

expected when the population at large is to be affected by EU regulations. The conference also explored possibilities for further development of the EU on the basis of Canadian and American examples. Critical views warned against too much optimism – attempts to strengthen the impact of national parliaments on the EU could lead to an impasse. A shift from ‘post-parliamentarism’ to ‘neo-parliamentarism’ would require national parliaments to make room for a supranational EU parliamentary institution.

The papers also explored the implications that the internationalisation of parliaments holds for party systems, the formation of parliamentary elites, etc. Specific forms of internationalisation were presented and discussed, such as parliamentary assistance through EU twinning projects, and developing wider access to basic information on the functioning of parliaments through websites.

The final discussion pointed to the absence of any comprehensive cross-national survey of the impact of globalisation and internationalisation on national parliaments. A similar lack of joint research on the legislatures in the EU and their actual potential for development has led to a gap in the conceptualisation of domestic assemblies in the larger EU project.

As one paper on Norway and Slovenia demonstrated, the level of internationalisation of individual parliaments can be compared using specific indicators for cross-national comparisons. Now is the time to begin this research effort.

Drago Zajc, David M. Olson

Europeisation – A New Topic in Political Science Research, Brno, 14–15 April 2005

A two-day conference titled *Europeisation – A New Topic in Political Science Research* was held in Brno on 14 and 15 April 2005. The conference was organised by the International Political Science Institute of Masaryk

University in Brno. The organisers attracted many Czech experts in the field of political science from various universities (Brno, Prague, Olomouc, Plzeň) and research institutions (the Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, the Institute of International Relations in Prague), and also from various other fields dealing with the issue of europeisation (political science, international relations, sociology, regional studies). The conference was also attended by speakers from Slovakia and Poland, which broadened the context of the discussion beyond the dimension of just European-Czech interaction.

In the discourse of political science the process of europeisation is discussed primarily in terms of the influence of European integration on national policies and especially on party competition and the capacity of the executive to make decisions and implement policy. It is presumed that europeisation should have a similar effect on all the countries it occurs in. Consequently, it is a somewhat neglected fact that the process of europeisation provides individual actors with multiple opportunities, of which they may or may not necessarily take advantage. The impact of europeisation on national politics may therefore be heterogeneous. In the discourse of political science europeisation is also discussed in terms of the creation of a European, i.e. unified and supranational, policy. This stream of political science studies the factors that lead some areas to be unified while others are not and examines the consequences of adopting European policy. The primary interest of the conference organisers was to study the impact of European integration, and their thematic focuses are evident in the eight panel topics to which speakers were invited to contribute:

1. European Political Parties
2. The European Dimension of Central European Politics
3. EU Countries and Communal Politics
4. Europeisation and Political Parties

5. European Integration Trends after EU Enlargement
6. Euro-scepticism as a Research Topic
7. The European Elections and EP Election Research
8. Regions in a European Context

Four panels were held each day in two simultaneous sessions in the morning and afternoon. It was therefore not possible to attend and take part in the discussion of all papers presented. This author participated in the panels relating to europeisation and political parties (panels 1, 4, 6 and 7), so the information presented here deals with this portion of the conference and selected papers only.

The panel on *European Political Parties* was opened by Jan Rovný, who is an assistant professor at the College of Europe in Bruges, Belgium. He presented a paper from a neo-institutional perspective pointing to the increasing role of political parties in the behaviour and attitudes of the European Parliament (EP). Parliamentary party groups in the EP form 'political units' that supervise the activities of individual Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) in committees and in the plenary session. According to Rovný, this is a new element in European policy; up to now unity in attitudes and voting in parliamentary party groups had not been strictly required, as the diversity of nationalities of MEPs had served as strongly counteractive to unity. Rovný also pointed out that the larger role of political parties does not yet concern legislative issues and refers only to EP resolutions that are not of a legislative nature (for example, the rejection of an Italian candidate nominated to the European Commission). Rovný concluded his presentation with the question of whether the larger role of political parties in the EP could be reflected in an increase in competition between institutions (the European Parliament versus the European Commission), as party competition in the EP should not be allowed to lead to antagonism between the two main parties, the European People's Party (EPP) and the Euro-

pean Socialists (PES), which together promote further European integration.

An interesting paper in this panel was presented by Ladislav Mrklas from the Institute of Political Studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University, and from CEVRO in Prague (Liberal Conservative Academy). Mrklas focused on the influence of European integration on the inner workings of Czech political parties. He took the analytical framework developed by Robert Ladrech as a starting point (it is interesting to note that Ladrech's popularity in the Czech Republic came as a surprise to Jan Rovný, who is Ladrech's assistant at the College of Europe) and with it described some organisational changes that have taken place in Czech political parties. Mrklas talked about the attitude of the Czech Civic Democratic Party (ODS) toward European integration and the European Constitution, and the political clash within ODS over the party's position on European integration. He pointed out that the anti-European attitudes of ODS are advocated by county- and regional-level cadres, a portion of MPs, by President Václav Klaus, who is the party's Honorary Chairman, and by the party-affiliated Centre for Economics and Politics (CEP), an educational and promotional organisation, while, conversely, pro-European or at least conciliatory attitudes toward the EU are maintained by another portion of MPs, senators, the ODS chair, and, especially, by ODS members and voters. The attitudes toward European integration in ODS are an exact reflection of a vertical classification developed by John May (who discussed attitudinal structure in political parties and developed the law of inequality in political parties). Middle-ranking party cadres maintain the most extreme position and promote a policy that may lead toward a loss of voters. The party leadership and the party's voters, i.e. the party's top and bottom ranks, occupy a much more centrist position.

Another panel, *Europeisation and Political Parties*, primarily looked at the changes in

party competition and programmatics in political parties in Slovenia, Poland, Romania and Bulgaria. An inspiring presentation came from Ondřej Císař, who specialises in interest representation (lobbying) in transnational networks at national and European levels. Last year he published *Transnational Political Networks – How International Institutions Influence the Activities of Non-Governmental Organisations* (in Czech). In his paper Císař presented his theoretical model of the interaction between non-governmental actors and governmental political institutions at the national and the European level. The model is built on the distinction between the political opportunities that institutions provide to non-governmental actors and the resources these actors have at their disposal, and Císař used this model to show that the European level offers opportunities for those non-governmental actors who are not successful at the national level or require pan-European regulation. Císař's paper was the most theoretically developed at the conference, though his distinction between political opportunities and resources merited a deeper discussion. Political opportunities may exist in theory (i.e. in writing or as legal provisions), but they cannot exist in reality if the actors who are meant to take advantage of them do not have enough resources to be able to do so.

The morning programme on Friday was dedicated to research on Euro-scepticism and the audience had a chance to hear contributions from speakers about Euro-sceptic parties in Sweden and Denmark or about the sources of Euro-scepticism in Poland. Marek Rybář, from the Department of Political Science at the Philosophical Faculty in Bratislava, presented a paper describing the change in the attitude of the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) toward European integration, migrating from a position where they rejected Slovakia's accession to the EU to one of the most pro-integration positions among Slovak parties. In Rybář's view this shift in HZDS' position was caused by the party's effort to obtain acceptance in the eyes

of its partners at the national and the European level. HZDS is aiming to be included in the cabinet in the next election term, and this requires that the party maintain at least a conciliatory attitude toward European integration; the party is otherwise unacceptable to the other coalition partners. Conversely, Čarnogurský's Christian Democratic Movement (*Kresťansko-demokratické hnutie*) has, according to Rybář, gradually changed its position on European integration and is becoming increasingly more critical. Generally Catholicism is a source of Euro-scepticism both in Slovakia and in Poland, and, according to electoral behaviour surveys, also in the Czech Republic.

The Friday programme closed with the panel on *European Elections and Their Research* and an interesting paper by Tomáš Lebeda, from the Institute of Sociology, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, on the stability of regional electoral support for individual political parties in the Czech Republic between the elections to the Chamber of Deputies in 2002 and the EP elections in 2004. Lebeda drew on studies by Tomáš Kostecký (Institute of Sociology, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic) on the regional stability of electoral support in the Czech Republic in the 1990s and made a correlation analysis of the electoral support for individual parties in the counties of the Czech Republic in two elections. His paper was accompanied by a discussion on the appropriateness of using the correlation analysis of electoral support for individual parties to analyse electoral behaviour; the discussants agreed that the correlation analysis of electoral support in counties only makes it possible to analyse the regional stability of party support, but cannot serve as means of predicting the voting behaviour of individuals. Lebeda's conclusions about the correlation between electoral support for ODS and for the Independents movement (NEZ) and their negative attitude toward European integration (measured using the vote against accession to the EU in 2003) are quite obvious-