

ABSTRACTS

Martin Höpner and Armin Schäfer

Limits to integration – how intensified economic integration endangers political integration

In the last years, European integration has become a matter of political contestation in the EU member states. This contestation may be interpreted as the nucleus of a Europeanised public and, therefore, as the precondition for further democratisation of the European polity. At the same time, however, contestation mainly takes the form of national defensive action and may, therefore, reinforce existing divisions rather than attenuate them. We take this problem as a starting point for an analysis of the current state of European economic and social integration, in which one can distinguish three dimensions: market-shaping integration, market-enforcing integration, and the emergence of a European area of non-discrimination. We show that market-shaping integration lags behind the dynamics of the other two dimensions. The reason lies in the asymmetric impacts of European ‘integration through law’. The very vehemence of judicial integration, we argue, might endanger political integration and, thus, the emergence of a European public. Therefore, self-restraint of European actors might in the end lead to more, rather than less, integration.

Michael W. Bauer and Barbara Heisserer

Reforming the European Commission. Modernisation initiatives from four decades in a comparative perspective

The European Commission’s administration was subject to an overhauling reform between 2000 and 2004. Until today the so called Kinnock-reform is controversial. Depending on one’s point of view, the reform is considered a necessary modernisation for the organisation’s efficient workings, or regarded as a source of a growing need for internal coordination and an increasing bureaucratisation forcing the Commission to veer away from its ‘mission’ of European integration. The Kinnock-reform certainly was the most comprehensive, far-reaching management reform in the history of the European Commission. Contrary to a common perception, it definitely was not the first one. In the past four decades three other, more or less successful reform initiatives can be identified. This article reviews these four reform initiatives and compares them systematically. In so doing, the Kinnock-reform is put in a historical context. Furthermore crucial influencing factors, which contribute to successfully realising an administrative reform in a supranational context, can be identified.

Robert Kaiser and Heiko Prange-Gstöhl

The 2009 EU budget review: new options for a future-oriented financial framework

This article analyses the impact of the 2009 review of the EU budget on the EU’s main spending policies. The budget review is not only a novum in the history of European integration. Rather, the Commission appraised the review as a ‘unique opportunity’ to assess the future EU spending priorities in a process which is not immediately affected by the usual constraints of negotiations on a financial framework. We argue that in combination with the internal (i.e. mainly the Lisbon Strategy) and external challenges (e.g. global challenges and the global economic crisis) the European Union faces, the budgetary review, as

an innovative instrument, will render policy change quite likely. We structure our analysis along Hall's concept of different degrees of policy change. This conceptualisation allows us to assess the degree of policy change with regard to institutional structures, processes and actor constellations.

Torsten Müller, Hans-Wolfgang Platzer and Stefan Rüb

European Trade Union Federations. Organisational development and policy evolution since the early 1990s

This article deals with the organisational development as well as policy evolution of the twelve existing European trade union federations since the beginning of the 1990s. The analysis mainly focuses on whether and how the intensification of the European integration process and EU enlargement changed the conditions for interest representation at the level of the transnational sectoral trade union federations. The empirical evidence suggests that compared to the first decades following the establishment of the European Community, when the European federations mainly served as round tables, their role has been extended and strengthened despite the still prevailing problem of resources. This is particularly evident in the areas of collective bargaining, company policy, and autonomous regulation in the context of the sectoral social dialogues.

Joachim Wuermeling

Berlin light-blue: the European policy of the new Federal Government

While the European flag is azure, the European policy of the new Federal Government is better characterised by light-blue. This is somewhat surprising, considering the challenges Europe is facing at present. The Federal Government should instead use the new legislative period as an opportunity to relaunch its European policy. The article describes the current framework of the Federal Government's European policy with regard to actors, institutions, as well as policy priorities, and assesses its potential to deal with the current challenges of the EU. Given the limitations of the present approach, seven suggestions for a renewal of the Federal Government's European policy are offered.



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