

Great times in times of crisis

**By Anne-Marie Blajan,
SEI Chevening Fellow 2009**

The economic crisis brought together 23 alumni of the Chevening Programme, 11 fellows from the 2009 cohort, SEI professors and practitioners from governments and European institutions. The two-day conference held in March discussed the global financial crisis and the challenges

it presents for the European Union.

The conference reunited the network of SEI Chevening Fellows in European Political Economy. This was the third such conference. Each year more Chevening Fellows join the network. Prof Jim Rollo, Director of the Chevening Programme said, "The conference is a good instrument for encouraging the network and the next stage is a self-standing net-

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Activities

work. Some just come to these conferences to see old friends and make new ones, or maybe they want more. Others make substantial contributions. If they want more, what would it be? It is better if they themselves come with some ideas”.

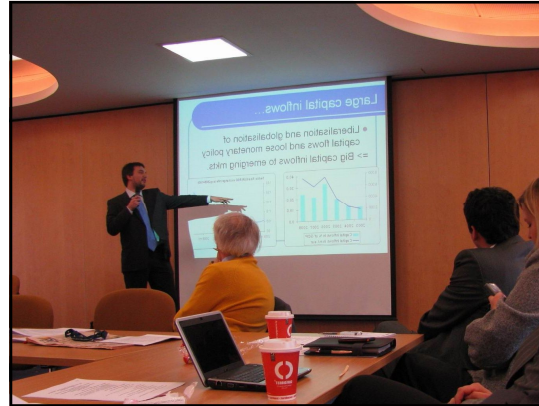
The conference is a good opportunity to see people you shared your life with for three months during the Chevening programme. It was also an opportunity for former Chevening Fellows to feedback on their activities since participating in the programme. Dusko Vasiljevic, a 2009 fellow, said, “The chance to just chat with clever people from other countries over a glass of wine is, in my opinion, a very valuable experience. It is fun and enriching to talk with people from different backgrounds and with different views and opinions”.

“When you hear someone who actually lives there and deals with issues first hand, you get this feeling and insight that you can’t otherwise get.”

Vasiljevic

But it is not only that; the network also proved its value on the academic level. The diversity of people and their professions and nationalities made the conference really challenging. Different opinions arose when talking about the crisis in countries of Europe, about EU policies and instruments – the CAP, the budget, the single market and macro and financial policy coordination - and about the crisis’ effects on trade.

“These first hand accounts were very valuable for me and really provided an additional layer of un-



Dusko Vasiljevic spoke at the conference

derstanding of how the crisis is affecting different economies, and more importantly different societies,” Vasiljevic says, “when you hear someone who actually lives there and deals with issues first hand, you get insight that you can’t find elsewhere. Media reports that cover Eastern Europe ‘from a distance’ often struggle to recognise the difference between countries and treat the whole region as a more or less homogeneous group”. Prof Rollo feels that professors also gained from the conference as it is not a one way street, “The Fellows bring a great deal to us, great views. We are not talking to people *tabula rasa*, but to people at a working level in their administrations and media, who know a lot and who’ve done a lot”.

The conference underlined two challenges: how Europe and the world should rebuild the world economy after the crisis, and how the Chevening fellows should build a network that could – why not? - help them face the first challenge.

CONFERENCE AGENDA

“The Challenges of the Global Financial Crisis for Europe”

- 1. Snapshots from the Frontline in the new member-states and candidates**
- 2. EU policy instruments and the Crisis:** *The EU Budget, Reform of the CAP, The Single Market & Lisbon Agenda & Economic Reform*
- 3. The Global Dimensions of the Crisis:** *Global Trade & the Crisis, Macro and Financial Policy co-ordination within the EU, The Challenges of Global Policy Co-ordination*

Who we are...

euroscope is the newsletter of the Sussex European Institute (SEI). It reports to members and beyond about activities and research going on at the SEI and presents feature articles and reports by SEI staff, researchers, students and associates. The deadline for submissions for the Autumn term issue is: 1st September 2009.

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Editorial Assistant: Patrick Scott



The SEI was founded in 1992 and is a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence and a Marie Curie Research Training Site. It is the leading research and postgraduate training centre on contemporary European issues. SEI has a distinctive philosophy built on interdisciplinarity and a broad and inclusive approach to Europe. Its research is policy-relevant and at the academic cutting edge, and focuses on integrating the European and domestic levels of analysis. As well as delivering internationally renowned Masters, doctoral programmes and providing tailored programmes for practitioners, it acts as the hub of a large range of networks of academics, researchers and practitioners who teach, supervise and collaborate with us on research projects.

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Where to find euroscope!

euroscope is easily accessible in the following places:

- the SEI website: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/sei/1-4-10-4.html>
- via the official mailing list, contact: euroscope@sussex.ac.uk
- hard copies are available from PoICES office, EDB 226
- via its new and dedicated facebook group called 'euroscope', where you can also join in discussions on the articles!

Also feel free to contact us to comment on articles and research and we may publish your letters and thoughts!

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'Doing Doctoral Research at the SEI' - Features section theme

The Features section of this edition of *euroscope* has a special theme and presents articles concerning the DPhil research experience at the SEI. The articles provide insider perspectives on what life is like as a DPhil student here, what is expected of you and what you can expect in return, at each stage of the process. The articles address; the MSc year, DPhil years opportunities and Life After the DPhil (apparently there is one!), as well as advice from an experienced supervisor.

Message from the Co-Director...

By Prof Aleks Szczerbiak,
SEI Co-Director

The last few months have, inevitably, been dominated, by the global financial crisis. Just as European and world leaders have been struggling to get to grips with the crisis, academics – including many of the my SEI colleagues - have also been trying to analyse its causes, ramifications and implications.

Chevening scholars

It was appropriate, therefore, that one of the highlights of SEI's spring term was a conference devoted to the challenges of the global financial crisis, a report of which you can read on pages 1-2. The March event brought together academic specialists and policy makers with alumni and current scholars taking the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)-funded twelve-week Chevening Fellowship in European Political Economy programme. This innovative programme, which my Co-Director Prof Jim Rollo ran for the fourth time this spring, is designed to give a group of mid-career high flyers from EU candidate and new member states an opportunity to study and engage with British and other European policy makers and practitioners on the EU's economic agenda.

The 2009 fellows made a big impact during their three month stay. You can read a report about their time at the SEI written by Sandra Puhovski, one of the fellows from Croatia, on pages 27-28 and a short dispatch about a special SEI workshop on the Western Balkans that they organised in February on page 30.

EP elections

Together with ongoing attempts by political leaders to craft a response to the global economic crisis, one of the main political developments in Europe over the summer months will, of course, be the June European Parliament (EP) elections. The SEI-based European Parties Elections and Referendums Network (EPERN) - which I co-convene with my colleague, Prof Paul Taggart - will publish a series of briefing papers on the elections as we did five years ago – except this time we are aiming to extend our coverage to include all 27 EU member states. For more information, check out the EPERN website (<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/sei/1-4-2.html>). Paul and I will also be organising an SEI round table on the results and implications of the 2009 EP elections on 16 June, as part of the SEI weekly research-in-progress seminar series (Full details of the summer term programme are available on page 9).

Doctoral research at the SEI

A large part of the current issue of Euroscope, (pages 11-15) is devoted to the theme of doctoral research and includes articles from SEI scholars at every stage of the process including: one taking our 'pre-doctoral' research methods MSc; current doctoral students describing their research design and fieldwork experiences; and a recently qualified DPhil now working in her first lecturing job at the University of Nottingham. As SEI research convenor Paul Taggart makes clear in his contribution, starting life as a doctoral student is only the first step in a research career. One of great strengths of the SEI as a postgraduate research centre is that we build career planning and professional

development into every stage of the doctoral process. Right from the very first supervision meeting, our DPhil students are encouraged to think about how to build up a strong CV that makes them 'sell-able' in the (increasingly competitive) academic jobs market. This includes: designing a research project that is 'publishable' as both as a monograph and a series of research papers; disseminating findings and networking through academic conferences; developing a broad portfolio of teaching experience; and (eventually) putting together a post-doctoral research plan.

A busy summer term

In addition to our research-in-progress seminar series, two other forthcoming SEI summer term events are worth highlighting (see page 31). First, a half-day workshop on EU-Swiss relations on June 5 organised by Nichole Wichman (University



of Lucerne), who was an SEI visiting fellow during the spring term. This will be addressed by the current Swiss Ambassador to the UK and SEI Visiting Professorial Fellow Prof Clive Church, who specialises in Swiss domestic politics. Second, I am delighted that my SEI colleague Dr Tim Bale has secured UACES funding for a workshop on qualitative methods on researching the EP, which will be held in July. When he has not been busy researching the British Conservative party (see his report page 16), Tim – together with Paul Taggart – has spent the last few years undertaking pioneering work on studying and profiling the 2004-9 new intake of MEPs.

New MA in Security and Strategic Studies

Finally, a word of congratulations to my SEI colleague (and predecessor as Co-Director) Prof Jorg Monar, who gave his professorial lecture in February - undoubtedly one of the most significant events of the spring term. Jorg's lecture, a report of which you can read on page 29, was on the topic of the EU responses to terrorism. This is fitting given that one of the SEI's emerging areas of expertise is, the 'politics of security' (conceived broadly to include internal and external, as well as 'hard' and 'soft', security). As you can also see in the 'SEI Diary', SEI scholar Prof Shamit Saggat recently published a book on understanding and tackling radical Islamism, and he has written a short article on his current research in this field on page 20.

To reflect this expanding area of research activities, SEI and the Department of Politics and Contemporary European Studies are launching a ground breaking new MA in Security and Strategic Studies programme this autumn, details of which you can find on page 10. The new MA is our contribution towards a larger University initiative in establishing a new series of postgraduate programmes on security studies, which involves a significant investment in teaching faculty to boost and bring together our expertise and teaching in this field. In short, there are exciting times ahead!

The SEI Diary...



The SEI Diary provides snippets on the many exciting and memorable activities connected to teaching and research on contemporary Europe that members of the SEI have been involved in during Spring 2009.

January: The Chevenings Arrive

January: The SEI welcomed a new cohort of Chevening Fellows in European Political Economy

This year saw the welcoming of fourth cohort of Fellows in EPE. This innovative Foreign and Commonwealth-funded programme is designed to give a group of mid-career high flyers from EU candidate and new member states an opportunity to study and engage British and other European policy makers and practitioners on the EU's economic agenda. This year we welcomed 11 Fellows from Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Hungary, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia working in the media and policy-making institutes, together with the agriculture, European affairs, economy, energy and finance ministries (see page 27 for a full report).

20th January: SEI Roundtable

This Research in Progress Seminar discussed 'The Future of Transatlantic relations under the Obama Administration' with Dr Stephen Burman, Prof Jörg Monar, Prof Jim Rollo.

23rd-25th January: USMUN

The Sussex Model UN held its annual debating and diplomacy conference which included a simulation of the EU Council of Ministers (see p.37).

27-29 January: Workshop

Kenneth Dyson (Cardiff University) and **Lucia Quaglia**, (SEI-based scholar) held an intensive three-day workshop at Cardiff University to finalise their co-edited volumes on *Economic Governance in the European Union: Key documents and*

commentary, which is under contract with Oxford University Press. This January, **Lucia Quaglia** was also appointed as external assessor for the European Research Council Grant proposals scheme for 5 years.

31st January: "Winter Graduation"

22 MA in Contemporary European Studies Students (MACES students) from Albania, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Kosova, Malta and the UK graduated at this year's University of Sussex winter graduation ceremony. This year's Jean Monnet Prize for Best MACES student was awarded to **Stephen Booth** (UK).



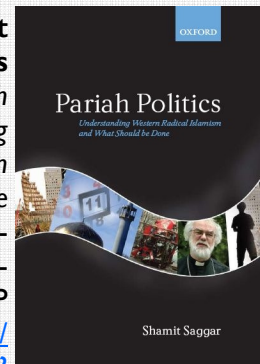
Jim Rollo with MACES graduates Stela Fiser & Nada Sirotic

Adrian Treacher with Stela Fiser & Maria Borg

At the ceremony, SEI DPhil student **Dr Simona Guerra** received her doctorate for her thesis on 'Domestic proxies and the European factor before and after accession: Polish attitudes towards EU integration in a comparative perspective'. Simona was supervised by **Profs Alan Mayhew and Aleks Szczerbiak** (see picture below). Three other SEI students were awarded an MSc in Comparative and Cross-cultural Research Methods.



The SEI's Prof Shamit Saggar released his new book entitled; *Pariah Politics : Understanding Western Radical Islamism and What Should be Done* through OUP. It is available now through bookshops, or direct from OUP at: <http://www.oup.com/uk/catalogue/?ci=9780199558131>.



OUP says; "Pariah Politics breaks new ground in examining the issue of western Islamist extremism from the perspective of government. It links underlying causes to the capacity of governments to respond directly and to influence others. Analytically-grounded, it asks what should and can be done." See page 20 for more details about the book and Prof Saggar's on-going research.

February: Catch the Pigeon



February: Pigeon Invasion

The SEI was alerted to the invasion of the SocCul buildings by pigeons, who flew through open windows in order to try to roost and began building nests.

12th February: MEP speaks at Sussex

Caroline Lucas MEP spoke to the Politics Society about her experiences at the European Parliament and new campaign for Westminster.



17th February: SEI Research Seminar

Carmen Suarez from the Office of Fair Trading spoke about "A CAP fit for the Twenty First Century?".

25th February: Research Outlines

Four first year SEI DPhil candidates presented their outlines to colleagues (see page 23).

26th February: Fat Tuesdays

SEI Visiting Researcher **Emelie Lilliefeldt** provided hungry research students with Fat Tuesday Buns (or "semla", Swedish pastries) in order to celebrate the Scandinavian Mardi Gras tradition.

27th February: Western Balkans Day

There was a half-day event dedicated to this region organised by the SEI Chevening Fellows (see page 30 for a report).

In February:

Dermot Hodson (Birkbeck College) and **Lucia Quaglia** won the open competition for the 2009 special issue of the Journal of Common Market Studies. The special issue they proposed on "The Global Financial Turmoil: European Perspectives and Lessons" brings together economists and political scientists from across the EU and outside Europe. A one day workshop sponsored by the Journal of Common Market Studies will be held in London in early June.

March: Talks & Trips

2nd March: Financial Crisis Meeting

Jim Rollo attended a meeting in Washington organised by Chattam House and the Atlantic Council concerning the 'Financial Crisis'. A paper based on his remarks was released on the 2nd April ahead of the G20 Summit.

3rd March: MEP speaks at the SEI

Prof **George Schopflin** MEP led a well attended SEI Research Seminar discussing "The Future of the EU: with or without Lisbon".

4th March: Ireland debate

The Politics Society organised; "The history and future of conflict in Northern Ireland" with Prof Norman Vance, Sean Oliver (Sinn Fein) and Rodney McCune (Ulster Unionist Party) (see p. 35).

9-10th March: Conference

Dr Tim Bale spoke at a conference entitled 'Enquêter dans un parti' (Investigating within a

Party) in Paris organised by the *Association Française de Science Politique*.

9-12th March: Trip to Berlin

Dr Dan Hough took his undergraduate "Politics of Governance: Germany" class to Berlin to visit institutions and historical sites (p. 32).

Dr Lucia Quaglia conducted fieldwork interviews at the International Association of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) in Madrid, where she also interviewed Spanish financial policy makers.

1st April:

Viva Passed

Dr Mark Bennister passed his Viva with flying colours on 'The Predominance of Prime Ministers: A Comparative Study of Britain and Australia'.



Forthcoming Events:

16-17th April: Model EU

Jim Rollo will be the keynote speaker at a Model EU conference at the University of Indiana. He will address around 28 university delegations on the State of the Union.

23rd-24th April: EUSA Conference

Jim Rollo will speak at the EU Studies Association conference in Los Angeles at a JCMS sponsored lecture and reception.

11th-13th May: EU Budget Workshop

Jim Rollo will speak at a workshop in Brussels concerning the EU Budget Review.

25th April: Poland & the EU

Aleks Szczerbiak will take part in a panel discussion on 'Benefits, challenges or obligations? An assessment of Poland's presence in the European Un-

ion from different points of view' at the 2nd Congress of Polish Student Societies in the UK, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London.

5th June: Workshop on EU-Switzerland Relations (2-5pm, Sussex House) with HE Alexis P. Lautenberg, Ambassador of Switzerland to the UK, SEI Prof Clive Church and SEI Visiting Fellow Nicole Wichmann (see page 31).

8-12th June: Brussels Trip

Each year the SEI organises a study trip to Brussels for its MA students. The participants meet with high level officials from EU Institutions, NATO, think-tanks, the European Parliament, European Centre for International Political Economy and European Policy Centre. There will be a report from this trip in the next issue.

12-13th June: JMWEN Conference

The Jean Monnet Wider Europe Network, the

Europe-wide academic network which researches the politics, economics and societies of central and Eastern Europe and their relations with the EU will be holding conferences and seminars in Slovakia, Finland and Sweden this year. The next conference together with the Slovak Foreign Policy Centre and the Comenius University will be held in Bratislava on 12-13 June, and **Profs Alan Mayhew and Jim Rollo** will speak. They have recently posted around 20 of the papers written for the Swedish Government over the last year on their website: www.wider-europe.org. These studies concentrate on the internal situation in Ukraine, its economic situation and its developing relations with the EU. If anyone from Sussex is interested in this work, please contact Alan at: a.mayhew@sussex.ac.uk.

26th June: SEI-CEELBAS Roundtable on Poland (12:30-2:30, UCL)

The SEI's **Alan Mayhew, Nat Copsey and Aleks Szczerbiak** will be taking part in an SEI/Centre for East European-Language Based Area Studies (CEELBAS) roundtable on 'Where is Poland Heading After the European Parliament Elections? Perspectives on Politics, Economics and Foreign Policy' at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University College London.

17th July: Workshop on Qualitative Approaches to investigating the European Parliament (provisional date) a one-day event discussing new approaches with and for researchers and practitioners interested in this field, will be held at the SEI (see page 31).

MACES Facebook Group

For MACES/MAEP Summer-Term socials

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#/group.php?gid=42018432175&ref=ts>

Politics Society Facebook Group

For details of summer term events

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?ref=home#/group.php?gid=2221375650&ref=ts>

SEI Research in Progress Seminars

SUMMER TERM 2009

Tuesdays 14.00 - 15.50

Arts C233

28.04.09

The Strasbourg Court, Democracy and the Human Rights of Individuals and Communities: Patterns of Litigation, State Implementation and Domestic Reform
Kim Brayson (University of Sussex) Gabriel Swain (University of Kent)

05.05.09

Varieties of Capitalism, the Developmental State and the domestic impact of Europe: The implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy in Greece
Anastassios Chardas (University of Sussex)

12.05.09

Configuring Gender and Party: Necessary and sufficient conditions for gender balanced representation
Emelie Lilliefeldt (Sodertorn University/Stockholm University/University of Sussex)

19.05.09

Organisational change in West European Communist parties: Lessons from the case of the Communist Party of the Netherlands
Dan Keith (University of Sussex)

26.05.09

Young citizens and electoral turnout in Britain
Ed Phelps (University of Sussex)

02.06.09

Regionalist Parties' Strategy and Ideological Adaptation in Changing Political Environments: A Comparative Study of the Northern League, Plaid Cymru, the Scottish National Party and the South Tyrol People's Party
Emanuele Massetti (University of Sussex)

16.06.09

SEI round table on 'The 2009 European Parliament elections: results and implications'
Prof Aleks Szczerbiak, Prof Paul Taggart (University of Sussex)

Everyone is welcome to attend!

To be included in our mailing list for seminars, please contact Amanda Sims, email: polces.office@sussex.ac.uk

MA Strategic and Security Studies

The SEI is due to launch a new Masters programme in *Strategic & Security Studies* and will take its first cohort in September 2009. It is a 1 year Full-Time or 2 year Part-Time course.

Course structure*

This innovative Masters programme addresses the key issues set out in the ESRC's initiative on security: stresses on the global environment, including energy and natural resource vulnerabilities, climate change impacts and disease transmission; the emergence of new forms of international and transboundary crime posing wider forms of risks; radicalised violence and terrorism; and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The SEI has established expertise in these fields, especially in the context of Europe, though it should be noted that this degree does not restrict its geographic focus to Europe.

You will develop a critical understanding of both traditional and new approaches to international strategic and security studies, as well as consider and identify answers to the key question: what factors influence collective security and shared responsibility in the international community?

This MA provides an excellent grounding for policy practitioners (e.g. civilian and military officials who want to deepen their understanding and upgrade their qualifications), as well as for those intent on careers in academia, government or the media.

**This programme is under development and subject to validation.*

- offers a wide range of high quality research and teaching in both Politics and in interdisciplinary Contemporary European Studies;
- hosts the SEI, a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence for the study of European Integration;
- was ranked 2nd out of 27 European Studies units in British Universities in the Research Assessment Exercise 2008;
- in the National Student Survey 2008, 91% of Politics students at Sussex expressed satisfaction with their course, placing it 14th out of 63 Politics departments in the UK.

MA Student profile

Our students come from all over the world, and have a background in many different disciplines. To take the programme you will need:

- A Bachelor degree (equivalent to a UK 2:1 Hons) in a relevant discipline, such as a social science
- An IELTS 6.5 score (with no component below 6.0 and 6.5 in Writing)

The MA is attractive if you aim to work in:

- Government foreign or defence ministries
- International organisations (e.g. the UN)
- Nongovernmental organisations
- Media or journalism
- Research or doctoral study

Department of Politics and Contemporary European Studies

The MA Strategic and Security Studies is an intellectually rigorous degree taught by the Department of Politics and Contemporary European Studies, which:

SEI Related degrees

MA Contemporary European Studies
MA European Politics

Please contact Prof Paul Webb for more details and information:

p.webb@sussex.ac.uk

Features

Doing Doctoral Research

Are you thinking about going onto, or coming back to, academia to do doctoral research? Our Features Section presents a range of articles from people at each stage of the process, providing you with information and insiders' perspectives on what is expected and what you can expect from doing a DPhil, (what Sussex calls a PhD!) at the SEI.

Myth-Busting for Research Students

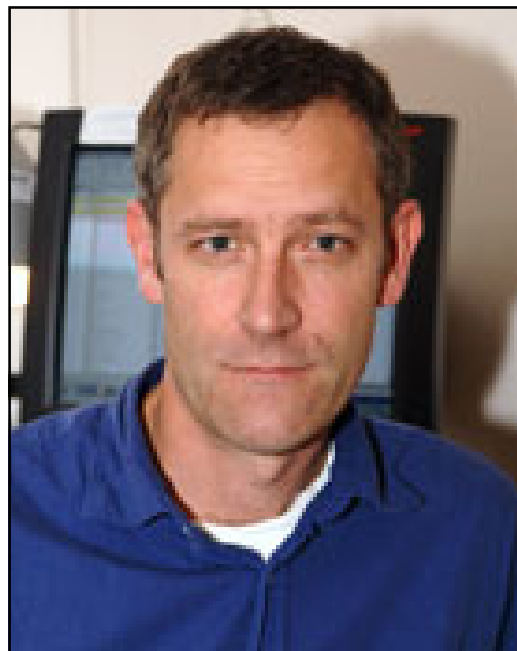
**By Prof Paul Taggart, SEI Research Con-
venor**

At the SEI, we place both great value and a high emphasis on our research students. We work hard to encourage and support a research community and my experience is that we have been rewarded with a research student body that is of the highest quality which constitutes the 'civil society' of the SEI.

I have enjoyed the job of Research Student convenor for SEI so much that I have done it twice. But, in doing this, I have found that research students in general are dogged by a difficult identity and by the prevalence of a number of myths. Even the terminology research "students" labour under is a misnomer - those doing doctoral work are effectively researchers doing a full-time job and pursuing a career rather than students, and it is a real shame that we still talk about research "students". Let me now attempt a little myth-busting.

Myth No.1: The PhD is a degree

Starting life as a research student is the beginning of a research career. The mistake that some people make is to think of the PhD as a degree whereas it is in fact part of a larger process of



professional development and the degree is only one component in that process. This means that the focus should not necessarily be on quick completion of the dissertation but on finishing it in the right way and as part of a wider professional profile. To my knowledge no-one has ever been rewarded for quick completion of a doctorate. In fact many academics remember their time as a research student fondly because they never again

Features

have so much time to dedicate to a project that engages them. There is also lots of time and opportunities to travel and meet other students at conferences, exchanges, summer schools and research sites.

“those who want to do a doctorate but want to do this remotely without taking part in the wider life of the University are like trainee doctors who don’t really like hospitals.”

Myth No.2: A Successful dissertation = a successful PhD

I always find it useful to think of the PhD as an equivalent to being a junior doctor – you are training and learning but at the same time you are also contributing to hospital life by treating patients – by actively doing the same things that you are being trained to do and learning on the job. What this translates into at the SEI is teaching, running workshops and attending conferences, which should be as much a part of a research student’s life as completing a dissertation and will also be equally valuable experiences. This means that those who want to do a doctorate but want to do this remotely without taking part in the wider life of the University are like trainee doctors who don’t really like hospitals.

Myth No.3: When you finish your PhD everything will be different

If you do the PhD in the right way it will be very much the way that you will work in the academic world. Although it appears to be the case that many successful PhDs go on to postdoctoral positions before gaining faculty positions, it is still true that both these sorts of career paths involve you trying to sustain a research project (or 2 or 3) while doing other activities such as applying for research grants and teaching. The key therefore is to develop working patterns and practices that will continue through your working life. Do not look at the PhD as a bar to be vaulted - it is just one of many hurdles in an on-going race, or marathon.

Myth No.4: I would like to end up teaching in the place that I do my PhD

The difficulty is that, as a rule of thumb, you should be doing your PhD at a place where there is a critical mass of researchers in your area. But when you come to gaining a faculty position, you will often get a position because no-one else is doing the sort of work you do at that particular institution. This means that while we tend to base our expectations of our future working lives on our postgraduate experiences, it can be a very different location that you find yourself in, so be prepared to move around.

Myth No.5: Pleasing my supervisors will mean I pass the PhD

The two people who will eventually decide the fate of your dissertation will be two people who have nothing to do with supervising your dissertation - your viva examiners. Your supervisors have no formal role in the examination process – they are mentors rather than managers. Of course, we would expect your supervisors to guide you through the process but in the end they can only advise, and it will only be you that will construct the quality of work that can mean you pass.

“Do not look at the PhD as a bar to be vaulted - it is just one of many hurdles in an on-going race”

Myth No.6: That things have always been the same for research students

Things change surprisingly quickly in the world of higher education and so the doctoral process in the UK today is very different from even a few years ago. The opportunities, expectations and processes have changed dramatically. So beware of the advice given to you by anyone who attained their research degree, such as this author, over ten years ago. But, if you are thinking of going onto, or coming back to do doctoral research then please contact either myself or better, one of the SEI research students, (often labouring away in Arts C311) if you want to know more about what this way of life offers and expects.

Doing DPhil Boot Camp!

By Peter Simmons, SEI MSc student

This year, I'm taking the MSc Comparative and Cross-Cultural Research Methods. Not perhaps the most snappily titled course – maybe we get a bigger certificate at the end, I'm not sure.

A PhD, (or DPhil) requires a level of research skill that you just don't get from an undergraduate degree - I know I didn't. The MSc is therefore intended to give you the skills you will need to get through a PhD, and also time and support to develop a research outline that will be the basis of your doctorate. My research outline is to do with the EU's democratic conditionality approach to potential members, and I'm hoping to look at Croatia, Turkey, Kosovo and Ukraine. Things I've learned from the MSc have directly influenced my research outline, and transformed it from basically what would fit onto the back of an envelope to what looks scarily like a real research proposal.

The autumn courses look at research design and philosophy of the social sciences. For me, it was easier to see how the research design course was going to directly help me as it covered how to design and develop a research project and think about things like ethics and research questions. The philosophy course was challenging at times, but I can see how it is important to at least be aware of the philosophical foundations of social science and the different views out there which fundamentally inform and shape research.

The spring term has got down to some more practical research skills. The qualitative course

covers things like interviewing and ethnography for gathering qualitative data and gives you the chance to carry-out and practise these methods. The quantitative course covers key concepts and also practical skills in using statistics and computer packages. I have to admit being a bit worried about the statistics course, but it's important to know firstly that it is not all about complex maths but rather about basic concepts and using computer packages that do all the maths for you. Even if you don't intend to use quantitative methods in your DPhil, it's really useful to understand it, not least as you might have to teach it one day if you end up in an academic career.

The summer courses haven't started yet, (but feel free to email me later) but there was a big range of courses to choose from, including comparative method, discourse analysis, policy analysis and ethnographic methods. We were told at the beginning that the MSc is designed to get more demanding, and that certainly seems to be true!



In addition to the courses, I've been meeting with my two supervisors regularly to work on my research outline, as they have more in-depth knowledge of my topic and experience of researching in this area. This will eventually become the 10,000 word MSc dissertation which is worked on after the summer courses. For me it's also the basis of a

proposal for DPhil funding, for +3 funding from the Economic and Social Research Council. However, if you're coming straight from undergraduate level you'd apply for 1+3 funding which supports you through the MSc and DPhil combined.

Email: peterjs@sussex.ac.uk

Life as a DPhil Student

Guidelines for starting a PhD from a 'successful' DPhil student

By John Fitzgibbon, SEI DPhil student

The typical image of DPhil students in their first year is of unending hours spent in the library locating all the relevant previous research on their chosen topic. However, starting off in the SEI I managed to avoid such trudging as my supervisors Prof.'s Aleks Szezerbiak and Paul Taggart had not only published the leading book on my DPhil topic, Euroscepticism, but also co-edited a book, published leading journal articles and had founded a research network bringing together scholars and publishing papers on Euroscepticism. With all this material available to me I was quickly able to isolate gaps in the contemporary research and with the help of my supervisors draw up a framework of how best to approach my research. Spending the first few months defining what precise question you are asking and how exactly you are going to answer it was possibly the most important thing I have done in my DPhil so far.

“Travelling all over the country interviewing individuals not only provided me with data but also made me feel like I was achieving something concrete and was a real researcher.”

Having such a clear goal of what I wanted to achieve and how I was going to achieve it allowed me to start fieldwork within my first year of research. It is one thing to read about the subject you are researching, quite another to go about doing it. Travelling all over the country interviewing individuals not only provided me with data but also made me feel like I was achieving something concrete and was a real researcher. With the Irish rejection of the Lisbon treaty my research became of real and intense interest. I was invited to conferences in Florence, Paris and Rennes to

give my perspective on Irish Euroscepticism where my papers were treated with intense interest and has led to one publication with another one to hopefully follow shortly.



While teaching takes up a considerable amount of time for any DPhil

student it is easily one of the most rewarding parts of the DPhil process. Explaining and communicating to students key political science concepts I have found to be endlessly challenging and for most of the time fun while in addition providing an intellectual break from DPhil research and a chance to earn some money.

Being a visiting scholar has also been of substantial benefit to my research. I spent one semester at the University of Tartu where I was able to accumulate all the fieldwork I needed, to type it up, and was also paid for my troubles. This summer I plan on doing something similar in Washington D.C., where I intend on being a visiting student at a leading political science department and gaining experience of the US academic system.

My DPhil experience so far has been quite successful in that I feel at each stage I have accomplished an important part of my work and moved on to something new, be it theoretical frameworks, fieldwork, presenting papers, teaching and being a visiting scholar. By continually seeking to do something different but that contributes towards my DPhil, I am doing what research is ultimately meant to be, rewarding, challenging and fun!

Life After the DPhil:

FROM SUSSEX TO NOTTINGHAM VIA CARDIFF

**By Dr Simona Guerra,
Recent SEI DPhil graduate**

It seems like I started my DPhil yesterday, but four years and a while have passed by.

At the end of my second year I realised it was time to think about my CV and future. In fact, the final annual review that year made me think of what I was going to teach afterwards. I received questions like ‘What about teaching Central and Eastern European Politics?’, ‘And Italian politics?’ I had never thought about it and realised it was time to plan my future.

“Showing you are a research student who can work on her/his research, teach and attend conferences is definitely important”

When I started my third year, it was useful to have a look at my friends’ CVs. My main supervisor also passed me his CV and we had a supervisory meeting focusing on future projects and career plans. It is fundamental to talk about your career prospects with your supervisors. I have been working on my CV and statement of research interest and career plans regularly since then. Of course, I had to re-draft them several times. It is important to begin to work on that from your third year, as it is a work in progress and you add more and more things up to when you see a possible job for you.

From your first year you can plan to attend a conference in your field. You can meet students and academics in your field. You may have a chapter by the end of your first year and you can present it in a graduate conference. From your second year you can submit papers for international conferences. It is important to receive feedback on your research and you can work on your manu-

scripts to submit them for publications. Publications and research funding are the most important sections of your CV. Showing you are a research student who can work on her/his research, teach and attend conferences is definitely important.



Therefore, a few priorities I would suggest are as follows: (i) Good planning (and well in advance), discussing it with your supervisors; (ii) At the end of your first year or in your second year attend a graduate conference. Plan to present a few chapters of your research at conferences, and submit something for publication; (iii) Publications can enhance your chances of getting a job. Try to have at least two publications in refereed journals or manuscripts submitted for publication, working papers or book chapters published by the end of your DPhil; (iv) Never feel upset after an unsuccessful job interview, it is not a failure, but a learning experience and the next application could be successful; (v) From your second year, regularly consult websites like www.jobs.ac.uk and if your research is in the field of European Studies, it is useful to subscribe to the uace@ and eu-research@jiscmail lists; (vi) Work on your CV and statement of research interests and future plans, and your teaching and research profile. Working as an Associate Tutor helps build a list of modules you may be willing to propose afterwards. Who knows, maybe your dream job is just behind the corner!

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On-Going Research

This section presents updates on research that is currently being carried out at the SEI by staff and doctoral students. It shows the array of issues that the SEI tackles and approaches we take, when researching contemporary Europe.

Conservatives and Conservatism

SEI-based scholar Dr Tim Bale has recently launched a new website for research on the Conservative Party, for the Political Studies Association Specialist Group, of which he is the convenor.

It has links to various centre-right sites and other more general political sites and blogs. It lists the names of academics and others who write on the Conservatives and Conservatism (C&C); the Party and the political philosophy, and provides links to their web-pages. The site also maintains a rolling record of all academic and quasi academic articles, chapters and books on the Tories.

You can find the site at the following link:
<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/polces/I-4-I.html>

Aims & Rationale

Conservatism is one of the oldest and most influential philosophical positions in the world. In the UK, the Conservative Party is the most successful but probably the least studied major party in British politics. Similarly, the conservative political thought and ideology of the centre-right has been somewhat neglected. The setting up of this specialist group of the PSA is a logical and much-needed step - especially at a time when conservatism and the Conservative Party are renewing themselves in anticipation of a return to government at the national level.

C&C aims to encourage the creation and dissemination of high quality research on all aspects of Conservatism (theoretical and empirical) through a web presence and by specialist conferences and workshops. It



It hopes to bring together and create a stronger sense of identity and common purpose among those political theorists, political scientists and historians who currently study the ideas and practices of Conservatism and encourage those who may want to do so in the future.

Activities

C&C aims to organise and co-organise at least one event per year. In 2008, together with Nottingham University's Centre for British Politics, it helped run a one-day conference on 'Cameron's Conservatives: Approaching Government?'. In May 2009, there is going to be a special issue of the *Political Quarterly* on Cameron's Conservatives, which will be launched in Parliament on 12th May (provisional date) at a roundtable kindly hosted by Sussex MP, Nicholas Soames.

It seems like corruption is everywhere...

By Dr Dan Hough, SEI lecturer

Corruption is apparently everywhere. Furthermore, everyone claims to want to do something about it. But what precisely? My new research on political parties and their anti-corruption strategies looks at this in more detail.

Whenever I mention to foreign friends that I am conducting work on the relationship between political parties and corruption one of the first responses I get is frequently “really, well, you simply *must* take my country as one of your case studies”. It seems like corruption is everywhere. It also seems like political parties are very much at the apex of its apparently burgeoning development. No matter where you’re from, no matter what sort of state you live in, you know that politicians (and non-politicians too, for that matter) can, and under given sets of circumstances do, abuse their public role for private gain.

Yet, even the most cursory of glances at either the academic literature or at the public discourse across the democratic world, reveals that this is where the consensus tends to end. For some, politicians are doing a difficult job under difficult circumstances, and the misdemeanours of a few lead to unfair generalisations about the entire political class. For others, politicians are inherently selfish, protecting their privileged positions in public life and bending the rules as and when they need to. There are, of course, a myriad of positions in between these two poles.

What of the reality? My research attempts to move on from much of the cynicism that colours debates on corruption by analysing three specific questions. Firstly, what do political parties actually think corruption is? Secondly, how do they envisage putting right the ills that they pinpoint? Finally, to what extent do they carry these promises through once in office?

The answers that political parties give to the first question revolve around sets of assumptions

about the very nature of politics. The further to the left that a party is situated ideologically, so the research hypothesises, the more likely that it is to define corruption as inherent in the capitalism that underpins western democracies. It is the profit motive itself, and the greed that it produces, that prompts people (and parties) to behave in a corrupt manor. The further to the left a party is located, the more likely it subsequently is to call for the expansion of the state’s role in managing these potentially damaging processes. Corruption, left-wing parties tend to argue, subsequently goes – at least to some extent – hand in hand with capitalism.



“Whenever I mention to foreign friends that I am conducting work on the relationship between political parties and corruption one of the first responses I get is frequently “really, well, you simply *must* take my country as one of your case studies”

Parties of the centre-right and right, on the other hand, see corruption as a manifestation of altogether different sets of problems. Building on public choice assumptions, these parties (whether it be implicitly or explicitly) believe that the state (and with it the politicians who control it) is not only inefficient and ultimately ineffective in providing public goods, but it (ultimately) provides opportunities for public servants to enrich themselves. Such parties argue that only a well-

regulated market, with transparency at its core and lines of accountability clearly identifiable, can prevent inherently self-serving political elites from using the state – eventually – for their own purposes.

Only once we're clear on what parties believe corruption is – and this will be done by analysing parties' election manifestos, their statutes and their programmes – can we move on to making sense of their proposed remedies. The two inevitably go hand in hand. It is expected that left parties will call for more state oversight, a more expansive role for the public sector in (what was) the private economy and more expansive regulatory frameworks. The centre-right and right, meanwhile, will prefer solutions that rely on the market as the only neutral allocator of resources, will stress models of lean government and subse-

quently less dense regulatory frameworks. Finally, the research assesses whether these parties have actually had any success in implementing their policy packages when in office. It takes parties in Austria, Germany, the UK and the USA and assesses both the anti-corruption legislation that they enact and the nature of the discourse that parties use.

The research will not be able to tell us what corruption is or what we – as informed citizens – should do to counteract it. However, it will give us much more of an idea as to what are elected representatives think the problem is and what concrete measures *they* think should be taken. Ultimately, it will also tell us plenty about the extent to which they put these agendas into action when they finally enter the corridors of power.

The JURISTRAS project

By Kimberley Brayson, Sussex Law School

As is discernable from the name, JURISTRAS is a project which finds itself firmly situated in the domain of law. However, its scope is much more all encompassing and as such, wholly embraces the political sciences and sociology.

Funded by the EU framework 6 initiative, JURISTRAS is a comparative enterprise spread across nine Council of Europe contracting countries: Austria, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Romania, Turkey and the UK, each with its own team of researchers, the coordinating team being based at ELIAMEP in Athens, Greece.

The *raison d'être* of the JURISTRAS project is to assess the implementation of European Court of Human Rights (hereafter ECtHR or Strasbourg) case law in the nine partner countries with specific reference to minority groups. The groups to be addressed were discussed at length at a Consortium meeting of all of the partners and eventually divided into: religious minorities, sexual minorities, political minorities, immigrants and asy-

lum seekers. The research gains momentum from questions such as:

- Does Government implement ECtHR judgements adequately?
- What movements does one witness in Civil Society which aim to follow up and push policies emanating from Strasbourg?
- Which NGO's are prominent in furthering Strasbourg policy?
- Which NGO's tactically use the ECtHR as a tool of reform to change policy through use of test cases?
- How does the Strasbourg court, with its privileged extra-terrestrial vantage point which transcends national delimitations, influence domestic policy and law making?

Currently nearing the end of its final year, JURISTRAS has been running over a period of three years. The first phase of the project resulted in a State of the Art Report which articulated the state of human rights review in each country and the impact thus far of the ECtHR on the domestic

situation. Phase two involved the collation of Case Study Reports, which were also country specific and detailed Strasbourg cases against the nine countries in question dealing with the minority groups specified above. Both of these reports aimed to elucidate the level of conformity by the State with Strasbourg judgements and to give a broader perspective of the extent to which judicial attitudes, awareness amongst the population at large of human rights issues, accessibility to the public of the judgements and relief that Strasbourg provides, legal and political culture, the presence of lobbying groups or lack thereof, encourage or undermine conformity with the ECtHR rulings on a national level.

“The *raison d’être* of the JURISTRAS project is to assess the implementation of European Court of Human Rights case law in the nine partner countries with specific reference to minority groups.”

An imperative part of the research was to conduct interviews with legal professionals, judges, government officials and applicants to the Strasbourg Court. These interviews, conducted with prominent figures such as Lady Brenda Hale and Rabinder Singh QC, provided indispensable first-hand knowledge which informed the research and gave it a whole new dimension which would not have been otherwise apparent.

The penultimate phase sought to bring all of these findings together in a comparative manner which meant that each country partner was to produce a Comparative Report on a specific minority group. The UK team was given the responsibility of compiling the report for women’s rights, transgender and homosexual rights as these cases were the most prominent in the context of the UK. This can be attributed to the greater tradition of lobbying and NGOs that exists in the UK which has sought to establish rights for those minority groups which have not been only politically unpopular, but also “taboo” so to speak, in civil society at large.

As the project shifts into its final phase, the emphasis is now on disseminating the findings in each country and will reach its climax at the final JURISTRAS event to be held in Strasbourg in June. The event is being co-hosted by the Directorate General for Human Rights and Legal Affairs and will take place in the Council of Europe buildings. The aim of the final event is to gather law makers and legal professionals from the Court in Strasbourg and to impart the project findings in the hope that this will influence policy making in the area of human rights for minorities in a positive fashion.



Referring back to the influence that the project findings will have in the UK, they can only be seen to support the work that has been done under the auspices of the Human Rights Act 1998 which incorporates the European Convention of Human Rights into domestic law. It is clear to see that in the areas concentrated on in the UK Comparative Report - women’s rights, transgender and homosexual rights - there is an undoubted improvement in the rights established and subsequently protected through the parlance of human rights discourse for these groups. However, it remains to be seen in what fashion this trajectory of improvement will be followed. With the whisper of the repeal of the Human Rights Act 1998 rife (should one witness a change in Government), coupled with not altogether complementary commentaries of the Act itself, it is unclear what the future holds for human rights review in the UK. If one were to experience the promulgation of a British Bill of Rights, what would the status of established Strasbourg and House of Lords jurisprudence be? Such questions will need to be answered. It is however clear, that it would be a shame (to put it mildly) to see all of the protection for minority rights established through the “brave” work of the Strasbourg Court and the House of Lords, fade into futility.

Tackling radical Islamist inspired terrorism

By Prof Shammit Saggar, SEI lecturer

The head of the UK's domestic security service MI5 announced in January 2009 that the threat of an immediate terrorist attack on Britain had receded. In the light of these claims, Prof Shammit Saggar, SEI-linked scholar, considers the effectiveness and strategic credibility of the UK's approach to tackling radical Islamist inspired terrorism.

For a serving MI5 chief to say that there is a less of an immediate risk of terrorists successfully striking today than a year or two ago, is no small thing. For starters, this kind of assertion would rarely be broadcast so openly in the past, not least because it may have simply served to incentivise current terrorist conspirators.

There are three significant implications that stand out. First, it implies that the operational and tactical strength of 1,800 to 2,000 individuals actively engaged in violent conspiracies has waned. It has declined partly due to the rigour with which these individuals are covertly monitored and, where required, intercepted. But, as importantly, the D-G's remarks infer something positive about the supply of fresh recruits to violent radical Islamism on British soil.

This relates to the second implication, namely the notion that hardened men of violence cannot succeed on their own. Instead, their campaigns have to be sustained by the moral oxygen of those within their communities who turn a proverbial "blind eye" to blatant extremism. We are aware also that those who question the values of religious exclusion and one-sided victimhood can be quickly marginalised within some of the communities. In Britain it is estimated that anywhere between one and four hundred-thousand Muslims would remain on the fence when confronted with a violent conspiracy they might reasonably disrupt or defuse.

The idea of such a tacit circle of support for ter-

rorism is, at first, an uncomfortable one. Yet it has gained currency in government and intelligence communities. Such an insight was, in the experience of this commentator, openly shunned by ministers and officials in the period between the New York City and Madrid attacks.

Finally, recognising the centrality of fence-sitters is one thing; influencing their outlook and behaviour is another. Jonathan Evans' message also helps to refocus on the age-old problem of how to get - and keep - moderate yet concerned Muslims on side. These parents, siblings, neighbours and friends of potential terrorists can exert a huge, indirect influence, whereas large security bureaucracies mostly cannot.

But there is a rub. If they come to feel that all Muslims are being treated as would-be terrorists, fence-sitters can also further deny, minimise or even unwittingly encourage violent extremism. For example, raiding the "wrong house" not only highlights gaps in intelligence, but also serves as a soft, yet powerful, recruiting sergeant for extremism. This is known, in the trade, as the risk of a "boomerang effect" - simply put, it ends up creating a much bigger problem than before.

"For a serving MI5 chief to say that there is a less of an immediate risk of terrorists successfully striking today than a year or two ago, is no small thing"

It is encouraging that Britain's domestic security supremo is willing to examine the basic efficacy of the country's CT levers. His recent interview demonstrates that his agency is beginning to understand and act upon the available levers. Crucially, it shows a desire to grow and harness new levers. The aim is to build a new calculus: a division of labour resulting in communities policies and security policies pulling together.

Effectiveness and success will hang a great deal on

trust between responsible Muslims on one hand and the nuanced actions of our security and criminal justice agencies. It is as well, therefore, that such trust is viewed - by all sides - as an output of earlier efforts. The alternative is to see it as a gap that is cited in disengaged frustration and anger. The MI5 chief has signalled renewed investment in the importance of trust as a tool to bear down on terrorism.

Shamit Saggat is Professor of Political Science at the University of Sussex; his new book, **Pariah Politics : Understanding Western Radical Islamism and What Should be Done** was published last month by Oxford University Press (see page 7).

*An earlier version of this article was published in an International Affairs Forum roundtable, February 2009 - see: www.ia-forum.org

World Trade and the World Crisis

By Dr Peter Holmes, SEI Economics lecturer

I have been working on themes relating to the world trade system. The first with Jim Rollo has been to prepare two short pieces on the current crisis, one for the voxu website appeared in January. Events are moving so fast that the follow-up paper, hopefully to be published shortly by Chatham House, contains even more dramatically bad news.

World trade and production shrank by 42% and 15% annualised respectively in the 3 months to November 2008. China reported a 42% fall in imports in January. Brazil had hoped to be spared the worst, but by February monthly exports had fallen by a quarter compared to a year before. Meanwhile 4th quarter German GDP contracted at an annual rate of over 9%. We are seeing a collapse in world trade for which the cliché “falling off a cliff” really does actually describe the graphs. There are signs that protectionism is emerging, but this drop in world trade is happening before 1930s style protection has reared its head, and while demand in Europe is still declining.

But if the worst excesses of protectionism have been avoided so far, the G- 20 bear major collective guilt for their failure to take a firmer stance on trade. Its imperative that there be a moratorium on even WTO-legal protectionism. Surely not even the most trade sceptical anti-globalisation advocate would want trade to be wiped out in this way! If the international financial system looks desperately broken one of the reasons why the WTO talks have stalled is that at

one level the system operates too well! Although the negotiating mechanism of the WTO has been stuck in treacle for the last few years, trade disputes are surprisingly successfully resolved by the legal arbitration mechanism of the WTO, the Dispute Settlement Body, headed by its Appellate Body (AB). For many years the AB has been creating path-breaking jurisprudence. The success of this process has actually led some countries to feel that they are able to secure through arbitration results (e.g. on removing US & EU cotton and sugar export subsidies) which are harder to get through negotiation. But the paralysis of the negotiations has made these decisions very controversial. A forthcoming paper by Kamala Dawar and Peter Holmes examines the reaction of the AB to criticisms made in recent years that it has been engaging in too much “judicial activism”, for example in authorising trade restrictive measures on environmental grounds. We find that contrary to some expectations, the AB has not totally abandoned activism, but it has focussed on closing the loopholes that developed countries thought they had carved out for their protectionism, e.g. in the use of anti-dumping.

To return to our main theme: it would be folly to rely only on the WTO's Appellate Body to hold back rampant protectionism for two reasons. If the world economy worsens, the rule of international economic law risks being a casualty. But there are also many WTO-legal protectionist schemes that can be used, such as anti-dumping and raising tariffs that have been lowered below agreed schedules. We need a real political lead from the G-20 and so far it has not come.

Doctoral Research Updates

This section presents reports and updates from current SEI doctoral students on their research progress and experiences from different stages of the DPhil.

Interviews: take the plunge!

By Ariadna Ripoll Servent,
SEI DPhil student

The idea of starting interviews so soon came as a surprise. I had not planned to start interviews until the second year of my DPhil when, in theory, my ideas would have started to take form and I would know better what to ask and what to look for. Therefore, planning to do a first round of preliminary interviews meant taking the plunge and facing some of the deepest fears I had when I started my project. I knew I would have to start at some point, but had hoped I could procrastinate more before the moment of truth. Interviews are always scary. There are so many uncertainties: the silences, the reactions, the expectations, the points missed, the mind going blank... But this experience has taught me that, once done, it is worth it.

The first hurdle was contacting people. I soon realised that most people in the European institutions are quite open to talking to research students. The result was that I managed to have a nice sample of officials from the three main institutions: the European Parliament, Commission and Council. Unlike reaching MEPs, it was not too difficult to reach officials and get an appointment, although some of this was done at the very last minute, just before leaving for Brussels. In fact, because I was not quite sure how many interviews I could get, I planned to stay in Brussels two full days on two consecutive weeks. This was a lucky guess, since on the Monday before my first journey I just had one interview scheduled for Thursday but suddenly on Tuesday and Wednesday I was able to schedule two more. So, tip number 1: do not be too strict with time; it is



better to have a walk around the city than miss the opportunity to fit a last-minute interview.

Once everything was organised, I had to actually go and interview people. I prepared my questions; got a Dictaphone ready for action and contacted some very good friends who agreed to shelter me while I was in Brussels. Thanks to all of them, it made things easier. The first thing I realised was that coming up with questions out of the blue was not an easy task. So, tip number 2: prepare as many questions as you can. Even if you think you have a lot and that you probably won't be able to ask everything, add a couple. It's good to have backups, especially during your first interviews. Questions will come up while you do more interviews, but it is very easy to run out of them during your first or second tries, especially if your informants get to the point quickly.

Once you are feeling more confident after your first interviews, be prepared to face the unexpected. Things do not always run as smoothly as you imagine, so, tip number 3: pre-empt surprises! Try to have details settled even if it doesn't seem important at the time. Explain clearly how you want to run the interviews and fix pre-

cise appointments. Otherwise, you might face some slightly uncomfortable situations. Here I have two examples. I had contacted two people in the Council. Once the first agreed on a time for the interview, I proposed to the second that I pass by his office after I finished that first interview, (well, once you have gone through all the hassle of getting security badges in any of the institutions, you'll understand why I proposed that). He agreed and told me to drop by at any time. I followed his instructions and then discovered he was in a meeting. I had no problem with waiting in the corridor until the meeting was over, but it seems that he or someone in his team had a much better idea: I could interview the person next door instead. Well, not such a bad idea, if you exclude the fact that I had no idea of who that person was or what she was doing there. Even worse, she had no idea of who I was and what I was doing there. The result was an awkward situation where I was trying to come up with more and more questions while trying to discover her role and area of expertise. So, tip number 4: do fix the time for the interview, even if they are reluctant to do so!

The second example is the result of not being clear enough when I first contacted someone in the institutions. I wrote to one person in the

Commission and she very kindly agreed to meet me and find some more people with whom I could talk. She was so efficient that after a couple of days I finished up with a group interview dropped into my lap. The result was... well, interesting. Actually better than expected, but quite challenging. At the appointed time I got to the Commission and I suddenly found myself under the spot of four different officials who came and went depending on their schedule. So, the interview ranged between one and three people present in the room, talking amongst themselves or giving short presentations. It was very informative but not the easiest scenario to manage, especially when the interview had to be transcribed. So, tip number 5: make sure you ask for individual interviews (except if you do actually want to have a focus group and are prepared for it).

Despite all the difficulties and unexpected events, the experience has been very positive. I have been able to get more information out of the interviews than I expected. These first results will make my research design more accurate and they have given me the chance to start expanding my research. In conclusion, tip number 6: do not be afraid to plunge into the interview experience in the early stages of your DPhil, it is well worth it!

Research Outline Presentations

On Wednesday 25th February, first year DPhil students in Politics and CES presented their research outlines to colleagues from the SEI who offered their constructive comments, feedback and support. There was a wide variety of projects exploring a variety of issues concerning Europe. All of the proposals were well-developed and received praise and advice from staff and other researchers.

The projects are entitled as follows:

Ariadna Ripoll Servent: "The Politics of Codecision in Justice and Home Affairs: Changes in Decision-Making and Values Since 2005"

Emma Sanderson-Nash: "Obeying the iron law? Changes to the intra-party balance of power in the British Liberal Democrats since 1988"

Giuseppe Scotto: "The political integration of migrants: a study of the Italian collectivity in London and Peterborough"

Eleferios Zenerian: "Knowledge, Social Capital and the Partnership Principle in the EU Cohesion Policy: A Comparative Study on the Conditions for the Successful Involvement of Social and Economic Partners in the Policy Process"

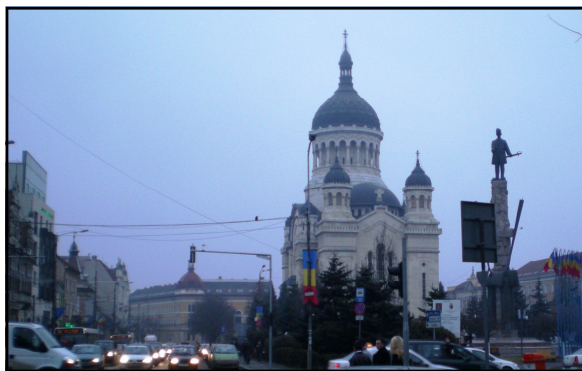
On that midnight train to Cluj

By Ed Maxfield, SEI DPhil student

It's hardly what Gladys Knight had in mind when she sang of long distance journeys in search of lost truths, but on my January research trip I was seeking a better place and time for Romania's Christian Democrats. The visit began with a night-train journey to the Transylvanian city of Cluj to meet with the Rector of the university – a former leader of the Romanian National Peasant-Christian Democrat Party. It was a fitting start to what turned out to be an exhausting and at times bizarre fortnight.

Over the three years that I have been working on my DPhil, I have never ceased to be amazed how willing busy people are to take the time to talk to me. Sometimes, admittedly, promised interviews have not transpired or have amounted to no more than a few words. But more often, warnings that the interviewees have no more than 20 minutes have led on to discussions of an hour or more. I admit to being a little star-struck at times too. Among my interviewees have been one former Prime Minister, two former Finance Ministers, six Euro MPs and a member of the Revolutionary Council which led the country in the chaotic weeks following the overthrow of Communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu back in 1989.

A common feature of securing interviews has



"Symbols of contested state-building": Cluj's Orthodox Cathedral flanked by Romanian flags, a statue of King Matthew Corvinus of Hungary, Hapsburg-era public buildings and a very post-Communist traffic jam.

been the need to establish contacts and to obtain recommendations. In this, two people have been enormously helpful. One is Lavinia Stan, professor of politics at St Francis Xavier University in Canada. The other is Laurentiu Stefan, one-time University of Sussex student and now Political Secretary at the American Embassy in Bucharest. Their willingness to open their address books has been invaluable in allowing me to build a series of contacts – and a few enduring friendships.



My approach to the interviews over the three years can hardly be described as strategic. No one can provide a script for interviews relating to what is supposed to be original research. It was difficult even to establish how many interviews I should aim to complete (in the end it will be around 20). I learnt that the more senior the politician the more opaque their answers to my questions: talking to their advisers and their colleagues has generally been much more illuminating.

So I am glad that accident led me to leave some of the best contacts until last. This trip was a blizzard of meetings and family events as my Romanian wife and our toddler came along too. But we were hardly prepared for the real blizzards we were watching on TV news coverage of the UK weather. Especially as Romania was experiencing temperatures more usual in early summer! Waiting for the bus as I returned from my final interview – with one of ex-President Constantinescu's senior advisers – it was a bit of a shock to be told that Luton airport was closed by the snow and that our flight the following morning might be cancelled. A suitably surreal ending that left me wondering if there was a night-train that I could catch from Bucharest all the way home to London...

A Closer Look at the Lib Dems

By Emma Sanderson-Nash,
SEI DPhil student

I have recently returned to Sussex to do a DPhil focusing on the Liberal Democrats. I came as an undergraduate in 1986, when Colin Brooks was Dean and John Dearlove a relatively new kid on the block.

After graduation I went to work for the Lib Dems in Westminster as a Research Assistant, then on a variety of projects for backbenchers, Leaders and Chief Executives, and recently as Head of the Treasurers Unit. This spanned 15 years which is too long to be anywhere in my view, so I thought about what I enjoyed most in my jobs and concluded it was the organisation of the Party, rather than policy, that intrigued me.

The Party has survived near extinction and grown in size, now with 62 MPs. They polled 22% at the last general election and are poised to hold the balance of power in a future hung Parliament. The Lib Dems have been overlooked by academics for too long.

The Lib Dems were born 21 years ago this month. They took two years to agree on a name! What's the real legacy of that merger? Its my hunch that since the Party's creation it has transformed into a professional campaigning organisation and moved, arguably with reluctance, away from its grassroots. Paul Webb and Tim Bale have helped me frame this in to a viable DPhil thesis entitled 'Obeying the Iron Law? The intra-party balance of power in the British Liberal Democrats since 1988'.

First I'll try to define centralization, and have come up with four indicators of where power is formally exercised; Candidate selection, Manifesto drafting, Resource allocation and Committee composition. Second I focus on causation. 'The mother of all party change' elections are the first independent variable, but it is not entirely obvious



that this will explain change in a party with few realistic aspirations to national office. Harmel (2006) brings together some 'theory islands' for why parties change. Life-cycle (change happens as organisations evolve), system-level (change happens in response to external factors, new technology, devolution, etc) and discrete change (people or events trigger change), and encourages research to build bridges between the three.

"The Lib Dems have been overlooked by academics for too long"

After pulling the research design together, the next stage requires gathering data from party publications and records, constitutions, manifestos, candidate selection data, the composition of committees and the distribution of human and financial resources. The timing of change will be crucial and so it's the intention to collect data, where possible, going back to 1988. It is unclear yet whether patterns in change will reflect periods of leadership, the timing of general elections or a different chronology entirely. Just as interesting as the formal exercise of power will be looking at perceptions of power and using elite interview to probe factions and cliques.

In 2008 the Bones Commission undertook the most thorough review of the Party to date, making this a particularly salient moment to undertake this research, and hopefully I'm in a good position to do it.

New EPERN Briefing Papers

The SEI-based European Parties Elections & Referendums Network (EPERN) produces an ongoing series of briefings on the impact of European integration on referendum and election campaigns. There are two new additions to the series. Key points from this are outlined below. All EPERN papers are available free at: www.sussex.ac.uk/sei/1-4-2-8.html



ELECTION BRIEFING: No. 45 **“Europe and the Austrian General Elections, 28th September 2008”**

Franz Fallend

University of Salzburg

E-mail: franz.fallend@sbg.ac.at

Key points

- On 28 September 2008, premature general elections were held in Austria after the coalition between the Social Democratic Party of Austria (SPÖ) and the Austrian People’s Party (ÖVP) had broken down. The SPÖ-ÖVP government had been characterised by infighting right from the start, resulting in a modest policy record and increased public disaffection.
- Not surprisingly, the two governing parties lost votes (in fact, both fell to unprecedented low-points), while in particular the two right-wing, populist parties, the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ) and the Alliance for the Future of Austria (BZÖ), won.

- A major reason for the government split was a controversy over EU policy. The SPÖ, responding to wide-spread negative attitudes towards the EU, announced that in the future important changes of EU treaties should be subject to national referendum, a move the ÖVP and serious newspapers criticised as populist.
- The election campaign was not dominated by the EU issue, however, but by social issues, in particular measures against rising inflation. As a result, the SPÖ was able to make up the leeway it had in opinion polls and, like in 2006, to cross the finish line as strongest party. The success of the SPÖ was largely due to a massive anti-ÖVP campaign of the EU-phobic * Kronenzeitung*, the tabloid with the highest circulation in Austria.
- In spite of their recent break-up, SPÖ and ÖVP renewed their coalition after the elections, because of the aggravating international financial crisis and for lack of alternative options. A large part of the ‘old guard’ in both parties, especially in the ÖVP, was replaced, though.

ELECTION BRIEFING: No. 46 **“Europe and the Parliamentary Elections in Slovenia, September 2008”**

Alenka Krašovec and Damjan Lajh

University of Ljubljana

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damjan.lajh@fdv.uni-lj.si

Key Points

- The Social Democrats led by Borut Pahor won the elections with lead of just over 1% over the next largest party.
- New Slovenia–Christian People’s Party, the second largest governing party during the 2004-2008

- parliament, did not pass the 4% threshold to secure election to the National Assembly.
- The Slovenian National Party did not repeat the remarkable result achieved by its leader Jelinčič in the 2007 presidential election.
- The Zares–New Politics party, which was only established in 2007, became the third largest in the National Assembly.
- A large part of election campaign was taken up by the so-called Patria corruption affair.
- As in the case of previous national parliamentary elections in Slovenia, EU issues were almost totally absent and, thus, had no impact on the election results.

Activities

SEI staff and doctoral students and PoICES undergraduates report back on their experiences of the exciting activities they have organised and attended this term.

The SEI Chevening Experience

By Sandra Puhovski,
SEI Chevening Fellow 2009

My name is Sandra Puhovski and I am from Croatia. This Spring, I have been one of the Chevening Fellows on the European Political Economy Programme at the SEI along with 10 other Fellows from all over Europe.

The Chevening programme was established in 1983 and provides scholarships for potential future leaders to study in the UK. In recent years it has also been offering a range of professional Fellowships, one of which is the European Political Economy Chevening Fellowship at the SEI. Fellowships offer awards for study on short programmes that focus on particular subjects. There are other programmes at various UK universities, including Birmingham, Bradford, York, Glasgow, UCL, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Nottingham and the National Policing Improvement Agency. Topics vary from flexible global network, countering terrorism and preventing and resolving conflict through to focusing on promoting a low-carbon, high-growth global economy, and developing effective international institutions such as the UN and EU. The other Chevening programme at the University of Sussex is on Managing Migration.

Lectures: The formal part of the programme was very interesting and useful for all of us. It consisted of lectures on various subjects such as European Political Integration, Political Economy of EU Integration, Political Economy of EU Enlargement and EMU, the EU as a Global Eco-

nomical Actor, Extending the Single Market and Economic Reform and the Lisbon Agenda. We were encouraged to participate in the lectures so we were engaged in the discussions on all topics, and we also made presentations and shared knowledge with our peers. It was interesting to learn from each other and we can say that after these three months we know much more about our countries than we used to.

Conferences: We also had the big Chevening Alumni Conference, attended by previous European Political Economy Fellows from all over Europe. It was really interesting to meet all the people who were here before us and to share our experiences. There is an article about this conference from **Annemaria Blajan** on pages 1-2 if you want to read more.

There was also the "Croatia and the Western Balkans" workshop which introduced that particular European region to us, with the emphasis on Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia, and the political and economic conditions of these countries, as well as the course of the EU integration process (see a full report on page 30).

Study Visits: During the Programme we have also had many study visits to various Government Departments, think tanks and European Institutions in London, Edinburgh and Brussels. We had a Government Visit Day in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, which was attended by Fellows from other Programmes, so it was an opportunity to meet them and extend our network. The day

Activities

ended with a dinner in Lancaster Palace which was

“Joining DEFRA for 3 days was an opportunity to experience its working methods. I participated in the Council preparing process and talked to officials dealing with various subjects like the future of CAP. DEFRA is an institution with a high working culture, where everybody’s time is respected and you demand as much from yourself as you do from others - a principle not always respected elsewhere. People make the organisation’s culture they say.”

Kristina Uibopuu, (Estonia)

a unique opportunity and an amazing evening. Meeting all those people, experts in their fields, definitely opened the gate to new viewpoints and ideas and broadened our horizons in many different ways. I am sure that this will be a big help when we go back home and continue with our work.

Traveling: The informal parts of the Programme were also as interesting and useful, and most certainly fun! Most of the free time we had, we spent traveling around this amazing country. After the study visit to Edinburgh, we took a trip through the Highlands and had a great time! We drove from Edinburgh to Inverness and learned so much about the history of Scotland from our fantastic guide Derek! We also had the chance to hear traditional Scottish music and enjoy the atmosphere in local pubs. It was four days of creating lovely memories, which we will always cherish.

When it wasn’t raining we would go running to the train station to buy tickets to the first destination that came to our mind and go exploring. Or we would just get on the bus and drive around the local area, exploring its beauty spots, like Seven Sisters. Or we would walk on the beach, enjoying the sound of waves and that special feeling you get by just being near the sea.

Parties: There were also many parties in Brighton, London and on campus, we sure had a good time! A few of our fellows, **Dusko, Bogdana and Riste** had birthdays while here and we did our best to make sure they don’t miss home on those special days. We also had parties celebrat-

ing the Estonian and Bulgarian Independence days. Kristina, Eli and Bogdana made proper feasts for us all of traditional Estonian and Bulgarian dishes and drinks - amazing!

Three months ago we were no more to each other than eleven people from different countries, eleven strangers. But since then, by living together, eating together, sharing everything and taking care of each other, we became close friends. The privilege to get know all these people was the greatest part of our UK adventure. Three months ago we didn’t know each other, and now, as it is almost time to say goodbye, we are leaving richer for hundreds of great moments, numerous fun memories and new friends to take with us. It has been a tremendous ride and we would do it again, without hesitation!

“‘Host UK Programme’ was a great opportunity to get a truly authentic feeling about life in the UK. My hosts were Welsh so I learnt about this part of Britain. They were very kind and lovely people, and we enjoyed inspiring discussions about our countries, societies and cultures. We also visited some of the beautiful Welsh landscapes and important historical sites. It was an excellent experience that definitely enriched my time in the UK.”

Dusko Vasiljevic (Serbia)

Last but not least, from all of us, a special thanks to **Jim Rollo, Peter Holmes, Jorg Monar, Alan Mayhew** and all our other professors from whom we have learned so much and special thanks to **David Dyker, Ozge Aktas and Francesca Conti** for taking care of us and being our family away from home!

Chevening Fellows 2009

Eli Manolova and Bogdana Grigorova (Bulgaria), Annemaria Blajan (Romania), Kristina Uibopuu (Estonia), Magdalena Kalkol (Poland), Dusko Vasiljevic (Serbia), Tibor Lalinsky (Slovakia), Mate Gjorgijevski and Riste Jurukovski (Macedonia), Sandra Puhovski (Croatia), and Marton Szili (Hungary).

Jörg Monar's Professorial Lecture: *The EU and terrorism: the common response and its constraints*

By Prof Jörg Monar, SEI lecturer

Public “professorial lectures” are peculiar exercises: on the one hand you are expected to lecture about cutting-edge issues of your primary research domain, but on the other hand you should choose a theme of general interest and address it in way that even listeners without any previous knowledge will be able to follow.

In academic research this combination is often not easily achieved (and we should always ask ourselves whether this is not something to worry about). In order to get at least the “general interest” bit right I went – when it was my turn to go through this exercise on 2 February – for the subject of terrorism, inevitably (“SEI oblige”) with a focus on EU action in response to it.

EU Member States have unfortunately had to start much earlier than the US to worry about terrorist threats, and in response to the surge of terrorist activities of the time intergovernmental cooperation started already in 1975 with the TREV framework. Yet it is only since the Amsterdam Treaty (1999) that the Union has actually had a mandate to play a role in providing internal security to European citizens and appropriate internal and external instruments to act in response to international terrorism. Since then – and very much also under the impact of the 9/11, Madrid and London terrorist attacks – the EU has emerged as real actor of its own in this field. Elements of a common legal framework for the cross-border fight against terrorism have been put into place by: several criminal law harmonisation and mutual recognition measures, the institutionalised information sharing and coordination mechanisms have been expanded (especially via Eurojust, Europol, Frontex, Counter-terrorism

Coordinator), best practice identification and transfer through mutual evaluation, common standards and training modules has become an important element of the Union's counter-terrorism strategy. At the



international level the EU has developed cooperation with several key third-countries (especially the US), reinforced its common positions in international organisation and used on a number of occasions its financial and economic instruments to foster counter-terrorism objectives.

“EU Member States have unfortunately had to start much earlier than the US to worry about terrorist threats”

Yet the constraints and limitations of EU action in this field are manifold: The official common threat definition (laid down both in the “Solana” Security Strategy and the 2005 Counter-Terrorism Strategy) is not backed by a real common threat perception of the Member States as both the extent of the terrorist threat and its nature (Islamist, separatist, left/right wing) varies greatly from one Member State to the other. If this reduces already the willingness to engage in substantial common action, this tendency is further increased by the Member States' reluctance to relinquish control over crucial internal security capabilities which touch upon core state functions and national sovereignty. The results have been the absence of any transfer of operational counter-terrorism powers to EU structures, minimalist harmonisation, an often delayed or deficient implementation of EU

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measures and many Member States still bypassing EU external action by strong bilateral cooperation with certain third-countries.

“‘Soft governance’ in this case does not mean being ‘soft on terrorism’ but simply to use the most effective ways for increasing synergy between national counter-terrorism capabilities and experiences”

One should, however, not be too negative in the overall assessment of the EU’s role: It can – and has already – provided real ‘added value’ by increasing the intelligence base available to national authorities, reducing the obstacles to cross-border cooperation between national authorities

and enhancing the possibilities for collective action both inside and outside of the EU. It is far from evident that a massive centralisation of counter-terrorism capabilities – for which the Union also lacks an appropriate legitimising framework – would have brought much better results. There is also evidence that ‘soft governance’ measures such as common threat assessments, best practice identification and transfer and cross-border training in counter-terrorism law enforcement may over time generate more substantial results than in many cases highly controversial ‘hard’ legal measures and any central command-and-control structures. ‘Soft governance’ in this case does not mean being ‘soft on terrorism’ but simply to use the most effective ways for increasing synergy between national counter-terrorism capabilities and experiences.

Chevening conference on the Western Balkans

By Prof Alan Mayhew, SEI Lecturer

The Chevening scholars organised a half-day SEI workshop on the Western Balkans on the 27th February. They invited **Chris Frean** from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) who will be going shortly to work in the Embassy in Zagreb, as well as the Masters students, many of whom are from the region. Given SEI’s strong link to Croatia through the scholarship scheme with FCO and the Government of Croatia, there is considerable interest in that country’s and the region’s progress. Around 20 people attended the workshop which was held on the Sussex campus.

Sandra Puhovski opened with a talk on Croatia, which was followed by a brief discussion about the future of the Croatian negotiations for EU accession. Chris Frean then intervened briefly, to introduce himself to the group.

After coffee, **Mate Gjorgjevski and Riste Jurukovski** gave presentations on Macedonia’s pro-

gress towards EU accession. The discussion centred around the question of why the EU is so hesitant about commencing negotiations with Macedonia. This is largely attributable to the bilateral problem with Greece, which is disputing the use of the word Macedonia in the name of the state. The lack of progress in opening negotiations is obviously putting a strain on the credibility of the Government of Macedonia, which sees full EU membership as the only way forward for the country.

Dusko Vasiljevic concluded the afternoon by talking on the impact of the financial and economic crises on the Serbian economy. While the economies of many European states crumbled in the final quarter of 2008, the Serbian economy appears to have resisted somewhat better, although the most recent data produced by Dusko indicated a strong downward movement in trade.

The afternoon concluded with a general discussion of the state of relations between the Western Balkans and the EU.

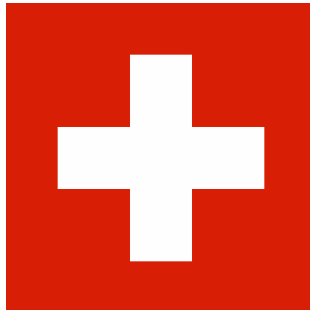
Upcoming SEI Events

Workshop on EU-Switzerland Relations

On 5 June 2009 from 2-5pm, the SEI will be hosting a Workshop on EU-Switzerland relations in the Committee Room at Sussex House.

Relations with the EU are a hotly debated topic in Switzerland. For instance, on 8 February 2009 a referendum was held on extending the free movement of persons to Romania and Bulgaria and on continuing the free movement regime with the EU. On 10 May Swiss citizens will also be voting on a "Schengen" measure, the introduction of biometric passports. Moreover, negotiations on a third round of bilateral negotiations (covering e.g. an agreement on free trade in agricultural goods) have been launched at the end of 2008. In spite of the political saliency of Switzerland-EU relations, the topic has attracted little interest among academics. The workshop at SEI will shed light on some aspects of the "exasperating, frustrating, but never dull" relations between the EU and Switzerland (quote from Diana Wallis, former President of the EP's delegation to Switzerland).

The event will start with a keynote speech by HE Alexis P. Lautenberg, Ambassador of Switzerland to the United Kingdom (2-3pm). He will be speak-



ing about the "bilateral approach, from an expedient tool to a method". HE Alexis P. Lautenberg was the Head of the Swiss Mission to the EU from 1993 to 1999. During his time in Brussels he was involved in the negotiations resulting in the conclusion of the first package of bilateral sectoral agreements between the EU and Switzerland.

After a short coffee break the second part of the afternoon (3:30-5:00pm) will be dedicated to an academic discussion on EU-Switzerland relations. In a first contribution Prof. C. Church, a renowned expert on Swiss politics and Visiting Professor at SEI, will analyse the "domestic politics" factors, such as euroscepticism and europhobia, which contribute to explaining the Swiss reluctance towards EU membership. In a second part Nicole Wichmann, Visiting Research Fellow at SEI, will show that although Switzerland is not a member of the EU, many domestic policies have been "Europeanised" and the country is closely integrated with the EU through a range of "flexible integration" arrangements.

We very much look forward to welcoming you to this event. We would ask you to register for the event by sending an email to Nicole Wichmann, nw66@sussex.ac.uk, by **22nd May 2009**.

Workshop on: Qualitative Approaches to investigating the European Parliament

SEI has recently secured UACES funding to host a one-day workshop in July 2009, (provisional date Friday 17th July) to discuss the possibilities made available by qualitative approaches to investigating phenomena at the European Parliament. This is a dynamic area in the field as increasing numbers of researchers are begin-



ning to use qualitative methods to fill in gaps left by traditional quantitative approaches, using methods such as elite semi-structured interviews and participant observation.

The workshop will review current literature, discuss opportunities new methods present and problems presented by them, as well as inviting the views of practitioners from the Parliament. If you would like to attend please email: t.p.bale@sussex.ac.uk by **1st June**.

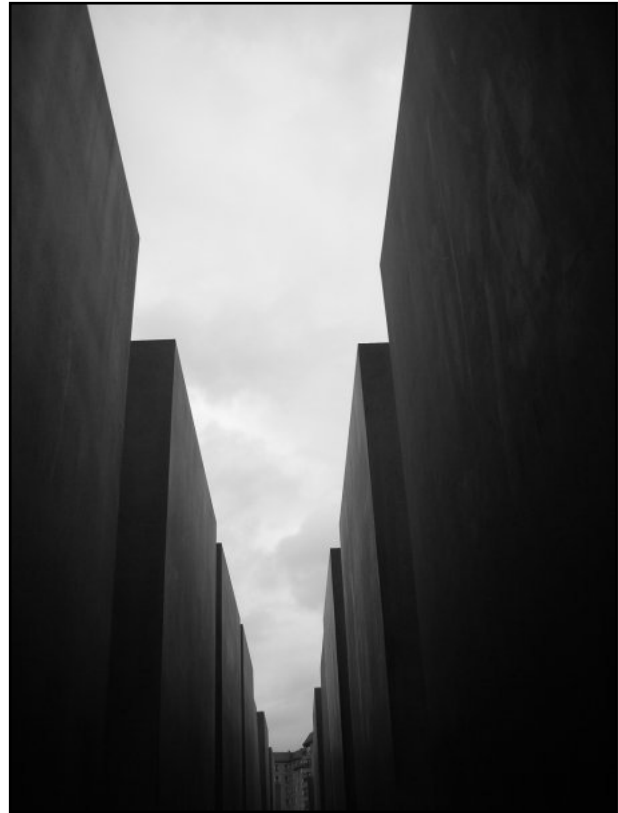
To Berlin and back in three days ...

By Dr Dan Hough, SEI lecturer

The annual 'Berlin Trip' for undergraduates studying the government and politics of Germany took place in week 9 of the Spring Term. This year Dan Hough (Politics) and Christina Oelgemoller (Geography and Migration studies) headed an intrepid international group of 26 students from as far a field as Hong Kong, the USA, Germany, the Faroe Islands as well as, of course, the UK.

The aim of the trip was to bring to life some of the issues and controversies discussed through the course and, as has become the norm over the years, there seemed no better place to begin than in Germany's parliament building, the Reichstagsgebäude. Jan Mücke, the parliamentary business manager of the liberal Free Democratic Party, generously spent nearly two hours discussing a wide variety of issues with the group; education and Europe were both prominent, whilst a number of students asked questions on the current economic and financial crisis. The legacy of unification in 1990 also got a good airing, as Mücke – himself an eastern German – did his best to explain the politics of the transfer payments from west to east as well as the importance of giving everyone the opportunity to work through their own individual pasts. Shaun Gunner's question on what should be done with the EU's Common Agricultural Policy prompted possibly the most intriguing answer of the day; according to Mücke it belonged on the scrapheap, and if this prompted a major argument with France then, well, "so what?". Interesting stuff.

Day two began with a trip out into the wilds of eastern Berlin to see the most infamous remand prison, in Hohenschönhausen, of the GDR's se-



cret police, the Stasi. Any hazy heads from the night before were quickly cleared as the Stasi's interrogation techniques were explained by a marvellously informative English-speaking guide. The afternoon saw a return to central Berlin and visits to two of the cities most well-known landmarks; the Holocaust Memorial and Checkpoint Charlie. The Holocaust Memorial, opened in 2005 and comprising 2,700 concrete slabs, (pictured above) is a permanent reminder – right in the centre of the city – of Germany's darkest hour. For some, the memorial itself is central to the country's identity, while others argue that the plinths' meaning is in many ways too abstract for normal citizens to make sense of. The museum at Checkpoint Charlie, meanwhile, is less overtly controversial, analysing the history of the most-famous of all crossing points between the old FRG and the GDR. After the best part of 9 hours on the go, most students subsequently retired back to the hotel to have a quiet evening; and to make use of the karaoke machine! Vince Gmerek's ren-

Activities

dition of 'White Wedding' and Louise Thomas's 'Dancing Queen' were works of art, although quite what the wider world made of Dan Hough's '500 miles' is anyone's guess.

"The aim of the trip was to bring to life some of the issues and controversies discussed through the course"

The third and final day saw meetings with politicians of the far-left and then the centre-right. Dagmar Enkelmann from the *Linke* (Left Party) was as open and entertaining as always, discussing topics such as the genesis of the *Linke*, the party's relationship with the Social Democrats and the GDR, and ways of overcoming the current economic and financial crisis. Enkelmann survived third year Charlie Kirk's grilling on the reliability of Oskar Lafontaine as party leader, as well as Alistair Lichten's dissection of the *Bundesverfassungsgericht's* likely thinking on the constitutionality of the Lisbon Treaty. Kate Ledigo and Jasmin Carcary's scepticism about both Germany's role in Afghanistan and the LP's proposed abolition of NATO also provided Enkelmann with plenty of food for thought. The LP's parliamentary business

manager nonetheless provided engaging and entertaining answers, and was – as normal – excellent value.

Following a super lunch (both in terms of price and quality) in the Bundestag's canteen (Bramber House please take note), the group's final port-of-call was with the CDU's education spokeswoman, Katherina Reiche. Frau Reiche again covered a wide range of topics, ranging from same-sex marriages and future coalition options, to the relationship between the CDU and the Christian faith and, of course, her current brief of education. The end of the meeting with Frau Reiche effectively marked the end of the trip, as the group hastily raced off to Schoenefeld airport to catch a flight back to Gatwick. Hectic though the trip was (and, always is!), the politicians once again provided a revealing insight into the way politics functions, parties think and act and Germany ticks.

After the trip, the group discovered that Dagmar Enkelmann (Linke) and Jan Muecke were telling their world (and including pictures) that they met students from the University of Sussex!

<http://www.dagmar-enkelmann.de/>

<http://www.jan-muecke.de/aktuell.php#2>



Dan Hough and students from the Government and Politics of Germany

MACES: I could not have imagined it better!

By Milena Vasileva, MACES student

I returned to Sussex in January to start the second year of the MACES programme, (MA in Contemporary European Studies). I think I am the only student doing the degree part time but I feel this has been an advantage – it gave me more time to get the most out of my studies, but even now I feel there is a lot I did not have time for.

I had a huge gap and had not been to the university since April; however I stayed in England and have been coming to the campus sometimes just to keep the spirit. It was a great warm feeling to be back in the SEI – a place I have felt attached to from my first day here. I was looking forward to meeting all the new MACES students. Meanwhile all my friends from last year arrived in Brighton for their graduation ceremony at the end of January. After being here for one year, I thought I knew what to expect but my second year so far seems to be even more exciting, interesting, motivating and inspirational. After enjoying the broad introductory course in the autumn term and exploring the Single Market Law in my first year, I decided to take something more specific for the spring term.



Politics of Eastern Europe in Transition option group



MACES & MAEP Christmas Party

“I felt inspired by the high level of analysis and fruitful discussions and I think that all of us made much progress in the short 10 week period. Being part of a competitive group of people made every one of us willing to perform at a higher level, which as a result was beneficial for all of us”

As my first degree was in Macroeconomics, I decided to follow this interest and chose the economics based modules that the SEI offered for the spring term, with Peter Holmes, Jim Rollo and Alan Mayhew. This term was a great experience and I left each seminar full of interest. I felt inspired by the high level of analysis and fruitful discussions and I think that all of us made much progress in the short 10 week period. Being part of a competitive group of people made every one of us willing to perform at a higher level, which as a result was beneficial for all of us. In fact, this really applies to the whole program but I felt it was more noticeable during the spring term once everyone had chosen to focus on areas of personal interest. I believe we have made a big step for-

ward in terms of professional development.

I have also had the opportunity to take courses attended by the Chevening Fellows (see page 26) who I found highly motivated and intelligent people, knowledgeable about the EU. Coming from different member or candidate states and working for their governments, all of them had exciting stories and experiences from the backstage. It was also interesting to compare the popularity of the EU in different countries from their perspectives.

On the social side, we found a nice way of developing our relations further by organizing parties representing each country. Each started with many delicious national dishes cooked by the Fellows, some of whom travelled home to bring original products and ingredients, and then we watched short films from or about the country, listened to national music and exchanged stories until late. We all realised that what started as an attempt at networking, lead to some common future projects which may contribute to our countries' development in a better way.



MACES/MAEP option group enjoy a night out in Brighton with their tutor Aleks Szczerbiak

It is sad that the Spring-term is drawing to a close, and now we have the big responsibility of our dissertations. I was wondering how to conclude my article, and think that all there is left to say is a big thank you for my experience, especially to all the staff who are passionate about their subject and made me feel very welcome and supported. I always felt part of the SEI and my Sussex experience: - I could not have imagined it better!

Which way is forwards?

By Amy Busby, SEI Research student

On Thursday 4 March, this Sussex Politics Society event was so well attended it had to move to a larger venue. The topic was the history and future of conflict in Northern Ireland, and the turn out, as one of the speakers commented, shows the continuing interest in and importance of these affairs.

The panel consisted of Prof Norman Vance, Sean Oliver from Sinn Fein and Rodney McCune from the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP). Norman Vance, a Professor of English, opened the proceedings, saying he was qualified to do so on the grounds that he was born in Belfast and had once shaken Martin McGinness' hand! He gave a brief but stimulating overview of the history of Anglo-Irish relations, from which McCune claimed he learnt much. Vance spoke of *The Book of Invasions* and the history of invasion and settlement in Ireland.

He focused on the role of fear in the conflict, linking it to identity and rights claims. He suggested Ireland's greatest toxic asset is toxic memory, and a fear of the return of the 1641 atrocities invokes fear of identity loss and of being engulfed.

Vance spoke about the importance of industrialisation in the conflict history and to identity. The heavy industrialisation of Belfast meant that the North East had a link to England which differentiated it from the rural and agrarian rest, exacerbated by the fact this connection to England was felt to be the source of prosperity and it created a key difference of interests. Vance also touched on culture and cultural heroes and where support for these ideas comes from, the importance of language in identity, and role of these ideas in the conflict. He noted that artificial perceptions of history and culture come from both parties, and spoke about the presence of populism in Irish politics. Vance said one problem which remains in

Ireland is that the political institutions do not command equal respect and legitimacy. Vance ended with what became a theme of the evening, which is the desire to deal with the past and move forwards. However it became apparent that there are different ideas about the direction of this forward motion.

Sean Oliver stated from the outset that their political project is the reunification of Ireland, and that all their actions stem from this principle. The work of their elected representatives is to integrate the two Irish systems. However, he said that the only way the Assembly can function is as a joint effort with both sides contributing; again a common theme of the evening. Oliver said some Republicans have responded to the election of these figures with sentiments such as, "Is that it?", to which he responded "No", because Sinn Fein continues to fight for equality and a united Ireland. This also highlights another common thread of the evening, which was how to 'justify' the past and current situation and proceedings to those who fought on each side in the past – with several references to political prisoners. However, Oliver argued that in the end Northern Ireland needs a referendum so the people can decide their future. He sees reunification as inevitable and it must be prepared for, partly due to demographics.

Rodney McCune firstly made it clear that he perceived himself as a Unionist, and not a Loyalist as some literature had suggested. He argued that in his view, the issue in Ireland is not one of religion, (and suggested that perhaps it never was) but it is about nationalism. He said the issues have moved forward a long way in the last ten years which have passed extremely quickly, and that he could never have dreamed of a joint leadership in Northern Ireland, let alone it working! He claimed the lesson of the Irish experience has been the

importance of dialogue, which he suggested may be a lesson for contemporary conflict zones such as Israel/Palestine. He also spoke about not letting down supporters who fought on one side, and flagged the question "was it all worth it"? He too said that Ireland needs to move on from the past and focus on the present and what politicians can do for people, but that they must also find a way to deal with the past.

However, the point of departure is the UUP's political project which is normalisation. Like the Scots and Welsh, they want the people to be able to vote in Assembly and Westminster elections, but also to be able to feel secure about these rights and not to need them continually re-stated. He wants to see a voluntary coalition which allows scrutiny and proper opposition in the Assembly and an end to the culture of 'double-roles' as many Assembly members currently hold another public position and are 'filling their boots' with public money which doesn't happen so frequently in the Scottish and Welsh assemblies. This kind of normalisation means going beyond the current transitional phase. McCune ended by saying that he does not see re-unification as an inevitability, as demographic changes do not guarantee this as peoples' minds can be changed because this is an issue of nationalism not religion.

The speakers dealt well with an array of probing questions from the audience. They again stressed the need for dialogue and co-operation, and to be prepared to work with people you may not like or agree with. They disagreed with those who take extremist positions, of violence or ideology. They spoke about the need to deal with the past and move on, but whilst they agreed on the need to move forward, they retained these opposing ideas of the direction of the forward motion.



Norman Vance, Sean Oliver, the Chair and Rodney McCune

EUCM simulation solves Europe's gas supply crisis!

By Amy Busby, SEI Research student

Over the weekend of 23-25 January, around 22 Euro-enthusiast students met and solved Europe's gas supply crisis. Every year, the University of Sussex Model UN society organises and holds its own debating and diplomacy conference called USMUN. This is attended by around 100 delegates who flock from universities across the UK and Europe, and the simulation of the European Union Council of Ministers (EUCM) has become somewhat of a beloved tradition.

The conference theme of USMUN-2009 was the Global Resource Crisis and therefore the four committees, (the EUCM, Security Council, International Court of Justice and UN Development Program) discussed topics stemming from this. The EUCM met to resolve a hypothetical crisis in Europe caused by Gazprom shutting off gas to Europe due to a dispute with Ukraine over unpaid bills – sound familiar to anyone?

The topic guide was actually written in November 2008 and was rather spookily played out over the New Year period. Therefore the Chairs decided that the delegates would discuss a hypothetical repeat of the crisis, and the delegates' challenge was to resolve the immediate crisis and restore gas supply by mediating the dispute between the Russian and Ukrainian delegates, and also to discuss the future of energy supply and security for Europe. All of the delegates played their parts well and contributed to the debate and some were almost frighteningly knowledgeable about European gas pipelines and Russian policy – they know who they are!



The first day produced deadlock and little progress, and we all learned rather too much about the plight of freezing Bulgarian children and orphans thanks to one particular delegate! Thankfully by the end of the conference, the committee managed to negotiate the crisis with Russia and Ukraine and return gas supply to Europe. Russia waived the outstanding fines in return for other compensation. The delegates also discussed some interesting and innovative proposals to enhance supply security in the future. These included the creation of a permanent, independent gas monitoring team, recommending the ECB as a financial intermediary for payments between the companies, creating stores for 150-day emergency supply across all member-states and encouraging accelerated development of new projects, pipelines and supply sources. We also saw European solidarity and the offering of gas from western member-states to those with no supply.

Once the Common Position Statement passed a qualified majority vote, the committee descended into chaos and voted to change the EU anthem to *Kings of Leon, Sex on Fire* and to expel Latvia from the EU on the basis of his objection to this change.

The committee was an interesting insight into the advantages and limitations of the EU as an arena to discuss and resolve disputes such as this. Hopefully next year there will again be a European element to USMUN. You can find more information at www.usmun.eu or on the Facebook group 'USMUN 2009'.



Dispatches

SEI Dispatches: An update on the activities of SEI members across Europe and beyond

Lonely audit institution seeks interested research students with a view to fruitful relationship

By David Bostock, SEI Practitioner Fellow

During the seven years I have spent as the UK Member of the (governing body of) the European Court of Auditors (ECA) I can only recall one rather half-hearted expression of interest from a British academic in what we do in Luxembourg. Why?

Audit does not sound the most lively of activities. But public audit, carried out by public audit institutions (like, in the United Kingdom, the National Audit Office and Audit Scotland) is an important part of the checks and balances within a modern polity. Has the taxpayer's money been spent as was intended by Parliament and properly accounted for? Has it been spent effectively, efficiently and economically? These are the questions which modern audit institutions ask - and sometimes answer with embarrassing frankness for those spending the money.

So there should be some questions worth researching about the way in which the ECA - the Union's public audit institution - operates, and about whether and how our products affect the operation of the EU. Our products are audit reports and opinions on some forthcoming legislation. (The ECA is not a court in any normal sense of the word).

Let's be more concrete. The Court's highest profile product is its annual report, a bit of which examines whether the Commission's accounts are reliable (answer: yes, more or less) but most of which examines whether expenditure from the Community budget has been carried out in accor-

dance with the rules and regulations which apply to it (answer: for most of the budget there is significant error in the way in which money is spent). The annual report is a significant element in the 'discharge procedure', in which the Parliament, [taking account of a 'recommendation' from the Council] decides whether to declare that the Commission has implemented the budget in an acceptable way (usual message: a grumbling yes, with the Commission urged to do better in future). Questions: how far does the message in the Court's reports determine what goes into discharge resolutions? What are the political dynamics of discharge - between Council and Parliament, or within Parliament?

We also produce special reports each year, which ask how effectively or efficiently some policies have been carried out. Some address significant policy issues: does the Common Fisheries Policy work effectively? Is cross-compliance in the CAP an effective policy? Are EU agencies achieving results? Question: do these reports (discussed by Parliament's Budgetary Control Committee, sometimes by other Parliament Committees and/or the Council) affect policy choices? Is there a feedback from audit to decision-taking?

If you are looking for areas of EU life not already swarming with researchers, give the ECA a thought. And don't worry: you don't have to be an auditor in order to study how a public audit institution affects EU public life.

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Dispatch from the Front

**By Dr Nat Copsey,
SEI Visiting Research Fellow**

At the risk of replicating the full annoyance of the Christmas round robin, it has been an eventful year. Although I have not – yet – swum across the English Channel whilst simultaneously composing a number of (quite well-received) caudate sonnets, if you find the format disagreeable, please look away now.

Since April 2008, I have been engaged in an ESRC-funded (RES-000-22-2723) research project that investigates the capacity of Member States to exercise power and influence in the European Union, using the case study of Poland and its eastern policy as an example. The project – together with the work of my Birmingham colleague, Tim Haughton who is investigating national preference formation in Slovenia, Slovakia and the Czech Republic – is intended as a pilot for a much larger study that examines the capacity of individual Member States to upload national preferences onto the agenda of the Union. Thus far, I have completed the initial part of the Warsaw leg of the field research, where I interviewed around 35 Polish civil servants, past and present ministers, journalists and think tank analysts. I have recently begun the Brussels-based part of the research.

Articles based on preliminary results, co-authored respectively with Tim and Karolina Pomorska (Maastricht) have already been published in the *JCMS* and will also appear in *Comparative European Politics* later on this year. A number of other articles and a more policy-oriented report will follow this autumn. My findings have also been presented at APSA in Boston, BASEES, the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik in Berlin, Bratislava and Budapest. I am very grateful to the ESRC, the Polish Government, the British Academy, the Polish Academy of Sciences, and above all, CEELBAS (the Centre for East European Language-Based Studies) for their generous support without which

this project would not have been possible.

Together with the core team of the Jean Monnet Wider Europe network, I have been advising the Swedish International Development Agency on its assistance policy for Ukraine. Our policy papers from the project



are now available on the Wider Europe website at <http://www.wider-europe.org>. We also organized training events for practitioners in Stockholm and Kyiv. This April, I shall be traveling to Moscow to teach a group of Russian civil servants about the relations between the EU and its eastern neighbours at the Russian Academy of Sciences.

In July 2008, together with Carolyn Moore I won a tender of €41,000 to organize a large-scale conference on the Future of Europe at the European Research Institute in Birmingham on 14 and 15 May 2009. A paper co-authored with Carolyn and Clara Marina O'Donnell which overviews the conference themes will be published by the CER this spring. Tim Haughton and I were chosen as the new editors of the *JCMS Annual Review*. Our first issue will appear in September 2009.

On Anglo–German relations, I took part in both the Jung Königswinter conference on freedom in July 2008 and the German–British Forum in Hamburg in November 2008, where I had the pleasure to co-edit (together with Willie Paterson, David Marsh and Wiebke Raber) a collection of essays in honour of the 90th birthday of Chancellor Helmut Schmidt. The collection contains several gems, including the late Nicholas Henderson's account of Schmidt's speech on Europe to a hostile Labour Party Conference in 1974. These are available at: http://www.gbf.com/gbf/docs/GBF_Brochure_2008_final.pdf.

Opportunities at the SEI

MA Strategic and Security Studies

Course structure*

(Full time 1 year, Part time 2 years)

This innovative Masters programme addresses the key issues set out in the ESRC's initiative on security: stresses on the global environment, including energy and natural resource vulnerabilities, climate change impacts and disease transmission; the emergence of new forms of international and trans-boundary crime posing wider forms of risks; radicalised violence and terrorism; and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

The SEI has established expertise in these fields, especially in the context of Europe, though it

should be noted that this degree does not restrict its geographic focus to Europe.

You will develop a critical understanding of both traditional and new approaches to international strategic and security studies, as well as consider and identify answers to the key question: what factors influence collective security and shared responsibility in the international community?

This MA provides an excellent grounding for policy practitioners (ie civilian and military officials who want to deepen their understanding and upgrade their qualifications), as well as for those intent on careers in academia, government or the media.

For more information see page 10

**This programme is under development and subject to validation.*

Funding for Masters students

MACES Cockfield:

SEI is the recipient of 2 fees only (Home/EU) scholarships funded by the Lady Monika Cockfield Memorial Trust for students taking the MA in Contemporary European Studies. All EU citizens who have formally been offered a place on MACES before the end of April in the previous academic year are eligible (no separate form to fill in). After Easter, a short list of candidates will be drawn up. They will be invited for a 20-minute interview in person or by telephone. The condition of the scholarship is that the student devotes at least part of their MACES studies to the central issues and themes of European integration.

For more information contact:

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Funding for DPhil students

Lady Monica Cockfield Scholarships in CES:

The SEI offers one doctoral scholarship in Con-

temporary European Studies for students pursuing research in the field of European integration.

The scholarship covers tuition fees up to the level paid by UK/EU students for up to three years for Full-Time students. These scholarships are aimed specifically at students whose research focuses on the mainstream of European economic and political integration and the issues confronting a post-enlargement EU at the EU-level.

Sussex International Research Scholarships:

Non-EU students are eligible to apply for the SIRS which will cover the difference between Home/EU and Overseas fees. These scholarships are for 3 years. Full details are available at:

http://www.sussex.ac.uk/scholarships_and_bursaries/pg/overseas/orsas.php

For more information contact:

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Applications for all of these studentships are also welcome from those already registered for a DPhil at Sussex.