



## 2009 COUNCIL MEETING

### MINUTES

of a meeting of the Council of the European Consortium for Political Research held in room B103 (building 2) ISCTE, Lisbon, Portugal on Saturday, 18 April, 2009.

**1. Chairman's welcome.** Michael Cox introduced himself and opened the meeting. As Chair of the ECPR he thanked the local hosts, emphasising the hard work involved in organising an event like the Joint Sessions, which was all the more special because of the presence of some of the ECPR's founding fathers and the visit with President Barroso. He also thanked the outgoing Executive Committee, who had been active and committed over the past three years and had worked hard as a unified team. Finally, he thanked the Central Services for continuing their excellent work.

**2. Chairman's statement/report.** Referring to the report contained in the Review of Activities, Michael Cox highlighted a few things he considered the greatest achievements over the past three years. First, the Graduate Conference had become established as perhaps the most important of all the services and activities for graduates and investment in the profession's future was key to the aims of the ECPR. Second, a measure of the success of any academic association was its output and the recent expansion of the ECPR's publications portfolio was extremely positive. He went on to thank the editors and publishers, in particular, the support from Cambridge University Press and the editors of the new journal, EPSR. The Methods Summer School had also established itself over the last three years and now could expect between 250 and 300 participants and the General Conference was also a great success. Also of note was the launch of the Capital Lecture Series in September 2008. As well as developing and expanding its own activities, the ECPR had also made efforts at international outreach, organising panels at conferences organised by other associations. Finally, it was important whilst acknowledging the ECPR's successes, to note that the world is currently in very uncertain times economically speaking and there might be difficult times ahead for the academic world and organisations like the ECPR. On that note he passed over to Erik Neveu, the ECPR Treasurer.

**3. Treasurer's report.** Referring to his report, Erik Neveu highlighted the main items concerning the ECPR's finances. First, the ECPR has over the last three to six years invested heavily in new activities. Some are already paying for themselves – the Methods Summer School, for example – while others, such as ECPR Press, continue to require substantial subsidy. Alongside this, the ECPR subscription fee had not been raised for nearly ten years. This meant that after suffering a substantial deficit in the previous financial year, the membership subscription was increased in 2008 by €100 and more emphasis was placed on raising money locally for specific activities, such as the General Conference. Second, in looking to the future, it was possible that the academic world would suffer considerably with the world economic downturn. This could mean less investment in younger members of the profession, less money for attending conferences and summer schools, less money for buying books and

journals. On the other hand, it is possible to be reasonably optimistic because the quality and reputation of the ECPR's events and publications is such that most political scientists and librarians would not rush to cancel subscriptions because of relatively short term financial considerations. Good value for money could, he added, be had by participating in workshops and conferences, by attending summer schools, by applying for mobility and scholarship funds – in short, by ensuring that members were active in the ECPR and therefore contributing to its success. There were no comments or questions about the report.

**4. Executive Committee members' reports.** Michael Cox said that individual members would not report unless there were specific questions for them, since they had provided written reports in the Review of Activities. There were no questions.

**5. Election of new Executive Committee members.** Michael Cox said that the outcome of the nomination process had resulted in six names, plus one other to be co-opted by the Executive Committee. Before asking the returning officers to list the names of those nominated, he said that it was important in terms of legitimacy for the Council to approve the nominees en masse. He acknowledged that many of those present had travelled to Lisbon specifically to vote and was sensitive to the issue and there may be a sense of a democratic deficit if the Council was not asked to endorse those nominated. Ken Newton then read out the names of those nominated:

Danica Fink-Hafner	University of Ljubljana
André Kaiser	University of Cologne
Niilo Kauppi	Institut d'etudes politiques de Strasbourg
Joaquim Molins	Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona
Simona Piattoni	University of Trento
Jonas Tallberg	Stockholm University

Michael Cox said that according to the constitution, the one remaining vacancy must be filled by co-optation by the next Executive Committee and that this could take place at its first meeting or at a later date. He then asked Council to give a broad endorsement to the six candidates.

Hans Keman (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam) said that the ECPR constitution was devised many years ago, when the ECPR was a very different organisation and that the incoming Executive should consider looking at it, with a view to bringing it up to date. It was important to improve on existing procedures, so as to prevent abuse of the system whereby not always the best people were nominated for the Executive Committee. He said it was important to ensure that committed people stand for election and to get rid of the democratic deficit that the ECPR is currently suffering. Finally, he requested that a special Council meeting be organised at the Münster Joint Sessions to consider procedural and constitutional changes. Michael Cox endorsed this proposal, taking responsibility, but also acknowledging that there was no one to blame for the current situation and the important question to answer was how to proceed forward.

Hans Keman then proposed that the Council endorse the existing candidates, but on the condition that the new Executive Committee establishes a sub committee or group to look at constitutional and electoral reform so that in Münster there can be a special

Council meeting to agree proposed constitutional amendments and new procedures. Luciano Bardi, speaking as a continuing member of the Executive, said that he agreed fully with Keman's proposal. He said that the process would be as transparent as possible and within the spirit of what had been asked by the Council. He emphasised that since he had not yet been elected as Chair, he could not speak as Chair. Vello Pettai said that the co-option of one member of the Executive should be done as expeditiously as possible, but that it must be taken seriously, since that person would serve for three years. Klaus Armingeon added his support to the proposal.

Peter Mair (EUI, Florence) said that the group that is to consider revisions to the constitution needed a clear remit. He said that there were other issues that should be considered in addition to those raised by Hans Keman, such as the position of associate members and ways in which the voting by national blocks could be broken down. Pippa Norris (Harvard University) endorsed Peter Mair's proposal to look at the role of associate members and asked for the group to look at giving a voice to them, as well as the opportunity to be represented. This would open up choice – something that was particularly important given the lack of willing candidates for the Executive Committee.

Rudy Andeweg (University of Leiden) also endorsed the proposal and added that ways should be found for widening the voting process so that it did not simply include those members who happened to be present at the Joint Sessions in a particular year. He pointed out that the request to endorse the six candidates was not provided for in the constitution and also asked for clarification of the co-option process and whether Council could provide some input into the co-option. Michael Cox explained that according to the Constitution, the incoming Executive Committee has the right to co-opt members onto the Committee without reference to Council; Ken Newton confirmed this. He added that this was also something the constitutional review group might look at. Luciano Bardi said that the continuing members of the Executive were well aware of the responsibility they have, but reminded Council that members must take responsibility for not coming up with enough candidates, in spite of the deadline for nominations being extended.

Hermann Schmitt (University of Mannheim) said that whatever is done with the constitution and electoral procedures, it must ensure that there is proper competition for membership of the Executive Committee and take steps to correct the rules that allowed for the present situation to arise. He added that it was not possible to have an election and there was no provision for endorsement, and therefore nothing could be done at present. Michael Cox admitted that although in constitutional terms, the proposal for formal endorsement was not absolutely correct, it was important politically and for the good health of the ECPR that it be agreed by Council.

George Mavrogordatos (University of Athens) asked for clarification of the endorsement process, to which Michael Cox explained that it would take place with a show of hands. George Mavrogordatos responded that he was sure that this would be unacceptable to most members of the Council, who, he was sure, wished for an election. As returning officer, Ken Newton then pointed out the rules for the election and that it was statistically impossible for all candidates to get any less than 100% of the vote, which would make a mockery of an election. He added that in the future, there might be a provision for voting for 'none of the above'. Following a show of

hands, it was agreed not to hold an election, but to vote on the slate of six candidates. (Nine against the slate, fifty-one in favour, eight abstentions.) Council then voted with a show of hands on Hans Keman's proposal (above). Council voted unanimously in support of the proposal, with two abstentions.

Following a further request by Peter Mair that the remit of the constitutional review group is made clear, Michael Cox requested endorsement by Council of the six candidates. The candidates were duly endorsed.

**6. Academic Director's report.** Martin Bull summarised the report that had been included in the Review of Activities. He said when he first joined the Executive Committee six years ago, the overall discussion had been one that emphasised consolidation, rather than innovation. However, the last six years had seen more innovation and expansion than ever before and an Executive Committee that had shown extraordinary energy and commitment – in part because of the limited tenure of Committee members. He thanked the outgoing members of the Committee for their hard work, summarising their areas of activity. He gave special thanks to Michael Cox, who had been an ideal Chair who had chaired the Executive with diplomacy and skill and promoted the ECPR around the world, giving the Consortium greater visibility within the field of international relations. Finally, he referred to the Central Services and the importance of their permanency to the continuity of the ECPR and to the achievements of the Executive Committee members. He thanked them for their support and hard work.

**7. Administrative Director's report:** Michael Cox introduced Clare Dekker, saying that in three weeks she would have worked for the ECPR for twenty years and following on from that, rather than reporting on the recent past, she talked about how the ECPR had changed since she first started. This had been on her mind very much, given the presence of several founding fathers at the Joint Sessions and working recently on the ECPR history with Ken Newton. She thanked the Chair and Academic Director for their friendship and support and emphasised the need for regular meetings of the 'troika' to help manage the immense amount of work needed to keep the activities of the ECPR working well. She also thanked the Executive Committee for their support and the members for making the ECPR a good organisation to be a part of.

**8. Reports submitted by members.** There were no reports submitted by members.

**9. Items proposed by members.** There were no items proposed by members.

**10. 2008 Strategic review of the ECPR.** Michael Cox referred to the strategic review as reproduced within the Review of Activities and explained that its aim was to measure where the ECPR is and set targets for the next three years.

**11. Members' meetings during Joint Sessions.** Peter Mair had requested annual meetings in-between Council meetings at the last Council meeting, but these had not been well attended. It was, however, agreed to continue these.

- 12. Announcement of Executive Committee election results.** N/A. See item 5 above.
- 13. Any other business.** Vello Pettai reminded Council of the need for 40% of the membership to be present at the Münster Council meeting in order for any constitutional changes to be approved.

The Chairman then closed the meeting.