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The Future of EU Governance in Comparative Perspective

SAPERE WISEN

EUROPA

Villa Vigoni signed a partnership agreement with the Brexit Institute of Dublin City University, which will allow the two institutions to jointly undertake a multi-annual research project on the future of the EU institutional order in comparative perspective.

The project – which is funded by the German Federal Ministry of

Education and Research (BMBF) – was kicked-off in Dublin on Thursday 12 December 2019 at the event on “Brexit & the New EU Institutional Cycle”, which featured as speaker Michele Valensise, Italian President of Villa Vigoni and former Secretary-General of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Hans-Gert Pöttering, former President of the European Parliament.

“For Villa Vigoni it is natural to follow with particular attention the developments and the discussions around the future of the European Union. This commitment is in line with our tradition and acquires even greater importance today in the current phase of the European integration process. We are therefore very pleased of the collaboration with the Brexit Institute of the DCU in Dublin to foster

together through a series of round tables in different countries a reflection on the implications of Brexit for the EU” says Valensise.

The project proves once again how Villa Vigoni and its commitment to foster the Italian-German relationship is always framed in a European context and in cooperation with other EU Member States.

# Research purpose

In 2019 the European Union (EU) is entering its next five-year institutional cycle at a time of great turbulence. At the constitutional level, the EU is dealing with Brexit – the unprecedented process whereby the United Kingdom (UK) is seeking to leave the EU – and facing a growing threat to its foundational values as a result of the authoritarian drift at play in a number of Central & Eastern European member states. At the policy level, the EU is still grappling with the legacy of the euro- and migration-crises, and the partial/idiosyncratic responses to them, which have produced deep divisions in the functioning of Europe’s Economic & Monetary Union (EMU) and Schengen zone. And at the political level the EU is witnessing the rise of

populist political forces which are hostile to European integration – not just in peripheral nations, but also in core, founding member states.

The purpose of the research project is to analyze to what extent the EU system of governance – that is the mechanisms through which decision-making is taken – is fit for purpose, and thus able to tame the centrifugal tendencies at play in the EU. To this end, the project endeavors to study how the EU institutions, party system & constitutional structures impact on continental integration – by comparing the EU with other compound/federal/multinational polities. In fact, while the EU faces specific challenges,

centrifugal pressures have been historically experienced also by other orders, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada, which are however prototypical cases of alternative governance systems. As such, their experience provides a wealth of insights to explain the incentives/disincentives that different governance arrangements can play toward union/disunion.

The project has profound policy relevance. The EU is in the midst of a reflection about its future – a process started during the euro-crisis, catalyzed by the Commission whitepaper on the future of Europe for the 60th anniversary of the Rome Treaty and recently

relaunched by leaders like Macron. However, most reform proposals fly over the issue of governance. Instead, if it is true that alternative governance arrangements have a bearing on the EU ability to govern crises, governance reforms should be at the center of any reflection on the future of Europe, particularly as a result of the implications of Brexit. As such, the project would also develop policy proposals to improve EU governance by advancing innovative ideas, connecting to other initiatives to reform the EU, including the ongoing plan to set-up a Conference on the Future of Europe.

All the events will take place in English.



2019

Brexit Institute  
at DCU,  
Dublin

2020

Villa Vigoni,  
Menaggio

2021

European  
Parliament,  
Brussels