

Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence
Cologne - Paris

WELCOME

EUCOPAS was initiated in September 2015 as Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence together with our partner Sciences Po Paris. Our newsletter will be published yearly presenting all EUCOPAS activities. In October, we started with a public lecture on the European Monetary Union and Grexit. Not only researchers participated in the lively debate but also the interested public was eager to exchange ideas on the future of the Eurozone. In January, we continued with an excellent PhD Workshop in Paris. Young researchers presented their work in an academically fruitful environment. This event is particularly interesting for networking and to present research on the international academic scene.

Eventually, the inaugural EUCOPAS conference took place in March. We took the opportunity to invite well-known academics as well as young researchers and students from all over Europe, but also interested people from Cologne who wanted to dive into the discussions on (dis-)integration in the EU. The final event this year was the international and interdisciplinary MA summer school in Brussels. Students with different academic backgrounds came together to discuss current EU-Turkey relations and the refugee crisis. These five intense days created new pan-European friendships and academic exchange beyond borders. With this first very successful year in mind, we are looking forward to the forthcoming EUCOPAS activities in Paris, Cologne and Brussels. We hope you will enjoy keeping track of our activities and achievements.

Aline Bartenstein, *EUCOPAS Project Manager*

Wolfgang Wessels, *EUCOPAS Academic Co-ordinator*

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EUCOPAS INAUGURAL CONFERENCE

The inaugural conference 'THE EUROPEAN UNION BETWEEN INTEGRATION AND DISINTEGRATION' took place in Cologne on March 17th and 18th, 2016. The Conference was jointly organized with THESEUS, a European network of thinkers and actors. More than 100 international academics, politicians, young researchers, and the interested public discussed past and possible future developments of European integration and disintegration processes. They found that challenges at hand ask for new political and scientific approaches – leaving some speakers more optimistic than others regarding the EU's future.

The conference dealt with a reflection on the past and current crises taking place in and around Europe, and discussed if and how those have been working as catalysts for further institutional, economic or political integration or caused steps of disintegration. It analysed a set of theoretical understandings, concepts, and definitions of the disintegration phenomenon itself as well as possible causalities and

interplays between integrative and disintegrative processes. These academic debates took place within an introductory session, four panels and a conclusion. The first panel dealt with the varieties and different types of crises the European Union has dealt with so far. After creating this thematic fundament, the subsequent panel elaborated on how the institutional architecture of the Union was effected and subject to alteration due to the crises management displayed by the EU.

The third panel was dedicated to the external dimension, namely to the challenges the EU is confronted with on its borders. The fourth thematic panel reflected on possible exits of single member states as well as EU fragmentation. The concluding session characterised all discussions taking place in the respective panels as a sign for the need to actively address problems at hand, and to redefine theoretical models of European integration to better address processes of differentiation and disintegration.



Participants of the inaugural conference.



Informal discussions at the conference.

EUCOPAS is a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence consisting of the Jean Monnet Chair, Prof. Wessels, University of Cologne and the Jean Monnet Chair in European Union Law and Political Science at Sciences Po, Paris. The programme's objective is to promote and mainstream EU-related key subjects in different disciplines and to reach out to the wider public.