

## **European Elections 2009 – Europeanization: Parties, Institutions, Member States**

### **International Workshop of the Hungarian Europe Society**

*Hungarian Parliament, Gobelín Hall  
Budapest, 22-23 May 2009*

2009 is a year of historical importance for Hungary and Europe. It marks the next European elections; the fifth anniversary of many post-communist states' accession to the European Union and the “Big Bang” enlargement of the „old” European Union; as well as the twentieth anniversary of the crucial year of political transition to democracy in Central Europe.

The workshop aims to reflect upon the adjustment of the political elites, the citizens and the institutions to the historical and political changes of the past two decades in both the former EU-15 and the recently joined member states, whilst focusing on the process of Europeanization inside the whole European Union. The analysis of the upcoming European Parliament elections as well as the search for the development of the European political sphere will also express the all-European approach of the event.

#### **Program:**

22 May 2009, Friday

16.00 – 16.15 Welcome

16.15 – 18.00 First Session

#### ***Europeanization and Adjustment to the European Union – Twenty Years On, Five Years After***

How far did Hungary and other new democracies leave communism behind? To what extent have Visegrad countries and other newer member states become more European? How successful has Central Europe been in bridging the (former) East/West divide? What steps have countries of the region taken to interiorize common EU decision-making mechanisms? And how did older member states accommodate to the enlarged European Union?

Introductory contributions:

- **István Hegedűs**, Hungarian Europe Society, Budapest
- **Martí Grau i Segú**, Member of the European Parliament, Brussels/Barcelona
- **Václav Nekvapil**, Association for Communication in the Public Sector, Prague
- **José Ignacio Torreblanca**, European Council on Foreign Relations, Madrid

Moderator: **Petra Bárd**, Hungarian Europe Society, Budapest

23 May 2009, Saturday

10.00 – 11.45 Second Session

### ***The National Media and Europe – The European Public Sphere***

How are European issues and events covered in the media of the member states? How much do the domestic context and the historical legacy differentiate the image of Europe inside the EU-27? Is there a European Public Sphere emerging as an autonomous field of communication or can we register the Europeanization of the national news? Do we have an increasing room of opportunity to raise all-European issues at home, especially at European elections?

Introductory contributions:

- **Hakan Sicakkan**, University of Bergen
- **Judit Járadi**, Cafebabel.com, Budapest Editorial Office
- **István Hegedűs**, Hungarian Europe Society, Budapest

Moderator: **Györgyi Kocsis**, Hungarian Europe Society, Budapest

11.45 – 14.00 Break

14.00 – 15.45 Third Session

### ***Europessimism, Euroscepticism and Populism in the European Union***

How and why did anti-European political sentiments rise, to varying degrees, within the European Union? What are the reasons of diverging results of public opinion polls on EU membership and how should we evaluate the political implications of europessimism and euroscepticism in the Central European region and elsewhere inside the European Union? Are democratic political elites and parties able to drive public mood or do they react to populist claims all over in Europe?

Introductory contributions:

- **Martí Grau i Segú**, Member of the European Parliament, Brussels/Barcelona
- **Václav Nekvapil**, Association for Communication in the Public Sector, Prague
- **Grigorij Mesežnikov**, Institute for Public Affairs – IVO, Bratislava

Moderator: **Jürgen Dieringer**, Hungarian Europe Society, Budapest

15.45 – 16.15 Coffee Break

16.15 – 18.00 Fourth Session

### ***The Party Families – Participation, Turn-out and Voter Behaviour at the European Elections***

How can we evaluate the development of the European party system? What is the role of the political groups inside the European Parliament and in the EU decision-making process? Do MEPs represent European trans-national positions or national interests? Do we need a stronger all-European partisan competition? How do political parties of the Central European region fit into the party families of the EP? What are the opportunities for them to co-operate as Central Europeans? What about new eurosceptic political formations? Why was the turn-out lower in the recently joined member states than in the former EU-15 in 2004? What common strategies might be used to increase participation in 2009?

Introductory contributions:

- **Mikołaj Cześnik**, Institute of Political Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw
- **Alexander Trechsel**, European University Institute, Florence
- **Ol'ga Gyárfášová**, Institute for Public Affairs – IVO, Bratislava
- **Zsolt Enyedi**, Central European University, Budapest

Moderator: **Attila Bartha**, Hungarian Europe Society, Budapest

18.00 – 18.15 Concluding Remarks

Sponsor:

Friedrich Naumann  
STIFTUNG **FÜR DIE FREIHEIT**