

**LISBOAN – ERASMUS ACADEMIC NETWORK EXPERT WORKSHOP
“Relevance of the European External Action Service for the**

EU’s policies towards South East Europe”

CALL FOR PAPERS

Conveners: Dr. Visnja Samardzija and Dr. Hrvoje Butkovic
Institute for International Relations - IMO
Dubrovnik, Croatia, October the 5th 2012.

The Lisbon Treaty equipped the EU with the “European External Action Service” EEAS (Article 27 TEU) that integrated EU’s foreign representations into a network of embassies staffed by officials from the Commission, European Council Secretariat and the national civil servants. By receiving staff from national diplomatic services, the EEAS intends to associate the Member States in a process that may lead to the emergence of a common diplomatic culture (Hillion and Lefabvre, 2010.). The EEAS provides a window of opportunity for the EU to recast its external relations institutions by building a more unified approach to development, foreign policy and practice (Gaves and Koeb, 2010.). Thus the launch of EEAS was seen as a possibility for increasing coordination and improving the EU’s diplomatic, economic and operational instruments in acting as global player.

The South-Eastern Europe represents challenging geographic area for exercising a more unified EU approach, since it is the region where the EU explicitly claims a political and operational lead in a dense international field (Gross and Rotta, 2011). This is particularly important given the still existing “soft-security” challenges such as ethnic tensions, terrorism, international organized crime and corruption, largely derived from the weak-state capacities that can nevertheless still dilute the effectiveness of the EU actorship in the region. In addition, the EU itself lacks coherence in dealing with disputes over Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Macedonia, where EU member states confirm that foreign policy remains one of the last *domain réservé* of the nation-states.

Completing enlargement towards the countries of South-Eastern Europe represents important EU’s unfinished business. The EU must search for a new strategic approach that might keep the momentum of the Stabilisation and Association Process and EU accession. Slowing down the process of EU accession of the region (except Croatia, as a positive example) might negatively impact the EU “transformative power” to stabilise the region and continue implementing the reforms. In this context EU should find solutions to motivate countries in the region to continue their reforms even in the situation when their prospects for EU membership may be far of in the future (Conley and Cipoletti, 2010).

The EEAS could help to maximise the EU presence and impact positive political developments on the region, policy-making and implementation (Gross and Rotta, 2011). It could help overcoming administrative divisions between various EU institutions and play an important role, not only in producing more unified approach to the region but also in providing necessary strategic backing and potential coherence that would encourage further enlargement in the SEE. The CSDP missions in the region such as the EULEX in Kosovo could also benefit from increased political leadership of the EU provided

through innovative role of the EEAS. However, it is yet to be seen to which extent will the EEAS be confronted with the still dominant Member States' external competence.

The planned workshop in Zagreb will search for answers to questions such as:

- How could the Lisbon Treaty and the EEAS actions contribute towards advancement of the Commission led enlargement process in the SEE region?
- How does the EEAS influence traditional interlinkage between the EU enlargement policy and the CFSP in the SEE?
- Could the EEAS contribute to building of unified EU positions on disputed SEE topics?
- To which extent will the EEAS provide effective mechanisms to ensure state-building and peace-keeping in the SEE region?
- How to overcome possible tensions between the EU-led diplomatic framework and ambitions of some EU member states to pursue their own foreign policies in the region?
- Will the EEAS be capable to recruit the best personal for implementing its tasks?
- What are Croatian expectations for its active participation in the EEAS?

Please send your proposal (max 2 pages) by April 30th, 2012 to: butkovic@irmo.hr; the presenters will be informed by May 31st, 2012. Limited resources are available for travel and subsistence or participants, particularly for those coming from LISBOAN partner institutes (cf. <http://www.lisboan.net>).

References:

- Bechev, DMITAR. *Constructing South East Europe: The Politics of Balkan Regional Cooperation*. Basingstoke, Hampshire, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- Bindi, Federiga. One Year On: Assessing the European Foreign Policy and the European External Action Service. *Brown Journal of World Affairs*. 17.2 (2011): 125-138.
- Butković, Hrvoje. How is Democracy Applied within the EU: Combining Elements of Traditional and Innovative Democratic Practice. *Croatian Political Science Review*. 47. 5 (2010): 27-43.
- Belloni, Roberto. European Integration and the Western Balkans: Lessons, Prospects and Obstacles. *Journal of Balkan & Near Eastern Studies* 11.3 (2009): 313-331.
- Cerović, Božidar; Uvalić, Milica. *Western Balkans' Accession to the European Union: Political and Economic Challenges*. Belgrade, Faculty of Economics of the University of Belgrade, Publishing Centre, 2010.
- Conley A. Heather; Cipoletti, T. J. The European Union's Policy toward the Western Balkans. *Western Balkans Policy Review*, September 2010.
- Gavas, Mikaela; Koeb, Eleonora. Setting up the European External Action Service: building a comprehensive approach. *Overseas Development Institute – Background Note*, April 2010.
- Gross, Eva; Rotta, Alessandro. The EEAS and the Western Balkans. *IAI Working Papers* 11, 15th June 2011.
- Hillion, Christophe; Lefebvre, Maxime. The European External Action Service: towards a common diplomacy? *Foundation Robert Schuman Policy Paper*, European Issue n° 184, 25th October 2010.
- Pridham, Geoffrey. Securing Fragile Democracies in the Balkans: the European Dimension. *Romanian Journal of European Affairs* 8.2 (2008): 56-70.
- Samardžija, Višnja. Southeastern Europe in an Enlarged Europe, in: Deimel, Johanna; Van Meurs, Wim (ed.). *The Balkan Prism. A Retrospective by Policy-Makers and Analysts*. München, Verlag Otto Sagner, 2007.: 199-213