

Opening the Parliamentary “Black Box” - The Internal Politics of National Parliaments in the Shaping of EU Affairs

Workshop of the PADEMIA Network

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organised jointly by

Centre for European Research in Maastricht Salzburg Centre for European Union Studies
Maastricht University Salzburg University

Call for Papers

For a long time, the focus of the academic debate on national parliaments was mainly on their respective formal powers and moreover national parliaments were treated predominantly as unitary actors. Only recently, attention increased also for the actual behaviour of parliaments; the extent to which they actually use their formal powers, and for the role that different actors within parliaments play in this regard. Nevertheless gaps in our knowledge remain, for example we know little about ‘activities behind the scenes’, that do not show up in official parliamentary statistics and comparative studies so far and the informal coordination processes between actors have also been eclipsed to a great extent.

Comparatively speaking, academic attention on the inner workings of the European Parliament (EP) has been more advanced, with scholars having studied both internal structures and individual and corporate actors. The role of political parties, of EP committees and of unelected officials has thus been part of the scholarly discourse on the European legislature for some time. As for national legislatures, which have become more systematically involved in EU affairs in recent years, more work needs to be done in order to improve our understanding of the role of, and the interplay between, different political and administrative actors

Against this background, this workshop seeks contributions that help to open further the ‘black box’ of parliaments. We invite papers that focus on the role of different actors – committees, parties, political groups, secretariats – and especially on their interaction with one another in shaping EU affairs. Comparative studies on the role national parliaments play within EU-related activities as opposed to activities within the legislative process on the national level are also of interest.

At the same time we also welcome papers on the European Parliament that have a similar focus, in order to stimulate the academic debate among those working on parliamentary affairs across the various levels in the EU.

The workshop conveners are Thomas Christiansen and Christine Neuhold (Maastricht University) who are organising the workshop in cooperation with Eric Miklin at the Salzburg Centre for European Union Studies.

We welcome contributions both by senior scholars and those at the beginning of their careers, including graduate students. Please send your paper proposal including title and an abstract of max. 300 words to Shelly Tsui (s.tsui@maastrichtuniversity.nl) by 1 February 2016. We will inform you by the end of February if your paper has been accepted. Draft papers should be circulated to all participants by 1 May 2016 at the latest. Funding for travel and accommodation is available for participants from PADEMIA member institutions. Non-PADEMIA members are invited to apply as well and limited funding is potentially available for those.