

**ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops  
Lisbon 2009**

**Workshop on:**

***THE POLITICS OF GOVERNANCE ARCHITECTURES:  
INSTITUTIONS, POWER, AND PUBLIC POLICY IN THE EU LISBON STRATEGY***

***Workshop directors:***

***Susana Borrás and Claudio Radaelli***

The Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs is perhaps the most important initiative of the European Union since the first decade of the 2000s (Begg 2007; Rodrigues 2003). There are two main reasons for that. The first has to do with the fact that the Lisbon strategy has broadened significantly the scope of EU public action for economic growth. With its focus on competitiveness and on institutional framework conditions, the strategy seeks to expand the Single Market and to strengthen the economic dimension of the EMU, while going beyond them by emphasizing economic-related institutional reforms at all levels of government. The second reason why the Lisbon strategy is so important in the political life of the EU is that, while expanding its substantive scope, it has also widened the forms and the procedures of EU public action. Namely, the ambitious substantive agenda for economic growth is to be achieved by combining the use of conventional EU regulatory and economic instruments, with a series of new policy instruments of voluntary nature. These two dimensions of the Lisbon strategy, the substantive and the procedural, are the backbone of this ambitious governance architecture. The fact that the Lisbon agenda is ambitious, however, does not mean that it is effective, or that it has an impact on institutions, governance, and public policy. Indeed, academic scholarship has not generated consistent findings on the explanation of the Lisbon agenda and its effects. Neither has it engaged with rival alternative hypotheses on Lisbon as independent variable, considering the full range of possibilities, from 'Lisbon' as discursive-symbolic packaging of existing policy plans to 'Lisbon' as catalyst or cause of specific institutional and policy changes. If we turn to the Lisbon strategy as dependent variable, political scientists have not as yet engaged in explanations of why this ambitious agenda came about in 2000, and its more recent vicissitudes. Only rarely have they carried out process-tracing work on how the long-standing attempts of European leaders to craft an agenda for competitiveness have come about from the single market to the last decade (Laffan 2002).

Most of the scholarly work on the Lisbon strategy, however, is based on either the economic outcome of individual policies (Archibugi and Coco, 2005; Pisani-Ferry and Sapir, 2006; Tholoniati 2008; van Pottelsberghe 2008) or on a specific mode of governance established at the Spring Council of March 2000, that is, the open method of coordination. In political science and socio-legal studies, there has been an intensification

of work around the open method of coordination, but the Lisbon strategy is contingent on the interplay between open coordination and more hierarchical modes (on the OMC see Armstrong 2005; 2006; Borrás and Jacobsson 2004; Radulova 2006; Zeitlin and Trubek 2003; Zeitlin and Pochet 2005).

Recently, this literature has moved to the consideration of more ambitious governance frameworks (Zeitlin and Sabel 2007; for a different approach to governance based on policy theory see the typology by Bulmer and Padgett 2005). This new experimentalist – learning framework, however, has to be theoretically and empirically controlled alongside other explanations, such as realist politics, neo-functionalism, and, perhaps, ideational politics<sup>1</sup>. It would also be interesting to apply theories of the policy agenda, such as Kingdon’s multiple streams model, to the emergence of Lisbon as ‘agenda’. Indeed, recent work by Zahariadis (2008) suggests that the multiple streams model can be usefully applied to EU politics and public policy.

Turning to the burgeoning literature on Europeanization and modes of governance (Börzel & Risse 2003; Olsen 2002; Radaelli 2003; Bulmer and Radaelli 2005; Treib et al. 2007), they tend to be concerned with public policy analysis, or mechanisms of Europeanization, but they do not tackle the overall analysis of Lisbon as a governance architecture. Finally, institutional analysis of EU politics is becoming popular (Aspinwall and Schneider 2000; Marks and Hooghe 2001), but this is yet another area where we have not seen projects on the complex institutional and multi-level actors constellation at the base of the Lisbon agenda.

To sum up then, very little work has been done on what we think are the key political science questions involved in the Lisbon strategy, such as its emergence (that is, agenda-setting approaches), the role of different institutions in the ‘initial framing’ and re-definition of the main aims of this strategy through time, the interplay between different modes of governance in individual policies and across policies, and the institutional and Europeanisation effects brought about by Lisbon novelties.

### Participants and types of expected papers

The workshop aims at attracting theoretical and empirical papers by academics working on EU integration, comparative public policy and public administration, international relations, modes of governance, political architectures, the politics of problem definition and agenda setting, discourse analysis, the Europeanization of national policies, and, power and distributional politics in the EU context. As mentioned above, most of the work on Lisbon is dominated by a focus on very few individual policies and on the open method of coordination. This workshop wants to take a step further, and to enable a much wider range of approaches on studying the governance and politics of the Lisbon strategy.

---

<sup>1</sup> Lisbon has also been an extraordinary process of intellectual mobilization across Europe and beyond, traces of which are evident in several land-marking reports such as the Kok report and the Sapir report.

Therefore we invite theoretical and especially empirical papers dealing with the issues mentioned above. Specifically, we propose papers addressing the following dimensions for analysis:

- The comparison between the governance architecture of the Lisbon strategy with other major agenda-setting projects, such as the Single Market and the Economic and Monetary Union.
- Historical and process-tracing papers on the emergence and re-definition of the Lisbon strategy, with emphasis on power dynamics across the member states, across the EU institutions, and the role of epistemic communities in problem definition and the choice of modes of governance
- The role of Lisbon in EU inter-institutional relations, including the balance of power among Council formations and the interplay between Council, the European Parliament and the Commission
- The institutional and administrative impact of Lisbon's novelties at the national level, focussing on issues such as institutional capacity, coordination tools within the member states, network-building and network-management, and implementation structures.
- The patterns of policy transfer and policy learning across member states in policy areas associated to the Lisbon agenda, and the modes of cross-country coordination.
- The role of symbolic politics and ambiguity in the Lisbon strategy, and the implications for its implementation records and for its overall governance architecture.
- The role of the master-discourse of competitiveness, its tension with other master-discourses like sustainable development and social cohesion.
- The political and symbolic dimension of Lisbon strategy at the national level: the political reverberation of the Lisbon strategy in domestic discourses and the party politics associated to it.
- The balance (or lack of) between the goals of competitiveness, sustainable development and social cohesion, to be empirically examined by looking at new governance tools such as regulatory impact assessment and better regulation.

### Paper proposals

Please send extended abstracts (between 300 and 500 words) shall be sent by email to both convenors before December 1st 2008.

Susana Borrás: [sb.cbp@cbs.dk](mailto:sb.cbp@cbs.dk)

Claudio Radaelli: [C.Radaelli@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:C.Radaelli@exeter.ac.uk)

Decisions about paper acceptance will be communicated to authors during the first week of January 2009.

## References

- Archibugi, Daniele and Coco, Alberto (2005) Is Europe Becoming the Most Dynamic Knowledge Economy in the World? In *Journal of Common Market Studies* 43 (3) , 433–459
- Aspinwall, M. and G. Schneider (2000) Same menu, separate tables: The institutionalist turn in political science and the study of European integration, *European Journal of Political Research*, 38(1) August: 1-36.
- Armstrong, K. (2005) 'How open is the UK to the OMC process on social inclusion?' in J. Zeitlin and P. Pochet (Eds.) *The Open Method of Coordination in Action*, PIE – Peter Lang, Brussels, 287-310.
- Armstrong, K. (2006) 'The Europeanization of social exclusion: British adaptation to EU co-ordination' *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 8: 79-100.
- Begg, I. (2007) Lisbon II, Two Years on: An Assessment of the Partnership for Growth and Jobs, CEPS Special Reports.*
- Börzel, T. and Risse, T. (2003) 'Conceptualising the domestic impact of Europe' in K. Featherstone and C.M. Radaelli (Eds.) *The Politics of Europeanization*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 55-78.
- Borrás, S. and K. Jacobsson (2004) 'The open method of coordination and new governance patterns in the EU' *Journal of European Public Policy*, 11(2) April: 185-208.
- Bulmer, S. and C.M. Radaelli (2005) 'The Europeanisation of public policy?', in C. Lesquene and S. Bulmer (Eds) *The Member States of the European Union*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 338-359.
- Bulmer, S. and Padgett, S. (2005) 'Policy Transfer in the European Union: an institutionalist perspective' *British Journal of Political Science*, 35:1, 103-126.
- Laffan, B. (2002) 'Lisbon Europe': Experimental arrangements and new modes of governance, *Paper prepared for the EU Presidency conference on 'Policies, institutions, and citizens in the knowledge society'*, Barcelona, 6-7 May 2002
- Marks, G. and L. Hooghe (2001) *Multi-level governance and European integration*, Rowan and Littlefield.
- Olsen, J.P. (2002) 'The many faces of Europeanization' *Journal of Common Market Studies* 40(5) 921-952.
- Pisani-Ferry, Jean and Sapir, André (2006): Last Exit to Lisbon. Bruegel report. [http://www.bruegel.org/Files/media/PDF/Publications/Papers/EN\\_LastExitToLisbon\\_Paper\\_ElectronicDistribution.pdf](http://www.bruegel.org/Files/media/PDF/Publications/Papers/EN_LastExitToLisbon_Paper_ElectronicDistribution.pdf) (last accessed 3rd June 2008).
- Radaelli, C.M. (2003a) 'The Europeanization of public policy', in K. Featherstone and C.M. Radaelli (Eds.) *The Politics of Europeanization*, Oxford, Oxford University Press: 27-56.

- Radulova, E. (2006) 'On the emergence of light and heavy soft governance in the EU – The open method(s) of coordination' in D. De Bievre and C. Neuhold (Eds.) *Dynamics and Obstacles of EU Governance*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham.
- Rodrigues, M.J. (2003) (Ed.) *European Policies for a Knowledge Economy*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham.
- Tholoniati, L. (2008) The European Employment Strategy and the Lisbon agenda: overcoming the OMC paradox, paper presented to the Connex workshop on Governing the European Union, University of East Anglia, Norwich, May 2008.
- Treib, O. Holger Bähr, Gerda Falkner (2007) Modes of governance: Towards a conceptual clarification, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 14(1); 1-20.
- van Pottelsberghe, Bruno (2008): Europe's R&D: Missing the wrong targets? Bruegel Policy Brief 3/2008, February.  
<http://www.bruegel.org/Public/PublicationPage.php?ID=1174#6522>  
 (accessed June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2008)
- Zahariadis, N. (2008) 'Ambiguity and choice in European Public Policy' *Journal of European Public Policy*, 15(4) 514-530.
- Zeitlin and P. Pochet (2005) (Eds.) *The Open Method of Coordination in Action*, PIE – Peter Lang, Brussels, 447-503.
- Zeitlin, J. and D. Trubek (2003) (Eds.) *Governing Work and Welfare in a New Economy*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Zeitlin, J. and C. Sabel (2007) "Learning from Difference: The New Architecture of Experimentalist Governance in the European Union", *European Governance (EUROGOV) Paper No. C7-02*, May 2007.