

Europe Together Apart? – Member State Sections and the Future of Europe

19 October 2022 | LUISS, Rome

Department of Political Science, 32 Viale Romania, Rome | 8.30 – 9.30 am [Room 203](#)

9.45 – 10.45 am [Room 204](#)

Student Debates on the Future of Europe series | Task D7.4

This event aims at presenting and comparing the position of EU member state governments in the framework of the Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFoE). The event is part of the Student Debates on the Future of Europe series organised within the Horizon 2020 project "EU Differentiation, Dominance, and Democracy" (EU3D). EU3D studies the conditions under which differentiation in the EU is politically acceptable, institutionally sustainable, and democratically legitimate.

Event Description

The Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFoE) was an unprecedented democratic experiment. In procedural terms it was the pinnacle of deliberative and participatory democracy. European citizens could express their views on an ample variety of topics related to how the EU should be reformed and what direction European integration should take. Nevertheless, the fate of plenary conclusions and their translation into practical reforms, or even a treaty change depends on the gatekeepers of EU restructuring: the EU member states.

This event aims at presenting and comparing the position of EU member state governments in the framework of the Conference on the Future of Europe. The lynchpin of the discussions is a report with the same title co-authored by Andrea Capati, Dora Hegedus and Tiziano Zgaga, which seeks to analyse country coalition (section) patterns mirroring government proposals to the CoFoE initiative. For analytical purposes, the report divides countries into three different sections, based on their geo-economic model, culture and political system: the Solidarity Coalition (SC – France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece), the Frugal Four (FF – the Netherlands, Austria, Denmark, Sweden) and the Visegrad Group (VG – Czechia, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia). Germany is treated as a special case, which fluctuates between the FF and SC. The above group division largely coincides with the sections, which emerged during past negotiations of EU policy responses to acute crisis situations (refugee crisis, COVID-19 pandemic, rule of law crisis).

In the first 15 minutes of the event, a panel composed of the report authors will investigate the internal coherence of sections, as well as possible inter-sectional convergences and differences along four analytical macro-concepts: I.) policy integration; II.) institutional empowerment; III.) consolidation of democracy, identity and the rule of law; and IV.) polity integration. Similarities and divergences will be highlighted both in terms of issue salience and reform direction. Following the brief presentations, students will have the chance to debate which country and/or section proposals provide a more efficient solution to Europe's problems, whether and what sort of compromises may emerge as a final result, and if they agree with the proposals of their own government. Since the vast majority of participants are of Italian origins, special attention will be dedicated to the audience's stance on the Italian proposals, including some reflection on the possible changes in policy direction and tone as a result of the recent general elections. The primary target group is Master's students of LUISS University. The event will last altogether 60 minutes and will be repeated on another subsequent occasion due to space limitations on campus. This arrangement will guarantee more students the chance to participate physically, exchange their thoughts with their peers, and to engage in personal discussions. Remote access will be guaranteed to some students on first comes first served basis.

Panel & participants

Professor Sergio Fabbrini - LUISS

Andrea Capati – LUISS

Dora Hegedus – LUISS

Dr Tiziano Zgaga – LUISS, University of Konstanz

Programme

Wednesday, 19 October

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| 8.30 – 8.40 | Opening statement of Professor Sergio Fabbrini |
| 8.40 – 8.55 | The co-authors introduce the position of country coalitions (sections) on the future of Europe |
| 8.55 – 9.30 | Oxford style student debate |

The debate is repeated with the same schedule from 9.45 – 10.45.

This event is organised in the framework of **EU3D**, a 4-year research project looking at the future of European integration, in particular differentiated integration. EU3D will specify the conditions under which differentiation is politically acceptable, institutionally sustainable, and democratically legitimate; and provide important knowledge on the conditions under which EU reforms may fail or succeed.

www.eu3d.uio.no



EU3D is funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme Grant Agreement No. 822419