

GPSG NEWSLETTER 04 –JULY 2005

Dear Colleagues

Welcome to the fourth newsletter of the Greek Politics Specialist Group. Having just celebrated our first birthday, we are expanding the scope of the newsletter to include comment articles by our Thematic Networks (each Newsletter will feature one Network). In the first of those articles, *Anna Vallianatou* (Co-Ordinator of Thematic Network A) discusses the impact of the recent EU Constitution referenda on Greece.

Furthermore, we are introducing a new section with information on research centres, institutes and think-tanks on Greek Politics. In this issue, *Kyriakos S. Hatzaras* introduces the work of 'Ideologikon'.

Keep sending your material, news and comments to rgerodimos@bournemouth.ac.uk and zisouli@otenet.gr

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1. 'One Year Later': GPSG celebrates first anniversary

It has been a busy twelve months for the Group. This time last year, the Greek Politics Specialist Group (GPSG) existed only on paper – that paper being our proposal to the PSA's Executive Committee. Since the approval of that proposal, the GPSG has grown to be one of the largest and most active specialist groups in the PSA, hosting four panels at the annual conference, supporting doctoral students through small grants, and establishing six thematic networks with their own resource documents and co-ordinators. A Specialist Group is only as good as its members so we would like to thank everyone for their continuing support. We would also like to invite more members to become active in the Group – please [get in touch](#) to find out how *you* can help GPSG to grow.

2. Latest News: Membership; Athens Meeting; Networks

As of July 20th our **membership** stands at **110**, which is almost double the number of our founding members last July. A full list of members is available [upon request](#). Membership at the GPSG is free – if you would like to become a member or to nominate someone who is interested please contact our Secretary Andrew Liaropoulos (aliaropoulos@hotmail.com).

The **next meeting** of the GPSG's Committee will be held in late July (26-28) in central Athens [details to be confirmed]. The agenda includes a series of very important issues and we welcome any member who would like to [take part](#) in the discussion or [submit input](#) beforehand.

Finally, I am delighted to announce that Anna Vallianatou (University of Athens) and Anastasios Chardas (University of Sussex) have accepted to be Co-ordinators of **Thematic Network A**, "Greece and the Challenge of a 25-Member EU". We are also grateful to Michael J. Romanos (London School of Economics) who has accepted the position of Contributor in the same network. The team of Network A have already put together the first draft of the resources document with bibliography and weblinks (available at: http://www.psa.ac.uk/spgrp/greek/Network_A.pdf).

3. Review of the 2nd LSE PhD Symposium

On June 10th, 2005, the [Hellenic Observatory](#) at the European Institute of the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) organised the [2nd PhD Symposium on Modern Greece](#).

Following a thorough process of selection, the Greek Politics Specialist Group awarded three small grants (£80 / €120) to doctoral students from regional Greece presenting papers at the Symposium. The three successful presenters were Maria Xenitidou (SEERC, Thessaloniki); Kyriakos S. Hatzaras (Ideologikon, Thessaloniki) and Vaso Papageorgiou (University of the Aegean).

The event itself was very successful with many interesting panels and papers, as well as three immensely enjoyable keynote speeches. In his opening plenary speech, Professor Stathis Kalyvas (Yale University) presented some interesting data regarding the make-up of political science faculties and departments in Greece. Prof. Nikolaos Zahariadis (University of Alabama at Birmingham) then demonstrated the contradictions and dilemmas of the 'Macedonian Question' and of Greek Foreign Policy. The Symposium concluded with a keynote speech by Prof. Nicos Mouzelis (LSE) - admittedly the "father" of Greek sociology and political science studies in the UK – who took the audience on a journey to modern and postmodern theorizing.

Several GPSG members attended and presented at the event, while Roman also chaired a great panel on domestic politics. The full text of the papers presented in the Symposium can be found at the Hellenic Observatory's website ([click here](#)).

4. Thematic Network Article:

“The Impact of the Double Rejection of the European Constitution on Greece”

by Anna Vallianatou

After the rejection of the European Constitution by France and the Netherlands, the European Council (16-17/6/2005) decided that it is wise to “freeze” the document. Therefore, at least until 2007, the EU enters into a transitional period, into a period of introspection. Following the discussion¹ that takes place in Greece (unfortunately that discussion is mainly limited among academics) we come to the conclusion that this situation will more or less have a negative effect on Greece.

The most important consequence of the EU not producing (at least for the time being) a Constitutional Charter will probably be the delay of the enlargement process. It is argued that one of the main reasons that exhorted the French and the Dutch people to oppose to the European Constitution was the recent accelerating pace of the enlargement procedure, and particularly, the prospect of the Turkish accession. The prospect of the accession of other countries apart from Romania and Bulgaria seems remote, at least for the time being. Consequently, the accession process of Turkey as well as the European prospect of the Western Balkans is at stake. Therefore, the strategic objective of Greece is jeopardized. Greece expected that Turkey’s European perspective would motivate the normalization of the bilateral relations of the two countries. In addition, Greece will not be able to play a strategic role in the region given that the European embracement of the Western Balkans will not take place in the short-term. The vision of the South East Europe being an area of stability and prosperity is blurred. The entire reformative procedure in the countries of Western Balkans is jeopardized since the main driving force, the prospect of EU accession, is removed.

The two negative referenda also led to the weakening of the European Union’s international role. In addition, the fact that the prospect of future enlargement in the short term is contested weakens a very important instrument of the EU external policy: economic diplomacy. This situation affects the external role of Greece which, as a small country, depends directly on the stature of the European Union in the international scene.

The strategic vision of federalism seems to be severely wounded and the integrationist group of countries seems to be segmented. It is argued that the issue of subsidiarity will be more intensively discussed and that, in the short term, it will be more difficult to confer powers from the national to the European level. In brief, the negative vote of the French and the Dutch peoples disturbed the European integration process, which was weakened in the eyes of all European citizens. In addition, the adoption of liberal economic reforms will be negatively affected since, as it was shown from several surveys, one of the reasons for rejecting the European Constitution was the public fear that this document was extremely liberal. This situation could detain the process of modernization in Greece.

The crisis of the European Constitution seems to affect the institutional European architecture and to disjoint the European Union. The option of creating core groups in the context of the EU is widely discussed. This new European architecture would constitute a new challenge for all EU member states that will have to respond to new important dilemmas.

As far as Greece is concerned, the country should strive to participate in the core group. It would be better for Greece if participation in the eurogroup were the main criterion for the inclusion of a member state in the ‘core group’. In general, Greece should analyze the new situation prudently and try to take the right decisions in order to minimize, if possible, the negative effects of those new developments.

Anna Vallianatou is Co-Ordinator of Thematic Network A. Email: annavallianatou@yahoo.com

¹ This article is based on the views of several Greek academics as they are expressed in the context of relative conferences as well as through newspaper articles.

5. Featured Institute: IDEOLOGIKON

by *Kyriakos S. Hatzaras*

The Institute of Development and Industrial Studies (IDIS) IDEOLOGIKON has been founded by PhD graduates and young professionals having been repatriated to and now living in Greece. The idea has “spinned off” of the academic environment of the LSE in late 2003 and IDEOLOGIKON is thus home to a significant academic heritage. The Institute’s mission is that of the enhancement of social capital, as the lifeblood for local development, through structured dialogue for research, and the promotion of economic and social development in European regions. Its people have pooled together a diverse set of experience at a very high level to the aim of working for the European periphery.

The Institute’s convenient geographical location in greater Thessaloniki has enabled an initial round of activity in SE Europe with a local focus and strong international dimension. Projects discussed and agreed in the framework of local communities have been the upgrade of the littoral zone of lake Pamvotis in Ioannina, a study of new electronic technology as determinant for enterprise export growth in Central Macedonia and the renovation of the Poiana Brasov resort in Romania with the view of the long term development aim of hosting winter Olympic Games. These research projects are being composed by structured dialogue among local socio-economic organisations facilitated by the Institute.

While the core activity of the Institute is comparative applied socio-economic research based on dialogue among socio-economic organisations, IDEOLOGIKON has further successfully experimented in consulting and conducting other think-tank operations. The next innovative project is for the Institute to evolve as a membership-based non-governmental organisation, with members having an interest in the promotion of local economic and social development, and will start out in the academic communities of Athens and Thessaloniki. More information is accessible at www.ideologike.gr or www.ideologike.gr/ideologikon/home_en.htm.

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6. Website, Feedback & Contact Details

Visit our website: <http://www.psa.ac.uk/spgrp/greek/GreekPol.htm>

As always, we welcome suggestions and comments regarding all aspects of the Group, including how to improve this newsletter. Please send your news and views at:

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