



Call for papers

Challenges and Opportunities for EU Parliamentary Democracy: Brexit and beyond

Maastricht University Campus Brussels

18-19 January 2018

Organizers: Diane Fromage, Thomas Christiansen, Anna Herranz Surralles (Maastricht University)

2017 marked both the 60th anniversary of the Rome Treaties – and hence of the European Union (EU) – and the start of the United Kingdom’s negotiations to withdraw from it. At the same time, a debate on the future of the EU has begun, including a White Paper from the European Commission setting out a number of scenarios for the evolution of the Union. This is a period in which the future of the integration process is uncertain, with the Union facing both internal and external challenges as well as new opportunities for further integration.

National and European parliaments will need to play an important role in this context in their quality as institutions in charge of ensuring democratic legitimacy within the EU (art. 10 TEU). National parliaments are arguably still perceived by citizens as *the* institutions in charge of democratic representation *par excellence*, although the recent trend towards referendums on EU matters has, to a certain extent, challenged this assumption. By contrast, as far as the European Parliament is concerned, the declining turnout at its elections as well as rising Euroscepticism indicate the limited faith that citizens appear to have in the EU’s only directly-elected institution. The fact that the European Parliament has already started a deeper reflection on these questions is no guarantee that this trend will be reversed.

Against this background, the **Centre for European Research in Maastricht (CERiM)** convenes a Workshop to **provide a forum for a debate on these developments**. The Workshop will take place on **18 and 19 January 2018** at **Maastricht University – Campus Brussels**.

We welcome proposals for papers addressing the **four following themes**:

- **The Role of Parliaments in Brexit:** contributions may address issues such as the role of Westminster and of the European Parliament in the Brexit negotiations. Additionally, analyses of the way in which several other national parliaments are closely scrutinizing the Brexit procedure are welcome. The impact of Brexit on the work of the remaining national parliaments of the EU27 could be also analysed, particularly given the fact that both the House of Commons and the House of Lords have been amongst the most active parliaments in EU affairs and have arguably inspired some of the other chambers.

- **Parliaments and the domestic dimension of EU affairs:** contributions could assess how European and national parliaments confront the changes and challenges within the Member States, i.e. to what extent debates take place or reform proposals on EU affairs have been implemented to address past crises. Other dynamics stemming from the national level might be analysed in their respective domestic context. For instance, contributions might look at the role of the Polish parliament in EU affairs in its relations with an increasingly Eurosceptic executive, or at the situation of the Italian parliament following the failure of last year's constitutional reform as this reform would have modified its scrutiny procedures in EU affairs.
- **Parliaments and the external dimension of EU affairs:** contributions could examine the role of parliaments in defining EU responses to an international environment characterized by the proliferation of security threats in and around Europe, including the concern with traditional forms of aggression, and the growing uncertainty over the future of international trade and multilateralism. Since some parliaments have an important say in both decisions related to defence cooperation and the approval of international agreements, contributions could shed light on the conditions under which parliaments can become a driver or a brake for articulating EU common responses. This might include the analysis of new patterns of politicization in foreign affairs, for instance the impact of the growing representation of far-right and far-left parties, the role of inter-parliamentary cooperation in aligning views and procedures, or parliaments' direct engagement in external affairs through parliamentary diplomacy.
- **Parliaments in the EU – an outlook:** In these challenging times for the EU, several proposals concerning the future role of parliaments are under discussion. This includes enhancing democratic legitimacy of economic governance in the EU, for example through the possible creation of a Eurozone parliament or of a second chamber next to the EP. Contributions might critically examine these proposals as well as make new ones which could, for example, allow for the collective accountability of the Council and the European Council. The future of interparliamentary cooperation might also be discussed against the background of the recent creation of yet another such forum, namely the Joint parliamentary scrutiny group. Another aspect could be the role the EP plays in the election of the President of the European Commission, in the light of the experience with the *Spitzenkandidaten* process in 2014. The EP's reports and the latest reform of its Standing order could be also examined.

These proposed topics are indicative and additional proposals fitting the defined themes are welcome.

Abstracts (250 words) should be sent to cerim@maastrichtuniversity.nl by **October, 20th 2017**.

First versions of the presented papers will have to be submitted by **January, 8th 2018**. The organisers intend to publish selected papers in an edited volume, subject to review of the final version of the papers. Some funding is available to support the travel and accommodation expenses of accepted participants.

Any query may be addressed to cerim@maastrichtuniversity.nl

