

ABSTRACTS

Daniel Göler und Mathias Jopp

Can Europe Succeed? Projects and Prospects of the German EU presidency

The German EU presidency is confronted with a number of challenges in the first half of 2007: first, there is the quest for a solution to the constitutional crisis; second, there is the need to make strategic decisions in a number of important EU-policy fields; and third, Europe must find the ways and means to cope with international crises in Africa and the Near and Middle East. Also, there are still unresolved problems in Europe's backyard, the Western Balkans, where the most challenging task will be conducting a civilian ESDP mission in Kosovo as the successor to the UNMIK. One of the difficulties is that a number of important EU member states have become weak players on the European stage because of domestic problems, upcoming general elections or difficulties in forming a government. It is against this backdrop that many hopes rest on Germany, which is seen at present as the central actor in shaping European politics. The German presidency will have to explore the lines of consensus on the constitutional issue and deal with the question of a common European energy policy, which has moved to a top priority on the EU's agenda due to the most recent Russia-Belarus gas and oil dispute. One approach for securing European energy demands would be making the energy issue a part of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), the reorientation of which is already on the European agenda as it is. Should the German government also be able to beef up the European economic and social policy and strengthen cooperation among member states in justice and home affairs on issues such as terrorism, trans-national crime and migration – issues where European citizens have deep concerns and high expectations towards the EU – the presidency could achieve a real success in advancing European integration.

Franziska Brantner and Anja Thomas

European Policy – No Priority Issue in the French Presidential Election Campaign

In the European political debate in France, essentially two developments related to dominant political conceptions are crystallising in the aftermath of the referendum on the constitution and the run-up to the French presidential elections. First, it is becoming clear that Europe as a frame of reference is generally accepted in the public debate. This represents a significant turning point in comparison to the debate on the Maastricht Treaty. At the same time, however, it is also possible to distinguish continuities in the debate of the current presidential election campaign, which connect substantively to traditional European debates in France. Indeed, key French conceptions for economic and social policy, the role of Europe in the world and the debate on enlargement all remain important points of focus. Although both candidates for president claim to exemplify a new style of politics, up to now their European policy discourses demonstrate more continuity than change.

Wilfried Loth

The Road to Rome – The Origins and Meaning of the Rome Treaties

The Rome Treaties signed 50 years ago were the result of a multi-faceted process challenging the system of the European nation-states. Securing peace in Europe, containing the Germans, creating productive markets, and securing independence both from the Soviet Union and the U.S.A. were its main motives. The movements switched into the political field when the French government decided in July 1948 to integrate the new Western Germany into a European framework. However, given the disputes about British membership in the European Community and a German contribution to a European army, it took more than eight further years to reach an agree-

ment between the six founding member states of the European Community on a compromise establishing both Euratom and the EEC. The driving forces behind this compromise encompassed all the motives of the process, not just its economic aspects.

Axel Schäfer, Michael Roth and Christoph Thum
Strengthening the EU Efficacy of the Bundestag

This article describes the efforts that the Bundestag has undertaken to strengthen its EU efficacy, especially with the goal of influencing the legislative behaviour of the federal government in the Council of Ministers. In the end, this serves to better legitimise European governance and thus increase acceptance for European integration itself. The ratification of the constitutional treaty initiated the reforms, which for the first time granted direct rights of participation to national parliaments. The legal basis for national participation established by Art. 23 of the German Basic Law is supplemented by an additional arrangement between the Bundestag and the federal government, which guarantees parliamentary access to extensive information, including internal government documents, and stipulates how to proceed when the decisions of the Bundestag are not enforceable at the EU level. To be able to appropriately make use of these new possibilities, the human and administrative resources of the Bundestag have been expanded significantly. Ultimately, the arrangement has also brought about the need to change the procedural rules of the Bundestag, especially in order to enable quick reactions to decision-making situations at the EU level.

Michael Glos

Energy Policy during the German EU Council Presidency

The global framework for energy policy poses formidable challenges: The worldwide demand for energy will continue to grow, while at the same time there is a considerable shortfall of investment in production, transport, and refining capacities and a problematic concentration of oil and gas reserves to very few supply areas. The following aspects should therefore form the focus of a responsible energy policy: a global effort in questions of climate protection, the completion of the European internal market for electricity and gas, a diversified supply of raw materials for energy, an increase in energy efficiency and an economically efficient expansion of renewable energies. Given the emotionally charged energy policy discussion that is currently being conducted in Europe, it is important to bring more rationality into the debate. This will form a guiding principle for the German Council Presidency.

Ralf Roloff

On the Path to Variable Geometry – Implications of EU Enlargement for ESDP and NATO

The author confronts the fundamental questions of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) and EU-NATO relations. His central question is: What are the implications of EU enlargement for the European security architecture? Using concrete examples, Roloff emphasises that the ESDP is already strongly defined by flexible integration and structured cooperation in the areas of military capabilities, armament, procurement, and research and development. He presents the thesis that the expansion of flexible integration with the ESDP has provided new impetus. This development, however, should not be judged negatively. Instead, Roloff sees in this 'variable geometry' not only a sensible concept for constructing a capable and effective ESDP of the EU-27 and the possibility of including ENP countries in ESDP missions, but also a suitable guiding principle for the revival of transatlantic burden-sharing within NATO.

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