

ARE EUROPEAN ELECTIONS USEFUL?

Friday, April 17th 2009

Sciences Po, Paris

Room Goguel (56 rue des Saints Pères, 75007 Paris)

Thirty years after the first direct elections of the European Parliament, this conference aims at shedding some more light on the effects and practices of the European elections. The conference is organised around three main themes:

Scientific Committee: Bruno Cautrès, Renaud Dehousse, Sylvie Strudel, Alexander Trechsel

9.00-9.15

Introduction and General Presentation

Renaud Dehousse (Sciences Po, Centre d'études européennes), **Sylvie Strudel** (University of Tours, associate researcher, Sciences Po, Cevipof)

Session 1. 9.15-10.45

European Elections and the Logics of Political Recruiting

Building on the idea that the emergence of a new kind of mandate (i.e. MEP) has modified the general economy of elective positions, the contributions to this session assess the impact of the European mandate on political careers (elaboration of the electoral rolls, trajectories of the MEPs, etc.). They also deal with the specificities of this new profession, its know-how and its networks.

Speakers: **Niilo Kauppi** (GSPE, IEP de Strasbourg), **Christopher Lord** (University of Oslo)

Discussant: **Maurizio Cotta** (University of Siena)

Session 2. 11.00-12.30

European Citizens and the Public debate on Europe

European elections open a window for a public debate on European issues. Contributions in this session analyse European electoral campaigns, the mobilisation of NGOs, etc. They also consider the impact of these debates on public opinion: are European citizens more politically competent on these issues after thirty years?

Speakers: **Bruno Cautrès** (Sciences Po, Cevipof), **Philippe Schmitter** (European University Institute)

Discussant: **Sylvie Strudel** (University of Tours)

Session 3. 14.30-16.00
European Elections and their Impact on European Integration

Even if the European Parliament has not been the mainspring of the – many – reforms of the last thirty years, it has clearly been the main beneficiary of these reforms. It is also likely that, in some domains, the input of the EP has contributed to the strengthening of the integration process. Contributions to this session systematically analyse these issues.

Speakers: **Olivier Costa** (Sciences Po Bordeaux), **Wolfgang Wessels** (University of Cologne)

Discussant: **Jean-Paul Jacqué** (Legal Service of the Council, Brussels)

Session 4. 16.15-17.45
European Elections and (Domestic and European) Party Systems

As “second order elections”, European elections have had a limited impact on the European political system. At the national level, they have regularly provided the electors with an opportunity to express their discontent and to punish their governments. Small organisations have found an un hoped-for forum. In this context, what are the prospects for the European party system?

Speakers: **Robert Ladrech** (University of Keele), **Paul Taggart** (University of Sussex)

Discussant: **Renaud Dehousse** (Sciences Po, Centre d'études européennes)

17.45-18.00
Conclusion

Alexander Trechsel (European University Institute)

Inscriptions: europe@sciences-po.fr