Following our expectations here at the Centre for European Research (CER), the past 12 months have been a rather eventful period. The ongoing Brexit process and the European Parliament election of May 2019 marked the end of an era in European politics and the beginning of a new, albeit yet uncertain one. The election shook up the EU’s political landscape, leaving the Union’s mainstream, centrist forces short of a clear majority in one of its most important legislative bodies. Negotiations regarding the EU’s top leadership jobs and possible new alliances and factions are still underway.

In EU member states, national elections (e.g. in Slovenia, Sweden, Latvia, Luxembourg, Belgium or Slovakia) have produced mixed results for political forces positioned across the spectrum, showcasing no clear pan-European pattern of voter choice.

At the same time, after more than two years of negotiations, Brexit is nowhere near an orderly resolution. The economies and societies of both the UK and the EU27 are expected to be seriously impacted by this unresolved situation, with the UK remaining utterly divided internally, while its international standing is seen to have hit a long-time low.

The future of the UK-EU relationship is something that will be high on the Centre’s agenda in the coming year. Europe will remain a powerhouse and important partner for the UK. Both sides will need to identify the areas of mutual interest they want to continue working on together trustfully, especially in a world of high competition between and from the US, China and Russia.

DIRECTOR’S INTRODUCTION

At this crucial time, research and teaching on Europe could not matter more. The Centre provides a home for the study of Europe and its many facets by drawing on a range of disciplines.

Our activities and events involve policy makers, experts, scholars and civil society actors whose acclaimed work helps us make sense of the latest developments in our societies throughout Europe. As a renowned organisation based at one of the UK's leading research-focused higher education institutions, the Centre will continue to provide its followers with focused seminars, conferences and research findings to stimulate discussion and knowledge exchange.

Dr Sarah Wolff
Director
WHAT WE DO

Established in 2004, the Centre for European Research is based in the School of Politics and International Relations, Queen Mary University of London. Since its founding, the Centre has distinguished itself as an interdisciplinary forum blending scholarly and academic activities with projects involving policy officials, NGOs, practitioners, business leaders and the academia. The numerous activities sponsored by the Centre include conferences and workshops with a European focus, teaching on matters relating to Europe, and the production and distribution of a number of prestigious publications.
A notable part of the Centre’s mission is to promote excellence in teaching and learning on Europe and support research activities. The Centre is constituted mostly by faculty members and comprises of seventeen academic members from SPIR, the School of Law, the School of Business and Management and the School of Geography, three visiting and honorary staff, one postdoctoral researcher and one research assistant. Every year, it hosts a number of visiting PhD researchers and interns who have recently finished their postgraduate education. The expertise of its members in European Studies has been acknowledged by several prizes such as the 2012 LISBOAN Best Book Prize awarded to Dr Sarah Wolff, the Vincent Wright Prize for best article in West European Politics given Professor Tim Bale, the Drapers’ Award for Teaching awarded to Professor Rainbow Murray and the 2016 Young Research Prize in Migration Law from the Odysseus Network given to Dr. Violeta Moreno-Lax. The Centre has also achieved high policy impact in its work related to UK and European policy making by providing policy inputs on various occasions, published high quality research publications and obtained a large volume of external research funding. For instance, CER currently co-hosts three highly prestigious and refereed journals: Mediterranean Politics (2017 impact factor: 1.136), co-edited by Dr Sarah Wolff, Politics, co-edited by Dr Javier Sajuria, and East European Politics (indexed in the ESCI) with Mr David Gazsi as Editorial Team member.
Research

The Centre produces outstanding research and publications on topics of significant relevance for European politics. Some examples of our focus areas are as follows:

European Integration

European integration is at the core of the Centre’s research activities. This academic field includes Dr Sarah Wolff’s work on EU politics, Justice and Home Affairs (JHA), migration and border management policies, as well as EU-Arab relations in the Mediterranean and EU development aid. Dr Wolff’s current research focuses on the external relations of ‘Secular Power Europe’ and EU engagement with Islam. Dr Paul Copeland investigates two main themes: the political economy of European integration, particularly with respect to the EU’s competence in employment and social policy and the UK’s relationship with the EU. Mr David Gazsi’s work investigates the role of EU decentralised agencies in advancing the integration of third-party countries into the framework of EU and global rules, norms and practices.

Comparative European Politics

Comparative European Politics is another field of research at the heart of the Centre’s activities. Dr Stijn van Kessel’s work examines the electoral performance of populist parties in Europe and Euroscepticism in the Union in a comparative manner. He is currently co-investigator in the project 28+ perspectives on Brexit. Dr Javier Sajuria’s work focuses on comparative political behaviour, particularly on the interaction between voters and elites, internal party politics, social media and political action, and quantitative methods. He is the Principal Investigator of Candidaturas Chile and Co-Investigator of the project “Out of Touch and Out of Time?”. Professor Rainbow Murray works on political representation, with particular expertise on gender politics and French politics. Professor Murray studies the causes and consequences of women’s underrepresentation and men’s overrepresentation, with a particular focus on political institutions.
Dr Catherine Charrett’s research interests include Middle East studies, security studies, terrorism studies, gender politics, performance studies and queer theory. Dr Monica Poletti is interested in all aspects of political participation in Europe, including party membership in Britain, which is the main focus of the ECRC Party Members Project on which she collaborates with Professor Tim Bale, at Queen Mary and Paul Webb (Sussex).

**British Politics**

In his research, Professor Tim Bale focuses on all aspects of party politics in Britain, Europe and sometimes further afield. In addition to his interest in the Conservative party and centre-right parties more generally, his current project focuses on the relationship between parties and interest groups (particularly left-wing parties and trade unions), the party politics of immigration and the British Labour Party after PM Tony Blair.

**European Law**

Professor Valsamis Mitsilegas’ research focuses on EU criminal law and its implications on global security. He has been involved in a series of projects with the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS).

Dr Mario Mendez studies EU and comparative constitutional law. Dr Violeta Moreno-Lax’s research looks at EU migration and asylum law. She has recently been involved in a number of projects such as OMNIA. Dr Matthieu Burnay’s main research focus is on the EU-China relations. His current projects include EUPLANT and EUCROSS.

**European History**

Dr Robert Saunders specializes in modern British history in a European context with a particular focus on the relationship between the UK and the EU.

**European Business and Trade**

The on-going research project of Professor Adrian Smith and Dr Liam Campling focuses on EU trade agreements and international labour standards involving and interdisciplinary team. Professor Smith focuses on the economic and social geographies of post-socialist transformation in Central Europe. Together with Dr Campling, he runs the project Labour Standards and FTAs. Dr Stella Ladi’s research interests include the Eurozone crisis, public policy and public administration reforms, Europeanization, global governance and the role of experts in public policy.
CER-YouGov project ‘Britons’ trust in Europeans and the impact of Brexit on European elections’

CER experts, Dr Sarah Wolff, Professor Tim Bale and Dr Javier Sajuria were awarded with a Queen Mary University of London, Humanities and Social Sciences Strategic (HSS) Impact Award for their CER-YouGov project ‘Britons’ trust in Europeans and the impact of Brexit on European elections’. The project aimed to answer the following questions in light of the Brexit process: Will Britons continue to trust their European partners? How will the (outcome of the deal -to be known by then) impact UK’s future relationship with Europeans? What do voters think about Europeans’ negotiating style? How should the future of British-French relationship look like? Will the departure of the Brits strengthen the Franco-German engine? Do voters think that Europe will be a major powerhouse for the future Britain’s foreign policy? What will be the impact of Brexit??

The findings of the project were published on the QMUL HSS homepage (incl. a link to the data tables), in The Conversation, on the ‘UK in a Changing Europe’ website here and here, and on the LSE blog. The results were also promoted by the Centre as well as QMUL HSS via their social media platforms, reaching thousands of followers. Next steps in the project include the publication of a policy paper as part of the CER Policy Paper Series, the organisation of an informal policy hub later in 2019, and the finalisation of an academic article to be published in a peer-reviewed journal.
Teaching

The high level of research at the Centre goes hand in hand with an outstanding quality in teaching. CER’s experts offer a wide range of modules, both for undergraduate and postgraduate students. Open to undergraduate students is ‘The European Union’ module (POL386), the objective of which is to explore the origins, development and institutions of the EU as well as major policies and policy-making processes in the Union. British politics is investigated in the ‘Background to British Politics’ (POL108) as well as the ‘British Politics - Theory and Practice’ (POLM065) modules. Moreover, the ‘Comparative European Politics’ module (POL248) combines an application of ‘new institutional’ theories of comparative politics with the empirical analysis of key aspects of the development and performance of European political systems. POL 267 Researching Everyday Politics is a second-year compulsory module on that analyses the way people experience Europe on a daily basis, and how they engage with it through activism and acts of citizenship. Two themes run through most of the topics in the module: processes of Europeanisation and multilevel governance that have impacted, to varying degrees, different European nation-states and the European Union as a whole. Postgraduate modules include ‘Case studies in EU Policy-making’ (POLM066), a course designed to offer students an in-depth analysis of the EU’s competence in a number of policy areas including the Single Market, competition policy, the Eurozone, the Common Agricultural Policy, employment and social policy, as well as environmental policy. The external relations of the EU are examined in ‘The EU as an International Actor’ module (POLM079), providing students with the necessary conceptual and empirical perspectives regarding the EU’s international role.
The Centre continuously organises research seminars, conferences and other events to stimulate discussion and knowledge exchange between the academia, practitioners and the public.

The CER inaugural event in October 2018, titled “Reforming the EU: Why and How the Union Needs to Hand Power to its Citizens”, saw the participation of two high-profile guest-speakers: Professor Ulrike Guérot, Berlin-based political thinker, and Marie La Conte, French freelance political journalist living in London.

Our other event highlight of the past period was our UACES grant awarded workshop that took place at the University of London Institute in Paris in March 2019. Titled Decentring Europe: Critical Approaches to European Foreign Policy, it drew 25+ participants from various European academic and expert institutions. Its aim was to depart from prevailing conceptualisations of European foreign policy and develop new epistemological and ontological approaches as well as methodologies to formulate novel, decentred analytical perspectives for European foreign policy. The list of participants included notable academics such as Professors Stephan Keukeleire (KU Leuven), Kimberly Hutchings (QMUL) or Christian Lequesne (Sciences Po), and experts such as Daniela Huber (IAI) or Alexandre Escrocia (MFA France).
Starting in October, and following last year’s successful series, The Centre launched its biweekly Debating Europe seminar series where academics, experts and policy makers have looked at the most pressing issues Europe faces. The seminars were chaired by our Director, Dr Sarah Wolff.

The opening seminar “International Populism: The Radical Right in the European Parliament”, was hosted by Professor Duncan McDonnel (Griffith), who was engaged by discussants Sophia Gaston (ARENA) and Dr Stijn van Kessel (CER).

The following seminar “Post-crisis Greece: impact on democracy and governance after eight years of Economic Adjustment Programmes” saw the participation of Dr Stella Ladi (CER) and Professor Kevin Featherstone (LSE). The third seminar, “Influencing the EU beyond Brexit: How can British-based NGOs and the UK Government continue to shape EU policies?” hosted Dr Matthew Sowemimo (MSC) and Professor Tim Bale (CER) with Dr Paul Copeland (CER) acting as Chair.

The seminar “Migration Policy in Europe: Selecting on Social Class?” hosted guest speakers Dr Saskia Bonjour (UVA) and Professor Elspeth Guild (QMUL). The seminar “Why the Centre-right Might be Wrong on the eve of the 2019 European Elections: How do Mainstream Conservatives Handle Europe’s Populist Challenge?” saw keynote speaker Professor Tim Bale (CER) debating with Charles Grant (Centre for European Reform) and Dr Sofia Vasilopoulou (York). The special seminar titled “The Vein, the Fingerprint Machine and the Automatic Speed Detector” took the form of a performance and discussion initiated by Dr Catherine Charrett (CER), with the participation of Professor Engin Isin (QMUL), Dr Nasser Golzari (Westminster) and Dr Majisola Adebayo (QMUL).

The final seminar of the academic year was titled “The Right to Rescue: A Human Rights Defender Framework” and involved a discussion between Dr Violeta Moreno-Lax (CER) and Pia Oberoi (UNHCR).

The last event in the season was a lecture given by Jamie Taylor from the European Parliament titled “The May 2019 European elections” with the involvement of Dr Paul Copeland and Dr Sarah Wolff (CER).

In addition, CER members actively took part in several events and conferences across the globe to represent the Centre. For instance, Dr Sarah Wolff participated in the Roundtable Crisis of Democracy, Crisis of Democracy Promotion in The Hague, while Mr David Gazsi acted as discussant at the ASN World Convention in New York.
OUTREACH

Members of the Centre appear regularly in national and international media to comment on European affairs and are often consulted for expert advice by a number of key political actors such as the Dutch government, British and European political parties, think tanks and the European Commission.

The research of our members is published in in peer-reviewed journals and university press volumes. (For the latest appearances of CER experts in the media, see ANNEX 2. For publications see ANNEX 3).

ACTIVITIES

The Centre has an official website and hosts the ‘Europe Matters blog’ which provides a platform for internal and external experts to comment on the most prominent issues in European politics, as well as a Spotlight section which helps communicate CER members’ research to a wider audience. It has launched a Policy Paper Series, the first issue of which has already been uploaded online, and created the Best MA Dissertation Prize to reward QMUL students for the excellent work in the field of European studies. The Centre also regularly produces podcasts and videos and has a newsletter which is received by more than 350 subscribers (see Issues 4 & 5). Finally, the Centre has created a promotional video, banners and flyers and distributes pens with its logo at events.

SOCIAL MEDIA

CER has established its social media presence on Facebook and Twitter to keep its followers up-to-date on its activities. These channels have seen a considerable growth in the number of followers in the past period. Twitter followers have increased by almost 30%, with total impressions reaching 45.1K in the last 90 days. Top tweets include live tweets posted during the CER seminar “How Mainstream Conservatives Handle the Populist Challenge?”
the release of our Brexit poll survey “Brexit: British public thinks the #EU has been harsh in #negotiations” and the launch of the workshop 'Decentring Europe: Critical Approaches to European Foreign Policy'.

The number of followers and post views remained stable on Facebook. Amongst our top Facebook posts was the one on launching our Europe Matters Blog article about “Populism in Europe”, and the launching of our workshop 'Decentring Europe: Critical Approaches to European Foreign Policy'.

1. Gender representation of CER's followers on Twitter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Growth of the engagement rate on Twitter

1.2 Reactions, Comments, Shares, Answers, Claims on Facebook.

1.3 Growth of the engagement rate on Twitter
MEMBERS

Dr Sarah Wolff
Director of CER, Senior Lecturer
School of Politics and International Relations

Professor Tim Bale
Professor of Politics
School of Politics and International Relations

Dr Liam Campling
Reader in Political Economy
School of Business Management

Dr Catherine Charrett
Lecturer in Politics and International Relations
School of Politics and International Relations

Professor Valsamis Mitsilegas
Professor of European Criminal Law and Global Security,
School of Law

Dr Paul Copeland
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Dr Stella Ladi
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School of Business and Management

Dr Stijn van Kessel
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Dr Matthieu Burnay
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School of Law

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Dr Robert Saunders  
Senior Lecturer in Modern British History  
School of History

Professor Adrian Smith  
Professor of Human Geography,  
Dean for Research (Humanities and Social Sciences)  
School of Geography

Professor Rainbow Murray  
Professor of Politics  
School of Politics and International Relations

Mr David Gazsi  
Research Assistant  
King’s College London

Visiting/Honorary Staff

Lord (Roger) Liddle  
Honorary Fellow  
School of Politics and International Relations

Dr Silvia Sovic  
Honorary Fellow  
School of Politics and International Relations

Dr Françoise Boucek  
Visiting Fellow  
School of Politics and International Relations
## ANNEX 1. Latest CER events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 October 2018</td>
<td>CER Inaugural</td>
<td>Reforming the EU: Why and How the Union Needs to Hand Power to its Citizens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 October 2018</td>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>International Populism: The Radical Right in the European Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 October 2018</td>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>Post-crisis Greece: impact on democracy and governance after eight years of Economic Adjustment Programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 November 2018</td>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>Influencing the EU beyond Brexit: How can British-based NGOs and the UK Government continue to shape EU policies?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 December 2018</td>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>Migration Policy in Europe: Selecting on Social Class?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
28 January 2019
Performance and Discussion | The Vein, the Fingerprint Machine and the Automatic Speed Detector
Performed by Dr Catherine Charrett (QMUL), Discussants: Professor Engin Isin (QMUL), Nasser Golzari (Westminster), Dr Majisola Adebayo (QMUL), chaired by Dr Sarah Wolff, Director of CER.

11 February 2019
Seminar | Why the Centre-right Might be Wrong on the eve of the 2019 European Elections: How do Mainstream Conservatives Handle Europe's Populist Challenge?
Professor Tim Bale (QMUL), Charles Grant (Centre for European Reform), Sofia Vasilopoulou (York), event by Dr Sarah Wolff, Director of CER.

7 March 2019
Workshop | Decentring Europe: Critical Approaches to European Foreign Policy

25 March 2019
Seminar | The Right to Rescue: A Human Rights Defender Framework

26 March 2019
Lecture & Discussion | The 2019 May European elections: Some insights on Article 50 and the European Parliament
ANNEX 2. Latest appearances of CER Experts in the Media

- *Forget the Brexit Party surge in the UK, the rest of Europe has delivered a far more important message* - The Independent (Dr Sarah Wolff)
- *Britain has never been more European* – POLITICO (Professor Tim Bale)
- *European Parliament elections: What happened to the populist surge?* (Dr Paul Copeland and Dr Sarah Wolff)
- *Where do the elections leave Europe’s nationalists?* – AlJazeera (Dr Sarah Wolff)
- *En Grèce, les élections européennes ont valeur de test pour Alexis Tsipras* – Le Monde (Dr Stella Ladi)
- *Grèce: Tsipras cherche à renforcer sa position à l’approche des européennes* – RFI (Dr Stella Ladi)
- *Elecciones del Parlamento Europeo: Parte 1: las nuevas alianzas; Parte 2: los impactos domésticos* – Pauta (Dr Javier Sajuria)
- *Tory leadership: Who gets to choose the UK’s next prime minister?* – BBC (Professor Tim Bale)
- *Both the Conservatives and Labour are in thrall to member power* – The Financial Times (Professor Tim Bale)
- *European election polls: How the EU’s establishment parties will lose ground as far-Right populism increases* – The Telegraph (Dr Stijn van Kessel)
- *European elections: Surge of support means a third of MEPs could be populist* – Sky News (Dr Stijn van Kessel)
- *All Out Politics - Sky News* (Dr Sarah Wolff)
- *Sondage : ce que les Britanniques pensent du divorce avec l’UE* – Le Petit Journal (Dr Sarah Wolff)
- *Theresa May Stalls on Brexit. Again. And Again. And Again* – The New York Times (Professor Tim Bale)
British public thinks the EU has been harsh in negotiations – The UK in a changing Europe (Professor Tim Bale, Dr Sarah Wolff, Dr Javier Sajuria)

Brexit poll: British public thinks the EU has been harsh in negotiations – The Conversation (Professor Tim Bale, Dr Sarah Wolff, Dr Javier Sajuria)

BBC Icons: Alan Turing was a worthy winner – but where were the women? – The Conversation (Rainbow Murray)

L'accord du Brexit a été massivement rejeté par les députés britanniques - ICI Radio-Canada Première (Dr Sarah Wolff)

Theresa May asks her MPs to ‘think about history’. She should do so too – Evening Standard (Professor Tim Bale)

Officials discuss election plans as Brexit deadlock sparks poll talk – Financial Times (Professor Tim Bale)

Would a Norway option break the Brexit stalemate? Here’s what new polling tells us – The Conversation (Professor Tim Bale)

Why is the Brexit Deal so unpopular? - Whatukthinks (Professor Tim Bale)

Jeremy Corbyn’s successor may be more establishment than you expect – New Statman (Professor Tim Bale)

Corbyn defies calls from within Labour to back second Brexit referendum – The Guardian (Professor Tim Bale)

Rétrospective des actualités européennes - Radio Canada International (Dr Sarah Wolff)

Most Labour members believe Corbyn should back second Brexit vote – The Guardian (Professor Tim Bale)

No confidence vote: Why Jeremy Corbyn hasn’t called a motion against the Government – iNews (Professor Tim Bale)

The Reader: Snowflake Brexiteers must surely expect a bit of name-calling? – Evening Standard (Professor Tim Bale)

Dr Françoise Boucek discusses the protests in France on Sky News – Sky News

Women seeking selection to be MPs face bias, finds study – Financial Times (Rainbow Murray)

Dr Sarah Wolff speaking to Radio Canada @RCInet about May’s draft agreement
ANNEX 3. Latest relevant publications of CER members


T. Bale, P. Webb & M. Poletti (forthcoming) 'Participating Locally and Nationally: Explaining the Offline and Online Activism of British Party Members', Political Studies.

T. Bale, P. Webb & M. Poletti (forthcoming) 'Why do only some people who support parties actually join them? Evidence from Britain', West European Politics.

T. Bale & P. Webb (2018) "'We Didn’t See it Coming": The Conservatives' Parliamentary Affairs, 71 (s.1) pp. 46–58.


V. Moreno-Lax (forthcoming) ‘Solidarity’s Reach: Meaning, Dimensions and Implications for EU (External) Asylum Policy’, Maastricht Journal of European and Comparative Law (accepted)


