

Review of the 8th GARNET Ph.D. School on Global Governance, Regionalism & the Role of the EU: Challenges and Debates: Shaping IR Theory in the Early 21st Century

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This article aims to inform and create awareness of the **GARNET** Network of Excellence, specifically its Ph.D. School which aims to develop an interdisciplinary and international epistemic community at the doctoral level through network building activities.

GARNET

GARNET (<http://www.garnet-eu.org/>) is a Network of Excellence on Global Governance, Regionalisation and Regulation: The Role of the EU and is funded under the 6th Framework Programme of the European Commission. It comprises of 43 leading research centres and universities and is coordinated by Prof. Richard Higgott's team at the Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation (CSGR) at the University of Warwick (<http://www.csgr.org/>). The EU is the most integrated and institutionalised actor in global governance, nevertheless research on regulation and multi-level governance, although sophisticated, is incoherent and weakly coordinated. **GARNET** aims to establish a strong, coherent European research community of expertise with specific focus on governance, regionalisation and the relation between multilateralism and regionalism. Specific network building activities have been developed by **GARNET** in order to guide and achieve its goals. These are amongst others, a virtual network, common databases, an annual conference, a scholarly mobility program and a network of Ph.D. Schools.

The GARNET Virtual Network (VN) is GARNET's online platform which allows students, academia and policy-makers involved in the GARNET network to contact each other, to exchange views and sources. Coordinated by Prof. Brigitte Young's team at the University of Münster, the VN is a significant project to support the goal of network building. Regarding the Ph.D. Schools, the VN is used by participants before, during and after the Ph.D. School. Before students meet each other, they are asked to create a profile on the VN including personal information and research interests. This gives students with common interests the opportunity to exchange views and enter discussion before meeting at actual event. Students also are asked to fulfil certain tasks, such as creating a poster on a lecturer who takes part or to create a their own poster. Furthermore, of significance is that all students are encouraged to comment on at least three Ph.D. projects of fellow students. Again, this type of online discussion and networking occurs in the weeks prior to the Ph.D. School so that students get familiar with their colleagues and research interests.

The GARNET Ph.D. School is a GARNET organised international seminar for doctoral students, the so-called network of Ph.D. Schools. The **GARNET Ph.D. School** offers a week long intensive seminar with active student participation and academic excellence with a specific focus on theoretical and methodological concerns. The goal here is to create a research community on major European and Global Governance issues involved around the network of students at the doctoral level. During the past five years, eight international seminars, all under the main title of 'Global Governance, Regionalism & the Role of the EU' have been organised and have taken place in Brussels, Bruges, Geneva and Kassel. The next Ph.D. School, scheduled for 7-11 December 2009, will be held in Wroclaw, Poland.

8TH GARNET PH.D. SCHOOL: CHALLENGES AND DEBATES: SHAPING IR THEORY IN THE EARLY 21ST CENTURY

The last Ph.D. School entitled 'Challenges and Debates: Shaping IR Theory in the Early 21st Century' was held from 8-12 June 2009 at the Institute for European Studies (IEE) of the Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB). It was coordinated by Prof. Mario Telò (ULB), Prof. Luk van Langenhove (UNU-CRIS) and Dr. Laurent Scheeck (ULB). During the week in which the Ph.D. School took place both students and academia interacted with each other about specific topics concerning International Relations Theory, EU Studies, Global Governance and Regionalism. These specific topics on International Relations Theory and EU Studies have been faced by conceptual debates and factual challenges. Numerous certainties have been called into doubt, such as the rapidly changing relationship between national sovereignty and supranational limitations. These challenges and debates have shaped the variety of theoretical perspectives, whether (neo-)realist, (neo-)functionalist, constructivist or one of the institutionalist approaches. Regarding these contemporary issues, faced by both International Relations Theory and EU Studies, a combination of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches were chosen to study these two levels of enquiry and consequently were divided into five daily research topics, each one grouping two sessions;

1. Deepening an Interdisciplinary Dialogue between European Studies and International Relations;
2. From a Unipolar Moment to a New Multipolar Balance of Power;
3. European Integration Studies and International Relations Theory Critically Assessed;
4. Challenges and Dynamics facing Global Governance;
5. Evolutions in International Institutionalisation and Multilateral Cooperation.

Especially, the third session 'European Integration Studies and International Relations Critically Assessed' started a lively debate between the speakers Prof. Schmitter, Prof. Wiener and participants. Two aspects were of great significance: 1) the question of applying European integration theories to other regions in the world, and 2) the problem of the inability to fully apply a European integration theory onto

the European context. A discussion emerged about the importance of neofunctionalism and its focus on the role of non-state actors which interrupted the state-centric analysis from International Relations experts. Also, neofunctionalism's openness to criticism as doubt continually had been cast upon the usefulness and the applicability as a 'grand theory' of integration. Students questioned its theoretical underpinnings and its plausibility as neofunctionalism was rejected empirically, both by Prof. Schmitter as well as by many other theorists, as events in the 1960s and 70s did not follow the 'predicted' path, or spillovers. This summarised that it can be relatively problematic applying a European integration theory to other regions in the world while it is equally problematic to fully apply integration theory onto the 'blue print' model of the EU.

*"The **Garnet** Ph.D. School is very special for two reasons: 1) it attracts a wide range of top PhD students from across not only Europe but the world; 2) it invites a wide range of top professors from Europe and the US to lecture and interact with those students. This makes for a very intellectually lively interchange of ideas plus creates informal networks for the students that are likely to last over time."*

Prof. Vivien A. Schmidt, Jean Monnet Professor of European Integration, Boston, USA.

Ph.D. Chair Holder Award – Research Plan

Each Ph.D. School grants one distinct award: the Ph.D. Chair Holder award. All participants can apply for chair holder during the Ph.D. School and one student will be elected on the final day. The main task of the Ph.D. chair holder is to stimulate discussion and dialogue during the Ph.D. School but mainly concerning the period between the last and the upcoming Ph.D. School. In order to encourage and continue networking between students, the chair holder arranges certain activities. The main project currently undergoing preparation is a so-called Research Plan. This is an initiative of the current chair holder for a collaboration of contributions which carries the provisional title 'Challenges and Debates: Shaping IR Theory in the Early 21st Century' and as such corresponds to the themes of the 8th Ph.D. School. Its main aim is to include contributions from both Ph.D. students (paper givers and non-paper givers) and academia alike. Students and academia are invited to contribute discussions, interviews, Ph.D. projects, and articles which are to reflect the above-mentioned five research topics of the Ph.D. School. The Research Plan gives everyone who has taken part in the 8th **GARNET** Ph.D. School an opportunity to stay involved and contribute to the development of a research community and its network building activities.

Complementing the proposed Research Plan, the current chair holder also distributes Call for Papers on the **GARNET** Virtual Network. This is an online platform which gives students, academia and policy-makers involved in the **GARNET** network the opportunity to contact each other, to exchange views and sources. The VN is a significant project to support the goal of network building. Currently, two panels are being organised which relate to the themes of the 8th Ph.D. School. First of all, a panel is being proposed for the **GARNET** conference to be held in Brussels, 'The EU

in International Affairs Conference 2010' (<http://www.ies.be/conference2010>). This proposed panel entitled 'The EU in the Global Political Economy' is interested in original and innovative contributions to explain and discuss EU trade strategy's increasing turn to interregionalism and bilateralism. One of the key issues to be addressed is the prospect for interregional cooperation as fostered by the EU. Questions this panel deals with are for example: what lessons can we learn from the study of the EU's interregional and bilateral relations for the analysis of EU foreign economic policy and the EU's behaviour as an actor on the global stage? Currently under consideration is to also propose a panel for the upcoming Young Researchers Workshops (YRW) organised by the ECPR Standing Group of International Relations (SGIR) (<http://www.sgir.eu/>) This YRW offers an opportunity for young scholars to become more acquainted with academic conferencing. Alumni Ph.D. participants are welcome to collaborate in proposing or applying for a prospective panel, whether for the conferences mentioned above or for future conferences or workshops. All information is available online on the **GARNET** Virtual Network. Participation is however not only limited to alumni Ph.D. students. Other students (postgraduate and Ph.D. students) are more than welcome to participate, provide or request information. Please send details and questions to: Aukje.vanLoon@rub.de

Here some interesting facts regarding the **GARNET** Ph.D. School kindly provided by Prof. Mario Telò (Academic Council President).

250 alumnis for 8 PhD school seminars (out of 400 applicants) coming from 5 continents and the world's best universities as well as from peripheral institutes with brilliant CV's.

80 leading scholars as teachers among them:

H. Milner and J. Ikenberry (Princeton U),
Z.Chen (Fudan Shanghai), P. Schmitter (EUI), I. Wallerstein (EPHHSS, Paris),
R.O. Keohane (Duke U.), K. Smith (LSE), L. Fawcett (Oxford U),
A. Gamble (Cambridge), V. Schmidt (Boston U), M. Zürn (Berlin),
B. Hettne (Göteborg), V. Aggarwal (UC, Berkeley)
R. Higgott (Warwick), D. Bach (Bordeaux), M. Telò (ULB).

Declaration of Robert Keohane (Princeton U):

"in my career I never met a so alive, various and competent PhD. students audience"

Prof. Mario Telò:

"The European Commission is so happy with this 5 years long experience of the **GARNET** Ph.D. School that the following project Erasmus Mundus Ph.D. (GEM Global governance, Europe, Multilateralism) has been selected and will be financed for five more years (from 2009 to 2015)."

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