Institutions and challenges of the European Union

Session 11
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Session 11

• **Democracy**: Looking for a *homo europeanus*

• **Brexit**: What’s happening in Britain and what are the effects on the EU?

• Conclusion
European tour

Luxembourg

Nicosia, Cyprus

Votive Church
Szeged, Hungary
European tour

Sofia, Bulgaria

Triglav National Park, Slovenia

Bucarest (Parliament), Romania
Democracy: Looking for a *homo europaeus*

• I. Some comments on the European elections

• II. Citizens' attitudes towards the EU: opposed or indifferent?

• III. Looking for a *homo europaeus*
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- Why are European citizens very little mobile?
- Who is a *homo europaeus*?
- What effect does the Erasmus programme have on the creation of a European identity?
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Some information on the Erasmus programme

• Erasmus... is inspired by Erasmus, a **Dutch humanist monk** (1465-1536)

• Erasmus..... means ‘**European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students**’

• Erasmus... was created in **1987**

• Erasmus... aims to promote exchanges between students and professors in **34 countries** (e.g. MS + Iceland, Norway, Turkey)
Some information on the Erasmus programme

• For the period 2014-2020, Erasmus+ represents €14.7 billion or 1.5% of the EU's budget

• Erasmus... has benefited more than 4.4 million students from spending part of their university studies abroad

• Less than 5% of students participate in a university exchange program
Mitchell (2015): An Erasmus effect

- **Data:**
  - Panel of 1729 students from 28 universities in six MS (GE, FR, IR, IT, SP, UK)

- **Three main results:**
  - Studying abroad reinforces students' European identity...  
    *except for British students*
  - A **better knowledge of Europe** and attention to European information as another driver
  - Being **in contact with Europeans** (transnational interactions) strengthens European identity
Questions
Brexit: What’s happening in Britain and what are the effects on the EU?

• Brexit in one tweet
• Brexit in one diagram
• Explaining Brexit
• Explaining the Brexit effect on the EU
Je propose de faire entrer le mot "brexit" (sans majuscule) dans la langue française. Il désignera un débat cacophonique et insoluble, une réunion foutoir, une assemblée bordélique. Ex: l'assemblée des copropriétaires s'est achevée en brexit.
Brexit in one diagram

Source: https://jonworth.eu/brexitdiagram-series-4/
Explaining Brexit

• Short chronology of UK/EU relationships and Brexit
  • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RU8JxMKwKwk

• Other interesting videos:
  • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZcoyCQDq07l
  • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8LT1eQxGCGL
  • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xsev9DP10f8
  • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pm8I_XLsfXE
EU-UK relationships: 1973-2016

• 1973: UK joined the EU

• 2016: PM Cameron decided to organise a (new) referendum

• In a context of increasing Euroscepticism in the UK...

• ... And especially within the Conservative party

• Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union (Lisbon Treaty): mechanism for the voluntary and unilateral withdrawal of a European Union country
Brexit: 2016

- June 2016: 51.89% of people voted to leave the EU (motto: ‘take back control’ – money, immigration)

- July 2016: PM Cameron resigned after Brexit

- July 2016: PM May (in favour of Brexit but against a second referendum)
Brexit: 2017-8

• Mars 2017: the UK gave itself two years to leave the EU (i.e. implementation of article 50)

• June 2018: Beginning of formal negotiations

• Three options:
  • ‘Soft Brexit’ (remain in the internal market)
  • ‘Hard Brexit’ (leave the internal market)
  • No deal (between the UK and the EU)

• November 2018: Conclusion of an agreement between London and Brussels
Brexit: 2019

• Three negative votes in the British Parliament before the deadline of 29 March 2019: 15 January, 12 and then 29 March
• March 2019: New deadline in April 2019
• April 2019: New deadline in October 2019
• May 2019: PM May resigned
• July 2019: PM Johnson
• October 2019: New deadline in January 2020
• General Elections: 12 December 2019

Source: https://www.lefigaro.fr/fig-data/calendrier-brexit/
Brexit: What’s next in 2020?

• A deal in January 2020?

• A long time period of uncertainty
Explaining Brexit effect on the EU

• Contrary to the mainstream idea that Brexit has led to disintegration (i.e. ‘domino effect’)

• The cohesive effect of Brexit on the EU27 (Lequesne, Chopin, 2019)

• Governments and public opinions of the EU27 plaid a completely different game regarding Brexit which consists in assuming the validity of EU membership and EU integration
Explaining Brexit effect on the EU

Figure 2: Attitudes towards EU membership at national level (October 2018)

Source: Eurobarometer Survey 90, European Parliament, October 2018
Questions
Conclusion: Beyond common sense
I. INSTITUTIONS OF THE EU

- Commission
- Parliament
- Council
- European Council
- Court of Justice
- EEAS
- ECB
- Lobbies
- Etc.
1- HISTORY: What’s the driver of European integration?

• **Common sense:** the EU is only the result of negotiations between States and their interests: when they converge, the Union becomes integrated but when they diverge, the Union splits.

• **Scientific result:** the EU can be strengthened despite diverging national interests and through a ‘constructive ambiguity’ (Jabko, 2009)
2- GOVERNANCE: How could we define the EU and how does it work?

• **Common sense:** The EU is either an international organization or a state

• **Scientific result:** The EU is a system of differentiated integration where decision-making depends on the sector of public action (Schimmelfenning, Leuffen, Rittberger, 2015)
3- EXECUTIVE AND JUDICIAL POWERS: Who governs, the States or the Commission?

• **Common sense:** The EU is either a intergovernmental organization or a supranational one

• **Scientific result:** The EU government is not the result of one institution, but of a continuous balance of power between the Member States (European Council and Council) and the Commission which are checked by the Court (Mérand, Weisbein, 2011)
4- LEGISLATIVE POWERS: Who sets the rules?

• **Common sense:** The EU is a technocratic organisation in which the European Parliament has little power.

• **Scientific result:** EU rules are set by the Council and the European Parliament under the ‘ordinary legislative procedure’ (Whitaker, 2015).
5- LOBBIES: How do interest groups shape the EU?

• **Common sense:** The EU is under the control of the lobbies that control European policy.

• **Scientific result:** Lobbies represent actors with multiple resources, objectives and strategies and have a variable effect on the EU if they are ‘permanent’ or ‘intermittent’ (Courty, Michel, 2012)
II. CHALLENGES OF THE EU

• Monetary Policy

• Migration Policy

• Defence Policy

• Democracy

• Brexit
6- EURO: The monetary policy of the EU

• **Common sense:** The economic and financial crisis (2008-10) has reinforced the trend towards an intergovernmental governance of the EU

• **Scientific result:** Supranational institutions (the ECB, but also the Court and the Commission) have been strengthened during the Eurozone crisis (Fontan, 2013)
7- MIGRATION: The area of freedom, security and justice

- **Common sense:** the European migration policy is for some a sieve, for others a fortress

- **Scientific result:** Migration policy reveals ‘multi-level’ governance (Guiraudon, 2013)
8- A EUROPEAN DEFENCE POLICY: An oxymoron?

• **Common sense:** The CSDP does not exist, it is only based on national defence policies

• **Scientific result:** The CSDP reveals the differentiated integration of the EU (Faure, 2019)
9- DEMOCRACY: Looking for a *homo europaeanus*

- **Common sense:** European citizens are increasingly Eurosceptic, i.e. they increasingly reject the EU

- **Scientific result:** European citizens are more and more indifferent to the EU (Van Ingelgom, 2012)
10- BREXIT: What’s happening in Britain and what are the effects on the EU?

- **Common sense**: Brexit has led to disintegration, i.e. ‘domino effect’

- **Scientific result**: Brexit has a cohesive effect on the EU27 (Lequesne, Chopin, 2019)
AND SO WHAT? The EU as a political field

- **Common sense:** The EU is a unified and homogeneous political actor acting as one man and in a rational way

- **Scientific result:** The European Union is a political field where actors with multiple interests and perceptions cooperate and compete with each other
Questions
Evaluation

• 1) Strengths

• 2) Weaknesses

• 3) Advice