report from the meeting of council

doi:10.1057/eps.2011.39

15 april 2011, st. gallen

On April 15, the Council of the ECPR held an extraordinary session, called by the Executive Committee, to discuss among other things a set of constitutional reform proposals aimed at reorganising the governance structure of the organisation. In part, these reform proposals were motivated by the staffing issues in Central Services during 2010, which resulted in the tabling of Motions by four Official Representatives who were critical of the Executive Committee's management of these issues.

The three main outcomes of this meeting were: first, a rejection of any further review of the staffing events of 2010 than that already conducted by the Executive Committee itself, thus drawing a definitive line under those events; second, the establishment of a Committee of Three ORs to look into 'how situations of this type can be avoided in the future', with its terms of reference specifically precluding making any judgements on the staffing events of 2010; third, the deferral of consideration of the Executive Committee's proposals for constitutional reform until Antwerp.

Under Chair's Welcome, an attempt by David McKay (Essex) to replace Luciano Bardi (Chair of the Executive Committee) with Dirk Berg-Schlosser (Marburg) as chair of the Council meeting was defeated by a show of hands.

Under Matters Arising Richard Katz (Johns Hopkins) proposed a Motion aimed at moving forward from the conflicting viewpoints that had been aired over the staffing issues at Central Services in 2010. His Motion read: 'A Committee of three members of Council, who are not current members of the Executive Committee and not signatories of the Motions proposed concerning the personnel issues in Central Services over the last 18 months, is to be elected by the Council. The Committee is to make recommendations concerning how situations of this type can be avoided in the future, but its terms of reference specifically preclude making judgements concerning the events that generated the controversy. The report of the Committee is to be presented to the Council.' After discussion, the Motion was passed by a show of hands.

After presentation and discussion of the Activities Report, the Finance Report and the Staffing Report, it was proposed by John Doyle (Dublin City University) to drop the 'Items Raised by Members' from the Agenda, in the light of the earlier approval of Richard Katz's Motion. During the discussion Kenneth Newton (Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin) announced the withdrawal of the Motions he had presented with Jan Sundberg (Helsinki), but requested that Council still debate and vote on the Motion forwarded by Wyn Grant (Warwick) and Klaus Goetz (Potsdam) calling for an independent review into the staffing events of 2010. Professor Goetz echoed this view. Council voted by 41 to 32 not to discuss the remaining Motion, and Agenda Item 8 was formally dropped in its entirety from the Agenda.

Pippa Norris (Harvard) presented a Motion calling for Agenda Item 9 (Governance Review Group Report and Constitutional Amendment Proposals) to be deferred until next Council meeting in Antwerp (2012) in the light of: the lack of time, the serious nature of the governance proposals and the need for Council to await the deliberations of the Committee of Three. This Motion was approved by a show of hands.

Subsequent to the meeting, the Executive Committee set up the system of nominations to the Committee of Three and three nominations were received by the deadline: Richard Katz, Lars Johanssen and Ferdinand Mueller-Rommel. The Committee of Three will commence its work at the Reykjavik General Conference in August.



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https://doi.org/10.1057/eps.2011.39 Published online by Cambridge University Press

general conference goes annual

The General Conference is one of the ECPR's largest and most visible services to its members and the only event that through external sponsorship generates extra funds that enable the ECPR to finance, for instance, the Graduate Conference and other initiatives.

The ECPR General Conference in Reykjavik 2011 will bring together more than 2,500 political scientists across all sub-disciplines. It will certainly be the largest ECPR event to date, and the local organisers in Iceland have also confirmed that it is the largest conference to take place in Iceland. With over 4,000 paper proposals received, and space for only 2,500 papers, regrettably the Academic Convenors had to turn down many excellent proposals for no other reason than they could simply not accomodate them all. Due to the extraordinary numbers increasingly interested in the General Conference, the Executive Committee, at its recent meeting in Frankfurt, took the decision to change the ECPR General Conference to an annual conference.

Constitutional changes now enable Associate members from other regions of the world to become Full Members and therefore organise ECPR events. It is hoped that this will then produce more future hosts that can accommodate these large events.

If your institution would like to host the ECPR General Conference from 2016 onwards, or any other ECPR event (Graduate Conference, Joint Sessions of Workshops, etc), further information can be found on our website at: www.ecprnet.eu or by contacting ecpr@essex.ac.uk.

Steady increase in numbers

2001	Canterbury, Kent. 1,200 participants (which includes the International Relations conference which was held concurrently)
2003	Marburg, Germany. 900 participants
2005	Budapest, Hungary. 1,350 participants
2007	Pisa, Italy. 1,700 participants
2009	Potsdam, Germany. 2,200 participants
2011	Reykjavik, Iceland. In excess of 2,500 participants expected



re-launching *ECPR News* after ten years

The articles in this ECPR News section of *EPS* are taken from the first issue of the newly re-launched *ECPR News*. As of this summer *ECPR News* will be published every July and December, and mailed electronically to the ECPR's membership and beyond. Please look out for your copy, or visit the website www.ecprnet.eu to view. Hard copies will also be mailed to all member departments and will be available at events the ECPR attends.

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Any problems, please contact Jeremaine Johnson (+44 (0) 1206 874504 / jjohns@essex.ac.uk)

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