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## **LISBOAN**

### **Linking Interdisciplinary Integration Studies by Broadening the European Academic Network**

#### **7th Guest Lecture**

Prof. Dr. Simon Bulmer,  
University of Sheffield (Partner no. 58)  
hosted by  
Prof. Dr. Lenka Rovna,  
Charles University Prague (Partner no. 13)  
and  
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## **LISBOAN GUEST LECTURE – Visit of Professor Simon Bulmer in Prague, November 26 – 28, 2012**

During his visit, Simon Bulmer (Professor of European Politics and Head of the Department of Politics, University of Sheffield) gave two lectures at LISBOAN partner institutes: one at Charles University in Prague and the second at the Institute of International Relations, Prague, Czech Republic

### **I. The Comparison of German and British Approaches towards the EU**

Charles University Prague

Charles University Prague organized a lecture by Professor Bulmer at the campus in Prague 5 Jinonice. It enabled a very high participation of students. There were about 50 participants at the lecture, mostly students and lecturers of Charles University.

The lecture dealt with German and British approaches towards the EU. Professor Bulmer introduced a number of specific conditions for the United Kingdom on the one hand, and Germany on the other. By outlining their historical development, the different projection of their nationhood after WWII and the roots of their relationship towards the European integration project, he provided the background for a comparison of the present role of EU matters in these two countries. The rich debate following the lecture tackled the perceived leadership role of Germany, contrasting it with a possible withdrawal of the UK from the EU. Professor Bulmer's Power Point presentation was made available to the students after the event.

After the lecture, a meeting with PhD students at the Department of West European Studies was organized. Professor Bulmer advised on the methodology of their PhD theses. Options for further strengthening the cooperation between Charles University and Sheffield University were also discussed.

*Lenka Rovna*

### **II. Germany and the Euro zone Crisis: Between Hegemony and Domestic Politics**

Institute of International Relations, Prague

The Institute of International Relations Prague hosted a public discussion on the Euro zone crisis and Germany's future role in the European Union. The event was held in the main conference room of the Institute, which was filled to maximum capacity. The fifty people in attendance were made up of scholars, students of social sciences from nearby universities and government officials and diplomats. The main event was a lecture by Professor Simon Bulmer, head of the Department of Politics at the University of Sheffield, on the current situation in Europe and the challenge Germany faces in helping reverse the crisis.

Professor Bulmer began with an overview of the current economic issues facing the Euro zone and focused on several key problems, such as the banking crisis, lack of economic growth and the issues of political leadership and legitimacy. He then turned to Germany and the Euro zone,

giving reasons why Germany both could and could not act as a leader of the European Union. Professor Bulmer also took this opportunity to elaborate on two of the main factors regarding Germany and the EU: 'sound money' and political capacity. He stated that the Euro zone crisis could essentially be broken down into sound money theory versus European integration.

Regarding political capacity, Professor Bulmer spoke at length concerning the situation between hegemony and domestic politics in Germany. Once again, Bulmer detailed why Germany was a quantitative hegemon in Europe, and yet felt very reluctant taking up the role of an active leader. Germany's recent policy regarding the crisis has reflected this reluctance and has been criticized; it is ultimately not clear then whether Germany can or is willing to offer hegemonic stability in the Euro zone.

Professor Bulmer concluded his lecture by stating that Germany has developed a successful economy in the post-war era, but its domestic institutional structure is not conducive to swift decisions due to its reliance on building a consensus. Therefore, economic hegemony has to co-exist with both the constraints of domestic politics and with its acceptability in southern Europe. He finished with two remaining dilemmas regarding the crisis. The first was whether or not a domestic German and Euro zone consensus can be found to advance integration so as to make sound money compatible with further integration? Secondly, can Germany secure prior agreements for solutions with France, which Professor Bulmer cited as a pre-requisite for success? Either way, the answers may not come until after both the German federal election and the European parliamentary elections in 2014.

*Petr Kratochvil*