis, one cannot help but think that the demission of Jean-Claude Juncker as head of the Euro Group in January 2013 is also due to a moment of fatigue which might be explained by the lack of willingness of the big Member States to compromise. With regard to the Euro zone, Juncker recalls in an interview given to the Luxembourgish press that "the euro is the common currency for all, and not just Germany, France or Italy /.../" . In line with this, the Luxembourgish Government spoke repeatedly up in favour of Eurobonds in order to stabilize ailing economies. As for the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, almost all parties represented in the National Parliament reject the idea of budget cuts.

Immigration and Schengen area

The decision taken by the Home Affairs Council, on 7 June, on the possibility of re-establishing intra-European border controls in case a Schengen area member country is unable to control illegal immigration at its external frontiers, gave rise to a lively debate in Parliament and a subsequent resolution in which the MPs showed their attachment to the Schengen-acquis. The Luxembourgish Chamber backed explicitly the European Commission, calling for more powers in this respect.

Despite growing immigration pressure from the Western Balkans linked to visa exemptions in the Schengen area, which caused some disapproval in the larger public, the Luxembourgish Government is in favour of the integration of Bulgaria and Romania into the Schengen area.

Selected research results of Luxembourg University containing aspects related with the LT

- Dumont, P./ Spreitzer, A. (2012): The Europeanization of domestic legislation in Luxembourg, in: Brouard, Sylvain; Costa, Olivier and König, Thomas (eds): The

Europeanization of Domestic Legislatures: The empirical implications of the Delors' Myth in nine countries, New York, pp. 213-246.

Malta (University of Malta)

Where the EU dominates the national debate, the media and parliamentarians/politicians tend to focus most on the Euro crisis and immigration. Energy is debated but mostly from a national perspective with the EU featuring only when it comes to interconnectors to link the Maltese islands to the European electricity grid and gas pipeline network, both of which are a work in progress and are being partly financed by EU structural funds. The Mediterranean and particularly the situation in North Africa and Libya after the Arab Spring also enjoy considerable salience but the debate hardly refers to EU after the LT which is supposed to become a stronger world actor.

The role of the national parliament and the subsidiarity check has been raised by the media particularly since Maltese activism in this domain has tended to be negligible. A related issue was the long and inexplicable delay in appointing a representative of the National Parliament at the European Parliament in Brussels. The citizens' initiative has made some waves, on March 15th, 2012 an activity was held at Dar l-Ewropa, Valletta, jointly sponsored by the Commission Representation and the Economic and Social Committee to mark this important event. The Citizens' Initiative was also given prominence at a Conference and Citizenship Fair organized by the Training, Information, Cooperation - Towards Active Citizenship (TIC-TAC), the Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA) and the Association of Local Councils on October 29th-31st, 2012 at Dolmen Hotel, Qawra. The session on the Citizens' Initiative was chaired by the Director of the Institute for European Studies. EU Enlargement is not a topic of discussion in Malta but it is sometimes the issue is raised. When Turkey's European Affairs Minister, Egemen Bagis visited Malta; he gave a lecture at the University in Valletta on April 12th, 2012 on Turkey's membership prospects. The Institute for European Studies and MEUSAC organized the event which was attended by around 100 people including diplomats.

Netherlands (Universtiy of Groningen)

In the past year, debate in the Netherlands regarding Europe has almost exclusively been about the Eurozone crisis. For example, issues which formerly seemed to dominate past national elections, like immigration and asylum issues did not play nearly such a large role in recent elections and in the public debate. Part of the media interest in the Eurozone at the moment is no doubt because of the Dutchman, Jeroen Dijsselbloem, current president of the Eurogroup of finance ministers. The discussions and bailout of Cyprus received a lot of attention, because of the role of Mr. Dijsselbloem in leading the process. The Dutch government has announced that it will not meet the EU's 3% of gross national product deficit target for 2013. The Financial Times (February 28, 2013) notes that it is 'an ironic outcome for a country that was one of the toughest proponents of the deficit limits at European summits during the euro crisis.'

Netherlands (University of Twente)

The main topic related to the debate on the Lisbon Treaty in the Netherlands has been the Eurozone crisis. But also the role of the European Parliament and its national counterparts has been discussed, as exemplified by the following Exemplary Dutch publications on the Lisbon treaty:

- De Ruiter and Neuhold (2012): The winner takes it all? The implications of the Lisbon Treaty for the EPs Legislative Role in Co-Decision, in: Laursen (ed.), The EU's Lisbon Treaty, Ashgate.
- Toshkov, D. and Rasmussen, A. (2012) 'Time to Decide: The Effect of Early Agreements on Legislative Duration in the European Union', European Integration Online Papers 16(11).

Netherlands (Institute of International Relations Clingendael)

National Parliaments, Subsidiarity Check

In the past year the Lisbon Treaty as such has not been a major subject of political or academic debate in the Netherlands. However, its legacy has been discussed on a regular basis. The strengthened role of the European Parliament and the interplay with national parliaments has been high on the agenda, especially in relation to a lack of trust in the EU and broader problems on democratic legitimacy. The political discussion on increasing democratic legitimacy is mainly focused on the national parliament, subsidiarity tests, better scrutiny mechanisms and the use of the yellow card procedure. Yet, according to a report from the advisory council on international affairs (AIV), the Dutch government should intensify and improve its relations with the European Parliament. Furthermore, an increased coordination between national parliaments on EU affairs is deemed important to increase the legitimacy of the decision-making process. In the academic debate it is also recognised that an increased role for the European Parliament will be problematic considering the democratic gap between Brussels and the voters.

Euro crisis and the rethinking of the future of the EU

The euro crisis has challenged and stretched the institutional framework of the Lisbon Treaty to its limits. The national political debate is centred on incremental, pragmatic steps to solve the euro crisis. This has created an incidental institutional structure which falls partly outside the Lisbon Treaty. Moreover, it has forced European leaders to take steps on deepened integration, fuelling the debate on a political union. In this context, there are new discussions on the need of a new Treaty reform, either for all member states or only for EMU members. The speech of British Prime Minister Cameron intensified the debate on the future of the EU and potential alternatives to a federalist model or political union. In the Dutch context, a group of academics and publicists has organized a so-called citizens' initiative to prevent a further transfer of powers to Brussels unless it is approved in a national referendum.

Sources

- Advisory Council on International Affairs. The Netherlands and the European Parliament. Investing in a new relationship. No. 81, November 2012. This report investigates the strengthened role of the European Parliament after the Lisbon Treaty and provides recommendations on how the Netherlands can or should respond to this new role.
- Crum, Ben (2012): "Het democratisch tekort als institutionele uitdaging. Hoe verder na het Verdrag van Lissabon?" in: Europa, burgerschap en democratie. Over de gespannen relatie tussen burgers en Europa en mogelijkheden om die te ontspannen. (The democratic deficit as institutional challenge. How further after the Lisbon Treaty?) Den Haag, Raad voor het openbaar bestuur, pp. 109-121. This article aims to address the issue of the perceived democratic deficit from an institutional perspective in order to provide recommendations that can be implemented on this level.
- Rasmussen, Anne (2012): 20 Years of Co-decision since Maastricht: Inter- and intra-institutional implications, in: Journal of European Integration. 34 (7) pp. 735-751. This article provides a comprehensive view on the development of the co-decision procedure from the Maastricht Treaty to the Lisbon Treaty.
- Rasmussen, Anne (2012): Early Agreements in the European Union Co-decision procedure: Democracy versus efficiency? Newsletter of the Montesquieu Institute (The Netherlands)

January 11, 2012. This article is relevant because it discusses the development of the co-decision procedure and focuses on the increased use of 'early agreements' in the decision-making process and the consequences for national parliament's involvement.

- De Bruijn, Th.J.A.M. (2011): De veranderende rol van nationale parlementen in de Europese Unie (The changing role of national parliaments in the European Union) RegelMaat. Volume 6, pp. 337. This article is useful because it examines the changing role of national parliaments in the EU from the Treaty of Rome to the Lisbon Treaty and offers an account on how these developments can contribute to the further construction of an economic and monetary union in the context of the euro crisis.

Norway (ARENA, University of Oslo)

As Norway is but closely associated with the EU, many of these issues have spill-over effects that impact Norway, and thus enter into political debates – in particular the Eurozone crisis and Immigration and the Schengen Area. However as Norway is a non-EU country, and was thus never faced with ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, the Lisbon Treaty enters less into discussion of EU issues than in EU countries.

Poland (Foundation for European Studies/ European Institute Lodz)

As it concerns the financial crisis it is worth mention that Poland – despite of the fact of not being member of euro zone - played an important role in the conceptualization of the new financial rules established with the aim to avoid any further crises at the European arena. Two major conferences, devoted to this subject: took place in Poland in the reporting period, being organized by: National Bank of Poland (Warsaw, May 2012) and by the University of Gdansk, Faculty of Economics and Transport (Gdansk, October 2012). Eastern partnership and relations with Russia continued to be important and debated topics both in academic and media circles. Human rights and freedom of press and expressions were the key issues of concern for Polish scientists and journalists. Three scientific conferences on these issues took place during the reporting period and were organized by: Soros Foundation (Warsaw, May 2012), Centre for Eastern Studies (Warsaw, January 2013) and by Rzeszów University (March 2013). Arab Spring was present in public and private medias but was not substantially further developed within the academic environment, except for some individual researchers coming from: Institute of Public Affairs (1PHD researcher), Institute of Eastern Studies (one PHD researchers), Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Lodz (1 PHD researchers), Centre for European Studies of Jagiellonian University (2 PHD researchers).

Within the energy chapter (Title XXI art. 195), during the reporting period, in Poland, a great attention was paid to: feasibility of the Polish adjustments to the EU environment law, seen the great dependence on traditional coal energy source, the building up of a joint EU energy policy, providing substantial differentiation of energy sources, the common approach to the exploitation of shale gas European sources, to problems and risks of development of nuclear plants in Poland and to the more general issue of the European energy security in the long run. One major event was devoted to these issues: "Safe energy for Europe II" conference organized by AGH of Cracow University of Science and Technology in Katowice, in February 2013. Eastern Partnership and further enlargements were highly debated subjects within the reporting period. The particular attention was given to democracy issues in the neighbouring countries like Ukraine and Belarus. Violation of civil rights, limitations of free expression rights, punishment of Julia Timoshenko were vocally present in medias and academic debate. Centre for Eastern Studies organized two workshops: one devoted to Ukrainian path to the EU (Warsaw, October 2012) and the second, raising the problem of Belarus and the situation of Poles living there (Warsaw, January 2013). Within the reporting period there were at least 9 PHD dissertations linked thematically to this problem (2 in Cracow at the Jagiellonian University, 1 in

Warsaw, at the University of Warsaw, 2 in Lodz at the University of Lodz, 1 at the University of Szczecin, 2 at the Academy of Economy in Poznan and 1 at the University of Adam Mickiewicz in Poznan.

Other academics/institutions recent and recommended research outcomes and publications:

- Lisbon Treaty – chosen problems, (red. Maria Magdalena Kenig-Witkowska and Robert Grzeszczak, Warszawa 2012). This publication is the outcome of the conference organised by Chair of the European Law of Warsaw University and focuses on: reinforcement of democratic aspects of the European integration, Europe as a community of values and on factors acting in favour of reinforcement of European integration;
- W c, Janusz Józef (2012): Lisbon Treaty – political aspects of EU reform, Warsaw, Political Studies. It presents in detail major changes in the European political regime through treaty changes – and is advised as a basic reading for academic circles of political sciences studies;
- Rewizorski, Marek; Przybylska-Maszner, Beata (2012): Institutional system of the EU after the Lisbon Treaty, New Politology, Warsaw – presents the concrete changes in institutional shape of the EU through a deep glance of particular institutions: European Council, European Parliament, European Commission and the Court of Justice. Recommended as a reading for academics and practitioners.

Portugal (Instituto Superior de Economica et Gestao/ Technical University of Lisbon)

The Lisbon Treaty is not an issue in Portugal and in its academic community, anymore. To tell the truth, whenever the Lisbon Treaty is mentioned in the debate it is to refer it as an example of clear political failure. Indeed, the expectations that preceded the coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty were initially related with the strength of the European Union political system, and the increased legitimacy of its political institutions. After three years of deep political and economic crisis in Europe, the Lisbon Treaty seems useless for the public opinion in Portugal, at the best. In fact, the main purposes of the Lisbon Treaty did not prevent the appropriation that powerful member states did over the EU political process, with the emergency of a German hegemony, which was precisely the opposite of the letter and spirit of the Lisbon Treaty.

Romania (Babes-Bolyai University)

The Eurozone crisis has been discussed in the Romanian academic community, in light of the divergent opinions as to whether our country will be ready to adopt the Single European Currency within the current timetable. The Schengen Area remains an intricate topic, widely discussed in both the media and the university environment, as Romania's accession has repeatedly been delayed. The issue of immigration equally represents a topic for which there is considerable interest in academic research. The political debate on Romania's Schengen membership is particularly heated. The Energy Policy is frequently associated in Romania with the reliance on Russian fossil fuels and is often analysed in connection with the increase in the price of energy.

With regard to external action, the discussions mostly revolve around the role of Romania on the border of the European Union, with particular emphasis on the Neighbourhood Policy. Amid the reform of the external action mechanisms of the EU, Romanian scholars wonder about the future liaisons between Romania and Russia, but also about the traditional relations our country has had with the Republic of Moldova. EU enlargement is studied mostly at an academic level, with a relatively low amount of research conducted on Croatia's future accession and an increased interest in the wider

Balkans' area. Analyses of Turkey's negotiations also occupy an esteemed place in the curriculum and university debates. The Faculty of European Studies remains the most prominent contributor to the research based on the Lisbon Treaty.

Romania (European Institute of Romania)

The academic and political debates continue to be focused on Romania's potential to contribute to the external relations dimension of the EU, and particularly to its Foreign and security policy and the neighbourhood policy. The European Institute of Romania has participated in a series of seminars dealing with these topics, such as the research seminar *The European Union and Crisis Management Operations: Towards More Strategic Thinking*, organized by the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) from the 24th to the 26th of September 2012 in Switzerland. The event was attended by officials and experts from European institutions and research centres in the field such as: Timothy Clarke, Head of the European Security and Defence Policy Division of the European External Action Service, Sven Biscop, Senior Research Fellow, Egmont- the Royal Institute for International Relations- Brussels, Thierry Tardy and Gustav Lindstrom, training directors at GCSP. Discussions brought into attention the complex external challenges to European security since the Lisbon Treaty such as the 'Arab Spring', the shifting US focus to the Asia-Pacific region, as well as the complexity of the on-going EU missions. Also, European efforts to establish strategic partnerships with countries such as Russia, China and India and the context and prospects of the European Security Strategy were tackled. In this context, it was noted that a better correlation of the foreign and security policy of European states is needed, and also to redefine the interests of European countries by prioritizing situations that require a prompt and coherent response from the EU. The major geopolitical challenge the EU need to cope with on a medium and long term is the "Arab Spring", which should be dealt with through proper resource allocation to the European Neighbourhood Policy, however convincing citizens of the need to allocate appropriate resources remains the most difficult task for decision-makers at both EU and national level. Moreover, Europe remains the most suited continent for projecting a „big governance” model, through the promotion of democracy, rule of law and market economy standards, despite the setbacks manifested in time. It was also pointed out that the EU needs to develop and promote concerted interests in several areas: territorial security, migration control, climate change, and ensuring member states' decision-making autonomy in relation to other international actors.

In the reporting period, EIR expert Agnes Nicolescu contributed with a Romanian perspective on Germany's competitiveness to an EPIN paper entitled "Germany as viewed by other EU member states". As the abstract of the paper points out, criticism of Germany has diminished compared to recent years, but its diplomacy must improve, as the heavily intergovernmentalised setting of EU decision making creates talks of a "constant German EU Presidency". Furthermore, the relegation to second tier European integration of the traditional partners of the members of "core Europe" for balancing relations with Germany has left those member states deeply nervous. Also, as Germany's current weight reflects only the conjuncture of extraordinary domestic and international economic factors, the way Germany and other member states behave towards one another will have implications for their own treatment on the longer term. Already the "Union method" and "multi-speed integration" are being used to excuse exclusion and fragmentation within the EU, and Germany should develop a new style of interaction before it falls victim to these trends. The paper can be downloaded at <http://www.ceps.eu/ceps/download/7084>.

Also on the policy issue of External Action, The Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) organized on March 22nd, 2013 in Rome, Italy, a Lisbon Seminar on the topic of „The European Neighbourhood Policy and the Lisbon Treaty: What has Changed?“ at which EIR was represented by Agnes

Nicolescu. Participants included representatives from European universities and research centres such as the University of Ghent, the Trans European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA) Brussels, the University of Hanover or the Institute of World Economics Budapest. Discussions were held over the course of three sessions, with topics covering the legal basis of the ENP and the possibility of a neighbourhood agreement, the coherence brought by the Lisbon Treaty to the ENP and the system of EU external action, and the current geopolitical, economic and institutional context and the role of the ENP. Agnes Nicolescu presented her paper on The Eastern Partnership Roadmap 2012 – 2013 and the European Enlargement Strategy: Main Challenges to the conditionality and differentiated integrated principles during the third session of discussions.

The Romanian Academic Society published the following papers and articles:

- Emmanouilidis, Janis A. and Stratulat, Corina (2012): “Implementing Lisbon: a critical appraisal of the Citizens’ Initiative ” examines the introduction of the Citizens’ Initiative (CI) by the Lisbon Treaty, focusing on how the CI will work in practice.
- D ianu, Daniel et al. (2012) “Managing Diversity for a Growing Europe: A Romanian View on the EU Budgetary Review Process” addresses the major external and internal challenges linked to the EU enlargement and the need to find new solutions based on some basic principles such as: solidarity, interdependence of policies, necessity to redesign the national budgets as well, all under the legal framework of the Lisbon Treaty.
- Stratulat, Corina and Molino, Elisa (2012): “Comitology Reform: Setting the Record Straight ” is focused on the innovations made by the Lisbon Treaty in regards to the implementation process (‘comitology’), but also on the importance of comitology in the EU decision-making process.
- Dimulescu, Valentina: “Migrants at the gates: the external dimension of the EU’s migration policy in the South Mediterranean ”examines one of the basic European rights, free movement, in the context of growing irregular migration from the South Mediterranean and calls from a number of Member States to reconsider the Schengen agreement.

Romanian Center for European Policies

- Ghinea, Cristian; Dinu, Dragos; T n sache, Oana: “The Romanian Parliament enters the EU – the challenge of being an active actor in Europe ” compares the role of the national parliaments before Lisbon as well as in the Lisbon Treaty.
- Ghinea, Cristian and Chiril , Victor: “EU - Moldova negotiations. What is to be discussed, what could be achieved? ” offers an overview of the EU- Moldova relations until 2010.

Slovenia (University of Ljubljana)

Eurozone crisis

In Slovenia the Eurozone crisis has been the most often commented EU policy issue. Given the domestic financial problems and the failed stability mechanisms proposed by the Janša government (causing a political crisis and social unrest), the new Bratušek government is currently focusing on the establishment of the so called “bad bank” in order to send a clear sign to the financial markets that Slovenia is actively developing austerity policies to solve its problems without the EU emergency funding or ‘bail-out’ rescue packages. Lately, a lot of attention has also been given to the proclamations that Slovenia is to follow the Cyprus scenario. Especially the statement of the new

Eurogroup president Jeroen Dijsselbloem (“Cyprus might be the role-model case for other EU states with similar problems”) was perceived as being inappropriate and only adding to the already unstable financial environment for Slovenia. A further aspect of the Cyprus crisis debate was with regard to the so called solidarity clause, where Slovenia as highly indebted country with severe bank sector problems on its own should financially help Cyprus with approx. 50 million Euros therefore additionally increasing its debt.

Citizens´ Initiative

With regard to the newly proposed water directive by the European Commission that could potentially lead to the privatization and bad-management of water resources in Slovenia the possibility of an EU-wide Citizens´ Initiative was mentioned as one way of increasing the participation of citizens in the EU policy making process.

EU enlargement

In the light of the July 1st, 2013 accession of Croatia to the EU the need for a further commitment (of the EU as a whole and Slovenia in particular) towards a gradual integration of the remaining states of the Western Balkans has been discussed in media and politics. Since most of the potential EU candidates have open bilateral issues and since these have already been used in the negotiation process of some EU states (Slovenia, Croatia), the question of how future accessions should address these issues has been problematized.

- Accetto, Matej (2013): Jubilej ustavnega trenutka Evropske unije (Jubilee of the European Union’s constitutional moment). PP, Prav. praksa (Ljubl.), Vol 32, No. 5, pp. 3.
- Accetto, Matej (2012): Vpliv prava EU na pravico do sodnega varstva: okoljsko pravo kot testni poligon? (Influence of EU law on the right to court action: environmental law as testing ground?) PP, Prav. praksa (Ljubl.), Vol. 31, No. 21, pp. 8-10.
- Repas, Martina, Knez, Rajko in Hojnik, Janja (2013): Skupna politika kazenskih pregonov EU - pilotski primeri varstva okolja, intelektualne lastnine in iger na srečo (Common EU policy on criminal prosecution - pilot examples of environmental protection, intellectual property and games of chance). Pravniki: revija za pravno teorijo in prakso, Vol. 68, No. 1/2, pp. 67-93.