

ABSTRACTS

Wolfgang Wessels and Thomas Traguth

The Permanent President of the European Council: ‘Master’ or ‘Servant’ in the House of Europe

This article argues that the new permanent president of the European Council is placed institutionally in a dilemma between a national sovereignty reflex and the propensity for joint problem solving. Following a principal-agent approach, the examination of his powers and constraints reveal more of a managerial role than that of a full-blown presidential figure within his institution. In a second step, the new office is analysed in view of the institutional balance within the wider EU political system, namely the rotating presidency, the Foreign Affairs Council, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign and Security Policy, the Commission and the European Parliament. It is argued that the heads of state and government carefully constructed institutional and procedural brakes and multiple points of control to avoid drift and hierarchical dominance of the new office. Thus, we conclude that the new permanent president is best described as a ‘first servant’ – of many masters – within the EU institutional architecture.

Sebastian Gröning-von Thüna

The German Legal Framework of the Lisbon Treaty as seen from the Perspective of the German Bundestag – Open Questions and New Challenges

One year after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty and its German legal framework, the German Bundestag’s political practical involvement in EU-affairs reveals a mixed balance. Its legal and organisational strengthening are contrasted by the Bundestag’s lack of influence over decisions concerning measures for the stabilisation of the Euro. Based on political practice, the author describes the Bundestag’s new possibilities and the challenges resulting from these. The analysis reveals that the legal specification of the parliament’s rights of information and participation in EU affairs are only part of the explanation for the increased activity of the Bundestag. As much significance can be attributed to the increased awareness that has resulted from the constitutional court’s ruling in July 2009 and the new laws.

Martin Seidel

Current Problems of the European Monetary Union

The European Union has again entered into crisis. Some member states of the Eurozone are so highly indebted that they currently face the very real threat of bankruptcy. These countries permanently have above average rates of inflation and balance of payments deficits, which negatively effect their economic competitiveness. The common currency, the Euro, is one of the biggest accomplishments of European integration and depends on strict national budgetary discipline. In light of current events however, it now finds itself in danger. The European Union is trying to help these countries by means of financial assistance. In the case of Greece this assistance has taken the form of a “rescue plan” and as a further response the “European Stabilisation Mechanism” has been created for use by all member states. In return, the said countries are forced to reduce public expenditures and to increase taxes by draconian measures, which could result in public turmoil.

Wilfried Loth

The Schuman Plan and the Future of the European Union

The main motive behind Robert Schuman's Plan of May 9, 1950 was to prevent Germany from establishing a new industrial hegemony over France and Europe. It was accepted by the German Federal Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, because he was convinced of the necessity to integrate Germany into the West. Discreet American and British support helped the two statesmen to carry through the ambitious project against strong opposition at home. Thus, the cornerstone of European integration was a hidden peace treaty between France and Germany. This is why the EU permanently needs a joint Franco-German leadership. To concentrate future actions on precise problems – as Schuman and Adenauer did – may help to develop the EU further.

Politische Gestaltung von Märkten



Regulierung der Finanzmärkte in der EU

Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der politischen Gestaltung dynamischer Märkte im europäischen Mehr-Ebenen-System

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