



European Documentation and Research Centre

Newsletter

New Edition

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The ERASMUS Programme at the EDRC

In the academic year 2009-2010, a total of 37 EDRC students applied to go and study at an overseas university as part of the EU's ERASMUS Programme. This shows that for many students the opportunities offered by the Erasmus programme are becoming increasingly attractive. The Erasmus Student Mobility programme provides financial assistance for undergraduate and postgraduate students to study for one semester at a University with which the EDRC has a mobility agreement.

The EDRC currently has seven such agreements with universities across Europe, each offering two places for EDRC undergraduate students. These universities are Limerick in Ireland, Warsaw in Poland, Paris 8 in France, Konstanz and Mannheim in Germany, Szeged in Hungary and Bologna in Italy (the Bologna agreement provides for

seven places at this university). Postgraduate students also have the opportunity to study at both Warsaw and Szeged.

In addition to these places, the EDRC has recently agreed to sign several new agreements including with the University of Calabria in Italy, the Autonomous University of Barcelona in Spain and Malmo University in Sweden. With these new agreements the EDRC hopes to increase the range of courses open to EDRC students as well as the linguistic opportunities offered by studying abroad (of all the agreements cited, most courses are taught in English except for credits taught at Paris 8, Bologna and Barcelona).

Once student applications have been processed, applicants are allocated a place on the basis of their academic performance and their list of preferences according to the places

available. Second year students travel in the second semester while third year students travel in their first semester. Before leaving students sign a study agreement which covers their grant (and which is dealt with by the International and EU Office) and a learning agreement which is signed between the student and the EDRC, in which the subjects to be followed overseas are listed.

Students should also be aware that the EU provides additional grants for Intensive Language Courses in the host country to which the student is travelling, primarily for courses which will be held immediately before the commencement of the semester of Erasmus study.

The academic coordinator for the Erasmus programme at the EDRC is Dr Mark Harwood and he can be contacted at the following email address: mark.harwood@um.edu.mt



The Gozo Seminar

On the 16 and 17 of February of this year, 24 students in the final year of the Bachelor in European Studies participated in a two-day seminar held in Gozo. The resident members of the EDRC academic staff also attended. The purpose of the seminar was to give students the opportunity to make a short presentation on their dissertation followed by a discussion and comments from members of the academic staff and fellow students. This was the first time that such a seminar had been organized at the EDRC and the success of the first one has encouraged staff to repeat it next year and possibly also mark it as an annual event in the EDRC calendar.

The seminar took place at the Jesuit retreat home, *Manresa House*, in Victoria, Gozo. Manresa has excellent audio-visual facilities and halls for such meetings and all students made a power-point presentation on their research. The titles, methodology and preliminary findings of these dissertations were discussed in eight sessions spread over two days. Presentations were grouped according to subject. All the students were accommodated on full board at Manresa and the seminar was very intensive.

Preparations for the seminar began well in advance. Students were informed of it many weeks before the event and encouraged to consult their thesis supervisors on their presentations. Happily many of them did so and before the 'examination fever' of the first semester assessment had taken hold of them. No stone was left unturned to ensure that the seminar would be academically productive and worthwhile.

The selection of the seminar date, the second day of this year's event happened to be Ash Wednesday, was influenced by a number of academic considerations. The EDRC staff wanted to give students time to advance in their research and to finish their first semester assessments. In addition the seminar could not be held close to the submission date because in order to give students the benefit of changing their research projects in response to the feedback received during the sessions.

Two other presentations were made during the seminar, one on the Masters in European Studies at the EDRC and the other on the referencing system and other technicalities involved in the writing of the dissertation.



Manresa Retreat House, Victoria

It was noted that the students prepared very well for the seminar. The sessions started on time and participants kept to the agreed schedule. At the end of the seminar we received very positive comments from the students who attended. Most of them said that they had underestimated its value and that it had benefitted them in many ways. Living in with fellow European Studies students was also an opportunity for them to get to know each other better. Some argued that it is a pity it could not happen in the first year of the course.

This very positive feedback has encouraged us to try it again next year. With increasing student numbers, as the trend seems to be at present at the EDRC, the organizational challenge is going to be bigger. But that is an additional reason why we should go for it again.



Final year students of the Bachelor in European Studies and the EDRC academic staff during the seminar in Gozo



The EUROPEAN DOCUMENTATION CENTRE



EDC Information Revamped

As part of the ongoing process of providing access to the documentation produced by the European Union and thus facilitate the retrieval of information, the website of the European Documentation Centre has been updated. It now provides a number of links to various useful websites, including online journals and databases, news on EU matters, directories, statistical information, specific links relating to Malta and the EU, and more. The EDC site can be accessed through the EDRC webpage on <http://www.um.edu.mt/edrc/edc2>



CLIMATE NEWS

The European Commission adopted on 31 March 2010 a proposal to enhance the EU's role in global health, to support developing countries in getting back on track towards achieving health-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Amongst other things, the Commission proposes that the EU combine its leading role in trade and development to create a coherent approach to global health, including on issues such as migration, security, food security and climate change (more on europa.eu-en.org/articles/en/article_9642_en.htm)

www.acpsec.org/index.htm

The UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has released the February 2010 issue of its e-Bulletin *Sustainable Development of Tourism*. The issue features several climate change-related articles, including one on coastal tourism in the Mediterranean and adapting to climate change (more on www.unwto.org/sdt/ebulletin/en/pdf/E-bul_en_18.pdf)

The Asia Pacific Regional Human Development Network (AP-HDNet) of the UN Development Programme (UNDP) is holding an e-discussion on human development and climate change (more on www2.undprcc.lk/ext/HDRU/e_discussion_climate_change.php)

Letter of President Barroso to EU Heads of State and Government on climate action

(more on europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/10/41&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en)

The European Environment Agency (EEA) released its annual publication "Signals," which focuses on "Biodiversity, Climate Change and you." This year's issue was drafted in support of the International Year of Biodiversity (more on www.eea.europa.eu/publications/signals-2010)

ACP Countries and EU Discuss Improved Partnership on Climate Change The 20th session of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly between the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries and the EU was held in Tenerife, Spain, from 29 March-1 April 2010. Amongst other things, the assembly further discussed climate change cooperation. More details are available at

(Information edited by Stefano Moncada and adapted from Climate-L.org)





The Europeanization of Malta's Public Administration

Dr Mark Harwood

In March of this year my doctoral thesis on the Europeanization of the Maltese Public Administration was passed by a board of local and foreign examiners. The thesis was originally intended to fill the gap in Europeanization studies where Malta was the only Member State which had not been studied in detail. A second aim was to study Europeanization in a micro-state.

The thesis is arranged into seven chapters, the first outlining an overview of current Europeanization theories and how Europeanization is conditioned by those factors which are stimulating change, where change is manifested and what factors mediate in facilitating or hindering EU-related change.

Chapters 2 and 3 analyse the particular context within which political change takes place in Malta, in particular how issues such as EU membership can often be manifestations of more fundamental questions of national identity and that this can explain the extreme polarisation that these issues create in Maltese society. This polarisation led to particular mediating factors in Malta's initial Europeanization experience, including problems caused by changes being left to the last minute, public servants resisting Europeanization due to their political affiliation, the excessive burdens placed on a very limited group of political actors at the core of decision making and the distinct feeling of burn-out across the Public Service even before the real work of membership was to begin in May 2004.

Chapter 4 then outlines the changes experienced across the Public Service since 2004. These changes have seen Malta take its seat in various EU institutions but have also brought about real structural changes

across the Public Service including new, coordinating structures within the Prime Minister's Office for EU policy (the EU Secretariat) and EU Funds (the PPCD) as well as horizontal coordinating structures across Ministries, primarily the EU Affairs Directorates (in their various manifestations). Each Ministry also saw more specific changes in their various sectors, both in terms of policy as well as the systems for administering policy. Chapter 4 also analyses how policy has been impacted.

Chapters 5 and 6 represent case studies from within the Public Service, chosen to better illustrate the structural and policy changes brought about by membership as well as analysing in greater detail Malta's principal mediating factors. Both case studies were chosen to reflect different dynamics within the Service with the first, the Customs Department, being taken as an example of a relatively smooth transition to membership while the second, agriculture, saw more resistance to change. Both were analysed to better understand why change was more successful in the case of Customs as opposed to agriculture. These conclusions were then consolidated into a final chapter which analyses how membership has impacted the various levels of the Public Administration from the political to the administrative class as well as the work of parliament, political parties and social groups. In concluding my thesis several broad observations were made:

- The EU has a pervasive influence in small polities like Malta where "resistance" to it can seem futile
- One of the greatest impacts of membership has been the articulation of long-term planning and policy formulation

as well as greater enforcement of regulatory control

- Europeanization has seen a radical centralisation of coordinating power in the Office of the Prime Minister and has also created greater Prime Ministerial patronage through the centralisation of funding responsibilities within the PPCD
- Political elites have effectively controlled Europeanization in their own interests and where political machinations are more limited, as with Customs, Europeanization has been smoother
- The EU coordinating structures at the core of government remain works in progress with key gatekeepers and decision-makers being on temporary contracts or on loan from other Ministries. Changes in government often see significant reshuffling of such positions. However, Malta cannot be an effective EU player if EU-related elites are regularly moved every five years. A more mature approach is needed from our political elites in managing the personnel that interface between Malta and the EU
- Euroscepticism should remain a dominant factor in Maltese society, especially since contentious issues of identity, such as opposition to abortion or neutrality, continue to be challenged by membership.



The MA in European Studies Programme

The EDRC has been running successfully an MA in European Studies programme since 1993. We have recently taken stock of the subjects being taught, the method of assessment and students' feedback and made some revisions to the course programme.

The course is taught on a seminar basis and most of the reading material is made available to students on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) of the University of Malta. This means that the main texts are just a "click" away and students can consult them from the comfort of their homes or on campus. Special emphasis is placed on reading and the recommended texts are discussed during the seminars in which all students are expected to participate.

The underlying assumption in the MA course is that students have attained a sufficient level of knowledge to be in a position to learn more through their personal effort – i.e. reading in advance, debating points during the seminar sessions, making presentations and writing papers on selected topics. Less emphasis is placed on formal lecturing. So far, this approach has led to very good results and students have learned that the final quality of their degree and learning outcomes depend a lot on how hard they work at it.

From the next academic year we have introduced a number of changes that are intended to strengthen this approach. The weight of the examination mark of each study-unit has been reduced from 80 per cent to 50 per cent. The written assignment's weight has been increased from 20 to 25 per cent while another 25 per cent is awarded for the presentation made by the individual student during the seminar on the basis of a written/power point document. We believe that this will incentivize students to read more, study, present concisely and debate the issues.

The MA in European studies is taught by a core of four EDRC resident full-time members of the Academic staff. In addition a number of specialized part-time and/or visiting lecturers also teach on it. The law study units are serviced by the Department of European and Comparative Law of the Faculty of Laws.

The course which has a credit weighting of 90 credits (European Credit Transfer System – ECTS) is fully compliant with the requirements of the Bologna Process. The course load is divided between 60 ECTS for course work and 30 ECTS for the dissertation which we encourage students to keep at around 20,000 words including footnotes. The MA seminars and materials are in English.

Participants can choose either to study on a full-time basis, in which case they are expected to complete all requirements over 12 calendar months, or on a part-time basis in which case the work load is spread over two years of study. For some students there is also a possibility of going overseas on an Erasmus exchange but due to the time-consuming logistics involved this is more feasible in the case of part-time students.

Over the years, we have had many non-Maltese students opting to come and read the MA European Studies and we plan to increase the number of places offered to other EU and non-EU citizens in the future.

Many of the EDRC graduates work in the EU institutions, in private firms and business organizations, in the diplomatic and civil service, in agencies and bodies dealing with the EU, in international organizations, in consultancy firms and the media. The MA in European Studies has also served as a good stepping stone for further studies leading to the Ph.D.

Additional Study—Units

(for students with a good degree which is not in European Studies)

- Law and Institutions—General Principles of European Union Law
- Introductory Economics for European Studies
- Politics of the European Union

MA Study—Units

- Lobbying in the European Union
- Current Issues in European Union Politics
- Theories of European Integration
- The European Union in World Politics
- European Union Enlargement
- The European Union and its Mediterranean Neighbourhood
- European Union Trade Policy
- The European Union and Climate Change
- European Union Cohesion Policy
- European Union Development Policy
- The Fundamental Freedoms of the European Union
- European Union Environmental Economics
- European Union Monetary and Fiscal Policy
- Environmental Legislation and Policy of the European Union
- European Union Migration and Asylum Law
- The Law of the Institutions of the EU
- EC Financial Services Law
- European Union Constitutional Law

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European Documentation & Research Centre (EDRC) was established at the University of Malta in 1992 and was granted in 2004 the status *Jean Monnet European Centre of Excellence* by the European Commission. It operates as a research and teaching centre in the area of European policy studies. In addition to publishing papers, studies and books on developments in the EU and on EU-Malta and Euro-Mediterranean relations. It organises conferences and seminars for a wide range of audiences and publishes a regular Newsletter.



TEPSA

the Trans European
Policy Studies Association

The Belgian Presidency 2010 – Future Prospects for the Belgian Presidency of the EU: Global Challenges in a New Institutional Era

The next TEPSA Conference will take place in Brussels on the 20 and 21 of May. The conference will bring together senior scholars and high level practitioners from across Europe to focus on the 2010 Belgian Presidency of the European Union after the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty. The Belgian Presidency, which officially begins on 1 July 2010, will be analyzed in the light of the worrying challenges which the EU is facing such as the global turbulence started by the recent world economic crisis and the various ongoing conflicts at Europe's gates. Currently there is also a lot of internal questioning going on about

the EU's role in a globalised world, particularly the emergence of competing global powers or actors. The conference is intended to critically assess the Belgian vision, outputs and prospects for improving European efficiency in the following areas: Security and Defense, Climate Change and the Environment, Immigration and Development, the Eastern Dimension and Energy supply, the Lisbon Strategy and Economic Social Cohesion and finally the External Representation of the European Union.

Following the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, the EU has entered a new 'institutional phase' in which the role of the traditional, six-month rotating presidency has been changed. Since December 1, 2009 the EU has a President, the Belgian Herman van

Rompuy and a High Representative for the Union Common and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, who represent the Union in the international sphere. This has led to a lot of debate and analysis on how the institutions are going to adapt to the new situation. But one of the 'internal' matters that has really raised a lot of concern in recent weeks has been Greece's financial problems and the negative impact they are having on the euro zone and the euro's own stability.