

**Luiss**  
Department of Political Science

**Luiss**  
PhD Programme in Politics

# Annual Postgraduate Conference

**Thursday, 6 June 2024**

Polivalente Room, Luiss Campus at Viale Romania 32, Rome

## 9:15 am Welcome

**Thomas Christiansen**

Professor of Political Science and European Integration  
and Coordinator of the PhD Programme in Politics,  
Luiss University

## 9:30 am | Panel 1

### ***The Politics of the European Union***

**Chair: Vincenzo Emanuele**

Professor of Political Science, Luiss University

### **Speakers**

**Celeste Bonnamy**

Postdoctoral Fellow, Luiss University

*Geopolitical Dynamics of Artificial Intelligence  
Regulation in the European Union: Mapping actors  
and their rhetorical effects*

**Dora Hegedus**

PhD Candidate, Luiss University

*Towards a Europe of Subregions? –  
Investigating the drivers of subregional actorship in the EU*

**Giulia Gallinella**

PhD Candidate, Luiss University

*Rethinking Emergency Powers in the EU:  
The use of delegated rulemaking in the context of crises*

**Aslinur Inalci**

PhD Candidate, Luiss University

*The Influence of EU Accession on Control of Corruption  
and the Anticorruption Civil Society Organizations  
in Southeast Europe: A comparative analysis  
of five Balkan countries*

## 11:00 am Coffee Break

## 11:30 am | Panel 2

### ***Transnational Contestation Over Values***

**Chair: Emiliana De Blasio**

Professor of Sociology of Culture, Luiss University

### **Speakers**

**Ugur Bulgan**

Postdoctoral Fellow, Luiss University

*Reimagining Transitional Justice:  
A global framework for queer injustices and migration*

**Ilaria Lorusso**

PhD Candidate, Luiss University

*Making Sense of EU's Approach to  
Gender Mainstreaming in Migration Policy*

**Elise Daniaud Oudeh**

PhD Candidate, Luiss University

*Tourists at War: The representation of heritage  
and culture as instrumentalized by russian war  
reporters in Syria, 2015-2020*

**Mark Felix**

PhD Candidate, Luiss University

*Structural Climate Change: Theorising the overlap  
of climate change and structural injustice*

## 1:00 pm Lunch Break

*Brown bag lunch to be picked up  
from the canteen*

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**2:00 pm | Panel 3**

## ***Polarisation and Conflict Around Europe***

**Chair:** Rosario Forlenza

Professor of History and Political Anthropology,  
Luiss University

### **Speakers**

**Flavia Canestrini**

Postdoctoral Fellow, Luiss University

*Navigating Extraterritorial Sanctions:*

*Western European response to U.S. hegemony in 1982*

**William Atkinson**

PhD Candidate, Luiss University

*Post-Valence Politics? The effects of voter polarization on party competition*

**Rebecca Maria Perla Iotti**

PhD Candidate, Luiss University

*Exploring the Impact of Economic Statecraft on EU Member States, the EU as an Institution, and Beyond: The case of China*

**Enrico Ciappi**

Postdoctoral Fellow, Luiss University

*The European Union Facing Hard Politics:*

*The origins of the EU strategic autonomy (1992-2014)*

**3:30 pm | Coffee Break**

*Aula Polivalente*

**3:45 pm | Roundtable - *What to Expect from the European Elections?***

**Chair:** Flavia Lucenti

Postdoctoral Fellow, Luiss University

### **Speakers**

**Thomas Christiansen**

Professor of Political Science and European Integration and Coordinator of the PhD Programme in Politics, Luiss University

**Lorenzo De Sio**

Professor of Political Science and Director of CISE, Luiss University

**Edoardo Bressanelli**

Professor of Political Science, Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies

**5:00 pm | Concluding Remarks**

**Thomas Christiansen**

Professor of Political Science and European Integration and Coordinator of the PhD Programme in Politics, Luiss University

**5:15 pm | Reception/Aperitif**

*The Dome*

**LUISS**



# Annual Postgraduate Conference

## Overview of Conference Presentations



### ***Post-Valence Politics? The effects of voter polarization on party competition***

William Atkinson

Descriptive analyses have shown that ideological polarisation between the supporters of competing parties is rising in the United States and several European countries. Despite this, surprisingly little is understood about how parties strategically adapt to polarisation in the electorate. The aim of this project is to address this gap, focusing initially on how voter polarisation affects 1) the issues which parties respond to, and 2) the deployment of 'valence' strategies that emphasise parties' competence and integrity. A novel theoretical framework is constructed by integrating existing theories of voter polarisation and party competition – it is expected that polarisation increases parties' responsiveness to the issue priorities of their core supporters, while constraining the efficacy of valence strategies. To test these hypotheses, a quantitative research design which connects voter attitudes to party strategy is proposed, drawing on longitudinal data from national election surveys and party campaign materials.

### **Geopolitical Dynamics of Artificial Intelligence Regulation in the European Union: Mapping actors and their rhetorical effects**

Céleste Bonnamy

This research delves into the impact of debates surrounding the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Act on shaping the European Union's identity as a «geopolitical actor.» It aims to map the actors lobbying the European Commission and Parliament to influence the AI act, objectively examining the roles of cultural industries and non-EU entities in this process. The study reveals an over-representation of US-based entities in lobbying for EU AI regulation, emphasizing the transatlantic nature of the debate. It also highlights that discussions on AI regulation predominantly involve three major industry categories: digital, financial, and cultural. Additionally, the research explores the rhetorical effects of lobbying, particularly regarding geopolitical considerations and the protection of «European culture.» The methodology involves creating a comprehensive database from publicly available MEPs' and Commissioners' agendas and scrutinizing debates within the European Parliament in 2023. Utilizing network and discourse analysis, the study aims to unravel the dynamics underlying these processes..

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### ***Reimagining Transitional Justice: A global framework for queer injustices and migration***

Ugur Bulgan

Political transition can be defined as a normative paradigm shift in the organization of a society that transforms political relationships. We witness such changes in the global scale with regard to hetero- and cis-normative societies. If we can convincingly argue that the peoples of the world have been going through a long-delayed yet inescapable paradigm shift with regard to non-heterosexual sexual orientations and non-cisgender gender identities, we should affirm a global political transition. This would raise the need for a new conceptualization of transitional justice that accommodates justice claims regarding global political transitions. In this paper, I would like to propose a new conceptualization of transitional justice that is capable of providing normative guidance for global political transitions targeted at identity-based structural groups such as LGBTI+. I will further my argument by emphasizing the disparity among different nation-states within transition and how to vindicate it.

### ***Navigating Extraterritorial Sanctions: Western european response to U.S. hegemony in 1982***

Flavia Canestrini

The paper examines the Western European response to the 1982 extraterritorial sanctions imposed by the United States. As the U.S. extended its territorial nexus beyond its borders, European governments sought ways to resist and counter American power. Through archival research, the analysis spans three phases: initial assessment and legal examination, strategic responses from affected countries, and the emblematic case of France navigating the enforcement of sanctions. The paper highlights the unprecedented nature of the situation, where four major industrialized nations united against U.S. interference, marking a turning point in the evolution of modern sanctions. It examines the means employed by European countries to confront U.S. extraterritorial actions, including the potential risks of secondary sanctions and recourse to judicial courts. Ultimately, the historical analysis of the European response highlights the challenges of navigating a global economy under U.S. hegemony and offers insights into the future dynamics of modern sanctions.

### ***The European Union Facing Hard Politics: The origins of the EU strategic autonomy (1992-2014)***

Enrico Ciappi

Since the end of the Cold War, the European Union has been struggling to develop an awareness of itself as a global actor. The concept of EU strategic autonomy has recently revitalised the debate on the Union as a geopolitical power, capable of running ambitious economic, political and even military policies. This paper is aimed at reconstructing the historical roots and geopolitical features of this concept from the Maastricht Treaty (1992) to the first invasion of Ukraine (2014). New archival findings demonstrate that the current notion of EU autonomy harks back to the strategic debate of the early 1990s.

After the launch of the CFSP, supranational agencies formed a policy network with think tanks and other NGOs claiming a more ambitious EU international agenda. Over time, the EU's current quest for self-governance results from a long-standing discourse on the limits and potentialities of a more coherent and strategically oriented EU foreign policy.

### ***Tourists at War: The representation of heritage and culture as instrumentalized by russian war reporters in Syria, 2015-2020***

Elise Daniaud Oudeh

This article aims to develop a better understanding of the narrative mechanisms implemented through the daily onsite coverage of the Russian intervention in Syria (September 2015) by Russian war correspondents on social media, as part of the overall communication strategy of the Russian Federation. In a context of compromised media autonomy, the online media coverage of the conflict for Russian audiences constitutes an interesting case study of soft power and manipulation of public consciousness : it crystallises different reporting tools including photography, text, videos and online streaming, associated with reporting techniques blurring the lines between professional work and personal opinions, therefore creating confusion between amateur testimonies and professional targeted journalism.

The researcher will lead a semi-automated analysis of 6000 images shared on Vkontakte and Twitter and complement it with a qualitative analysis tackling recurring narrative frames, with a special focus on the symbolic meaning surrounding historical, cultural, and religious heritage.

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### ***Structural Climate Change: Theorising the overlap of climate change and structural injustice***

Mark Felix

Climate change is a human-made catastrophe of global, intertemporal, and planetary proportions. In addition to being political and social, climate change is crucially a structural phenomenon. Historically-grown political and social structures are combining with physical and technological ones to distribute the negative effects of climate change predominantly on marginalised or poorly-off groups. As such, the realities of climate change are primarily characterised by their fundamentally unjust nature and their interactions with existing—often unjust—structures, thereby significantly increasing overall complexity. While both the realms of practice and theory are generally aware of this, the problematic is often set aside or pressed into schemata ill-suited for analysing or confronting the issues at stake. Using a problem-motivated and structural approach, this research aims at uncovering and reconciling the problems of practical and theoretical approaches to climate change from a political theory perspective. In doing so, it centres the most vulnerable groups and the complexities of their contexts in its analysis.

### ***Rethinking Emergency Powers in the EU: The use of delegated rulemaking in the context of crises***

Giulia Gallinella

In the context of managing the ‘polycrisis’, and particularly in the last few years, the EU has resorted to delegated rulemaking, namely delegated and implementing acts pursuant to Arts. 290 and 291 TFEU respectively. This work analyses empirically if the use of delegated rulemaking during crises proved to be a sufficient alternative in the absence of genuine emergency powers in the EU. In particular, it provides an analysis of the use of delegated and implementing acts in the scope of the EU’s response to the sovereign debt crisis, the so-called refugee crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the consequences to the war in Ukraine. By way of conclusion, the paper discusses to what extent ordinary instruments such as delegated rulemaking can become an efficient and effective tool of crisis governance, with the aim of contributing to the scholarly debate on the emergency powers of the EU.

### ***Towards a Europe of Subregions? – Investigating the drivers of subregional actorship in the EU***

Dora Hegedus

The EU’s subregions have received amplified attention both in the media and the academic literature due to their increased visibility in EU decision-making. They managed to induce multiple negotiation stalemates, even though none of the groups achieved real blocking minority under qualified-majority arrangements in the Council. Examples of the recent flare in subregional activism include the New Hanseatic League, the Frugal Four, and the Visegrad Group. Hitherto, the literature on sub-regionalism remains under-explored, scattered, and it fails to offer feasible explanations to when subregions rise to prominent actorship. The proposed presentation will demonstrate an extract of my PhD thesis, including the theory chapter, the methodology chapter, and initial findings. The thesis investigates the following research question: “Under what conditions do subregions become effective actors in EU-level negotiations?”. Once the necessary and sufficient conditions under which subregions become effective actors have been identified via QCA, the thesis will continue with zooming into a case study about the Visegrad 4 (Czechia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia). The interaction between these four countries will be analysed via process-tracing during the following selected policy negotiations: the 2015-2020 reform attempts of the Dublin Agreement, the creation of the Rule of Law conditionality mechanism, the EU’s green transition, and the EU’s response to the war in Ukraine.

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### ***The Influence of EU Accession on Control of Corruption and the Anticorruption Civil Society Organizations in Southeast Europe: A comparative analysis of five Balkan countries***

Aslinur Inalci

Despite the long-standing EU engagement for the promotion of good governance, corruption remains to be a continuous challenge in the EU candidate countries in Southeast Europe. Thus far, the EU's anticorruption support has only generated superficial reforms, failing to meet the initial expectations that the prospect of EU membership would bring about robust transformation in the region. This study aims to analyze first; the process of corruption control in five Southeast countries: Croatia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, and Serbia and second; the role of EU's support to anticorruption civil society organizations (CSOs) in the region on their ability to control corruption. Therefore, the overarching research questions of this dissertation are: a) How has been the progress of Croatia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Serbia in corruption control in the context of EU accession and b) How does the EU support influence the CSOs efforts to control corruption?

### ***Exploring the Impact of Economic Statecraft on EU Member States, the EU as an Institution, and Beyond: The case of China***

Rebecca Perla Maria Iotti

This research aims to investigate the impact of Chinese economic statecraft, defined as both coercion and incentives, on a target state. Chinese economic statecraft is not defined in this thesis as the set of economic resources available to the state, but rather in terms of modes of influencing countries towards which it is directed, as well as the international order. Crucially, it sets out to investigate the impact on a target state that is an EU member state, on the EU as an institution, and on a country outside the EU. Therefore, it aims to answer whether, and subsequently why, belonging to a political union, such as the EU, affects the modes of

influence of Chinese economic statecraft. Following the literature on wedging and binding diplomatic strategies, the thesis explores how Chinese economic statecraft against the EU impacts the diplomatic relations between the EU and the US, both in terms of cooperation and competition.

### ***Making Sense of EU's Approach to Gender Mainstreaming in Migration Policy***

Ilaria Lorusso

This project aims at investigating the European Union's approach to the tool of gender mainstreaming (GM) in contested and politicized policy areas. Accordingly, the main research site of this proposal is EU external migration policy. By building up on the scholarship of feminist institutionalism its purpose is double: first, it aims at describing how is GM applied in the policy field; afterwards, its objective turns to trace the impact that securitization narratives have on migration policies' negotiations, ultimately altering the way in which GM will be integrated in such legislative texts. It will do so by employing mainly qualitative methodologies such as Critical Frame Analysis (CFA) and theory-building process tracing. The project is relevant both academically and socially, as it would potentially fill in a literature gap concerning the gender-security nexus in migration phenomena and, at the same time, address the marginalized need of migrants' gendered experiences.