

Introduction

This is the second issue of the “Lisbon Watch”, an annual report mapping the state of the art of and progress on research and teaching regarding the new legal foundations of the European Union: the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), referred to as “Lisbon Treaty” in short. As integral part of the LISBOAN project, the Lisbon Watch offers a unique multi-disciplinary perspective on the Lisbon Treaty’s impact on integration studies.

24 LISBOAN member institutes from 19 countries have answered an open questionnaire which was distributed in January 2012. The contributions cover activities at the respondents’ own institutes, but also address research efforts and political debates in each country as a whole. While the focus is on the period of autumn 2011 - spring 2012, developments around the coming into force of the LT in December 2009 are also included whenever applicable.

Following the structure of the questionnaire, the report is divided into four parts. Parts one and two cover the teaching and research activities at each contributing institution. This pertains both to EU studies in general and the Lisbon Treaty in particular. Part three deals with the debate on the Treaty of Lisbon in the respective country. Finally, part four provides the contributor’s personal assessment of topical issues linked to the EU’s new legal foundation. Have there been remarkable/counterintuitive developments following the Treaty’s coming into force? What challenges will the EU have to face in the short term, and does the Lisbon Treaty offer a better framework to cope with these challenges? In which areas are pressures for continued treaty reform likely to emerge?

The Lisbon Watch is produced annually over the full life span of the LISBOAN project from October 2010 – September 2013. All contributions are synthesised by the project management team at the University of Cologne, Germany. Contact persons are Tobias Kunstein (tobias.kunstein(at)uni-koeln.de) and Johannes Müller-Gomez (johannes.mueller-gomez(at)uni-koeln.de). Building on experiences from the preparation of this first issue, the questionnaire has been adapted in a number of ways: (i) the individual parts are published separately, as they address different target groups, (ii) research projects at individual institutions are addressed more prominently in order foster exchange among researchers with similar research interests, (iii) contributors have been asked for examples of research-based teaching in order to lessen the gap between the two dimensions addressed by LISBOAN, (iv) part three followed a more structured approach by enumerating a number of issues and asking contributors to address those in the pre-given order, (v) a last question dealt with trends observable in EU studies, and (vi) an additional part uses a simple scale model which, while acknowledging the technical difficulties of this approach, allows for a more comparative perspective on the contributor’s personal assessment of trends in EU studies in general and research and teaching of the Lisbon Treaty in particular.

Feedback, as always, is very welcome.

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Executive Summary

The second mapping of teaching activities at LISBOAN institutes does not show remarkable changes compared to the previous year. The overall picture is that the Lisbon Treaty plays an important role in teaching EU studies at the contributing institutions. While no partner actually dedicated a full course to the document, it was the basis for at least a number of sessions in most EU-related courses. Just as last year, no contribution explicitly mentioned the transitional periods which apply to a number of changes from Nice to Lisbon. This seems to indicate that both the 'old' and the 'new' rules still are of equal importance in the partners' teaching of EU studies. Had the Lisbon rules already fully replaced Nice as the basis of teaching, these transitional exceptions would most probably have been referred to.

Almost all institutes supplemented their regular course programme with extracurricular activities, including (public) guest lectures, press conferences and roundtables. Especially public and academic seminars with practitioners continued to play an important role, including high-level speakers such as the German Minister of Finance. In a few cases, partners gave interviews to different media to reach a wider public.

Turning to teaching methods, the contributions again show that "classical" forms of teaching, that is classroom-style seminars, are still prevalent as far as EU studies in general and the Lisbon Treaty in particular are concerned. In one case, a newly published book on the Lisbon Treaty was used as a textbook in courses. Teaching material such as Powerpoint slides were routinely updated in order to take into account the new legal framework. However, only two institutions (out of 24 contributors) reported the use of web-based platforms to manage their courses, distribute teaching materials and possibly interact with students. Five institutions report the organization of simulation exercises, a share more or less unchanged from the previous year. In terms of innovative teaching in the area of EU studies, this indicates that there is still a need for spreading such methods. The fact that this year's LISBOAN Teaching Award goes to a simulation course at the College of Europe should encourage partners to take up more interactive means of teaching the Lisbon Treaty.

Continuing and professional education was less frequently mentioned this year. Besides partners dedicated to such activities such as the European Institute of Romania, only two universities also reported to offer professional/continuing education in the reporting period.

Part two of the report deals with research activities of LISBOAN institutes. Their main areas of EU-related research are as diverse as the European Union itself. A slight emphasis on external aspects is observable, but topics also include democracy, European Neighbourhood policy and the institutional architecture, to name just a few.

When asked which Lisbon Treaty innovations were of special interest to them, respondents most frequently mentioned the EU's external action in general and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy as well as the European External Action Service in particular (42% of all responses, multiple answers permitted). However, especially the EU's dismal performance vis-à-vis the developments in the Arab world led to a rather pessimistic outlook on the effectiveness of Lisbon innovations in that area. Economic Governance and the debt crisis were the second topic frequently mentioned (38%). Here the general view on Lisbon innovations is however that the Lisbon Treaty did not equip the EU to effectively deal with the different crises when it came into force. The inter-institutional balance post Lisbon and the role of presidencies appeared less salient than in the

previous year (12%). By contrast, the role of national parliaments against the background of subsidiarity (21%) had a larger share than in 2011. Institutional innovations that were mentioned by four respondents each are the solidarity clause (Art. 222) and the citizens' initiative.

As a result of their research, partners produced a number of publications related to the Lisbon Treaty. These were partly research papers, but also contributions to edited volumes and renowned journals such as the *Journal of European Integration* and the *European Law Review*.

Part three of the *Lisbon Watch* analyses the Lisbon Treaty from a national perspective. The contributors focus on the academic debate in their country since the treaty's coming into force in December 2009, and link its innovations to topical issues that have been discussed in their respective political arena.

Against the background of the persistent debt crisis and the bail-out of troubled euro states, the Commission's democratic legitimacy to tell countries how to conduct their economic policy has become a key issue in national debates. This is true for both fiscally (relatively) sound and heavily indebted states (Austria, Belgium, Finland).

In a number of countries, the role of national parliaments (the empowerment of parliaments was supposed to be a hallmark of the Lisbon Treaty) was part of the debate, whereas it was neglected in others. This is especially striking in the case of Greece, given that Greek budgetary sovereignty has come under pressure exerted by the troika of Commission, European Central Bank and International Monetary Fund.

Linkages between energy policy and the Lisbon Treaty were cited only infrequently, for example in relation to the Hungarian Presidency during which an initiative in this sector was launched.

In the public debate in general, the Lisbon Treaty seems to slowly vanish from sight, although EU issues such as the financial crisis and EU accession are frequently discussed. In part, this can be attributed to the creation of new intergovernmental treaties outside the EU legal framework, such as the "Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance" which is supposed to promote fiscal discipline among its contracting partners. The new instruments "overshadow" the Lisbon innovations which, in the opinion of many observers, have proven insufficient to address the challenges the EU has been faced with recently. This assessment is also reflected in the results of the scaled questions introduced in part five of this *Lisbon Watch* issue: on average, respondents agreed to the statement that the Lisbon Treaty plays a less important role in the public discourse on the EU in my country compared to the time of its ratification and coming into force (question 5.6). Albeit less clearly, the answers to the questionnaire seem to indicate that respondents have (i) doubts whether the Lisbon Treaty has improved the Union's ability to react to unforeseen crises (question 5.4) and that (ii) the case for a complete revision of the EU treaties, possibly using the Convention method, has been strengthened over the past 12 months (question 5.5).