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Newsletter



Miami-Florida European Union Center of Excellence -FIU

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For South Florida, Three More Years of Europe

For at least another three years, South Florida students, teachers, businesses, professionals, politicians, journalists, artists, investors and academics will have a wealth of information about and connections to Europe at their fingertips. The Miami-Florida European Union Center of Excellence (MEUCE) had its life-sustaining grant renewed by the European Commission Sept. 1, 2008, thus ensuring funding until the end of August 2011.

"The center would have disappeared," said Elisabeth Prügl, the center's co-director, alluding to the possibility of funds having been discontinued. Among 23 applicants in the United States, the European Commission chose to finance only 11 – other successful candidates include centers housed at University of California Berkeley, Georgia Tech and The Johns Hopkins University.

The center, a consortium of the University of Miami (UM) and Florida International University (FIU), owes its success to its extensive community outreach but also to its location at the junction of the Americas, its two directors said.

"The Commission loves outreach," said Joaquín Roy, the center's other director and Jean Monnet Professor of European Integration in the UM Department of International Studies.

Outreach activities have included workshops for educators, journalists and the legal and business communities around the state. The center has held academic conferences and symposia, sponsored public lectures, published academic papers, funded academic research and last year facilitated the local Euro Challenge competition. It has built strong ties to Miami-Dade's key economic development groups, the Beacon Council and the International Trade Commission, as well as the local and binational Chambers of Commerce. It has worked

with large local and national law firms, such as Greenberg Traurig, to convey knowledge about European Union laws and treaties and particularly the EU constitutional process.

"One of the points of pride of the center is its close collaboration with the local community," said Prügl, who is also an associate professor in the FIU Department of International Relations.

The center serves a double mission, she said. It aims to teach communities in its radius about the European Union, but also highlight the importance of the relationship between the EU and the Americas, the immense volume of commercial, academic and all sorts of exchanges.



Dr. Elisabeth Prügl
MEUCE-FIU Co-director

"We see ourselves as a constant reminder of this," Prügl said. "This is a very, very close relationship of mutual dependence." Miami-based European officials stressed the center's importance in fostering this relationship, particularly by acting as a link between the European Union and the local community.

"In modern times, diplomacy is public," said Klaus Ranner, Consul General of the Federal

Republic of Germany in Miami. "We could see the center as a branch of our own consulates in a way."

To expand its reach, the center has partnered with four other area universities, those of Central Florida, South Florida, and North Florida and, most recently, Florida Atlantic University, Prügl said.

While Prügl's FIU segment focuses on a broader European theme, holding an annual academic conference (see article on page 3) and sponsoring a variety of events, Roy's UM part of the center focuses specifically on EU relations with Latin America and comparative regionalism, exploring the EU model of integration as a potential model for Latin America.

IN UPCOMING ISSUES:

- A transatlantic values clash? European diplomats and U.S. academics diverge on death penalty.
- Learning about the Euro: Miami students explore hurdles and perks of shared currency.
- Enabling knowledge production: center funds two students' doctoral research.
- The French Presidency: French Consul talks of ambitious plan derailed by consecutive crises.

And more...



Dr. Joaquín Roy
Co-Director, MEUCE, UM

Hon. Marco Roca
Consul General of Italy

Sven Kühn Von Burgsdorff
European Commission

Pilar Mendez
Deputy Consul General Spain

Dr. Elisabeth Prügl
Co-Director, MEUCE, FIU

Professor Megan Fairlie
College of Law, FIU

Hon. Philippe Vinogradoff
Consul General of France

Hon. Klaus Ranner
Consul General of Germany

Professor Scott Fingerhut
College of Law, FIU

"Possibly the most important dimension in the EU-Latin America relationship is not trade, is not investment, it is in the transfer of the EU model, or rejection," Roy said.

Location and expertise make this part of the center's work especially successful and valuable to its funder, Roy said.

"The Commission understands very well that the presence in Miami has an exposure," he said. "In this track, we have absolutely no match in the United States."

Recognizing this unique potential, the European Commission has also awarded Roy the Jean Monnet Chair, a highly prestigious teaching position specializing in European integration. Further, the University of Miami hosts a EU-USA Fellow, a high-ranking EU official for a semester-long residency. Only two institutions in the Western Hemisphere have a Center of Excellence, a Jean Monnet Chair and a EU-USA fellow, Roy pointed out (see article on the EU-USA fellow in the November issue of the MEUCE newsletter).

But Roy also draws pride from the fact that it was he, along with FIU Professor Ralph Clem, who founded the center in 2001. The two decided to enhance their chances of getting a grant from the European Commission by joining forces. Visibly pleased with his flourishing venture, Roy repeats what his co-launcher told him when the two were pondering a partnership.

"What I would like is 50 percent of a successful grant than 100 percent of a failed one," Roy said, quoting Clem.

The two paralleled the birth of the consortium to the birth of the European Union, with partners pooling their resources while keeping their autonomy.

"This was, and probably still is, the only collaborative program that exists between the two universities," Clem said. "The EU's tradition in bringing together disparate components really worked in an interesting way to facilitate this." In the upcoming three years, the center will not stray from a successful path; outreach and community building will remain its top priorities.

"We want to become part of the consciousness of the professional organizations around town," Prügl said. "We want to create a community that's larger than just the universities."

By Cynthia Malakasis



Professor Megan Fairlie, College of Law, FIU; **Dr. Elisabeth Prügl**, Co-Director, MEUCE, FIU; **Dr. Ralph Clem**, Professor, International Relations, FIU; **Sven Kühn Von Burgsdorff**, European Commission; **Christine I. Caly-Sanchez**, Assistant Director, MEUCE, FIU; **Dr. Joaquín Roy**, Co-Director, MEUCE, UM

Conference Ponders Unity Chances of Diversifying Bloc

Power resides in numbers, but growing numbers also increase internal differentiation – at least in the case of the European Union. The marital glitches of unity and diversity in the 27-country bloc engaged the minds of academics from both sides of the Atlantic and of a high-ranking EU official during the April 2008 annual conference organized by the Miami-Florida European Union Center of Excellence (MEUCE) at Florida International University.

“It was a totally new thing for the EU,” said Elisabeth Prügl, the MEUCE’s co-director, referring to the post-enlargement cultural diversity.

Prior to enlargement, Prügl said, there was no discourse on cultural minorities and group rights in the European Union. This conference, she said, was innovative in that it linked this discourse on group rights with the discourse on non-discrimination of individuals.

The 2008 conference, entitled “Diversity and European Integration,”

was the last in a three-year series on the theme of “The Changing European Union.” The first two, “The EU Constitution: Where Are We Now?” and “Assessing the New EU: Enlargement, Unity and Institutions” took place in April 2006 and March 2007 respectively.

While the first two focused on institutions, the third conference tackled issues of change in society, Prügl said.

“We thought of European integration not just as a political project,” she said.

Markus Thiel, a visiting professor of Political Science at FIU, stressed the bi-directional character of the integration process, how different minority groups organize and how the EU institutional apparatus responds to these pressures through citizen programs and legislation.

“Europeanization happens both ways,” said Thiel, who co-organized the conference and participated in the conference panel on diversity and integration.

The conference featured five panels; on diversity and integration, third-country migrants, sexual minorities and women, cultural minorities and Islam in Europe. Participants included academics from FIU, but also from institutions in the United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland, Turkey, Croatia, Italy, New York, Illinois, Georgia and Michigan.



It also included the Deputy Head of the EU Delegation in Washington D.C., Angelos Pangratis, who gave the opening address and also took part in the panel on diversity and integration.

Angelos Pangratis
Deputy Head of Delegation
European Commission to the USA
in Washington D.C.

“It was an interesting pairing,” said Prügl. “Having this conversation between someone who does the EU and people who theorize the EU was unique.”

Papers presented at the conference will be published in the summer of 2009, Prügl said. For more information on topics, participants and procedures, you may Visit:

http://www.miamieuc.org/pdf/conferences_web.pdf

The MEUCE’s latest three-year funding cycle, which kicked off in September 2008 (see article on page 1), will feature a new annual conference series on the theme of “Global Europe,” Prügl said. Conferences are projected to focus on energy (spring 2009), a pan-European identity (spring 2010) and the EU foreign and security policy (spring 2011).

By Cynthia Malakasis



Dr. Antje Wiener, University of Bath, UK ; Dr. Martin Schain, New York University; Dr. Elisabeth Prügl, Co-Director, MEUCE-FIU, Dr. Birgit Locher, University of Tübingen, Germany ; Dr. Nicol Rae, Senior Associate Dean, College of Arts & Sciences, FIU; Angelos Pangratis, Deputy Head of the EU Delegation in Washington D.C.; Dr. Jan Nederveen Pieterse, University of Illinois; Dr. Markus Thiel, Visiting Professor, Political Sciences, FIU; Christine I. Caly-Sanchez, Assistant Director, MEUCE-FIU



Anthony Smallwood
Counselor, Head of
Press and Public
Diplomacy,
Spokesperson
European Delegation in
Washington D.C.



"Europe is now very much the Europe of prosperity," Mr. Smallwood said. "We are now roughly equal in GDP with the US, and we are an enormous force in the global economy even though the global economy is rapidly changing"

A Relationship of Transatlantic Interdependence

European integration and prosperity stem from, but also boost centuries-old transatlantic relations of growing interdependence and reciprocity, a high-ranking EU official told five Miami audiences last February.

To drive his point home for local audiences, Anthony Smallwood, head of press and public diplomacy of the EU Delegation in Washington, D.C., pointed out that European trade and investment have spawned and sustained more than a quarter million jobs in Florida alone, and European investment makes up half of all foreign investment in the state.

"And I am not double counting here," Smallwood told some twenty people who gathered at Florida International University on Feb. 27, 2008, one of the five Miami audiences he addressed on that day. "There really are this many jobs here that are dependent on our relationship."

Smallwood, whose official title reads Cultural Counselor, Spokesperson and Head of Press and Public Diplomacy, emphasized the longevity and density of the transatlantic relationship, but also its most recent phase, set off by Europe's strength and unity.

As European integration has channeled vast funds from old member states to newer ones, propping the economies of budding democracies, the continent as a whole has flourished, Smallwood said.

"Europe is now very much the Europe of prosperity," he said. "We are now roughly equal in GDP with the US, and we are an enormous force in the global economy even though the

global economy is rapidly changing."

Smallwood walked his audience through half a century of integration that has transformed a continent broken up in warring factions to a union where respect for human rights, commitment to free trade and economic growth, the rule of law and institutional mechanisms for conflict resolution ensure that warfare and oppressive regimes are things of the past.

"The EU has quite genuinely brought peace", he said. "This evolution has been enormous and it's extraordinary that my generation is really the first generation in Europe that is not going to serve, as our parents and grandparents did, in a major European war."

Its transatlantic partner has a share in Europe's success, Smallwood pointed out. Throughout the 20th century, the United States helped a war-torn, cash-strapped Europe to its feet more than once. Now united and thriving, Europe holds its own in this partnership, whose continuation is a given, despite occasional rifts.

"Although there are disagreements sometimes on how we cooperate, don't ever forget we are talking details here," noted Smallwood. "We are not talking about whether we should cooperate or not; we are talking about how."

The occasional tension is expected in a close relationship and partners must learn from each other, meet halfway and ultimately mesh their approaches to world problems.

"As the old saying has it, if we don't hang together we will hang separately," Smallwood concluded.

By Mirsad Krijestorac and Cynthia Malakasis



Anthony Smallwood
At the lecture on "the Importance of the EU" at FIU on Feb. 27, 2008

MEUCE Holds Expert Panel on Georgia Conflict

A high-ranking European diplomat and four academics joined forces September 16 to shed light on the recent conflict between Georgia and Russia over the former's autonomous regions, their diverse knowledge and backgrounds highlighting different pieces of the puzzle.

"What was particularly interesting about the roundtable was to hear different interpretations of what the events in Georgia mean," said Elisabeth Prügl, co-director of the center that organized the event at the FIU Green Library. "Roundtable participants did not necessarily agree, which made for a fascinating discussion."



Hon. Keith Allan
British Consul General in Miami

The Miami-Florida European Union Center of Excellence, which organized the event, brought together Hon. Keith Allan, Consul General of the British Consulate in Miami, and four Russia specialists from Florida International University.

Allan highlighted the strategic and economic importance of the region between the Caspian and the Black seas, where Georgia sits, especially in view of the oil pipeline located there.

"The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline is hugely important as the second largest pipeline in the world," said Allan, emphasizing the need for stability in the region. He said the pipeline is a four billion dollar project led by British Petroleum. Ten percent of the world's tradable oil runs through it", he said.

"The BP- led investments around the pipeline are expected to reach 22 billion dollars by 2010," Allan said.

Historian Rebecca Friedman situated the conflict in Russia's historical relations with the rest of the Caucasus region. Although Russia viewed its neighboring populations and territories as backward, Georgia became increasingly important for it beginning in the 19th century. During the Napoleonic Wars and the reign of Alexander I, Russia annexed the Georgian territory, said Friedman, an associate professor at the FIU Department of History.

Yet annexation did not wipe out the strong Georgian ethnocultural identity, argued geographer Peter Craumer. Following Friedman's historical analysis, Craumer put the next piece of the puzzle: conflicts break out when international powers stir the pot in regions constantly fraught with skirmishes between clashing nationalisms.

The Caucasus is the most diverse region in the world, said Craumer, associate professor in the Department of International Relations at Florida International University.

"More than 40 different languages are spoken there, [...] languages that come from very different parts of a language tree," said Craumer, whose expertise lies in the social and economic geography of the former Soviet Union.

A provisional peace treaty after Georgia's 1991 civil war with its two autonomist provinces, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, allowed Russia to maintain a military presence around the two regions in the form of a peacekeeping force. The advent to power in Georgia of pro-Western Mikhail Shaakashvili, a personal foe of Russian President Vladimir Putin, and the increasingly active American presence in Georgia were bound to irk Russia and spur military confrontation, Craumer explained.

But the American presence also gave the re-emerging Russian nationalism its much-needed enemy, argued political geographer Ralph Clem.

"Putin needed to build the state and to baptize the legitimacy of the state somehow," said Clem, professor in the FIU Department of International Relations. "The state always has to have something to push off against, and what's Putin going to push off against? He is going to begin to push off the West, and begin to build a sense of Russian nationalism among the population." Putin dusted off symbols of Russia's imperial past, such as the flag, the double-headed eagle and Orthodoxy, all emotional signs of Russian nationalism.

"Putin is on top of that tiger now, and he is going to ride it the best he can," Clem said.

Oil-generated cash boosts Russia's geopolitical endeavors, but does not resolve its numerous social and economic problems, as evidenced by the state of its military.

"I am reliably informed that about a third of Russian armed vehicles, which invaded South Ossetia, broke down as unserviceable," Clem said. "Somehow the Russian air force lost at least five, and some people think up to 12 aircrafts, to a country, Georgia, that has no air force."

The offensive in South Ossetia aggravated Russia's economic predicament, Clem explained, with fleeing foreign investors compounding the effects of an already plunging stock market.



Professor Ralph Clem making a point

See panel on Georgia conflict on Page 6

Russian foreign policy scholar Mohiaddin Mesbahi, on the other hand, located the roots of the conflict in systemic dynamics, or what he called “permissive causes.”

Critical systemic dynamics are the collapse of the Soviet Union and the change in the balance of power of the international system.

“Without that consideration, it is very hard to explain what happen in Georgia,” said Mesbahi, associate professor at the FIU Department of International Relations.

While the Russians were promised a smooth fall, i.e. no NATO expansions, post-Cold War military interventions or ideological interpretations of the international system, the promises were not kept, said Mesbahi, also a specialist in national security and strategic studies.

“The West expanded, and I don’t know whether there was a plan to expand, but that’s what happened,” he said. “And it did not stop at the periphery of the former Soviet Empire.”

While the West expected Russia to play along, the latter got the message that it cannot be “the great power and the partner of the West at the same time,” Mesbahi argued. It also got the message, observing Western behavior, that military interventionism is permitted behavior.

“All the promises of the new international language, such as the rule of law, the respect for international institutions, territorial integrities, lack of interventions in foreign countries, all of that stuff did not happen either,” Mesbahi said. “So, what we had in the international system normatively, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, is the permissiveness of the military interventionism by the Western world.”

Those who attended appreciated the information, but also wished it had been a bit more prodding.

“It was fantastic, there were some very well informed people here,” said John Keller. “It’s hard to get good information through American media, and certainly you have to pick and choose which news to follow, and that is why it was nice to be here and hear things from the horse’s mouth in some sense.”

International relations Ph.D. candidate Frank Ortoleva said he had wished for a blunter perspective on the position of the European Union.

“I expected to hear more about the EU perspective on the issue,” Ortoleva said. “I think the comments from the British consul were a little bit too reserved and typically diplomatic, but nevertheless I enjoyed the overall discussion and some very good and useful information about the background of the conflict.”

By Mirsad Krijestorac and Cynthia Malakasis



Hon. Keith Allan, British Consul General in Miami; Dr. Peter Craumer, Associate Professor, International Relations, FIU; Dr. Elisabeth Prügl, Co-Director, MEUCE-FIU and Associate Professor, International Relations, FIU; Dr. Rebecca Friedman, Associate Professor, History and European Studies Director, FIU; Dr. Mohiaddin Mesbahi, Professor, International Relations and Director, Middle East Studies, FIU; Dr. Ralph Clem, Professor, International Relations, FIU.



Miami-Florida European Union Center of Excellence - FIU



SIPA

FALL SEMESTER ACTIVITIES 2008

September 2008



Tuesday, Sept. 16 - 2:00 p.m.

Roundtable

"The Fallout from the Conflict in Georgia"

- **Hon. Keith Allan, HM Consul General
British Consulate General in Miami**
- Dr. Ralph Clem, International Relations, FIU
- Dr. Peter Craumer, International Relations, FIU
- Dr. Rebecca Friedman, History/Humanities, FIU
- Dr. Mohiaddin Mesbahi, Int. Relations, FIU



Wed., Sept. 24 - 8:30 p.m.

Roundtable:

"The Death Penalty:

European and International Perspectives"

- **Hon. Philippe Vinogradoff, Consul General
Consulate General of France**
- Professor Megan Fairlie, College of Law, FIU
- Professor Scott Fingerhut, College of Law, FIU

October 2008



Wed., Oct. 8 - 2:00 p.m.

Lecture:

*"Transportation and The Creation of an
Integral European Economy since 1945"*

- **Dr. Richard Vahrenkamp**
Professor of Production Economy and Logistics
University of Kassel, Germany



Monday, Oct. 13 - 2:00 p.m.

Lecture:

*"The EU, International
Organizations and Global Governance"*

- **Professor Roger A. Coate**
Distinguished Professor of Political
Science, University of South Carolina

October 2008



Tuesday, Oct. 28 - 2:30 p.m.

Roundtable

"What does it mean to be European?"

- **FIU Graduate and Undergraduate
European Students**
Tanguy Euben, Stefanie Kessler, Marccia Moreno
Francesco Ortoleva, Anne Braseby



Wed., Oct. 29 - 2:00 p.m.

**Lecture: "Europe, Russia and the
Neighbourhood"**

- **Ian Bond**
Political Counselor for Foreign Policy and
Security issues at the British Embassy in DC

November 2008



Thursday, Nov. 6 - 2:00 p.m.

Lecture:

*"Coming to the USA:
Men, Women and Labor across the
Atlantic in the Age of Mass Migration"*

- **Dr. Ferdinando Fasce**
Professor of North American History
University of Genoa, Italy



Wednesday, Nov. 19 - 3:30 p.m.

Lecture:

*"Human Rights Promotion from
A European Union Perspective:
Development, Challenges and
Prospects"*

- **Sven Kühn Von Burgsdorff**
European Commission
EU Fellow, University of Miami, Fall 2008



For Additional Information:

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About the Miami-Florida European Union Center of Excellence (MEUCE)

A consortium of Florida International University (FIU) and the University of Miami (UM), the center promotes EU-related teaching, research, and outreach activities, which draw academic and policy experts from both sides of the Atlantic. It is a member of the Network of European Union Centers of Excellence, eleven centers operating throughout the United States to build stronger ties among Europeans and Americans by examining the process of European integration and its implications for transatlantic relations.

The MEUCE was established in September of 2001 through a grant from the Commission of the European Union. Since then, it has partnered with Florida Atlantic University, the University of South Florida, the University of Central Florida, and the University of North Florida, providing EU-related research and curriculum development grants and reaching out to business, legal, media, and educational constituencies throughout the State of Florida.

For more information on MEUCE, you may visit its website at <http://www.miamieuc.org/>.

For more information on the Network of European Union Centers of Excellence, you may visit its website at <http://www.unc.edu/euce>.



For the 2nd year, the Miami-Florida European Union Center of Excellence at FIU is recruiting Florida high schools for the Euro Challenge Competition: 2009.

A teacher orientation on the Euro Challenge Competition: 2009 will take place at Florida International University from 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 5, 2008. FIU faculty will answer high school teachers questions on the competition. FIU Faculty will give an introduction to the European Union, the Euro, and the European economy. A video conference with the Delegation of the European Commission in Washington D.C. will take place during the orientation.

For more information on the competition 2009 visit the website www.euro-challenge.org or contact Christine I. Caly-Sanchez at calyc@fiu.edu.



More information in the upcoming issue.

