



EUROPEAN UNION CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE NEWSLETTER

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European Commission

La commission Juncker face à l'eurosepticisme

Frédéric Mérand, Université de Montréal



European Commission

Depuis six ans, j'enseigne à Rome un séminaire en études européennes. D'habitude, les étudiants ont toutes les raisons d'être favorables à l'Union européenne. Ils viennent des quatre coins du continent, parlent au moins trois langues, militent souvent dans les mouvements fédéralistes et se destinent à une carrière dans les institutions de Bruxelles.

Le groupe auquel j'ai eu affaire cette année m'a toutefois étonné. La plupart de mes étudiants ne cachaient pas leur eurosepticisme, voire leur mépris à l'égard de Bruxelles. Pour les uns, l'UE est un instrument de la domination des grands États, principalement l'Allemagne. Pour les autres, la Commission européenne est un pouvoir exécutif à la fois autoritaire, impuissant et non démocratique. Un Britannique militait ouvertement en faveur du retrait de son pays de l'UE. Une Bulgare m'a confié son admiration pour Vladimir Poutine. Je soupçonne que la majorité d'entre eux n'ont pas voté aux élections européennes de 25-27 mai 2014.

Les résultats de ces élections, les

plus grandes au monde après celles de l'Inde, ont confirmé la désaffection des citoyens envers le projet d'unification du continent. Pour la première fois, les partis politiques paneuropéens ont présenté des candidats à la présidence de la Commission, ce qui se voulait le signe d'une évolution vers le fédéralisme. Ces candidats se sont affrontés lors de plusieurs débats télévisés, dans un modèle de multilinguisme à faire rougir les Canadiens.

Pour la première fois, les partis politiques paneuropéens ont présenté des candidats à la présidence de la Commission, ce qui se voulait le signe d'une évolution vers le fédéralisme.

Le Parti populaire (conservateur) étant arrivé en tête, le Luxembourgeois Jean-Claude Juncker a été nommé à la tête de la Commission. Malgré le chantage du premier ministre David Cameron et la tiédeur de la chancelière allemande Angela Merkel, les États-membres ont avalé le coup de force du Parlement qui a réussi à imposer son candidat.

Depuis cet été, le président Juncker a nommé une Commission qui, si elle manque de femmes (9 sur 28 commissaires), profite en revanche d'un poids politique considérable, avec la présence de plusieurs anciens premiers ministres, dont le Finlandais Jyrki Katainen à l'Emploi, le Letton Valdis Dombrovskis à l'Énergie, sans oublier l'Estonien Andrus Ansip. Les commissaires d'expérience Margot Wallstrom et Gunther Oettinger,

ainsi que l'ancien ministre français de l'Économie Pierre Moscovici complètent ce dispositif qui compte même un euroseptique britannique, Jonathan Hill qui hérite des services financiers.

Accentuant les forces politiques au Parlement, on dénombre dans le collège des commissaires 15 conservateurs, 8 socialistes et 5 libéraux. C'est un cas unique de démocratie supranationale qui se structure peu à peu autour d'un axe droite-gauche. Le Conseil demeure toutefois l'apanage des États, avec les nominations négociées du Polonais Donald Tusk à la présidence et de l'Italienne Federica Mogherini aux affaires étrangères.

Malgré cette évolution remarquable, on retient que ce sont les partis anti-européens qui ont connu un succès sans précédent aux élections européennes, alors que le taux de participation a chuté à un creux historique. Certains, comme la Gauche européenne menée par le jeune Alexis Tsipras de Grèce, ont misé sur la critique de l'austérité et veulent surtout une « autre Europe ». Mais la victoire symbolique revient aux nationalistes comme le UK Independence Party qui a damé le pion aux travaillistes et aux conservateurs au Royaume-Uni, ainsi qu'aux mouvements xénophobes, arrivés premiers en France avec le Front national et au Danemark avec le Parti du peuple. Ensemble, les partis anti-européens ont obtenu près de 20% des sièges à l'assemblée de Strasbourg, un record depuis que cette assemblée a été élue pour la première fois au suffrage universel, en 1979.

Divisés en de multiples groupuscules, les partis ... *Continued on page 3*

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carleton.ca/euce-network-canada

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CANADIAN EUROPEAN UNION CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE



EUCE Profiles: News and Innovation



EUCE—Centre for European Studies, Carleton University

<http://carleton.ca/ces>



The Carleton EUCE welcomes Dara Marcus, who began work at the Centre for European Studies in spring 2014 as Project Manager for the Canada-Europe Transatlantic Dialogue and the EUCE Network. She is also the Managing Editor of the *Review of European and Russian Affairs*, an online academic journal. She holds a Masters in Public and International Affairs from the University of Ottawa. Her research interests include urban agriculture, immigration, and science policy.

A highlight among the many events held over the summer and fall was an international research workshop entitled *Crisis Contained, Democracy Diminished? The Politics of the Eurozone Financial Crisis*, held September 19th. The opening roundtable, three panel presentations, and concluding discussion provided an opportunity to discuss the impact of the Eurozone financial crisis on democratic governance in the European Union, among scholars, researchers, and students.

The Carleton EUCE will welcome visiting scholar Emmanuel Sigalas, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Institute for Advanced Studies in Vienna, Austria, for the winter term in 2015. He will teach a graduate course entitled *Social and Political Perspectives in Europe* and co-teach two more courses with regular instructors at the university.

EUCE—Dalhousie University

www.dal.ca/diff/euce.html

The Centre has had a busy start this academic year with well-attended talks by the Polish and EU Ambassadors, as well as a symposium on migration in September. The Polish Ambassador spoke about Poland 25 years after the Solidarity Movement, and the EU Ambassador spoke on the strategic partnership between the EU and Canada.



The symposium, hosted by EUCE-Dalhousie director Ruben Zaiotti, was entitled *Remote Control: The externalization of border management in North America and Europe*. The participants were from Canada, the US, and Europe. A joint publication will result from the panel discussions. We also held a talk on HIV rates in African migrants in Scotland, co-sponsored with Health Promotion, and a talk on corruption in Ukraine in conjunction with the Centre for Foreign Policy Studies.

In addition, the Centre hosted Dr. Hungdah Su, Director of the European Union Centre in Taiwan, for a few days in September. Dr. Su also visited the Carleton EUCE through the Sharespeaker program.

EUCE—University of Victoria

www.uvic.ca/interdisciplinary/europe/euce/

In September 2014, the UVic EUCE launched an online course, *European Borders without Walls*. There are about 75 students from around the world taking this free, online, non-credit course, and several UVic students taking the course for credit. The course will be offered each year, and we hope to expand it to a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), with hundreds of students participating.



The EUCE has hired Ovidiu Raitu, a 4th year History student minoring in European Studies, to assist with event planning and communications.

Later in the fall semester, there will be several events targeting different stakeholders. We will host a seminar and workshop at UVic for high school students, *Let's Talk EU*, where experts will present on immigration, migration, and xenophobia, with comparisons of the challenges between Canada and the EU. Students will create and present posters on the seminar themes and then present them to a committee of EUCE faculty, staff, and students.

EUCE—University of Alberta

www.eucentre.ualberta.ca/



EUCE Alberta held a lunchtime panel discussion *The Future of the Eurozone: Risk and Opportunity* in Calgary on June 24. Dr. Adriaan Schout, Senior Research Fellow with Clingendael, and Dr. Kurt Hübner, Professor and Jean Monnet Chair for European Integration and Global Political Economy at the Institute for European Studies at UBC, spoke about Eurozone governance reforms, the prospects for Eurozone stability and growth, and how new sources of political risk may affect the Eurozone.

In September, in collaboration with the Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies and the European Union Democratic Observatory at the European University Institute in Fiesole, Italy, a workshop entitled *Parties and Democracy in Post-*

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EUCE Profiles (continued)

Communist Europe examined how EU conditionality, both before and after enlargement, has affected the development of two key elements of democracy: parties and party systems.

In October, EUCE Alberta hosted the symposium *Near-Zero Emissions and Carbon Capture and Storage*. The event brought together participants from academia, industry, government, and NGOs to discuss the practical obstacles to successful implementation of Carbon Capture and Storage technologies in Canada and the EU.

EUCE—Université de Montréal—McGill University

www.centreurope-montreal.ca/en/



The European Union Centre of Excellence in Montreal was established in September 2006 as a joint initiative between the Université de Montréal (UdeM) and McGill University. In the first year of the new grant period beginning in 2014, the EUCE-Montreal has hosted or jointly organized around 50 activities, ranging from public lecture series to academic workshops and outreach in the local community.

On the academic side, a workshop was held in June entitled *Rethinking Europeanization: The Politics of More and Less Europe*, which focused on how the "long European crisis" (2008-2013) has changed the domestic politics and the role of the EU among member states. In collaboration with the Goethe-Institut Montréal, the Centre also hosted a public roundtable on the European elections featuring former European Parliament president Klaus Hänsch, academics, and members of the EU Delegation to Ottawa. New additions to the EUCE Montreal team include Nathalie Mehdi as the UdeM Outreach Coordinator, and Anya Slavinsky as the McGill Outreach Coordinator.

FEATURE ARTICLE (continued)

...Continued from page 1
l'UE sont peu susceptibles de jouer un rôle d'influence au Parlement européen. Mais ils sont les messagers d'un électorat dont la majorité est désormais défavorable à la monnaie commune, l'euro, dans plusieurs pays, dont la France. Selon un sondage publié juste avant les élections par la Commission européenne elle-même, 59% des Européens n'ont pas confiance dans l'UE (EC 2014). Même les forces traditionnellement pro européennes, comme la droite italienne ou les socialistes français, ont fait campagne sur la diminution du pouvoir de Bruxelles.

Ce rejet populaire intervient alors que l'UE n'a jamais été aussi importante dans la vie de ses citoyens. Mes étudiants circulent librement sur tout le continent et c'est généralement grâce aux bourses

hostiles à européennes qu'ils ont pu étudier dans un autre pays que le leur.

Depuis la crise, l'UE a fortement renforcé ses pouvoirs : la Commission doit désormais approuver la politique fiscale des États-membres (c'est-à-dire leur budget, une chose impensable dans le Canada fédéral) et, avec l'union bancaire, c'est à la Banque centrale européenne que revient la supervision des systèmes financiers nationaux.

Il n'est pas mauvais que les citoyens puissent exprimer leurs doléances face à l'UE au sein même du Parlement. Comme toute institution politico-économique, l'UE crée des gagnants et des perdants. Les politiques d'austérité exigées par la Commission et les pays du nord pour renflouer les caisses de l'Irlande et des pays du sud ont été dures pour les classes populaires.

On ne doit pas s'étonner que l'UE soit devenue impopulaire en Grèce ou en Italie.

Mais cette défiance cristallise aussi un malaise qui n'a pas grand-chose à voir avec les institutions européennes, comme la perception d'un déclin économique et culturel en France, l'éclatement de la bulle immobilière en Irlande et en Espagne, la gabegie du gouvernement grec, ou encore la montée de la xénophobie en Hongrie. Ce n'est pas à Bruxelles que ce malaise trouvera des réponses.

References

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An English translation of this article can be found at labs.carleton.ca/canadaeurope.

AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Frédéric Mérand (PhD, Berkeley) is Associate Professor of Political Science and Director of the European Union Centre of Excellence at the Université de Montréal. He has authored or co-authored four books on European security, defense policy, and the European Union, including *European Defence Policy: Beyond the Nation State* (Oxford University Press, 2008). His research has been published in *West European Politics*, *Security Studies*, the *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *Cooperation and Conflict*, the *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, *International Journal*, *European Security*, and *Comparative European Politics*. He is also Associate Editor of *Politique européenne*.



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[@FredericMerand](https://twitter.com/FredericMerand)

Variable Democracy: Insights from the Eurozone Crisis

Emmanuel Sigalas, Vienna Institute for Advanced Studies

We take it for granted nowadays that democracy is the one and only constitution in Europe. The collapse of the authoritarian regimes in Eastern Europe seems to confirm that the model of a liberal and representative democracy has triumphed, at least in Europe. However, the lack of a credible alternative should not trick us into believing that democracy in Europe is perennially and everywhere safe and sound. Falling electoral turnout, growing political alienation and apathy, and mounting cynicism or even animosity towards politicians are some of the important problems that the parliaments of Europe face.

These phenomena are not particularly new, exclusive to parliaments, or confined to Europe. Yet the Eurozone crisis brought their importance back to the forefront, highlighting firstly that parliaments have to struggle to remain relevant, and secondly, that the EU remains very diverse in terms of political culture and structure. When it became clear that Greece's public debt was unsustainable and a bailout was necessary to prevent a GrExit (Greece's exit from the Economic and Monetary Union [EMU]), unprecedented political tension followed. On the one hand, the net EU payers, and especially Germany, were asked to make funds available to Greece and to other countries of the European periphery (Cyprus, Ireland, Portugal, and Spain). On the other hand, the receiving countries had to commit to a number of painful reforms that provoked public outcry and reactions.

Unsurprisingly, neither parting with large sums of public money, even in the form of loans, nor implementing austerity measures sits well with citizens. In the receiving countries, public protests became the norm, and many of them turned violent. In extreme cases, like in Greece, the legitimacy of the

national parliament was brought into question. Members of Parliament came to be seen not only as responsible for the disastrous fate of the country, but also as puppets of the Troika (European Commission, European Central Bank, and International Monetary Fund). In the paying countries, citizens were unhappy with their government's decision to use their money to bail out other European

“ [P]arliaments have to struggle to remain relevant... the EU remains very diverse in terms of political culture and structure.”

states. In both camps, Euroscepticism and populism gained ground.

In such a context of political tension and disillusionment, the prospects of parliamentarism in Europe appear mixed. Here, I briefly look at two cases, that of the German upper house (Bundestag) and that of the unicameral Greek parliament, which illustrate how

and Mechanism came into being. This raised the question of what powers the Bundestag should have over these new financing instruments. As Kinski (2012) shows in her research, the Bundestag demanded, and eventually succeeded in having, a greater say than the country's constitution envisaged. Even though the government originally wished to keep the parliament's role limited, the governing coalition MPs, including the speaker, demanded greater supervision powers. The need for enhanced democratic legitimacy when substantial international resource transfer is involved must have played a role in the government MPs' orientation, even though it is difficult to know the exact motives behind their decision to confront their own government.

This move upgraded the role and powers of the Bundestag, and consequently, it can be labelled a victory for parliamentary democracy in Germany. On the contrary, the developments in Greece, instead of leading to a strengthening of the Greek parliament, had the exact opposite result. During a prolonged period of mass demonstrations, sit-ins, strikes, and clashes with the police, Greek MPs were called to read, debate, and vote on the lengthy and virtually inscrutable memoranda agreements with the Troika, which included many and far-reaching austerity measures, and all of this in just a few days. On the day after the plenary vote, some governing party MPs confessed publicly that they did not have the time or the resources to study the content of the memoranda. These statements further undermined the standing of the elected representatives, and left many Greeks wondering why representative democracy should be any better than direct democracy.

The Greek government demanded party loyalty from its MPs and secured it

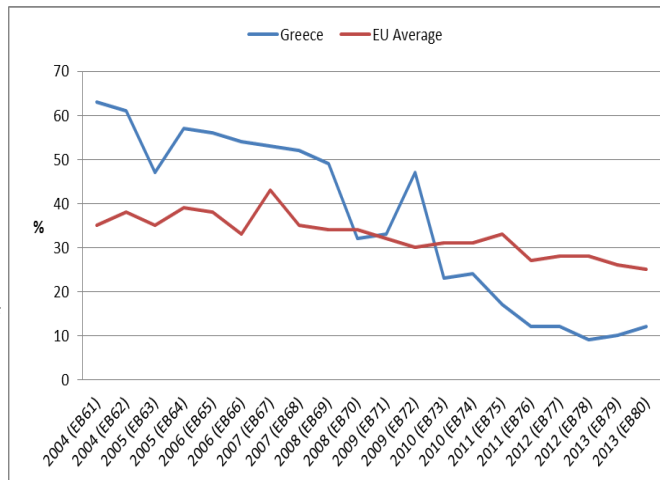


Figure 1. Trust in national parliament
Source: Standard Eurobarometers 61-80.

differently these two representative assemblies were affected by the crisis.

As soon as the German government realised that a single rescue package might not be enough and that a more long-term solution needed to be found, the European Financial Stability Fund

GUEST ARTICLE *(continued)*

from most of them. However, frustration inside the parliament intensified, culminating in MP defections, party switching, and heated exchanges. Despite public trust toward the parliament falling to an all-time low (Figure 1), the legislative assembly failed to reform, let alone increase, its powers in relation to the executive. On top of that, pre-existing maladies, such as the abuse of the guillotine, of legislative amendments, and of the executive avoiding addressing the plenary, intensified. Thus, as a consequence of the Eurozone crisis, the Greek parliament suffered badly in terms of public trust and autonomy.

Before the setup of the EMU, several economists warned that the EU was not an optimum currency area. They argued that, in the case of an external economic shock, its impact is likely to differ between national economies, and consequently, an

incomplete union (i.e. no fiscal union) may do more harm than good. It seems that they were right. What no one predicted, though, is the political implications of an asymmetric economic shock. The comparison of the German and the Greek parliaments shows that reforms are necessary not only in the economic sphere, but in the political, as well. Perhaps it is time we started debating whether an incomplete political union is really the optimal solution for democracy in Europe.

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AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Emmanuel Sigalas is Assistant Professor of European and EU Politics at the Vienna Institute for Advanced Studies (Austria), Adjunct Professor at Webster University Vienna (Austria), and, starting in January 2015, Visiting Scholar of EU Studies at Carleton University (Canada). He has published in *European Union Politics*, *West European Politics*, and *Space Policy*. His current research concentrates on European space policy, parliamentary reforms after the Eurozone crisis, and preferential voting in European Parliament elections.

twitter  [@esigalas](https://twitter.com/esigalas)

SPOTLIGHT ON: EU STUDY TOUR



Each summer, students from around the globe participate in the European Union Study Tour. The tour addresses the functions, evolution, and current issues of the EU through visits to the major institutions of the European Union in Brussels, Luxembourg, Strasbourg, and Frankfurt. Four students from across Canada shared their experiences with us.



Diana Chiriac

2nd Year MA Student

Focus: Italian and EU cultural diplomacy in Canada

What issue was the most interesting, and how did some of the institutions or organizations address it?

The EU's relations with its Eastern neighbours have interested me for a long time, but they have become a particularly intriguing topic recently, due to the crisis in Ukraine. We had the unique opportunity to be on the Tour at a time when the EU was facing a defining moment in its relations with Ukraine and Russia, and to confront perspectives coming from NATO, EU, and Russian officials who were all ready to address our burning questions.

What is something you learned from the lectures that you did not previously know about the EU and its various institutions?

The great variety of lectures made me aware of the activity of institutions that either I was not aware of, or did not know a lot about. For instance, a very interesting session was at Eurostat, where we learned how EU statistics are done and how they are used, in an interesting, interactive seminar.

What is your favourite memory of the EU Study Tour?

The experience of traveling, participating in conferences, and spending time with fellow students sharing similar interests was unique, and people who did not know each other previously became friends in a very short time.

...Continued on page 6





SPOTLIGHT ON: EU STUDY TOUR *(continued)*



Nicole MacLean

4th Year Undergraduate Student

Focus: Honors Political Science with a Minor in Law & Society

Which lectures or conferences were the most interesting for you? Which were the most controversial?

The lectures that interested me the most were those relating to Canada/EU relations and the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement; Foreign Policy, Diplomatic, and Justice issues within the EU; and the International Criminal Court hearing. The most controversial lectures were the foreign policy challenges in relations between the EU and the Russian Federation, and Ukraine/EU relations.

How did the EU Study Tour contribute to your knowledge and understanding of the EU and its various institutions?

The EU Study Tour contributes to knowledge of the EU and the institutions involved because you're actually *in* the institutions, attending hearings, and receiving briefings. Getting to visit the European Central Bank, EUROPOL, NATO, and the European Parliament, to name a few, was an amazing, once-in-a-lifetime experience.

What recommendations do you have for future EU Study Tour participants?

To get the most out of your experience participating in the EU Study Tour, you should review the EU institutions beforehand. Student participation in the lectures is recommended, and it's a rare opportunity to be asking diplomats and ambassadors your questions, so take advantage of it!



Inspiring Minds



Ovidiu Raitu

4th Year Undergraduate Student

Focus: History and Germanic Studies

What issue was the most interesting to you, and how did some of the institutions or organizations address it?

The issue that was the most interesting to me was the EU's energy policy in light of the crisis in Ukraine and sanctions on Russia. At that time, Russia had already signed a gas deal with China, and it was very interesting to get the EU perspective and perhaps to get a sense of the future direction of the EU's energy policy within the EU itself, and its energy relations with other countries.

How did the EU Study Tour contribute to your knowledge and understanding of the EU and its various institutions?

The EU Study Tour provided me with the opportunity to put my knowledge about the EU institutions into practice by asking speakers questions and engaging in open discussions with representatives of these institutions. I gained deep insights through these conversations with people who know the inner workings of the EU's institutions.

What is your favourite memory of the EU Study Tour?

One of my favorite memories was definitely our stay in Hachenburg. We were hosted at the Hachenburg Castle, which also serves as the professional school for the German Federal Bank.



University of Victoria



Timur Sharapov

2nd Year MA Student

Focus: Foreign Direct Investment from the EU and the U.S in Russia

How did the "learn by immersion" approach differ from university classes you have taken on the EU?

University classes on the EU definitely provide good background knowledge for students, no doubt. An opportunity to participate in the Study Tour, on the other hand, gives students a more "hands on" experience, as students get a chance to interact with EU policymakers and to complement and expand on the knowledge they already possess.

What is something you learned from the lectures that you did not previously know about the EU and its various institutions?

While the presentations and the conferences were a great way to help me elaborate and expand my knowledge, the Q&A sessions gave me a real opportunity to learn something new. In the end, I learned many new things about the EU, but the most important thing, I believe, was being able to fully comprehend the organizational structure of the EU's institutions and their specific roles.

What recommendations do you have for future EU Study Tour participants?

The most important thing is not to be shy, and to ask lots of questions of the presenters, thus triggering interesting discussions and expanding your knowledge horizon. It is also important to remember that the EU Study Tour is a study tour, after all, and one must maintain balance between learning and having fun. There will be plenty of opportunities to do both, and students should remain focused. Overall, participating in the EU Study Tour was the best decision I made while pursuing my MA degree.



Carleton UNIVERSITY

EUCE-CANADA NEWS



November 21, 2014: Annual **Teachers' Workshop** for local area high school teachers, to provide information about the current issues of the European Union (EU) with presentations and discussions on the importance of teaching about the EU.

November 24, 2014: A European Perspective Roundtable entitled **Fall of the Iron Curtain and the Aftermath of the Velvet Revolution** to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the peaceful collapse of communist regimes in central Europe, with Ambassadors from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and the Slovak Republic.

December 5, 2014: **Virtual Research Seminar** led by Professor Joan DeBardeleben, based on her research on EU-Russia relations.

For a current and past list of events, please visit www.carleton.ca/events

November 1, 2014: Two-day conference on the **Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)**, organized with McGill's Faculty of Law.



November 5, 2014: The annual **Carrefour Europe 2014**, dedicated to presenting business opportunities in Europe for Quebec entrepreneurs.

November 25, 2014: Visit by the EU Ambassador to Canada, **H.E. Marie-Anne Coninx**, with McGill and UdeM students.

November 29, 2014: Workshop on **European Central Banking after the Global Financial Crisis** at McGill University.

For a current and past list of events, please visit <http://www.centreurope-montreal.ca/en/events-news/>



October 20, 2014: Lecture by Alan Trench, a leading devolution expert from the UK: **The UK's Four National Health Services after Devolution: Divergence without Structure**.

October 22, 2014: Alan Trench: analysis of the results of the **Scottish Referendum**.

November 26, 2014: Lecture on **The EU and the Arctic**.

For a current and past list of events, please visit <http://www.dal.ca/diff/euce/news-events.html>

October 29, 2014: Lecture by German Parliamentarian Dr. Matthias Zimmer on **Sustainability and the New German Energy Policy**.



For a current and past list of events, please visit <http://eucentre.ualberta.ca/calendar-and-events>



November 2, 2014: Public seminar and discussion, **Transatlantic Convergence? Multiculturalism & Immigrant Integration in Canada and Europe**, by Dr. Keith Banting.

November 21, 2014: **European Union One-Day Workshop** for BC high school teachers at Capilano University. Organizers: Dr. Valerie D'Erman and Conrad King.

November 21, 2014: Ambassador of the Delegation of the European Union to Canada, **H.E. Marie-Anne Coninx**.

November 27, 2014: Lecture by Dr. Monique Scheer on **New Centres of Islamic Theology at Universities in the EU: the German Case**. Co-hosted by the EUCE Lecture Series and the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society.

For a current and past list of events, please visit <http://web.uvic.ca/europe/euc.php>

For a complete list of events at Canadian EUCEs, please visit carleton.ca/euce-network-canada



**Centre for European Studies, Carleton University,
EUCE Network Coordinator for Canada**



Centre for European Studies.
Carleton University
1103 Dunton Tower
1125 Colonel By Drive
Ottawa, ON K1S 5B6, Canada
Phone: (613) 520-2600 ext.3117
euce-canada@carleton.ca
www.euce-network.carleton.ca

**Editors: Dara Marcus
Brent Forbes-Murray**