



EUI Max Weber Programme and James Madison University
13th Graduate Symposium

Politics strikes back:

Europe between old and new challenges

April 7th 2020

The Max Weber Programme and the James Madison University's M.A. Program in European Union Policy Studies are pleased to announce the 13th Joint Graduate Symposium.

The symposium gives JMU's MA students in European Union Policy Studies an opportunity to present and discuss their own research with Max Weber Fellows and the wider EUI community in an academic setting. This year, the symposium highlights ever diverging problems in the EU, including economic, social, political, and security issues.

Symposium Organizer:

Silvia D'Amato, Max Weber Programme & James Madison University in Florence,
silvia.damato@eui.eu

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Panel 1: Public Policy, Economy & Rights

Chair: Stelios Tsiaras

Discussants: Tamara Popic & Giacomo Tagiuri

- Toni-Anne Barry, James Madison University
“The Struggle to Share: Why National Governments in Europe Respond Differently to the Introduction of Sharing Economy Platforms into Traditional Service Sectors”
- Hana Bekteshi, University of Prishtina
“Environmental Laws in Kosovo: Implementation of the SAA”
- Hannah Fahringer, James Madison University
“Enlargement Policy Consensus Among the EU Member States: The Question of Kosovo’s Independence and its Effects on Serbia’s Accession”
- Ilir Hajraj, University of Prishtina
“The Minority Communities’ Rights in the Republic of Kosovo under the EU Law”

Panel 2: Foreign Policy

Chair: Adérito Vicente

Discussants: Iakovos Iakovidis & Ester Sigillò

- Meaghan Boyle, James Madison University
“The EU and Iranian Trade Relationship: How Their Bilateral Trade Agreements Lead To Changes in Nuclear Nonproliferation”
- Bryan Eagle, James Madison University
“China at Europe's Southern Doorstep: Will China's Belt and Road Initiatives Change the Democratic Landscape that the EU Has Been Developing in Africa?”
- John Goulette, James Madison University
“The European Union’s Relationship with Latin America: Is it Mutually Beneficial?”
- Elijah Knopp, James Madison University
“Turkish Accession to the EU: What Has Prevented it?”

Panel 3: Security Threats and Policies

Chair: Silvia D'Amato

Discussants: Silvia D'Amato & Jonas Driedger

- Joshua Grant, James Madison University
“The New Shuffle for Africa: The EU and the US vs. China and Russia”
- Paige Moody, James Madison University
“The Cracking of Crimea: two Sides to Every Annexation”
- Valëza Ukaj, University of Prishtina
“The Legal Framework of Conflict Related Sexual Violence: The Kosovo Case”
- Mary Paige Van Kuiken, James Madison University
“The EU's Common Foreign Security Policy: The Case of Russia's Spread of Disinformation and Election Fraud”

Panel 4: Culture & Political Economy

Chair: Helen Callaghan

Discussants: Arianna Tassinari & Fabian Mushövel

- Greta Avdyli, University of Prishtina
“Kosovo's Cultural Heritage: Social and Economic Importance”
- Besnik Beqaj, University of Prishtina
“BREXIT: Its Impact on the Political Policies and Economy of the EU”
- Karla Rodriguez, James Madison University
“R&D Investments for Southern Europe: What Does “Brain Drain” and “Re-Brain” Mean in the Current 2020 Crises?”
- Sara Rzegocki, James Madison University
“Changes in the Energy Dynasty: Transitioning Away from King Coal. A Case Study of Energy Transitions in Germany and Poland”

Symposium Papers Abstracts

Panel 1: Public Policy, Economy & Rights

Toni-Anne Barry

The Struggle to Share: Why National Governments in Europe Respond Differently to the Introduction of Sharing Economy Platforms into Traditional Service Sectors

The rapid growth of sharing economy platforms such as Uber and Airbnb have garnered harsh criticism from national governments around the world. In the U.S. where these platforms originated, legal battles across the states are still on going, but robust public demand and support for these platforms ensure that lawmakers do not regulate them out of existence. In Europe, public engagement has yet to reach the point in which it will seriously affect the regulatory dispositions of lawmakers, as outlined in this paper. For this reason, it is apparent that European states are focusing more heavily on other factors outside of consumer demand. This paper examines the regulatory crackdowns in Italy on ridesharing and France on home-sharing to identify the predominant factors that are leading governments to impose tough restrictions on these companies. By identifying unremarkable levels of public opinion, current and past political landscapes that heavily favor traditional service providers, and differing environments for innovation, it is evident that the leading contributors to a more regulated Europe are largely caused by the political capital of interests groups as well as cultural and historical aspects such as long-standing protection of taxi unions and the affinity for centralized government control, both of which, are difficult to maintain in the presence of the sharing economy.

Hana Bekteshi

Environmental Laws in Kosovo: Implementation of the SAA

Kosovo is in its early stages of meeting the required standards of the European Union (EU) acquis, in order to meet the integration process. The constant and rapid need of environmental laws in Europe has made the integration process even more demanding and challenging for Kosovo. This paper presents an analysis of the implementation of environmental legislation in Kosovo, based on EU standards. Through a comparative approach of some of the EU Commission reports of the recent years, national reports on the implementation of environmental provisions, such as the National Implementation Program of the Stabilization and Association Agreement, as well as reports of the Kosovo Environmental Protection Agency, this paper analyzes the progress that has been made. However, this paper also sheds light on the absence of implementation of EU standards in Kosovo, in order to fulfill the requirements of the last few years. Overall, findings show that the adaption of the environmental provisions based on EU standards has gradually made significant improvements in Kosovo's journey to EU association. Yet, the partial implementation of EU standards into national environmental legislation highlights the necessary issues which need to be addressed, in order to meet the requirements based on the acquis within the given timeframes. This indicates that a lot remains far from being completed in regard to the approximation of Kosovo's legislation with the EU acquis and reaching its implementation.

Hannah Fahringer

Enlargement Policy Consensus Among the EU Member States: The Question of Kosovo's Independence and its Effects on Serbia's Accession

In a continuously evolving world system, it is more crucial than ever for the European Union (EU) to work as a cohesive and unified bloc. Yet this is hindered by the EU's inability to fully integrate member states and futile enlargement objectives. The EU's ambitions in the Western Balkans include a full implementation of European values within the region by making membership an incentive. This tactic is two-fold; it increases the EU's influence in the Western Balkans by negating Russia's power, and it unifies a larger portion of the continent. However, the current enlargement policy is not sufficient enough to withstand Kosovo's disputed independence. This debate creates a dichotomy between member states that support Kosovo's independence and those that do not. Thus, this paper aims to answer the question of how much is Serbia willing to compromise in order to become an EU member state, and how much is the EU willing to compromise to strengthen its influence in the Western Balkans. To do so, a case study comparing Serbia and Croatia's accession processes will be presented. This paper will analyse the effect Kosovo's status will have on the accession process in terms of member state consensus. Finally, this paper will advance recommendations for ways in which the EU can adjust the accession for the special case of Serbia in order to maintain influence in the Western Balkans.

Ilir Hajraj

The Minority Communities' Rights in the Republic of Kosovo under the EU Law

This paper scrutinizes the legal rights of ethnic minorities in the Republic of Kosovo. Specifically, it addresses the constitutional regime and the principles regarding minorities therein, meaning the variety of mechanisms for the promotion and protection of minority rights in domestic order of the Republic of Kosovo on one hand, and in the European Union integration path on the other. The paper starts off with the introduction to the topic, explaining the concept of minorities and continuing to explain fundamentals of the constitutional system of Kosovo, confining to the key principles of minority rights' protection framework. The paper proceeds to explain the institutional role and guaranteed rights for minorities in the public institutions, both central and local level. Then, it explains the relations between European Union and Kosovo determining the nature of the relations, and the obligations of Kosovo, confining to the aspect of the human rights in general, and minority rights in particular. Moreover, the paper shows the report regarding the implementation of minority rights on the ground in Kosovo, issued by the European Commission for the last years, highlighting the fields where the progress has been made, and where the improvements are required. The paper concludes that Kosovo's legal framework broadly guarantees the protection of human and fundamental rights in line with European standards, but the implementation continues to remain challenging.

Panel 2: Foreign Policy

Meaghan Boyle

The EU and Iranian Trade Relationship: How Their Bilateral Trade Agreements Lead to Changes in Nuclear Nonproliferation

The last decade has represented a turning point in nuclear nonproliferation within the international community. The creation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) has bound actors to respect international agreements and uses trade and economic sanctions as a guiding principle. This paper argues that the threat of nuclear energy (and/or acquiring nuclear weapons) in Iran decreased

if trade between the European Union and Iran increases. This paper considers the primary sources on trade statistics seen between the EU and Iran as well as the scholarly work that has been written about the complexities of this trade relationship. The findings of this paper will contribute to the evolving discussion of the effects of trade on nonproliferation and the role of the EU in a global setting. It will also give increased understanding to the evolution of the bilateral trade agreements between the EU and Iran and how there have been a multitude of economic benefits to all countries involved. The evidence in this paper suggests the hypothesis to be true and there is an inverse relationship between trade and nonproliferation. However, more research is required to reach a complete explanation for why the trade relationships between the EU and Iran effects nonproliferation.

Bryan Eagle

China at Europe's Southern Doorstep: Will China's Belt and Road Initiatives Change the Democratic Landscape that the EU has Been Developing in Africa?

This paper explores the relationships that China maintains with states in and around the Horn of Africa region. In these relationships, China's new global project, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), is used to understand the social, political, and economic outcome of countries that opt to partner with the Asian power. Using Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, and Uganda as separate case studies, the positives and negatives of cooperation become easier understand. The results vary, as the political and economic stability varies in each country, as does cooperation with China predates the BRI's 2013 start date. The results present that of the possible benefits as China offers a reasonable and attractive alternative to the aid and agreements posited by liberal democracies. Yet, while China offers economic growth and limited security, it finds difficulty in appealing to the locals and workers. Hence, this paper shows that China's overall approach is self-centered and economic driven, which opposes the priorities that the European Union has been attempting establish with its southern neighbors. However, while the Chinese do not export authoritarian practices or self-interest in its partners, it does little to reinforce the democratic institutions in Africa. Instead the BRI seems like a political tool in proving that economic development and political stability are independent of democratic strength.

John Goulette

The European Union's Relationship with Latin America: Is it Mutually Beneficial?"

Europe has been attached to Latin America since Christopher Columbus arrived in the fifteenth century. Since then, Latin America has witnessed multiple independence movements, which has seen European powers thrown out of their former colonies. This is specifically the case with Spain and Portugal. The two European countries have been connected to their former colonies because of their shared language and culture. Therefore, even though they are small players in European Union standards, they do contribute quite a bit to Latin American relations. Portugal also sees a lot of investment coming from its former colony, Brazil. This relationship shows that it is not just the European Union who can benefit from this transatlantic partnership, but Latin American countries as well. While the United States is Latin America's largest trade partner, their role is continuing to decrease as it focuses elsewhere in the world. This is because the US is implementing more protectionist policies under the Trump Presidency. This development has led others to try to fill that void, including the European Union. The European Union has already attempted to fill this void, specifically with the MERCUSOR nations, whom why have just recently made a new trade agreement with. This development could lead to further agreements throughout Latin America. While it is hard to determine how much a country benefits from trading with the EU, it is the more developed nations (like the MERCUSOR bloc) who seem to benefit more, due to them exporting more finished goods instead of raw goods (like most of Latin America). Therefore, while the EU benefits significantly

from trading with Latin America, and many Latin American countries have the same benefits from trading with the EU, specifically Brazil and Mexico.

Elijah Knopp

Turkish Accession to the EU: What has prevented it?

The foundations of the relationship between the European Union (EU) and Turkey dates back several decades, far before the EU was established. The European Economic Community (EEC), which would later evolve into the modern-day EU, was the first European community that Turkey had formal relations with. Since the beginning of the relationship, the EU-Turkey dynamic has changed several times, going through periods of ups and downs and all kinds of stages, reflecting characteristics of human relationships. Nevertheless, Turkey has managed to keep close relations with Europe, despite never becoming an official member of the EU. The Turks first filed their application to the community in 1987. However, they remain outside of the union as of 2020, constituting a 33-year application, the longest of its kind. Considering the lengthy history of the two bodies, this raises several questions. Why is Turkey such a unique case? What has prevented Turkey from joining? Will Turkey ever formally join the European Union, or will it continue in a state of limbo until the relationship reaches a breaking point? Each of these questions are discussed in detail in this paper.

Panel 3: Security Threats and Policies

Joshua Grant

The New Shuffle for Africa: The EU and the US vs. China and Russia

Russia and China have increased their strategic investments in the African Continent. Despite differing motivations and levels of investment, both Russia and China's adventurism into the African continent represent a strategic threat to the preeminence of the Western Liberal international order in the context of Africa. These illiberal emerging nations provide an alternative model to the democratic, more open model of the West. A multitude of African nations, reliant on international investment, are being presented with an ultimatum: the West or the rising East. Africa's resource abundance and its potential for growth in comparison to other continents make it a strategic region in which international actors should increase investment. This increased investment will allow international actors to facilitate and direct the growth of Africa and thus the future of international relations in the region. One of the primary instruments of the West is NATO. However, the recent breakdown in NATO's ability to project a clear and concentrated narrative has weakened the West. External pressures from China and Russia as well as internal criticism from U.S. President Donald Trump and French President Emmanuel Macron further the weakening caused by NATO's diluted narrative. NATO is a reflection of its parts; if NATO members do not establish an effective presence throughout and around the world, NATO will lose influence to rising powers. Thus, the following paper will compare and contrast the interests and efforts of Russia, China, the U.S. and the EU in Africa, providing analysis and suggestions on how the E.U. and the U.S. should address and respond to these issues.

Paige Moody,

The Cracking of Crimea: Two Sides to Every Annexation

In this paper, the variation of support of the Russian annexation of Crimea through a socio-economic context is explored in both the Crimean Peninsula and mainland Russia. Previous literature demonstrates that many aspects of society, such as political freedom, economic prosperity and

cultural protection were promised within the Crimean Peninsula, but not necessarily carried out by the Russian administration. The citizens of Crimea were supportive of the annexation at first due to guarantees of gaining access to the Russian mainland, as well as promises of new infrastructure that would connect the peninsula to the mainland. Through newspaper articles, it became clear that these promises were all political rhetoric by President Vladimir Putin and his administration, as many of these projects were never seen through or started. Over the past six years, the citizens of both Crimea and Russia have seen economic stagnation in both regions met with economic sanctions from the international community. Additionally, there has been a lack of political freedom as the Russian administration wants to ensure that the only following is that of President Putin. This research is put forth in order to demonstrate that the annexation has now proved to be less successful than originally hoped for the Russian administration, and that there should be cause of concern in the international community as tensions are growing within both Russian and Crimean citizens. Unfortunately, with President Putin creating a new constitutional amendment that would allow him to stay in power for another fifteen years, there is a question of how far the Russian government will go to ensure that the citizens of Crimea and Russia publicly support him and will be punished otherwise.

Valëza Ukaj

The Legal Framework of Conflict Related Sexual Violence: The Kosovo Case

The core aim of this paper is to analyze the legal framework of conflict related sexual violence in general and the legal framework and the measures that have been taken from the Kosovo context. The legal framework will be discussed and reviewed focusing on the both the institutional and non-institutional level. Specifically, the paper discusses the steps that have been taken towards providing a virtuous legal framework and reparation for survivors of conflict related sexual violence in Kosovo after the 1999 Kosovo-Serbia conflict. The overall sexual violence experiences have shown that information and acknowledge about sexual violence perpetrated during armed conflicts are scarce, scattered and very often very selective due to numerous challenges that such victims face. While there has been an increase awareness that sexual violence is a war crime over the past decades, the long term effects of the crimes are still felt by the victims, families, community and the country. The paper describes the challenges that have been put forward to the victims of conflict related sexual violence such as: ending the stigma, impunity for the perpetrators, implementation of comprehensive reparation programs for the victims, the denials of the survivor's access to justice, survivors right to reparation, and empower women to support sustainable peace-building within the Kosovo context.

Mary Paige Van Kuiken

The EU's Common Foreign Security Policy: The Case of Russia's Spread of Disinformation and Election Fraud

Within the past ten years, Russian election interference has escalated, affecting multiple countries across Europe as well as in the United States. The European Unions' (EU) Common Foreign Security Policy (CFSP) was created with the intention to promote international peace and security, however in its current state it cannot address the spread of disinformation that is taking place today. Particularly in Eastern Europe, the level of interference from Russian media that is taking place is a threat to security, both on a national and EU level. In this paper, I ask to what extend Russian disinformation and election interference has affected European security, and to a larger extent, the world? To do this, we examine cases from Eastern, Central, and Western Europe. Based on the study of trends in disinformation campaigns promoted by Russia, the paper provides an analysis of the CFSP and its shortcomings, particularly regarding the increase of disinformation on a global level.

Panel 4: Culture & Political Economy

Greta Avdyli

Kosovo's Cultural Heritage: Social and Economic Importance

This paper aims to present some common definitions of culture and cultural heritage, either from UNESCO or from other sources as well as its importance in the creation of civilizations. Cultural heritage is of special significance for its role on cultural, social, economic, and tourist progress. Cultural heritage is to be used as a tool for further development. Its entire concept does not only rely on preserving one nation's heritage but rather to directly intertwine cultures so to strengthen the collective knowledge across differences. Indeed, a stronger exchange across nations can help overcoming detrimental modern day hurdles. For this reason, the European Union places great importance in cultural heritage. Indeed, it supports policies that are conducted to propel the integration of different cultures by implementing this structure in different areas of social circumstances such as economy with an emphasis on tourism. Through the years there have been many resolutions approved by the European Union Parliament that go in favor of culture heritage. As such, Kosovo is a clear example of a nation that has an abundance to offer, having a diverse culture and many cultural sites that have great archeological value to this day.

Besnik Beqaj

BREXIT: Its Impact in Political Policies and Economy of the EU

The exit of the United Kingdom from the European Union is expected to bring major changes for both sides after about a 50-year cooperation between the two. Considering the relevance of the UK within the Union, Brexit will surely bring a breakdown of the European integration. This brief research examines how EU exit is regulated by Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty as well as the impact of Brexit on the EU political system. For instance, the paper will shed light on party politics dynamics by asking which political groups will be strengthened and which will be weakened as well as what will bring these changes what policies will be pushed forward with the strengthening of left-wing political groups and how will these policies affect the lives of EU citizens. The paper will also discuss France's role as the second largest power in the EU after the United Kingdom exits and how much will it cooperate with Germany to overcome the current challenges the EU is facing. Finally, while looking at the general impact of the Brexit on the EU economy, the paper addresses how Brexit affects the member states' system of contribution.

Karla Rodriguez

R&D Investments for Southern Europe: What does "Brain Drain" and "Re-Brain" Mean in the Current 2020 Crises?

While the economic and fiscal disparities between North/West and South/East Member States are obvious, there is now a gap between these "sending" countries when it comes to their highly educated youth population. These disparities have led to deeper gaps in which Southern states are unable to develop as quickly as the Northern states. This, in turn, means that the South is not nearly as equipped to handle crises as swiftly as possible. While Portugal and Greece have made large improvements in regards to "re-brain" initiatives and research and development investments, there is still much more to improve. Meanwhile, Spain and Italy are only falling further behind, especially within the current pandemic environment. While this crisis is only one factor that helps show this gap, it serves to demonstrate how that gap is harmful for nations and can only worsen if the trend continues. Greece is notoriously known for its economic situation after the financial crisis and for its high numbers of brain drain, but the number of R&D increases between 2007 and 2017, have increased and changed

more than Spain and Italy. Portugal made a dramatic increase in R&D that specifically addresses underlying issues that facilitated brain drain and has therefore seen an improvement. For all Southern European Member States there needs to be further attempts to address foundational economic issues of the brain drain has led to change for the better.

Sara Rzegocki

Changes in the Energy Dynasty: Transitioning Away from King Coal. A Case Study of Energy Transitions in Germany and Poland

This paper examines the “3-i” framework and to understand energy transitions in the European Union (EU). The EU has prioritized environmental sustainability and declared that EU countries will transition away from coal towards renewable energy. The capacity and priority of transitioning away from coal varies across the EU. Germany and Poland were chosen as case studies to analyze the variables that affect energy transition speed. These two countries were chosen because they have the largest coal reserves in the EU but are drastically different in how they are transitioning their energy sectors. To understand the differences, institutions, interests and ideas are analyzed through the variables of Green party representation, the number of jobs in the coal sector and the cultural significance of coal. This paper draws upon previous literature to examine hypotheses based on these three variables. Specifically, by building on previous research as well as by analysing recent trends in Germany and Poland’s energy sector, the paper shows that Green party representation is the strongest variable that explains energy transition speeds. Jobs in the energy sector has a moderately strong argument while cultural significance has a weak argument. This paper considers all three variables and reflects on the future implications of the energy sector in Germany and Poland.