

Regional Integration Observer

Vol. 3 No. 1

March 2009

Editorial

The history of the European Union has shown that the success of regional integration depends to a high degree on the qualification of human resources and the ability to learn from failure. This applies equally to any other regional integration project.

The first edition of the "Regional Integration Observer" (RIO) in 2009 takes up this issue and discusses opportunities and shortfalls in the interlocking areas of research and education with regard to regional integration. Articles reflect the need for detailed analysis of regional integration processes and the importance of conveying knowledge gained, to succeeding generations. Our authors take a closer look at efforts in regions such as the Caribbean and West Africa.

We have requested experts from all parts of the world to comment on the driving forces to deal with the European integration process in their respective regions. They reveal a clear imperative to draw lessons from each other and develop a comparative approach in the study of regional integration. The Center for European Integration Studies (ZEI) follows this approach not only in its research work but offers unique programs for human-capacity building.

In March 2009, ZEI hosted for the first time the "ECOWAS-ZEI Academy in Comparative Regional Integration" for high-ranking civil servants from the 15 member states of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the ECOWAS Commission. It is the objective of this academy to support the region-building process in West Africa and to build a sustainable platform for the sharing of experiences with Europe. This RIO includes a short comment of the Vice President of the ECOWAS Commission, Mr. Jean de Dieu Somda. With all of the skilled contributors, ZEI wishes its readers an interesting lecture.



Matthias Vogl, Junior Fellow at ZEI



ZEI Director Prof. Kühnhardt delivering a lecture at the Center for European Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) New Delhi, to his right: Former German Ambassador in India Bernd Mützelburg and Prof. Rajendra Jain, Director JNU Center for European Studies.

A new academic frontier: The global dissemination of regional integration studies

* Ludger Kühnhardt

1. New world trends require new academic conceptualizations

Region-building has become a global phenomenon of growing relevance. During the past two decades, several regional groupings around the world have redefined their focus, priorities and ambitions. Much remains to be done to turn vision into reality, in the European Union as much as anywhere else. Yet the global proliferation of region-building has become a sustained feature of global political, economic, and increasingly also, social and cultural realities.

Against this background, compartmentalized academic approaches to understanding the root causes, the dynamics, the potential and the obstacles of region-building, have reached their limits. Academic disciplines need to be better connected to increase our level of knowledge and the depth of our understanding of region-build-

ing processes. This does not mean that highly respected academic disciplines are incapable of providing excellent analysis of region-building processes but rather, that in order to fully grasp the dynamics of the current trends, pluridisciplinary approaches are highly advisable in order to cover the manifold dimensions of any regional grouping.

Area studies provide us with great insight and knowledge about a certain area, mostly defined by its cultural setting or the relevance of one or two of its big states. It requires a new reflection about the concept of region-building in order to better understand and focus the study of regions as areas. Comparative research and comprehensive research programs that involve partners from around the world will become a new dimension in the process of globalizing academia. Most of this scholarly work will be demand-driven yet needs to pursue objective criteria of competence, integrity

and solidity in order to impact the academic discourse or the expectations of practitioners of region-building.

2. Academic studies and capacity-building

Region-building is a man-made process. It requires knowledge, leadership and dedication. It requires capable actors to conceptualize and capable actors to implement. Studies on regional integration have become essential to train experts – experts with detailed knowledge and experts with a sense of overview and comparative analytical skills. Usually, pluridisciplinary regional integration studies need to cover political, economic, legal and cultural features of region-building. They support intercultural competencies and promote conceptual and strategic thinking. Regional integration studies are of a practical nature as they generate experts with applicable knowledge and understanding.

Capacity-deficits are a general fact across regional groupings. The budgets provided by member states are usually too small and so far, no regional grouping (the EU included) can rely on an independent supranational budget. The officials engaged in the daily routine of institutions and organs of

and projects of regional integration. Region-building affects institutions in member states of any regional grouping. Over time, regional integration also has effects on societies across an integrating region. These unavoidable trends require academic reflection.

3. Outreach and dialogue

Region-building has become a multidimensional phenomenon. The important regional groupings around the world are engaged in more than just a single issue. Their rationale and purpose has become multi-faceted. Most regional groupings are driven by security and development considerations. They formulate economic and/or political goals and develop instruments and techniques aimed at adding value to the respective region. To implement these goals requires communication, deliberation and persuasion. Those involved in the respective activities need knowledge and a comparative overview. They must be able to connect experiences elsewhere with the challenges at home. Policy dialogues with the main shapers and makers of public opinion and policy formulation are of the essence. Regional integration studies need to engage in outreach activities aimed at disseminating scholarly findings and contributing to the

global trends, awareness is growing around the globe: engaging in region-building and studying its preconditions, consequences, obstacles and potential are increasingly seen as two sides of the same coin.

The study of regional integration began with a focus on region-building in Europe. The number of disciplines involved has grown; the focus of research has been broadened; and the depth of the study of regional integration in Europe and its application through teaching and outreach has been solidified. In the meantime, research institutes and teaching activities focusing on European integration have become a global phenomenon. The study of European integration across Europe is certainly no surprise at all. But how does one explain the study of European integration in the US, in China, in India and in Thailand, in Australia and in New Zealand, in Korea and in Egypt, in Israel and in Costa Rica, in Barbados and in Argentina? This list is not comprehensive and the answer is twofold: 1) Academics around the world have become interested in studying regional integration in the European Union in order to better grasp the effects of European integration on their own regions and the wider world and 2) they are also studying European regional integration with the intention to draw comparative conclusions for the evolution of region-building elsewhere, especially in their respective regions.

5. The role of ZEI

The most recent trend echoes the global proliferation of region-building: Region-building studies, research and teaching activities are beginning to focus on non-European regional groupings. Eventually, comparative dimensions will grow. A new generation of regional integration experts is emerging worldwide. Against this background, ZEI continues to offer experience, partnership and advice for the promotion of regional integration studies around the globe. Our publications will continue to reflect this commitment. Our post-graduate education will expand in order to meet the growing demand, also on the level of a structured doctoral program currently under preparation.

Around the world, the proliferation of region-building will be followed by the dissemination of regional integration studies and research, teaching and outreach programs. ZEI is a partner in this new worldwide frontier of academia.

** Prof. Dr. Ludger Kühnhardt, Director at the Center for European Integration Studies*



“Many countries in the Middle East, particularly Israel, are marked by extremely significant historical, political and commercial ties with the European continent. Unfortunately the Middle East is not known for its knowledge and understanding of European affairs, which the Center for European Studies at the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya is trying to counter via its Certificate/M.A. programme, and a wide array of conferences. In addition, we operate in close cooperation with our partner institutions at the Palestinian Al-Quds University (East Jerusalem) and Yarmouk University (Irbid, Jordan), thus trying to learn a lesson from the European experience of peace-making and reconciliation after the end of the Second World War.”

Avi Primor was Israeli Ambassador in Germany from 1993 - 1999. He is now director at the Center for European Studies at the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya, Israel.

regional integration are often overburdened with paper work that limits their ability to conceptualize strategic planning. Planning units are often under-staffed and over-charged. Improved capacity-building has been identified practically in all regional groupings as an essential element to master the challenges ahead.

Capacity-building does not only touch upon the immediate activities in organs and institutions of regional groupings. The institutions of regional integration also require specialized experts and generalists with a sense of strategy and overview. But the more region-building diversifies its techniques, the more its effects reach beyond the official institutions initiating programs

ongoing public debate.

4. Growth industry: The study of region-building

Region-building tends to develop without a coherent blue-print. Regional groupings around the world give testimony to the power of trial and error, to the unavoidability of incoherent and idiosyncratic actions, and to success through back-doors, detours and unintended consequences. It therefore does not come as a surprise that region-building has preceded regional integration studies. Only with the hindsight knowledge of experience in regional integration does the awareness for the need to reflect about what has been achieved and what has failed to be achieved emerge. In light of recent

Institutions and Research Networks in the Southern Cone

*Marcelo Mondelli

While most countries of the Americas are increasingly linking their economies, most existing „regional“ programs and cooperative efforts, in reality, maintain a national outlook and frame of reference. However, most academic institutions not only teach about integration, they also practice association and link themselves with similar institutions.

These types of practices and associations can be traced back to the early 1950's when they were all built on a common regional spirit of earlier broad networks such as the Unión de Universidades de América Latina (<http://www.UDUAL.org>) established in 1949. At the sub-regional level two other important bodies were also created: the Convenio Andrés Bello (<http://www.CAB.int.co>) founded in 1970, which aimed to promote cultural, educational and scientific collaboration among the Andean Countries; and the association of autonomous public universities, Grupo Montevideo - AUGM (<http://www.GrupoMontevideo.edu.uy>), which emerged within the Southern Cone of the Americas when Mercosur was founded in 1991. The initial commitment of the group revolved around cooperation within the framework of AUGM, largely at the postgraduate level. This association functions with a fair amount of decentralization, through disciplinary centers that include the universities, with the maximum strength and interest being in the corresponding area. The AUGM aims to study common sub-regional

problems in social development, health, environment, and cultural production.

Latin America and the Caribbean region, as with the rest of the world, went through an intensive process of increasing enrollment. During the past decade (1997-2007) gross enrollment rates increased from 17% to 27% however, each sub-region experienced its own dynamics, constructing different types of governance at institutional levels and reformulating the priorities in terms of integrated education.

The Effects of SEM (Mercosur Education Sector)

The Mercosur Education Sector (SEM) has been proposed as a regional space to foster the integration of educational sectors of member countries. SEM was created in 1991 with the signing of the Protocol of Intent by the Ministers of Education of the region, made up of member countries and associates (Bolivia and Chile). The protocol was then submitted to Mercosur's Consejo Mercado Común (CMC), and accepted as an institutional body under the "specialized meetings" of their respective Ministers.

In December 2000, the Ministers of Education adopted the "Gramado Agreement". The agreement covered: internships and student and faculty mobility; accreditation of degrees offered throughout Mercosur; and inter-institutional cooperation at the graduate program level, faculty training, and scientific research. The most significant

progress has been made in the area of joint accreditation of university programs.

The "Buenos Aires Letter of Social Compromise" agreed to in 2004, was then incorporated into the main pillars of SEM, thus creating favorable conditions for the coordination of policies and exchange programs aimed at overcoming social inequalities and related problems. It was argued that "a new horizon of a common space of Higher Education in Mercosur is growing up, through specific mechanisms that include dialogue, follow up, technical assistance, cooperation, and funding". Still Mercosur's space "is clearly far away from the sophistication and high grade of development of that of Bologna process, but it is going on and it is, in some extension, a successful experience, relevant and concrete". Moreover, some relevant issues that shape the agenda of trade negotiations (asymmetries, structural convergence, external economics relations, and the efforts to improve the integration process towards the ideal point of Common Market) were identified as special topics in the interactive relationship between research and trade. For instance, the Mercosur Economic Research Network was reviewed as a significant example of institutionalization of research programs linked to integration issues and trade policy.

* *Marcelo Mondelli, Advisor in External Affairs and Cooperation for the Municipality of Canelones, Uruguay.*

Overview: Think Tanks and Research Institutions on Regional Integration in Latin America

Latin America and the Caribbean regional integration process created and developed an important set of specialized institutions. Perhaps the older and more specialized body in the region, which was born even before the beginning of the regional integration process, was the **Economic Commission for Latin America and Caribbean (ECLAC)**, under direction of Raul Prebisch. The Commission was initially based in Chile and then spread to most capitals of the region. ECLAC made an outstanding contribution on center-periphery theory of development that continues challenging the development style of the region and creates a regional-specific approach to development, underdevelopment, dependence and trade.

There is also a wide set of academic institutions, mostly public or private universities or centers of research dealing with integration issues. For instance, UBA, Instituto y Universidad Torcuato Di Tella (UTDT), University of Bologna (Arg); CLAEH and UdelaR (Uru); CEDES (Par); Fundación Getulio Vargas (Bra).

Other think tanks of the region are the Latin America Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO), CLACSO and Center of Formation for Regional Integration (CEFIR), as semi-governmental bodies providing infrastructure for studies and research.

Moreover, **Mercosur Economic Research Network -MERN-** was established in 1998 and is composed by twelve institutions from Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.

In **Argentina**: Centro de Estudios de Estado y Sociedad (CEDES), Centro de Investigaciones para la Transformación (CENIT), Instituto Torcuato Di Tella (ITDT), Universidad de San Andrés (UdeSA).

In **Brazil**: Instituto de Economía, Universidade Estadual de Campinas (IE/UNICAMP), Instituto de Economía, Universidade Federal de Rio de Janeiro (IE/UFRJ), Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada (IPEA), Fundação Centro de Estudos do Comércio Exterior (FUNCEX).

In **Paraguay**: Centro de Análisis y Difusión de Economía Paraguaya (CADEP), Universidad Católica Nuestra Señora de la Asunción (UCNSA).

In **Uruguay**: CINVE, DECON/FCS.

CARICOM Park - A Research Center for the Future of Caribbean Regional Integration

* Michelle Cave

As the Caribbean repositions itself to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the dynamics of globalization, the collective of island nation states is increasingly removing barriers to the free flow of the factors of production. With the movement of capital, people, information as well as those of goods and services, but especially people, the experiment of Caribbean integration has the greatest chance of success.

Inextricable to this argument is freer trade made possible by new methods of communication and transport using computerized telecommunications and satellite technologies. More and specialized demand through this increased exposure has seen greater attention being paid to the transportation desires of Caribbean peoples, both of the mainland, island and even the diasporic communities. This also comes at a time when all in the transportation industries

o the fore, its design and detail was put out for public input.

In the Caribbean, with democracy so hard won, most everything is in the public domain. Whether this is to our betterment or to our detriment, will be determined, but the past has shown us that universal participation in decisions and events that will shape us as a nation, requires unanimous approval or something close to it. When we look at how and why many of the existing regional integration movements came into vogue, we see that it was deemed almost impossible for them to do otherwise. After 200 years of war, tearing much of the continent apart, a few men deciding that war was much too costly, formed a coal and steel union, the engines of growth at the time.

The European Union has created unified and integrated institutions but not European people. The political culture of the Caribbean would hardly allow this to occur

evolution, where letting go of "ownership" must occur for it to grow. This time has come for the Caribbean Community. We see the beginnings of this erupting through the Caribbean. One stark demonstration of this is the yet unlaunched Caricom Park at the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus. Affectionately dubbed "Caricom" by students and faculty alike, there are centres within the park all dedicated in one way or another to the promotion of Caribbean Affairs and Integration.

The Caricom Park houses the Shridath Ramphal Centre where the Masters of International Trade Policy is carried out. Barbados' past Prime Minister, Owen Arthur, has an office charged with building a library dedicated to research into the issues of Caribbean Integration. The Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies is also housed here and handles issues relating to manpower and economic development, political science, public administration, migration, demography, women and development, human resource development via comparative research, multi-disciplinary projects and sample surveys such as political polls and market research.

The real utility of the Park though is the nature of its research strategy. The Caricom Research Centre, realizing that strong analysis and research will be the driving force behind any initiative to have lasting economic and political integration, is in the process of building a think tank peopled by Caribbean scholars and research students. Their tasks will be to feed the Caribbean Integration effort with culturally specific options for its viable and sustainable development. The fundamental issues of development will be dealt with and, though coming from a distinctly intellectual perspective, a number of distinguished persons have been asked to assist in creating a foundation that would encourage most practical applications for this development agenda of Caribbean integration.

Caricom Park is also charged with the creating and maintaining a Forum for Public Policy so as to achieve "a clarity of purpose" on the things it needs cemented.

Past Prime Minister Owen Arthur has, in speaking about his academic contributions to the Caribbean body of research and the establishment of a space dedicated to creating such, stated, "There is need for high-powered, high-intensity public engagement about the important issues of the day. I don't think there has ever been a period of greater intellectual challenge."

* Michelle Cave, affiliated to the University of the West Indies CARICOM Park

„For intellectual and practical reasons, the study of European integration has always interested Americans. Intellectually, Europe is a laboratory for the most advanced form of institutionalized integration, a phenomenon of great interest to scholars of international organization, international relations, and political science more broadly. Given the prominence of Americans in the social sciences, it is hardly surprising that most of the leading scholars of European in-

tegration in the early years, such as Ernst Haas and Leon Lindberg, were Americans; or that many leading scholars of contemporary



European integration, such as Andrew Moravcsik and Alberta Sbragia, are Americans. More pragmatically,

the development of European integration is of great economic and strategic importance for the United States. American policy makers are avid consumers of information and ideas generated by universities and think tanks on every imaginable subject, including, in the foreign policy realm, the European Union's current trajectory and future prospects. American scholars of European integration are happy to provide the required analysis and insights.

Desmond Dinan is Professor of Public Policy and holds the Jean Monnet Chair in European Public Policy at George Mason University in Washington. He has published extensively on different aspects of European Integration.

have responded to unprecedented hikes in oil prices, in some very creative ways. Endemic to this is the structuring of "hassle-free travel" that the Caribbean Community has promised to implement across the region, making entry into one port, entry into all, one customs space.

With a well established system of democratic action that is firmly respected most everywhere in the Caribbean, the method used in the European experiment in creating a unified space, might not work here. In most instances, the rule of law was used to usher in the EU experiment along with the usage of the monetary tool, the Euro. When the big project of a common currency came

when we finally give the nod to integrate politically.

The economic unification of this region will need to be solidly in place long before its people are comfortable giving their leaders the mandate to unify politically. Interestingly, though solid democracy plus economic integration results in many things, both good and useful, this will only come about if the political trust, cooperation and governance is put into a facilitating mixture.

This is the role of the latest addition to the Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies, a Caricom Research Centre. There comes a time in every movement's



"2009 witnesses the 10th anniversary of New Zealand's National Centre for Research on Europe (NCRE), the country's only graduate research centre exclusively devoted to studying all facets of the EU-NZ bilateral dialogue (see www.europe.canterbury.ac.nz). The unique hallmark of the NCRE has been its pioneering "external perceptions of the EU" research agenda which since 2002 has intensively examined media, public and elite perceptions of the EU in 18 Asia-Pacific countries. For further information, see www.euperceptions.canterbury.ac.nz.)"

Martin Holland is director at the New Zealand's National Centre for Research on Europe at the Canterbury University in Christchurch. Prof. Holland particularly focuses on research on the perception of Europe in the Pacific Region.

United Nations University - Comparative Regional Integration Studies (UNU-CRIS)

* Philippe de Lombaerde

UNU-CRIS is a research and training programme of the United Nations University (UNU) located in Bruges (Belgium). It was established in 2001 and operates as part of a global network of UNU centres engaged in research and capacity development to support the universal goals of the UN and generate new knowledge and ideas, by providing a framework to bring together leading scholars from around the world to tackle pressing global problems.

In particular, UNU-CRIS specializes in studying the processes and consequences of regional integration and cooperation. Research is conducted by a Bruges-based resident academic staff and associated researchers. UNU-CRIS receives its core funding from the Flemish Government (Kingdom of Belgium). Both institutions have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the College of Europe that arranges an institutional collaboration between UNU-CRIS and the College. As a UN Agency, UNU-CRIS is also a member of the United Nations Team in Belgium.

Mission

The mission of UNU-CRIS is to contribute towards achieving the universal goals of the UN and UNU through comparative and interdisciplinary research and training, for better understanding of the processes and impact of intra and inter-regional integration. The aim is to act as a think tank that contributes to capacity-building on issues

of integration and cooperation, particularly in developing countries. UNU-CRIS works in partnership with initiatives and centres throughout the world that are concerned with issues of integration and cooperation and encourage the sense of community between them.

More specifically, the work of UNU-CRIS focuses on:

- Envisioning how multi-level governance is being shaped.
- Monitoring implementation and impact of regional integration.
- Deepening critical understanding of regional integration as a process of social transformation and of the relations between micro- and macro-regionalisms.
- Strengthening governance capacities at local, national, regional and global levels for dealing with regional integration.
- Assessing the actual and potential role of regions in the UN system

Research and Expertise

At present, UNU-CRIS research activities are organised into four research clusters that focus on:

- 1) Studying Regions and Regional Integration from a Comparative and Multi-Level Governance Perspective.
- 2) Monitoring and Assessing Regional Integration Worldwide.
- 3) Studying the Global-Regional Peace and Security Complex.
- 4) Assessing the Socio-Economic Dimensions of Regional Integration.

1) Comparative Regional Integration

In spite of an explosion of literature on regional integration, the "comparative" element remains largely underdeveloped and there is little agreement regarding what constitutes "good" regional integration theory. This results in a fragmented field of study, both in the sense that there is a lack of comparison and cross-fertilisation between scholars focusing on different regions and that there is a lack of dialogue between scholars using different theoretical perspectives. This research cluster seeks to contribute to overcoming these two unnecessary divisions, by taking part in academic discussions and research networks and through the publication of a series of journal articles and book chapters.

2) Monitoring Regional Integration

This cluster aims to develop tools for monitoring and assessing regional integration processes worldwide, as well as to contribute to prospective thinking about regionalism. This cluster consists of basic research aimed at evaluating existing analytical techniques, the development of new tools for retrospective measurements, prospective foresight and forecasting of regional integration processes.

3) Regional Peace and Security

This research cluster aims to further expand our understanding of the contribution of regional integration processes to peace and security as well as to support the in-



"The SNU-KIEP EU Center started its operation in March 1st, 2006, as the first Center for EU studies in Korea. The EU Center will increase the awareness of Koreans on EU institutions and practices, and promote further EU-Korea relationship. The EU Center will also reflect the bilateral policy agenda between the EU and Korea, which culminated with the EU Framework Agreement on trade and cooperation with Korea and its attached political declaration announced in 1996. The EU Center will finally conduct research to promote East Asian integration, drawing lessons from European integration. Korean government's top priority policy is to establish peace and prosperity in East Asia through Northeast Asian cooperation and to this end the learning of the European integration process is inevitable."

Woosik Moon is director at the Seoul National University-Korean Institute for International Economic Policy-EU Center in Seoul. His research focus is on the EU-Korean economic relationship.



„Our Centre has been focused - mainly through its Jean Monnet Module and periodic seminars - in transmitting and discussing those aspects of the European integration experience that could be more useful for Mercosur and South American integration. Governance of the regional geographic space; methodologies of rule-oriented economic integration; transparency and participation of civil society; the effects of economic asymmetries, have been some of the main issues with priority in the Centre agenda.“

Felix Peña is director at the Centre for European Integration Studies at the Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He emphasizes the importance of the study of European Integration for the region-building process in Latin America.

teractions between the UN and regional organisations by addressing three areas of research:

1. Co-operation between the UN and regional organisations.
2. Case studies on the contributions of regional actors to peace and security
3. Case studies of regional approaches to peace and security studies

4) Socio-Economic Dimension of Regional Integration

The cluster aims to advance knowledge about how regional integration affects socio-economic issues and social policies, to advance research as well as policy dialogue and to build upon established partnerships with UNESCO, UNDESA and ILO. The ambition is to bring together existing expertise on social policy issues with expertise on regionalisation, in order to facilitate inter-regional dialogue, policy learning and capacity-building processes.

This cluster contains two strands of research:

1. The study of regional trade and investment agreements from a political economy perspective.
2. The study of regional dimensions of social policies.

•Capacity Building

The two major aims of UNU-CRIS capacity-building activities are to enhance human resources and to strengthen institution building for regional integration in developing countries.

•Visiting Researchers

UNU-CRIS hosts a number of researchers in Bruges every year. Some researchers come in the framework of the FP6 GARNET Network of Excellence, provided with a mobility grant. UNU-CRIS offers also the opportunity for university professors, researchers, and other professionals with a background in regional integration to spend research time in Bruges, for periods from three to twelve months.

•Short-term trainings and capacity-building activities

UNU-CRIS staff performs a number of short-term trainings and capacity-building courses (general and customised) in the area of regional integration, mainly aimed at students and administrative personnel in developing countries.

•Network for Regional Integration Studies (NETRIS)

UNU-CRIS and the College of Europe have introduced, with partner institutions, the Network for Regional Integration Studies, founded by Edulink, the ACP-EU cooperation programme in Higher Education. The project aims to establish and coordinate a network of Higher Education Institutions working within the field of comparative regional integration.

•Internships for graduate students

UNU-CRIS offers unpaid trainee positions for recent graduates whose background and interests respond to some topics in regional integration that fall within the UNU-CRIS Academic Programme.

For further information, visit: www.cris.unu.edu.

** Dr. Philippe de Lombaerde, Research Fellow at UNU-CRIS*



„The Centre for European Studies (CES), with six full-time faculties - the only centre in the country – offering 11 courses to postgraduate and MPhil students on the economy, foreign policy, politics, society of contemporary Europe/European Union. It currently has about 50 MPhil/PhD students. The Centre functions as a nodal point for the teaching, research and promotion and dissemination of research on contemporary European/EU studies in India through its conferences, publications, and public outreach activities.“

Rajendra K. Jain is director at the Centre for European Studies at the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) New Delhi. Prof. Jain is currently focussing his research on the growing relationship between India and the European Union and between Pakistan and the European Union.

New ZEI Publication - EU Foreign Policy in the Mediterranean and the Reform Process in Egypt. From Partnership to Neighbourhood

By Thomas Demmelhuber, ZEI Schriften, Vol. 69, Baden-Baden: Nomos Publishing House, 2009, 343 pages, ISBN 978-3-8329-4460-5

EU foreign policy in the Southern Mediterranean aims at fostering prosperity, stability, and democratic reform, based on a consensus with the Arab partner countries in the region. In the Barcelona Declaration of 1995 and in various documents of the European Neighbourhood Policy both parties have formulated common objectives and established mechanisms to ensure their sound implementation. To achieve these ambitious interests there is a wide-spread consensus in academics and politics that a comprehensive socio-economic development and eventually democratic reform in the authoritarian strip of the Southern Mediterranean are essential preconditions. However, are the established strategies and instruments on the ground sufficient for the EU to implement this diverse agenda together with its partners in the South? Focusing this core question the book aims at analyzing the genesis and results of EU-Egyptian cooperation since 1995 in the context of Egypt's political, economic, and social reform process.

Bridging Knowledge and Decision Making for Regional Integration in West Africa

*Corsino Tolentino

Inspired in part by the Freedom Fighters' legacy and the coming together of nations to form the European Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has set the goal of creating an expanding and solid bloc to augment the commercial, cultural and political weight of the region. These fifteen countries – Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo - constitute a particular group. Its population of more than 260 million speaks English, French, Portuguese and many originally African languages. Nigeria is the most populous country of the region (51.5%) and Cape Verde has the smallest population (0.2%).

There are also sub groups within ECOWAS: eight nations (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo) form the UEMOA (Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine), a monetary and customs union whose members share the CFA (Communauté Française d'Afrique) franc. Six of the remaining seven States (The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone) are preparing to establish a second common currency, the Eco, and the correspondent West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ). This means that by 2010 ECOWAS may have 3 European languages (English, French and Portuguese) and 3 currencies (CFA franc, Eco and Escudo for Cape Verde, the smallest and sole insular member).

In spite of the relative success of ECOWAS, the most dynamic and thriving African sub region, these facts point to some serious difficulties regarding regional integration at large. There is a positive evolution because two or three monetary zones are probably easier to merge than four or five, but one cannot honestly conceive a single West African currency and common central bank in this decade or the next. They are simply not feasible. So, why do people talk so much about regional integration? I think that this is mainly due to an intuitive need, a lack of evidence-based information and the dissociation between knowledge management and decision-making process.

Fortunately, while West Africa is one of the least developed regions in the world, regionalization is increasingly perceived as providing opportunities for sustainable economic growth, peace, social cohesion and democratic consolidation. With this in mind, ECOWAS, Cape Verde, UNESCO and ECOBANK proposed to the Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States the creation of an international research centre for regio-

nal integration and social transformation. In January 18, 2008 the decision to create the West Africa Institute (WAI) in Praia, Cape Verde, was made in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

Since then, we have been traveling down the long and rocky road to its legal creation and installation. Why? Because we need a respected institution to push West Africa into the world knowledge society. However, before achieving those objectives we have to consolidate the various multidisciplinary research teams and networks on regional integration and reinforce interaction and reciprocal confidence between researchers, policy makers, private sector and organized civil society. Partners at national, sub-regional and international levels and, a broad participation of the private sector, scholars and other members of the civil society, provide great challenges and opportunities.

For these reasons, WAI (IAO in French and

Portuguese) emerges as an atypical project. Regional, public and private friendly, it's an independent think tank to promote innovative ideas in a neutral and non-adversarial manner. Additionally, it is designed to place ECOWAS on the contemporary world map of knowledge for development and highlight the value of its insular part: Cape Verde. Furthermore, this institute may facilitate interregional dialogue for cooperation and progress.

It is expected that because it is being carefully created by ECOWAS with specific profile and governing system, the independent West Africa Institute for regional integration will immediately become an excellent category 2 research center under the auspices of UNESCO. The launch is planned for 2010.

* Dr. Corsino Tolentino, Project Coordinator for the West Africa Institute.



Students of the European Studies Program at the American University of Central Asia together with former German Ambassador in Kirgizia, Prof. Dr. Dr. Klaus W. Grewlich at the Center for European Integration Studies.

European Studies as a topic in Central Asia

With ever growing pace of integration processes in Europe and the increased role of the European Union as an international actor there is a need to study these processes more in detail. This is what the European Studies program at the American University of Central Asia in Bishkek commits to achieve in its undergraduate program. The interdisciplinary program was created in

2006. Behind this initiative stands the wish to understand how it was possible to overarch national ambitions and create something unique and salient in human history. Implicitly we also sought to draw lessons from the integration in Europe for our efforts in the central Asian region to integrate.

Serik Beimenbetov, Program Chair

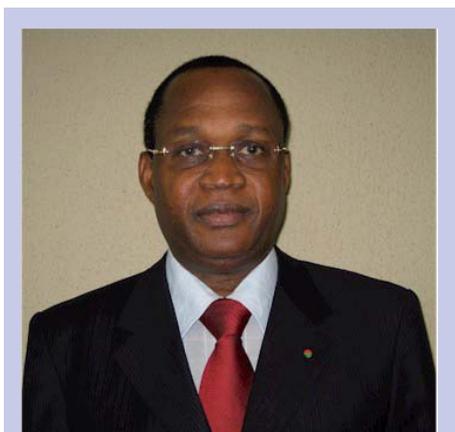
ECOWAS-ZEI Academy in Comparative Regional Integration

From 16 to 28 March 2009, the Center for European Integration Studies at the University of Bonn hosted the first ECOWAS-ZEI Academy in Comparative Regional Integration in cooperation with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), with financial support by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

This mid-career academy brought together the heads of the ECOWAS national units of the 15 ECOWAS member states and high-ranking civil servants from ECOWAS Commission, ECOWAS Parliament and ECOWAS Court of Justice in Abuja to discuss current problems of regional integration with a comparative focus on West Africa and Europe. National units are special departments of a national ministry, that deal with the ECOWAS affairs of the respective countries.

Participants listened to a series of multidisciplinary lectures presented by a faculty of international experts from academia, think tanks and politics. Furthermore a simulation of the European Union decision-making process and trips to the European Central Bank in Frankfurt and European Institutions in Brussels also gave a practical view on the daily business of regional integration in Europe.

It is the objective of this program on the one hand to enhance the understanding of the participants of regional integration processes



Jean de Dieu Somda, Vice President of the ECOWAS Commission based in Abuja, Nigeria.

in different policy fields, taking into account the latest developments and on the other hand simply to strengthen the mutual links between the people responsible for the implementation of regional integration in West Africa through common discussions and the building-up of a contact network. Thereby the basement for a further positive development of the ECOWAS system shall be enforced.

The ECOWAS-ZEI Academy is the first step of cooperation between ECOWAS, GTZ and ZEI. The Academy under the patronage of the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) underlines the commitment of ECOWAS to human capacity development.

ECOWAS Commission Vice-President Jean de Dieu Somda explains his idea of the purpose of the ECOWAS-ZEI Academy as follows:

„The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was founded in 1975. Until today it has developed from a pure economic purpose to an organization with political credit, for example in the provision of peace and security.

Especially for the African continent, we believe that regional integration is the only adequate answer to the challenges of a globalized world, the first ECOWAS-ZEI Academy is a step towards better mutual understanding between Africa and Europe and also among participants from the different West African countries.

The leading idea behind the ECOWAS-ZEI Academy in Comparative Regional Integration is the creation of a sustainable platform for the enhancement of human capacity development in Africa.

The objective of this distinctive initiative mandated by the ECOWAS-Commission is to strengthen government officials from the 15 member states of ECOWAS in their knowledge about regional integration with a comparative focus on the European Union.“

ZEI Discussion Paper

Recently published in the ZEI Discussion Paper Series:

- **Meredith Tunick: Promoting Innovation in the European Union- On the Development of Sound Competition and Industrial Policies, ZEI Discussion Paper C 191/2009**
- **Sonja Schröder: The 2007-2013 European Cohesion Policy. A New Strategic Approach by the Commission?, ZEI Discussion Paper C 190/2008**

Forthcoming:

- **Frank Decker/Jared Sonnicksen: The Direct Election of the Commission President. A Presidential Approach to Democratizing the European Union, ZEI Discussion Paper C 192/2009**

All Discussion Papers can be downloaded at: www.zei.de.



Zentrum für Europäische Integrationsforschung
Center for European Integration Studies
Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn

IMPRINT

ISSN1996-9678
Center for European Integration Studies
Walter-Flex-Str. 3
53113 Bonn, Germany

Editors: Ariane Kössler, Matthias Vogl
Tel. : +49 (0)228-73-4960
Fax: +49 (0)228-73-3086
www.zei.de

The Regional Integration Observer is published three times a year. Authors are responsible for the views expressed in their contributions.