# spotlight on ecpr standing groups

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Following on from the profiles of the Standing Groups on International Relations and Security Issues featured in *EPS* 5.1 and 5.2, respectively, this issue's ECPR News section casts the spotlight on several other ECPR Standing Groups:

- Analytical Politics and Public Choice
- European Union
- Forms of Participation
- Green Politics
- Organised Crime
- Politics and the Arts
- Regionalism
- Regulatory Governance
- Theoretical Perspectives in Policy Analysis
- Third World Politics

Standing Groups that would like to be featured in *EPS* in the future should write to Rebecca Knappett (rknapp@essex.ac.uk) at the ECPR Central Services.

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT ECPR STANDING GROUPS

The Standing Groups within the ECPR have largely (though not entirely) grown out of the experience of various workshops at the Joint Sessions and research groups – and more recently the General Conference. They provide a means of increasing collaboration between scholars specialising in the same area of research/academic interest and have an informal structure, which allows a closer form of exchange.

Standing groups are open to individuals in ECPR member institutions as well as those from non-ECPR institutions.

## WHAT DO THE STANDING GROUPS DO?

The size of the groups varies enormously, from the very large (many hundreds of individual members) and active, such as Standing Group on International Relations to the smaller (up to about fifty individual members) more specialised groups, such as the Standing Group on Theoretical Perspectives in Policy Analysis. Hence, the activities of the groups can range from organising major conferences, summer schools and publishing books and journals to simply maintaining a website and mailing list.

## HOW ARE THE STANDING GROUPS ORGANISED?

The larger groups are led by an elected Steering Committee or in the case of very small standing groups, one or two convenors. Some of the groups charge a small membership fee which is used to contribute to the organisational costs of the group – for example, to cover the costs for the steering committee to meet, to pay a graduate student to maintain a mailing list or website. ECPR Standing Groups are encouraged to organise business meetings during other ECPR



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events, such as the Joint Sessions and General Conference.

## WHAT CAN THE ECPR DO FOR ITS STANDING GROUPS?

Although Standing Groups fall within the general umbrella of the ECPR, they are largely autonomous – and are encouraged to be so. The only fixed requirement is that the Executive Committee receives annual reports and where grants have been awarded, documentation is provided to support expenditure. It is also expected that the ECPR is acknowledged in publicity where appropriate. In return, the ECPR can do a lot to help and stimulate its Standing Groups by:

- providing an annual grant of up to €750 for administrative costs in running the Standing Group;
- creating and maintaining Standing Group websites and email lists;
- publicising Standing Group activities and publications;
- assisting in organising Standing Group conferences – setting up conference websites, handling registration, organising book exhibitions and so on;
- giving priority to Standing Groups that wish to organise sections at the General Conference;
- providing administrative grants of up to €6,000 p.a. for Standing Group summer schools.

## HOW TO PROPOSE A NEW STANDING GROUP

Proposals should be a maximum of four typed pages and will be considered by the Executive Committee at either its spring or autumn meeting. The points a proposal should include are:

- A description of the subject area/s to be covered by the Standing Group, with confirmation that it will not overlap substantially with existing group/s.
- A description of the types of activities to be carried out, for example, email discussion lists, website, publications, panels at the General Conference.
- An indication of how the group will be organised – with a steering committee? one or two convenors? Who are they likely to be?
- Names of people who have already expressed an interest in such a group being established.

**Full list of all ECPR Standing Groups**

| | |
|---|---|
| Analytical Politics and Public Choice | Politics and the Arts |
| Central and East European Politics | Political Geography |
| Computer Applications | Political Parties |
| European Union | Political Regimes, Institutions and Governments |
| EU Level Interest Representation | Regionalism |
| Extremism & Democracy | Regulatory Governance |
| Forms of Participation | Religion and Politics |
| Green Politics | Security Issues |
| International Relations | Senior Academic Network in Europe (SANE) |
| Latin American Politics | Southern European Politics |
| Local Government and Politics | Third World Politics |
| Organised Crime | Theoretical Perspectives in Policy Analysis |
| Parliaments | Women & Politics |
| Party Manifestos | Young ECPR Network on Europeanisation |
| Political Methodology | |
| Political Economy | |
| Political Theory | |



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For more information about any of the ECPR's Standing Groups please see the web site http://www.essex.ac.uk/ecpr/standinggroups/index.aspx.

# standing group on analytical politics and public choice

The Standing Group on Analytical Politics and Public Choice aims to provide a forum for scholars interested in combining systematic theoretical thinking with empirical testing. One major source of inspiration is the literature on collective choice problems, which examines the relationship between individual and collective interests. Another line of interest is generated by studies that link developments in a formal theory with empirical research strategies.

The group has created the Duncan Black Award, which honours a graduate student who has presented the best paper at the ECPR General Conference pursuing research in analytical politics. The award, which carries a prize of €200, was first presented at the 2005 Conference in Budapest. The award winner was Sandra Pogodda, Ph.D. student at Cambridge University.

The next Duncan Black Award will be presented at the 2007 General Conference in Pisa. The Group invites possible candidates to submit their paper in PDF-format to Bernard Steunenberg at steunenberg@fsw.leidenuniv.nl before the start of the conference (the deadline is 31 August 2007 at 12.00 hours).

Together with the Standing Group on International Relations the group supports the Lewis F. Richardson Lifetime Achievement Award, which honours exemplary scholarship in the scientific study of militarised conflict. The prize is given on a bi-annual basis to scholars who have spent most of their academic life in Europe and analyse international interactions in a systematic way.

In 2007, the summer school on Analytical Politics and Public Choice will be organised by Mika Widgrén and will take place from the 19 to 28 September 2007 at Turku University in Finland. For two weeks, a group of around twenty-five participants will discuss major issues in theory development and empirical testing with distinguished scholars from Europe. It is still possible to apply for this summer school and further details of the programme, as well as the application procedure, are available at the group's website.

Finally, the group supports regular meetings as part of ECPR Conferences, including the forthcoming conference at Pisa, and regularly distributes a virtual newsletter. If you are interested in the activities organised by the group, please look at http://www.publicadministration.leidenuniv.nl/index.php3?m=1&c=254

Bernard Steunenberg (Leiden University),
Standing Group Convenor



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# standing group on the european union: third pan-european conference, istanbul bilgi university, 22–24 september 2006

In September 2006, the European Union Standing Group organised its third pan-European conference in Istanbul. Previous conferences have been organised in Bordeaux (2002) and Bologna (2004), attracting around 250 and 450 participants, respectively. The Istanbul conference was attended by some 375 participants (Figure 1).

The indispensable contribution of the ECPR secretariat to the conference comprised opening communication channels (circulation of the call for papers and panel proposals etc.), giving advice concerning the book exhibition, the provision of credit card payment facilities (to take conference fees) and running a stand at the book exhibition that both represented the ECPR as an organisation and sold books for publishers who had decided not to have their own stand. Despite the contribution of the secretariat, the organisation of a conference of such a scale is fully dependent on a considerable amount of voluntary work. Programme chair, Frank Schimmelfennig, and seven section chairs were in charge of the academic programme. Istanbul Bilgi University



**Figure 1** Standing Group Convenor Knud Erik Jørgenson with the ECPR's Clare Dekker at the conference in Istanbul.



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hosted the conference and the local organisers Ayhan Kaya and Senem Aydin were responsible for providing meeting facilities, recruiting a travel agent (for travel and accommodation), negotiating tirelessly with the Turkish customs authorities in order to get books for the exhibition through, organising social events and recruiting sixteen students to help during the conference. A moment of Turkish efficiency was shown when the organisers realised that the majority of participants preferred to use Powerpoint facilities – these were subsequently provided for all meeting rooms within twenty-four hours! Erik Jones managed the conference website and Ole Elgstrøm was our contact with the publishers.

Ten publishers (both Turkish and international) took part in the book exhibition during the conference. One publisher commented, 'we are very pleased with the exhibition. It is centrally situated, next to the canteen and there have been lots of visitors. We have met many scholars that we have not met before'. The last point is perhaps representative of the entire conference; most participants were off the beaten track.

The conference also included two plenary sessions, the JCMS Annual Lecture by Andre Sapir and the Keynote Speech by His Excellency Volkan Vural, Turkey's Ambassador to Spain, both attracting a considerable amount of attention.

The relatively young Turkish population is increasingly demanding higher education and the educational infrastructure is therefore constantly 'under construction'. Our host, Istanbul Bilgi University, was opened in 1994 and now accommodates around 9,000 students in both undergraduate and graduate levels, functioning also as an NGO and a think tank with social outreach projects, international consortiums and cultural activities. More than a handful of universities have a similar brief, yet dynamic history in Turkey. With some twenty universities in the greater Istanbul area, it functions as a hothouse of research and teaching activities. In order to make such huge processes of training successful, the outreach of professional associations such as the ECPR is appreciated.

Relations between Turkey and the EU – whether the accession process is alive or temporarily frozen – imply a huge demand of mutual knowledge between the two parties. With this in mind, both the paper room and the paper archive (at http://www.jhubc.it/ecpr-istanbul/) have been a most helpful source on 'breaking news' concerning research on EU politics. The paper room was a yet another major success, with over 300 papers purchased by the participants.

The conference ended with a dinner at the famous Hamdi Restaurant, overlooking the Galata Bridge.

Senem Aydin (Istanbul Bilgi University), Conference Organiser, and Knud Erik Jørgensen (Univerity of Aarhus), Standing Group Convenor

# standing group on forms of participation

Established in 2004, the ECPR Standing Group on Forms of Participation provides a forum for different schools of participation research to meet, compare approaches and develop new research strategies. It offers a venue for



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scholars researching participation from different angles (electoral participation, social movements, social capital, gender, globalisation, individualised action, virtual engagements, etc.) to engage in an open discussion on developments in the participation of individuals and groups in politics.

The Standing Group's first activities included membership recruitment, construction of its website and formulation of its themes. Effort has also been put in requesting information on new books, upcoming conferences, research projects, and calls for papers from members and non-members to post on the website.

One of the Group's main goals is to build an active network of participation researchers who can use their joint resources and talents to organise conferences, summer schools and apply for joint funding to enhance the Standing Group and conduct cross-country research.

An important opportunity for the Standing Group was the organisation of its first workshop at the 2006 ECPR Joint Sessions in Nicosia. *Studying Forms of Participation* received over seventy paper proposals, of which twenty were chosen. These included a good geographical and gender spread of European political scientists, representing different levels of professional experience (from graduate students to senior faculty members).

Members have also begun to establish regional and national participation research networks. Good examples are the Karlstad Seminar on Studying Political Action (KSPPA), which held its second meeting in conjunction with the Swedish Political Science Association's Annual Meeting in Karlstad in October 2006; the Cortona Colloquium organised by the Giangiacomo Feltrinelli Foundation in Cortona (Italy) also in October; and the Open International Research and Post-Graduate Seminar held at the University of Tampare (Finland) in November. Several Standing Group members participated actively at each of these conferences. Such national and regional participation research networks are an important cooperative resource for the Group.

Forthcoming activities for the Standing Group include proposed sections and panels for the ECPR General Conference in Pisa in 2007, proposals for the upcoming Joint Sessions of Workshops, organisation of the 3rd KSPPA in 2007, a website for research, teaching and social outreach, newsletter, collaborative books and journal articles based on workshop papers, and given sufficient funding, a summer school on participation.

The governance structure of the Standing Group consists, at present, of two co-convenors and a steering committee elected for the period 2006–2009 as well as three appointed positions nominated for the period 2006–2007. For further information about any aspect of the Standing Group, please see http://www.essex.ac.uk/ecpr/standinggroups/participation/index.aspx

Francesca Forno (University of Urbino) and Michele Micheletti (Karlstad University),
Standing Group Convenors

# standing group on green politics

The Green Politics Standing Group has established a specific forum for scholars with a broad focus on green politics issues, allows sustained dialogue on these issues among academics and practitioners in this area within and beyond ECPR member institutions, and contributes to



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fostering a cross-disciplinary, comprehensive European academic debate on the policies and politics of the environment.

In keeping with ECPR traditions and academic standards, this debate is open to scholars regardless of their methodological approach or subject background and offers the opportunity to include members of the academic and policy communities from a wide range of countries and institutions. Although the Standing Group's predominantly European base does not preclude the study of green politics issues outside Europe, it makes it possible to address specific European concerns – academic, social, cultural, political – in a more nuanced, substantive and sustained manner and provides a useful forum for engaging in a broader international dialogue with academics and policymakers from the rest of the world.

## GENERAL OBJECTIVES

The principal goal of the Standing Group is to stimulate research into Green politics, and act as an international networking facility for academics working in any area of environmental politics.

The GPSG aims to organise at least one workshop at each of the annual ECPR Joint Sessions and a section at the biennial ECPR General Conference, bringing together new and established researchers in Green politics. The Group also organises a series of meetings and workshops outside the framework of the Joint Sessions and General Conferences, sponsors an annual Summer School on Environmental Politics & Policy held at Keele University, and runs an electronic discussion and information list.

## ORIGIN AND SHORT HISTORY

The ECPR Green Politics Standing Group was formed in 1991 by Dick Richardson. Following Dick's untimely death in 1997, the GPSG was run tirelessly by Chris Rootes until 2006; at the 2006 annual meeting of the GPSG (held during the Joint Sessions), Chris stepped down as Convenor to concentrate on other projects. A new Steering Committee was subsequently elected to develop and expand communication between Green politics teachers and researchers in the international academic and practitioner communities.

At the Nicosia meeting, it was agreed to award the Dick Richardson Prize annually to the best paper on green politics delivered at the ECPR Joint Sessions.

## ORGANISATION OF THE STANDING GROUP

Membership of the GPSG is not formalised, although the associated discussion list allows us to maintain a subscriber database. By this measure, the Standing Group has, at present, 126 members from twenty countries (counted by subscribers to our mailing list, greenpolitics@jiscmail.ac.uk). The largest number of members are from the UK (forty-six), followed by the US (eighteen) and Germany (fifteen).

The Standing Group is managed by its two convenors in consultation with a steering group (comprised of Brian Doherty, University of Keele; Clare Saunders, University of Kent; Emilio Luque, Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, Spain; and Chad Briggs, Lehigh University, Pennsylvania, USA), and in accordance with the guidelines of ECPR Central Services.

## ACTIVITIES OF THE STANDING GROUP

The Standing Group was present with its own section of panels at ECPR's 2005 General Conference in Budapest, and sponsored panels at the 2005 Granada



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and 2006 Nicosia Joint Sessions. At Budapest, the GPSG sponsored a full section of ten panels, with topics ranging from the Politics of Renewables to Green Politics under Authoritarian Regimes. At Granada, the GPSG sponsored two workshops: Comparing Environmental Movements in North and South, directed by Brian Doherty & Tim Doyle; and Pioneers and Convergence in National Environmental Policy. At Nicosia, the GPSG sponsored one workshop, directed by Chris Rootes, on Local Environmental Mobilisations.

After a break of three years, the GPSG ran the third ECPR Summer School on Environmental Politics and Policy last summer, from 25 June to 7 July at Keele University in the UK, providing twenty early career researchers working in the field of environmental politics the opportunity to exchange teaching and research ideas with colleagues from other universities and research institutes.

As part of our mission to enhance communication and shared learning between researchers and practitioners in the field, we set up a new 'wiki' website this year, with generous funding from the ECPR, http://www.greenpolitics-ecpr.org.

The website carries basic information about the group, how to contact its conveners, how to join, how to subscribe to the mailing list, details of forthcoming conferences, etc. In the week of 15–21 October 2006, the site received 436 hits; 87 per cent of sessions originated from the USA.

Adam Fagan
(Queen Mary, University of London)
and Graeme Hayes
(Nottingham Trent University),
Standing Group Convenors

# standing group on organised crime

The Standing Group first met in Grenoble in 2001 in a Joint Sessions workshop and has developed extensively since its last meeting during the ECPR General Conference in Marburg, Germany, in 2003. In 2001, the Group established an Executive Committee, with responsibilty for organising a presence at ECPR events, encouraging ideas for projects, maintaining the website and generally keeping the group active and focused on the latest developments in the study of organised crime.

The forthcoming ECPR General Conference in Pisa is the ideal opportunity for the Group to meet again and with this in mind the Standing Group is organising a section on the general topic of '*Representing a crisis: organised crime between new and old threats*', which will hopefuly attract as many participants as possible (from both ECPR and non-ECPR member institutions). The idea behind this section is to encourage discussions about how organised crime seeks to imitate civil society, the economy and political systems in which it develops in order to better infiltrate, penetrate and coerce them. Thus, while terrorism is the 'new evil' and the main policy priority for governments, organised crime carries on undeterred in a changing environment.

In January 2006, the new editors of the SGOC Newsletter presented the first issue of the new format newsletter. This new format is made up of two parts: (1) an



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online 'blog' that provides interested readers with timely information about new books, conferences, calls for papers and other announcements and (2) the tri-annual newsletter that comes in a PDF-document with original contributions and a specific theme. The themes selected for this year were: '*Organised crime in south-eastern Europe*', '*Organised crime and terrorism*' and '*Emerging criminal markets*'. There was also a special issue of the newsletter dedicated only to the ECPR General Conference in Pisa.

More information about the different panels for which people can present a paper can be found at http://sgoc.blogspot.com/search/label/newsletter or they can write to Felia Allum (Convenor) mlsfsa@bath.ac.uk and/or Fabio Armao (Co-Convenor) fabio.armao@unito.it

Jana Arsovska
(Catholic University Leuven),
Editor of the SGOC Newsletter

# standing group on politics and the arts (polarts)

The Standing Group *Polarts* aims to advance understanding of the particular contribution that the arts and aesthetics bring to the understanding of politics and different aspects of the political. Members are interested in the political significance of artistic work in its various forms, including literature, theatre, media, music, film, photography, architecture and plastic arts. Questions of ways in which art and artists might influence politics are raised, and some researchers focus on analysing the relationship between politics and the art object as such. In short, *Polarts* Group focuses on the interdisciplinary study of art as a form of political expression, on art as descriptive and interpretative of the political, or of the interpretations of art and questions between aesthetics and politics.

We seek to bring together academics and individuals who are interested in working in the area of 'politics and the arts' and those whose research and teaching is concerned with the contribution of the arts to political science, and who work with the transmission of political ideas through the arts. The purpose of our meetings is to systematise and discuss the work that is being carried out in different disciplines, to share existing research and teaching resources, and to provide a vivid group for discussions and debates.

## CORE QUESTIONS AND CHALLENGES

From the inception of the group, there is an awareness of the need to define and redefine the key concepts of politics, arts and aesthetics. The range of current work in politics and the arts lack a more systematic study and there is a constant need for publications in the field. The conjunction 'politics and the arts' has attracted rising interest within academic circles but is still relatively unknown both within specific academic disciplines and artistic practices and between them. The relevant issues include understanding of the artistic element/the place of the art object as a primary factor in political analysis; connections to existing political science perspectives and methodologies;



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the methodological and expressive implications for academic disciplines.

One of the returning topics of conferences and symposia is 'the reconceptualisation of the political'. This is already evident in such developments within political studies as the increasing interest in narrative and in the rhetoric of political theorising; work on identity which takes in considerations of either ethics and aesthetics (e.g. work done by Adriana Cavarero, Jean-Luc Nancy, Jacques Ranciére); the widening of sub-disciplinary boundaries, as for example Michael Shapiro's work in *International Relations* or Murray Edelman's in *Public Administration*. There are further issues of reconceptualising the political, in work by Chantal Mouffe, Ulrich Beck, or looking at the problems of '*politicization of Aesthetics*', discussed from Walter Benjamin to Jean-Francois Lyotard, or different levels of political representation, such as done by Frank Ankersmit.

Themes such as the arts as sites for the discovery of new political identities; the contribution of the arts to new discourses for analysing contemporary political phenomena; the contribution of the arts to conceptual and cultural change of interest to political science will all be addressed at future conferences. It is also important to attempt to include work from geographic locations, that is, Africa, Asia and South America, that have so far, not yet been prominent in work on politics and the arts.

## WORK

It is clear, that working with such a variety of topics, the more specific issues are addressed in different conference panels and symposia. The Group first met at the 1995 ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops in Bordeaux, the planning Session 'Politics and the Arts' was convened by Maureen Whitebrook, who also founded the group.

Some recent events were for instance, the 3rd ECPR General Conference in Budapest, Hungary in which I chaired a section 'Artists and Political Movements'. The section concentrated especially on the role of art and artists in social and political movements and we had six panels, of which the titles were Politics and Architecture, Politics, Memory and Narrative, Social Movements and Artistic Inspiration, Artists Commitment in Social Movements, The Politics of Music and Art and Terror. A follow-up for this was the International Symposium and Doctoral Course Art and Terror that was organised at the University of Jyväskylä in May 2006. The current focus is to organise a section 'Art as an Alternative' at the General Conference in Pisa.

Currently, the group works intensively with the Finnish Centre of Excellence, 'Political Thought and Conceptual Change', chaired by Professor Kari Palonen (http://www.jyu.fi/yhtfil/PolCon/). This gives an opportunity for postgraduate work and supervision within the group, with much needed funding possibilities and permanent international contacts. For more information, history of the group and information of the members, see http://www.jyu.fi/yhtfil/polarts/pag.html.

Kia Lindroos (University of Jyväskylä),
Standing Group Convenor



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# standing group on regionalism

The Standing Group was established in 1994 at the ECPR Joint Sessions in Madrid. The basic aim of the Group is to bring together colleagues who are carrying out research in the related fields of federal and regional studies and to facilitate communication and research collaboration among members. The Group currently has about 300 members, mainly in Europe and North America. While the Group comprises many outstanding scholars of international reputation, young researchers and Ph.D. candidates are also involved. Additional input is gained by the membership of a small number (around forty) of EU civil servants, national and regional government employees, and researchers in various independent research institutes. Until December 2006, Michael Keating (EUI Florence and University of Aberdeen) and John Loughlin (University of Cardiff) co-directed the Standing Group. In January 2007, Klaus Detterbeck (University of Magdeburg) and Wilfried Swenden (University of Edinburgh) were appointed as the co-Convenors.

The Standing Group publishes a Newsletter twice a year, edited by the academic secretary of the Group, Eve Hepburn (University of Edinburgh). The newsletter is available via the ECPR website, and contains information on research projects, conferences, workshops and publications. Communication within the group is also facilitated by a Bulletin Board transmitted via e-mail.

The Standing Group organises conferences and seminars on various aspects of regionalism as well as workshops at the ECPR Joint Sessions, General and Graduate Conferences. It is open to various approaches to the study of federalism, regionalism and multi-level governance. In 2003, the Group launched a Summer School Programme for PhD students ('Regions in Europe'), which will be held for the fourth time in 2008. The Summer School is coordinated by Jörg Matthias (Aston University).

The Group's publishes the journal *Regional and Federal Studies* as well as two book series: Regional and Federal Studies (with Frank Cass/Taylor & Francis) and Regionalism and Federalism (with P.I.E./Peter Lang). A number of monographs and joint publications have also been produced under the auspicies of the group.

Wilfried Swenden
(University of Edinburgh),
Standing Group Co-Convenor

# standing group on regulatory governance: conference report

In September 2006, the ECPR Standing Group on Regulatory Governance organised their first conference at the University of Bath in association with the University's Centre for the study of Regulated Industries (in the School of Management). The conference was entitled '*Frontiers of regulation: assessing scholarly debates & policy challenges*' and was a highly successful event with twenty-three panels and over 100 participants from twenty-one countries, many from Europe and some from North America, Asia and Australia. Keynote



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speakers were Professor Daniel Carpenter, Department of Government, Harvard University, who spoke on the theme of reputation and the regulator, and Peter Freeman, Chairman of the UK's Competition Commission on regulation and competition policy. The conference also included a workshop led by Professor Carpenter on the reputation-based approach to regulation drawing on the case study of US pharmaceuticals and the role of the Food and Drug Administration.

Both the Standing Group and Conference have been prompted by the rapid rise in interest in the emerging phenomenon of 'regulatory governance'. In the last two decades across the world, regulation has become a central feature of governance. Public authority has been fragmented and a wide range of sector-specific regulatory regimes have been created with a proliferation of independent agencies. The traditional divide in governance between policy-making and policy implementation has shifted towards a divide between policy-making and regulation. The business of public management is thus increasingly the business of regulation rather than administration. We see a new mode of governance, which has been dubbed 'regulatory governance' and a new institutionalisation of the state termed the 'regulatory state'.

Conference papers covered theoretical and empirical themes across a range of countries, sectors and issues. The subject is developing as an interdisciplinary field and participants were from a range of disciplines including political science, economics and law as well as practitioners. Three major themes of the conference sit at the core of regulatory governance: (i) the administration of regulation by regulatory agencies and the delegation of technocratic powers and responsibilities to the agencies, (ii) the liberalisation, privatisation of network industries (i.e. communications, transport, energy and water) and their regulation by agencies, (iii) the development of new regulatory mechanisms and the drive for 'better regulation'. The conference also included several papers on regulatory governance and increasing globalisation, internationalisation, and rapid scientific and technological change.

Regulatory governance, however, is not just about themes that have emerged in the last two decades. The conference included papers on well-established areas of regulation such as compliance and enforcement, the role of law and courts and non-judicial processes of dispute resolution. Areas of public policy significantly influenced by regulatory governance such as competition policy, corporate governance and intellectual property rights were also represented.

Many important issues emerged from the conference to take forward. A salient feature and recurring theme of regulatory governance is the nature of agency independence. There are perennial questions about its nature and functioning, especially on the relationship between technocratic agencies and political authority and democratic policy-making. Another key issue is the spread or 'diffusion' of regulatory institutions, practices and mechanisms across political, policy and governing domains. These processes and the trajectories of regulatory governance across and within different domains remain key themes for analysis. The Standing Group plans to organise similar conferences on a biennial basis and sections in the established ECPR conferences. In addition, regulatory governance will be taken forward through a new peer-reviewed journal, *Regulation and Governance*, published by Blackwell starting in 2007.

Ian Bartle (University of Bath)
Conference Convenor



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# standing group on theoretical perspectives in policy analysis

The Standing Group on Theoretical Perspectives in Policy Analysis was founded in 2003. It focuses on theoretical and methodological challenges in policy analysis as well as new strategies to develop a theoretically more coherent, politically and socially relevant policy analysis (for further information please visit the *Themes and Aims* page on our website). The Standing Group aims to contribute to the restoration of the original connection between the analysis of public policy and the democratic organisation of society. Practically, the Group aims to build a community of policy scholars in Europe and set the conditions for an effective interplay between lay and professional knowledge (Figure 2).

To effectuate these aims, the Standing Group has engaged in a number of important activities: firstly, both within and outside the ECPR formats, we have organised a number of successful conferences and meetings on topics as diverse as Interpretation in Policy Analysis, Democratic Network Governance or the Politics of Urban Participation. At the third ECPR conference in Budapest in 2005, the Standing Group organised a section with thirteen panels, each one of which was able to draw a large audience.

Secondly, the Group is linked to the Theory, Policy & Society list serve, which disseminates information on recent publications, conferences, job openings and so on to a large community of policy scholars on both sides of the ocean.

Thirdly, the Standing Group has organised the European Summer School in Policy Analysis (ESSPA), which is recognised and financially supported by ECPR.



**Figure 2** Participants of the European Summer School in Policy Analysis continue their discussion with Professor Giandomenico Majone on the terrace of the Castle of Bertinoro, venue of the Summer School.



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The first, highly successful session took place in July 2006 in the Italian Renaissance hill town of Bertinoro. Twenty-three Ph.D. candidates from all over Europe convened for two weeks to attend seminars by internationally recognised policy scholars, and work with them on their dissertation research. ESSPA has been able to obtain European funding through the Socrates Programme as part of the Erasmus Intensive Programme. This means that ESSPA is now supported by partner institutions from eight European countries. The second session of ESSPA will take place in the summer of 2007. (For more information see the ESSPA website: http://www.esspa.org).

Hendrik Wagenaar (Leiden University) and Herbert Gottweis (University of Vienna)
Standing Group Convenors

# standing group on third world politics

The Standing Group on Third World Politics was established at the 1993 Joint Sessions in Leiden, with an initial membership of fifty-two people. The Group currently has over 200 members worldwide. In general, the Standing Group has three main objectives. The first is to help build up a network of scholars interested in the comparative politics of the Third World within the ECPR. The second is to help provide a mechanism to ensure a regular series of workshops at the annual ECPR Joint Sessions, which relate especially to the politics of the less developed areas of the world. Finally, it aims to provide a forum for exchanging



**Figure 3** Standing Group Governor Lawrence Sáez.



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views about developments in the field among interested scholars in the Consortium, especially through its newsletter.

In 2006, the Standing Group held an election to replace the outgoing Convenor, Andrew Wyatt (University of Bristol). Following a fiercely contested, but friendly election, Dr Lawrence Sáez (London School of Economics) narrowly defeated Dr Heather Marquette (University of Birmingham) by a single vote to become the new Convenor of the Standing Group (Figure 3). The issues raised by both candidates during the election provided the roadmap that the Group will follow over the next years. Lawrence Sáez's key aims for the Group are to raise the visibility and impact of the Standing Group. For this purpose, a new website is currently being designed and the domain name will be www.ecpr-thirdworld.org. Among other standard features, the website will include a database of experts and media directory drawn from the Standing Group's membership.

In addition to the development of the website, the Standing Group will be taking an active part in forthcoming ECPR-sponsored events. For instance, at the 4th ECPR General Conference in Pisa, it will sponsor a section on critical challenges in the Third World and this will be closely followed by a sponsored section at the SGIR Conference in Turin, entitled *IPE, Developing Countries, and Development*. Please contact Lawrence Sáez (L.saez@lse.ac.uk) if you are interested in getting involved with the Standing Group on Third World Politics.

Lawrence Sáez
(London School of Economics),
Standing Group Convenor



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