

4. Personal Assessment

Guide questions:

What strikes you as surprising and remarkable with regard to the Lisbon Treaty's first three years? This may also pertain to the academic debate in your country.

What are present trends observable in EU studies (teaching/research)?

Belgium (Universiteit Ghent)

The Treaty of Lisbon entered into force after a long and difficult period of institutional reform, prepared by the European Convention and slightly adapted after the failed entry into force of the Constitutional Treaty. The aim of this Treaty revision, which formally started with the 2001 Laeken Declaration, was to create a long-term and stable legal and institutional framework for the Union. It is remarkable that within two years after its entry into force, this framework has been supplemented with a new 'Treaty on stability, coordination and governance in the Economic and Monetary Union'. This evolution not only illustrates how quickly legal and political realities can change but also raise interesting academic questions regarding the treaty amendment procedure, the scope for enhanced cooperation and the constitutional foundations of the Union.

Reflecting the contemporary economic, political and legal challenges, EU academic research increasingly focuses on the economic governance of the eurozone and options for differentiated integration.

Bulgaria (New Bulgarian University)

It is the apparent lack of EU's foreign policy coherence and meaningful activities that strikes the most, despite that the LT established the External Action Service and provided it with many capacities and competences exactly on the matter. However the LT remains still under the radar in Bulgaria's politic and academic debate, as the country is hardly overcoming the global economic crises, which is in the centre of the public focus. It is from this perspective that EU and the LT are addressed – what instruments they both provide for helping the member states leapfrogging the recession and building a stronger, more unified Union. However, the most remarkable aspect of the whole debate is that EU is no more of equal rights and obligations. Instead, it has become a two or three-fold structure with proportional influence and benefits for each country following the respective membership.

Croatia (Institute for Development and International Relations)

Surprising about the LT is that it did not envisage a sufficient framework for better EU economic policy coordination and that the necessity for having more developed framework was realized only in context of the economic crisis. Instruments of the EU's economic governance such as the banking union and the fiscal compact were built outside of the EU Treaty architecture. This signifies a trend of shifting competences away from the EU institutions and towards governments of Member States and potentially compromises legitimacy of the EU.

LT paves the way for a more coherent and successful EU foreign policy. However, progress in this area is slow because major efforts are now being focused on overcoming the economic crisis but also due to fact that foreign and security policy remain to a large extent intergovernmental.

Impacts of the Lisbon Treaty are being directly observed to a lesser degree than in the previous years. This is an expected result having in mind the fact this is already the 4th year since the Treaty's

inception and Croatian academic community and practitioners do not consider it as a novel subject anymore. An additional trend which can be observed in the EU studies is increasing popularization of the European studies as well as mainstreaming of the EU policies into teaching and research of domestic national policies. Both of these trends are related to the upcoming Croatian EU membership which is set to begin on July, 1st, 2013.

Czech Republic (Institute for International Relations)

The expectations on the LT were often largely exaggerated both among advocates and opponents of the treaty. The Czech president Klaus declared that the entering into force of the LT was the end of Czech state sovereignty, others on the other hand hoped that the LT would be the solution that would lead to a situation where no new treaty revisions would be necessary for a long time. Both assessments seem to have been wrong. This is perhaps not that surprising for analysts following the EU over the long time.

The aspects of the LT which have received most academic attention in the Czech Republic refer to the establishment of the EEAS. The LT was vague on the functioning and the details of the institutional framework. To some degree this was understandable, yet it is surprising that for instance there was a wide spread expectation that the EU delegation would be able to assist in case consular distress, and thus that this could be one instrument for member states to reduce its spending on their foreign representations. It seems that the communication could have been clearer and some expectations subdued at an earlier stage. Regarding the wider view on CFSP post-Lisbon there were no big surprises. Maybe the role of Ashton has been even more complicated than anticipated, or alternatively, she has not been the right person for the position. However, by most accounts any achievements in CFSP caused by the inventions in the LT are likely to become visible in the long run. A positive interpretation would be that the institutional inventions in the long run could create socialization that smoothens collaboration and also increases the likelihood of defining European interests.

In EU research the trend is going towards increased diversity. EU studies is a field which receives attention from scholars coming from different theoretical backgrounds and from different main fields of studies, and my impression is not that the differences are getting smaller but rather increased. This in turn reflects that the EU is growing both in size but more importantly relating to competencies. If there is a trend over the last two or three years, that would be that a wider range of predictions are presented openly by leading academics. A few years ago hardly anyone would seriously have discussed the possibilities of a breakup of the EU. Now such discussions can be heard also among prominent scholars.

Denmark (Danish Centre for International Studies)

One thing that can be seen as surprising with regard to the Lisbon Treaty's first three years, is the demise of EU foreign policy issues on the EU agenda, taking into account the new system for foreign policy created by the Lisbon Treaty. The establishment of a High Representative assisted by the EEAS is the most ambitious attempt so far to meet the expectation that the EU should have a serious, common foreign policy, but we still lack the political will to achieve this. The economic crisis has led Member States to become more internally focused and the European model has become weakened and less desirable, leaving both little attention being paid to and weight left for EU foreign policy.

In term of EU studies at the DIIS, there has been a move away from the institutional debate into a more social one. This dimension is primarily taking place at the domestic level, and is concerned with the upheavals both in Europe in the light of the Euro-crisis and in the Middle East since the Arab uprisings. As a part of this, a number of DIIS researchers have underlined the role that memory and identity-politics increasingly play a part in foreign policy.

Finland (University of Tampere)

The most remarkable policy factor is how the institutional mechanisms of the LT have proved insufficient for dealing with the crisis of the Euro even though the LT was initially promoted as an arrangement giving the EU enough teeth to solve its policy challenges. Instead of rapid action by EU institutions, slow intergovernmental agreements have repeatedly been sought and new amendments made to existing institutional landscape. The Union has several times been caught running behind the 'markets'. Hence we have a situation where a new Treaty would be needed to build a more robust EU capability to defend the member states' economic and financial interests, while national debates focused on preserving existing rebates and other nationally sensitive arrangements and keeping European interventions into domestic policy in check prevent more solidarity as would be required in rational policy planning in today's Europe.

Regarding teaching and research, the academic community of EU studies has been poorly prepared to take on the challenge of the new political economy of the EU. There are relatively very few specialists on EU/ European political economy with a social science competence and ability to link fiscal, financial and economic debates to the wider political agenda, while many EU specialists have been slow to attempt to respond to the policy needs that should touch all of us as taxpayers and publicly paid intellectuals.

Germany (Humboldt Universität Berlin)

The increasing importance of the European Council (especially regarding the financial crisis) is still surprising, because the LT was supposed to increase democratic legitimacy of EU measures by strengthening the European Parliament. Instead, it is the European Council, which first and foremost determines the management of the crisis. Nevertheless, under its new president Martin Schulz, the European Parliament seems to emancipate itself, e.g. regarding its new right to veto the EU budget adopted by the Council. The new relationship between these two institutions will have to be carefully observed in the future in order to see whether the political system of the EU will work efficiently in order to increase the democratic legitimacy of EU politics.

LT does not provide the opportunities necessary to face the recent threats to the EU resulting from the financial crisis. The lack of a real political union complementing the highly integrated Economic and Monetary Union became evident. Instead, other innovative measures lying outside the treaties were invented to handle the crisis. Due to a lack of procedural rules provided by the treaties the intergovernmental method in EU politics has resurrected and has become very dominant again, although LT was supposed to strengthen the supranational method. In this regard, LT seems to have missed the target.

Germany (Universität Trier)

A major topic over the last months has been the dispute over the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for the years 2014 to 2020. A first round of negotiations failed in November 2012 due to incompatible positions of the net contributor countries paying more to the EU budget than they actually receive (notably Great Britain, Germany and the Netherlands) and those countries which benefit most from the subsidies and EU payment programs (notably countries from the east and south of Europe). The first demanded a budget reform and a reduction of expenditures, the latter a protection of vested rights and a rising budget. Of course, the EU couldn't have it both ways. Since the EU member states have to vote unanimously no compromise could be reached and a second round of negotiations was scheduled for February 2013.

The result of these negotiations was praised by the President of the European Council, Herman van Rompuy, as a „budget of moderation“, bridging the gulf between the irreconcilable differences among

the member states and preparing the EU to boost employment, economic development and competitiveness. In reality, however, it is a compromise typical for the horse trading between EU member states: to please the beneficiaries of the agricultural and regional subsidies still 70 percent of the budget will finance the agricultural policy (373 billion Euros, down from 421 billion in the last MFF 2007-2013) and the cohesion policy (325 billion Euros, down from 355 billion). Only 13 percent (126 billion Euros, up from 91 billion Euros) are earmarked for research and modern infrastructure (energy, traffic and telecommunication). In return – to please the net contributors – the MFF was limited to 960 billion Euros, 34 billion less than in the last MFF, or 1.04 percent of the gross national income (GNI) of the European Union. For the first time, the EU will spend less than in the past.

The EU Budget and Financial Programming Commissioner, Janusz Lewandowski, criticised this budget for preserving old structures instead of strengthening the innovative capacity of Europe. The heads of the four main political groups in the European Parliament declared in a joint statement that “this agreement will not strengthen the competitiveness of the European economy. Instead, it will only weaken it. It is not in the interest of European citizens”.

In March the European Parliament (EP) overwhelmingly rejected this proposal for the European Union’s budget, declaring that it “disregards Parliament’s role and competences as set out in the Treaty of Lisbon” and that the EP will “exercise fully its legislative prerogatives”. Representatives from the EU member states and the EP must now try to find a new compromise which should be finalized before summer.

Many observers had long criticised the European Parliament as a multi-lingual talking shop, which at best rubber-stamped decisions prepared by national leaders or the European Commission. But the powers of the EP were greatly expanded by the EU’s 2009 Lisbon Treaty, and this veto marked the first time the EP has had the right to vote on the multi-annual budget. The president of the EP, Martin Schulz, proudly declared that “the vote has shown that the European Parliament must be taken seriously as a negotiating partner.”

To conclude, the economic and financial crises brought back images considered long overcome by the European project of peace, stability and prosperity recently honoured with the Nobel Peace Prize. “Us” versus “them” attitudes of nationalistic kind are gaining ground. “Brussels” against the nation states, Greece and Cyprus against Germany and Great Britain against the entire EU. “Germanophobia” and “Germany bashing” (for example Angela Merkel portrayed as Hitler or in SS uniform) is on the rise in the countries deeply touched by the crises, making Germany and German politicians responsible for social cuts or rising unemployment due to a policy of austerity presented to them as being without any alternative. The role as scapegoat responsible for the often homemade economic and financial policy failures and at the same time being expected to act as political leader and to put fresh money on the table may strengthen the already existing mistrust and rejection of the EU among a potentially growing part of the German population (see for example the creation of the Eurosceptic party “Alternative für Deutschland”).

Given these circumstances, the Treaty of Lisbon was to strengthen the EU’s democratic legitimacy. But this latest empowerment of the European Parliament – the EU’s only directly elected institution – introduced a strong veto player as witnessed during the EU budget negotiations. Facing a lack of enthusiasm, courage and political will to deepen the European integration will make a major treaty reform very unlikely in the near future, all the more so as this would play into the cards of British eurosceptics.

Greece (Institute of European Integration and Policy)

In general it should be mentioned that the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty have been satisfactorily integrated in the university teaching. The new provisions of the Lisbon Treaty concerning the new ordinary legislative procedure and the new areas added in the co-decision procedure of decision making (Agriculture and fisheries, Cooperation with third countries; commercial policy, Freedom, security and justice Judicial matters, Liberalisation of services in specific sectors, Institutional issues: Implementing acts -comitology) as well as the impact of this reform on the European integration process and on democratization are incorporating in the university teaching. On the other hand, another aspect of the Lisbon Treaty, the significance and the impact of the European External Action Services in the area of Common Foreign and Security Policy should be examined more, expecting the first assessment report of the service.

However, what is remarkable is that these reforms and their impact are not integrated in the academic debate in Greece. In general, the new possibilities offered by the Lisbon Treaty to European integration and to the democratization of the EU institutional edifice do not prevail the academic debate. The dramatic repercussions of the economic crisis prevent the academia from dealing with these issues publicly and from diffusing them to the sensitive part of the civil society. As a result of that, as it was pointed out in previous Lisbon Watches, the dynamic offered by the Lisbon Treaty is not widely comprehensible to the Greek public.

Hungary (College of Business and Communication)

The incumbent Hungarian government is strongly opposed to the further integration stipulated by the LT and this has determined the entire political landscape of the academic debate in Hungary. Not only the universities have been marginalized in the official discourse on EU but the research institutes of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences have been completely reorganized with new bosses loyal to the government and with many researchers dismissed. It concerned the Research Institute of Political Science and Sociology, and also that of World Economy (VKI). These institutes must operate under increasingly difficult circumstances and lack forums and publication space.

The present trend is clearly practice-oriented or policy-oriented. The BCE and BKF students have an effort to get a job in the EU. The research has suffered from the missing funds and jobs, the university faculty are overburdened, since they teach at two-three places for earning a living. After the latest cut in the budget of higher education the universities have dismissed many people and still have very serious lack of resources. The university and research sector is a deep crisis, fighting for survival. Since December 2012 there have been a series of mass demonstrations of students against the policy of the government in higher education, including the BCE students.

Hungary (Institute of World Economics)

The most surprising issue might be the confusion that the EU is still suffering from its representation to the outside world and also its weak identity in international politics. Another remarkable shortcoming seems to be the fact that the crisis of the euro area could not be tackled exclusively on the basis of the LT. As regards teaching in general, European studies remain important in Hungary and this topic is usually compulsory in the great majority of higher education institutions. A general challenge is however, how to keep pace with fast developments in the EU. Only those textbooks “survive” on the market, which are being updated on a regular basis. As regards research trends, for example at IWE emphasis is put on the protracted economic crisis in the EU and its management at both EU and national level. In political science, research focuses among others on the future structures of the EU.

Iceland (University of Iceland)

The low profile of the Treaty itself is noteworthy but not surprising in view of the present concentration on Europe's economic, financial and purely political challenges. The weakness/lack of achievements of the EEAS is clearly a contributing factor, but has led to the EEAS becoming - perhaps excessively - a research focus in itself, while relatively little has been written on what the LT's external policy and security provisions should allow the EU to do in the respective fields. The debate on 'the EU as a power' sometimes seems to be moving in circles and to be excessively Euro-centric, rather than taking into account shifts in the understanding, and balance, of 'power' at Euro-Atlantic and global level. In terms of teaching, there is still too little focus on the EU's internal and functional security roles, on its roles and potential in the fields of arms control and non-proliferation, and on armaments issues in general.

Italy (Istituto Affari Internazionali)

The fact that it was initially considered as a Treaty that would not be revised for a long time, is the most striking. The Eurozone crisis has proved that the opposite is true. Pretty obviously, EU studies tend to now focus on the governance of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). What is missing is a more global and comprehensive approach to the Eurozone crisis and how it relates to the all process of European integration.

Lithuania (Institute of International Relations and Political Science)

A Eurozone crisis obviously has an impact on EU studies. It could be argued that the political economy of the EU is gaining more attention. The need to explain on-going processes calls for broader methodological and theoretical perspectives, incorporation of interdisciplinary arguments and explanations.

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

The most striking thing is the incapacity of the European Union to deal in a coherent way with the financial and sovereign debt crisis. Despite the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, which was meant to improve the decision making process of EU-27 and bring Europe closer to its citizens, the Union has lost credibility. Due to the dimension of problems the EU has to deal with, Europe goes through a series of Council and European Council meetings where ministers and heads of state seem to have taken over the day-to-day business of a Union under permanent strain. In view of that, in the Grand Duchy, the discussion on institutional reforms came up among the political class, wishing to reduce the dominance of the Council. Many, not just the political class, see Europe at a crossroads between further integration and the demise of the European project.

Malta (University of Malta)

The fact that the Lisbon Treaty is proving once again to be inadequate to help the EU confront the economic crisis it is in, is proof enough of its inadequacies highlighted before it had even come into effect. Though the defunct EU Constitutional project was halted and much of what could be salvaged from that project was incorporated in the LT, the need for further constitutional reform became apparent as soon as the LT came into effect. The LT has also been a disappointment in external relations and no dramatic turning point has occurred in the EU's ability to act more coherently in world affairs – particularly in the Mediterranean region where the need for action appears most acute.

Present trends in EU studies in Malta are focusing most on the Euro crisis, budgetary affairs, proposals regarding the EU's Mediterranean policies, particularly the EU response (Neighbourhood policy/Union for the Mediterranean), economic transition in southern Europe and north Africa and

their links with the seemingly unstoppable euro crisis. Another interesting area is “agenda setting in the EU” followed by EU energy policy and migration. The issue of deepening the European integration process is also beginning to take prominence. From a purely national perspective the following are most salient: EU small country presidencies in view of Malta’s 2017 EU presidency, the implementation of EU funded projects in Malta and keeping within the set macroeconomic targets for the national government expenditure / national debt specified in the new treaties. The European semester has also gained prominence as a research objective.

Netherlands (Universtiy of Groningen)

It seems that the true implications of the Lisbon Treaty are still not being felt and are difficult to judge. Many of the Lisbon Treaty subject areas have not been getting much attention from a policy making perspective, because of the continuation of the Eurozone crisis and the overloading of the decision making structures on the major questions related to the Euro. At the University of Groningen, we are putting new emphasis on the EUs 20/20 project and the policy areas where the Dutch government has identified as policy priority areas within this project. We think that places our graduates in a good position to ‘hit the ground running’ when confronted with the most urgent and important policy questions in the Hague and in Brussels. These priority areas include: research and R&D, innovation, ICT, support for SMEs, sustainable energy, climate, energy networks, sustainable transport, major infrastructure, employment and gender equality, education and training, strengthening links with the labour market, and combating poverty.

Netherlands (University of Twente)

Continuing disillusionment with how little the attempt of forging a “constitution for Europe” (settling institutional matters for a longer time period than pervious treaty changes) and the subsequent reform/Lisbon treaty has produced in actual change. The continuing debate of (now the Maastricht) “left-overs” in the context of the Eurozone crisis but also the Lisbon agenda and economic governance more broadly are an issue to address. Efforts to integrate “European studies” with the overall disciplinary discussions (in comparative politics, international relations or economics/law) and continuing efforts to move it more into the mainstream of “normal science” (less “what is the nature of the beast” navel gazing), including debates about methodology.

Netherlands (Institute of International Relations Clingendael)

It strikes me as remarkable that even after the no-vote in 2005, the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty did not cause much public debate in the Netherlands. It was not a sensitive topic and the consequences were easily accepted.

Norway (ARENA, University of Oslo)

Whereas the Lisbon Treaty was supposed to put an end to new constitution-making for the foreseeable future, the Eurozone crisis quickly revealed the inadequacy of the existing institutional machinery for dealing with the crisis. Instead there has been ad hoc decision-making through the “Union method” and back-door treaty-making outside the framework of the Lisbon Treaty (esp. the Fiscal Treaty). The most obvious observable trend is the great amount of research which is now coming to be brought to bear on the many interlocking crises facing the EU (financial, fiscal, sovereign debt, democratic, constitutional).

Poland (Foundation for European Studies/ European Institute Lodz)

As it concerns the current trends observable in the European Studies in Poland we can state that the European Studies came as the key subject to the level of license graduation. Some years ago the key model of European Studies academic teaching was the basic disciplinary education (economics,

international affairs, law, political science, sociology, environmental studies etc.), after which students were submitted to the master European Studies degree. Nowadays there is a twofold model, mixing up a Bachelor degree offered on the European Studies and the former model of European Studies Master graduation. All major public universities offer Master of European Integration (19 public universities). Six of them offer academic education in European Studies at the Undergraduate level (Poznan – University of Adam Mickiewicz, Krakow – Jagiellonian University, Warsaw – University of Warsaw, Lodz – University of Lodz, Faculty of Sociology, Szczecin – Faculty of Economics and Wrocław-Faculty of Political Science).

The key characteristic of the current teaching model is that the Lisbon Treaty itself does not constitute a lecture subject alone as such. In various curricula Lisbon treaty is presented as an element of lectures devoted to separate subjects like: European Law, European Polity and policies, European culture, Common agricultural policy, Economic aspects of European integration, Common Foreign and Security Policy, External relations of the EU, Cohesion policy etc.

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

The Lisbon network was a very important initiative that put together academic experts – coming from all EU member states – on political, economic and legal issues related with the Treaty of Lisbon content and scope of application. Nevertheless, this project took place in a time of serious EU crisis. Probably, this is the most delicate European integration crisis, insofar as it is the whole European project that has been at stake. As Mr. Juncker recently said, Europe is leaving a time that resembles the atmosphere of 1913. In a certain way, it is a pity that this large and rare academic network did not embrace this opportunity to discuss what really matters for Europe nowadays, and take a true European stance on it.

Romania (Babes-Bolyai University)

It is without a doubt interesting to follow the academic debates on the shortcomings of the Lisbon Treaty, notably in the field of decision-making, but also in the area of economic coordination. The sovereign debt crisis was obviously not meant to be solved by the provisions of the Treaty dating from 2007, but it is certain that it does not trigger the necessary response mechanisms to such troublesome situations, so as to foster coordination amongst all member states. It is surprising that, despite the significant changes brought forth by the Lisbon Treaty in institutional effectiveness, major decisions are still heavily reliant on the will of the intergovernmental element.

Present trends in EU studies in Romania tend to place emphasis on the past, present and future role of East-Central Europe in the decision-making process of the EU. The heritage brought by this part of the continent, this veritable New Europe, is thus regarded as an undeniable contributor to the restoration of the European common identity. Therefore, it becomes essential to study, throughout recent history, the modernisation, Europeanization and integration of these countries, as well as the numerous projects envisaged in this area throughout the 20th century. Apart from this, it is considered of interest at present to study the manner in which EU information is being communicated, so as to ensure more effectiveness in this permanent exchange of useful data amongst member states and directly with the EU institutions.

Slovenia (University of Ljubljana)

During the first three years of LT a relative lack of the LT in the public sphere and in the day-to-day politics of the EU itself is observable. Therefore changes brought about by the LT have not been thoroughly discussed in the academic debate in Slovenia but rather taken for granted. Slovenian polity

and politics is currently overwhelmed by its own economic and financial crisis, thus, this seems to be the only observable reference of the national polity in relation to the EU. Slovenian political science studies on the EU issues are however still divided in two fields; Policy Analysis of (common) EU policies and a more International Relations perspective on external action of the EU, including the EU enlargement, EU neighbourhood policy, EU interregionalism, EU development aid, EU diplomacy etc. These two approaches to the EU studies, namely studying the EU as a political process/system and studying the intergovernmental aspects and EU as a global actor of the EU prevail in political studies. Other branches of EU studies are also: EU Law and human rights issues, EU internal market studies, financial arrangements and the fiscal union within Economics and Business studies, and Cultural studies of EU (rope).