

# EU Constitution Project Newsletter

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In line with the Federal Trust's aim to enlighten the debate on good governance, this Newsletter reviews the current reform process of the EU from the standpoint of the work of the Federal Trust's project on Constitutionalism, Federalism and the Reform of the European Union (the 'EU Constitution Project'). The Newsletter looks at current developments in and outside the Convention and also covers the UK debate. Finally, it provides information about relevant events and publications.

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## 1. Guest Editorial

### How Did We Get From There To Here? The Origins of the EU Constitution

Until now the question of a constitution for Europe has never been at the forefront of the public debate about European integration. It has never been on the official policy agenda of the EU Member States simply because such a commitment was never required. The brief encounter with the European Defence Community (EDC) and the European Political Community (EPC) in 1952-54 was highly circumstantial and largely expedient, and it served to underline the difficulties that such a political strategy would have entailed. It would have been peremptorily dismissed as at best premature and at worst chimerical.

In such circumstances, then, how is it that we are now confronting that very empirical reality that until quite recently has been both rejected and often reviled by even informed commentators as something that is either unnecessary or impractical? Three common explanations are offered in the contemporary discourse:

1. Enlargement: the argument is that an EU constitution is a 'quick fix' enabling a Europe of 15 to be expanded to accommodate a Europe of 25 or more constituent units.
2. Democracy: the usual accusation levelled at the EU is that it is somehow 'not democratic' and that the so-called 'democratic deficit' suggests a lack of legitimacy, accountability and transparency.
3. Conspiracy: Eurosceptic opinion in the United Kingdom and elsewhere construes an EU constitution largely as a mere contrivance designed to consecrate an elite conspiracy of 'permissive consensus' that has been persistently pursued by an assortment of member state governments influenced by federalist thinking.

### The EU Constitution Project

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A closer analysis of where we are reveals that the real explanation is much more complex and is in fact implicit in Jean Monnet's conception of European integration. If we look carefully at Monnet's political strategy for the building of a federal Europe, we will see that it relied upon piecemeal, cumulative concrete steps that would forge specific functional links between states in a way that did not directly challenge national sovereignty. Monnet believed that the door to federation would be opened only gradually. A federal Europe would emerge as the culminating point of a gradual process for which there was neither a timetable nor a deadline.

The implication of this strategy was that Monnet's Europe would need to engage the constitutional question only at some distant, undefined date in the future. His 'method' was based upon the bold assumption that 'political' Europe would be the result of a tried and tested experiment facilitating a 'qualitative' change in the constitutional and political relations between states and citizens. But this metamorphosis would occur only when the force of necessity made it seem natural in the eyes of Europeans. Constitutionalism, then, was rendered contingent upon functional, largely economic, achievements.

In light of this perspective, we can easily understand why serious public discussion about an EU constitution has never before occurred. Such a debate was simply unnecessary. Today, however, we are witnessing a fundamental shift from 'quantity' to 'quality' in the debate about Europe. The point is that the EU has reached another crossroads in its economic and political evolution and this new watershed was always implicit in Monnet's conception of Europe. Accordingly, before interested commentators and observers of the EU use short-sighted explanations in order to explain how we got from there to here, they need to revisit the political ideas and strategies of Monnet if they really want to understand the origins of an EU constitution.

Professor Michael Burgess  
University of Hull

## 2. Towards a EU Constitution under the Irish Presidency

Negotiations on the Constitution are back on track. On 24-25 March the European Council agreed to restart IGC negotiations and also set itself a deadline to complete the process: 17-18 June 2004 at the latest.

The new scene, compared to the deadlock reached at the previous summit in December 2003, is characterised by a softening of positions which was already noticeable by the beginning of March, but which has been asserted by the change of leadership in Spain after general elections in this country. At the root of the change in colour of the Spanish government there are the bombings in Madrid of 11 March on the eve of the general elections, or more accurately, the discredit of Aznar's government over the political usage of the attacks.

The bombings in Madrid and the change of government in Spain have made phenomenal shock waves. The downfall of the Spanish government at the general elections has led to a re-alignment of power balances and positions on the Constitution dossier, notably the isolation of Poland - further accelerating the break-up of the Polish government - and the British displacement to the margins in the map of alliances on the Constitution negotiations. As a result, the centre stage has become occupied by an unchallenged Franco-German leadership.

The bombings in Madrid have also precipitated a shift of attention towards security matters and the eclipsing of economic matters which were to take centre stage in the 'traditional' spring focus on economic matters. Other issues to be discussed at the European Council, such as budgetary issues, were also limited to procedural discussions.

As regards the negotiations on the Constitution, this new scene is based on the lifting of the (so-far) hardest obstacle to agreement on the Draft Constitutional Treaty, notably, the double majorities issue, or in other words, the relative weight of Member States in the Council of 25 Member States. A compromise

on this point may be the key to an agreement on the whole package, and thus seems to be assumed by the Presidency, even though the resolution of a number of issues is pending and, as usual, nothing will be agreed until everything is agreed.

Indeed, on the Constitution dossier, there is a sense of having cleared a major obstacle and thus of moving towards agreement on the final points on the Constitution. Signs of a possible compromise started to emerge at the beginning of March with hints coming from Poland and Germany that there was a willingness to resolve the IGC impasse. On the Spanish front however, the signs were not auspicious in early March. In an interview with *Le Monde* and in clear pre-electoral mood, the Spanish Prime Minister kept to his global and European geo-political views and insisted on his well-rehearsed positions on the Constitution. Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern warned that the Presidency would not recommend the re-launch of the IGC if Member States continued to stick to their positions, and warned EU leaders to alter them urgently if they wished to work towards concluding negotiations on the EU Constitution during the term of the Irish Presidency and before the European elections.

The turning point that triggered the new scene was provided by the bombings of 11 March in Madrid. The new Spanish government emerging from the general elections in the immediate aftermath of the bombings announced a policy U-turn in both the global and European scenes. The new socialist-led government would soften its positions and seek compromise on the Constitution. Ex-Convention member Josep Borrell stated that the new Spanish government would accept in principle the Convention draft including the double majority system.

Besides the consultations taking place throughout the month, the declared shift in Spanish positions precipitated an upsurge of diplomatic activity on the eve of the Summit. On 16 March German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and French President Jacques Chirac met in Paris to re-plan strategy

and insisted on moving forward and wrapping the Constitution negotiations quickly. On 22 March the Irish Prime Minister met the new Spanish leader, met President Chirac in Paris, and German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder paid an official visit to Warsaw on 23 March. At the conclusion of the Taoiseach's meeting with Chirac in Paris, the Irish Prime Minister stated that he believed it was possible to conclude the IGC by the June Council.

[EU Observer](#)

[Avui](#)

[El Mundo](#)

[Presidency website](#)

[Le Figaro](#)

### Resuming the IGC: reassurances on 20 or 3 sticky points?

The awaited Report by the Irish Presidency was finally issued just on the eve of the European Council on 24 March. The purpose of the Report, mandated by the European Council last December, had always been rather vague: would the Irish propose ways out of the deadlock on the IGC? Or would the Presidency present a report purely on the state of affairs and of political will? Perhaps fearing failure to achieve compromise between the 25 and unintended domestic political damage the Irish demanded re-assurances before embarking on a re-staging of the IGC.

On 22 March 2004 the Presidency announced that the Report would be short and would contain only a summary account of the work done to date and an overall assessment of the state of play. Over dinner at the Summit, the Taoiseach would expand on the Report but the Presidency was not going to ask EU heads of state and government to 'enter into the detail of the substantive negotiations or to agree conclusions in that regard'. The intention was to seek confirmation 'that there is a shared political will to move to an early overall agreement'. The Irish appealed to some collective responsibility: it was going to be for the European Council as a whole to decide on the way forward.

The reassurances from Member States that there was commitment to

finish off the negotiations (and in particular that double majority was an agreed concept - albeit with possibly revised thresholds in the 'double majority' formula) were seemingly sufficient. Nonetheless the Report identified problematic issues, some which the Presidency expected 'could be resolved without undue difficulty', but three issues in particular were singled out by the Presidency as 'the most difficult', namely, the size and composition of the Commission, the minimum seat threshold in the European Parliament, and the definition and scope of qualified majority voting. Back in February, and distancing himself from the Italian Presidency, Ahern had stated that the list of outstanding issues stood 'at about 20'. Having an IGC at the highest level with over 20 issues on the agenda would not result in agreement, and the Presidency would work to shorten and narrow down the list of outstanding issues. In fact, not much is known on the state of the negotiations across the many elements in the Constitutional Treaty. The Presidency has been notoriously prudent and vague in reporting on the progress. Whether agreement on the most controversial issues would make all other pieces fall into place, or whether other issues will reappear once agreement on voting weights is achieved, is a reasonable concern.

In any case, the Report by the Presidency distinguished three major controversial issues. On the first, the size and composition of the Commission seems far from being 'done and dusted' as the Italian Presidency appeared to indicate back in December 2003. There seems to be movement towards a rendez-vous clause: Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt re-stated on 2 March that he would extend the deadline for keeping one Commissioner per member state until 2014 as opposed to the proposal by the draft Constitution for a smaller Commission from 2009. A smaller Commission is essential to avoid the emergence of a 'directorship' of large countries within the Commission, Verhofstadt argued. The Presidency appears to support this view. Other related aspects such as the creation of a super-Commissioner put forward last

month by UK, France and Germany are also on the table.

As regards the second item, decision-making in the Council by double majority, on 8 March Germany signalled its willingness to compromise on voting weights in a Council of 25 members. The European Convention had proposed a system under which votes could be carried by 50 per cent of states representing 60 per cent of the population, thus giving enhanced power to larger countries. The proposal, let us recall, was objected to by medium size countries, Poland and Spain, for it took away from them the blocking power granted by the Nice Treaty. Berlin indicated in early March that it was prepared to look favourably on a new voting formula that would reduce the power of big Member States to block EU initiatives. A proposal, floated by the EU's Irish Presidency, would increase the power of smaller Member States and make it easier to reach decisions.

German government officials have stated that a proposal by the Irish Presidency to reduce the population element and increase the member-state element in the equation would not defeat the principle of double majority. However, modifying the rules so that decisions could be made by 55 per cent of the EU's Member States representing 55 per cent of the EU's population would prevent the three largest countries - Britain, France and Germany - blocking a decision on their own. This would likely ease the concerns of Spain and Poland, the main opponents of the current proposed double majority.

The main question now appears to be the confirmation of the Spanish and Polish positions. As stated above, signs of a compromise emerged earlier in the month, and the change of political landscape triggered by the results of the Spanish elections confirm it. Spain has lifted its objection to the principle of double majorities and a possible compromise may appear on the alteration of the percentages proposed by the Convention or on an increase in the number of seats at the EP. Polish Prime Minister Leszek Miller also signalled on the immediate aftermath of

the Spanish elections that Poland should avoid being left on its own as regards the EU Constitution. Polish President Alexander Kwasniewski has stated that the double majority voting system as proposed by the Irish Presidency was an 'important and interesting idea'.

As regards the scope of qualified majority voting not much is known. As far as the UK is concerned, the statement by Tony Blair to the Commons on 30 March (see UK section below) indicates that the British defence of its red lines remains unmodified. As regards the third item, a minimum threshold of votes in the EP, this last item is closely linked to the two above, and it may be part of a deal to 'compensate' medium size countries for the loss of influence in the Council in terms of their relative vote weighting power.

[Presidency Report](#)

[epolitix](#)

[Süddeutsche Zeitung](#)

[Financial Times](#)

[FT Deutschland](#)

[Le Figaro](#)

[EU Observer](#)

[IGC Documents](#)

### Not if but when

The March European Council asked the Presidency to continue its consultations and, as soon as appropriate, to arrange for the resumption of formal negotiations on the IGC. The resumption is not likely to take place until the mid/end of April when the change in the Spanish government takes place - even though consultations with the incoming government will take place.

Besides the date of the official resumption of the IGC, the European Council decided that agreement on the Constitutional Treaty should be reached no later than the June European Council. France and Germany have repeatedly insisted that a deal on the Constitution can be reached by June i.e. still under the Irish Presidency. The UK government also has recently endorsed an early resolution. Whether this deadline is achievable will depend on the willingness of Member States to compromise, on which point, last month

Giscard pointed out that the reason for the stalled negotiations was rather 'a failure of method than a rejection of the Constitution'.

On the outstanding issues, including the voting system, the Presidency has seemingly not yet tabled any formal proposals, and the Convention text remains the default together with various revisions put forward by the Italian Presidency. The extent of consensus on these revisions remains unclear. In addition, the Irish Presidency Report states that 'the Legal and Technical Working Group chaired by the Head of the Council Legal Service has continued its work in accordance with the timetable envisaged under the Italian Presidency. The Group has finalised the texts of Protocols on the abrogation of acts and treaties completing or modifying the EC and EU Treaties and on the first four Accession Treaties. It aims to complete its remaining task, the drafting of the text of a Protocol on the Accession Treaty 2003, by 27 April'.

Let us recall a further element, that is the link between the adoption of the Constitution and the European Parliament elections. This is a link which has been present since the Laeken Declaration. The failure to strike a deal on the Constitution last December made the adoption of a Constitutional Treaty before or in time for the European Parliament elections impossible. However, Bertie Ahern said that the Presidency wanted to bring clarity 'to as many areas as we possibly physically can prior to elections' so that voters would know what was on offer. The Irish Prime Minister appears to defend agreement before the June polls if possible, and no later than the June summit a week later. The possibility of convening a special EU summit to be held before the European Parliament elections has been floated. On the same wavelength, the Benelux and Visegrad countries have reaffirmed their commitment to a quick deal on the EU Constitution, that is, they prefer a Constitution agreement before the European elections. Commission and European Parliament President have consistently called for a deal on the Constitution before the elections.

The European Council however, only subscribed to the timeframe of completing negotiations by the June Summit at the latest, that is by 17-18 June. Indeed, the commitment to finalise a deal before 12-13 of June is not explicit in the Conclusions of the Spring Council. In fact, some leaders appear to have questioned the principle of the Laeken timeframe. Some EU leaders are said to be concerned that the elections, to be held on 12-13 June, could become an unofficial referendum on the document. In fact the Irish Presidency seems to have some mixed feelings. Meetings between Irish Premier Bertie Ahern and French president Chirac resulted on 18 June being set as a possible Constitution deadline, amid a recognition from Dublin that the new treaty 'needs calm and rational debate' unlikely during an election campaign. 'It may be that some heads of government may feel that if you have a constitution in the immediate run-up to the European elections you might engender more confusion than enlightenment', Anne Anderson, Ireland's EU ambassador said. Ahern is seen as pragmatic on the issue: keen if a deal can be reached but also anxious to avoid failure.

[European Council conclusions](#)

[Irish Presidency web site](#)

[EU Observer](#)

### 3. Parallel developments Elections in Greece and Spain

On 7 March the Greek electorate went to the polls for the general elections. The results, largely expected, concluded a 20 year supremacy of PASOK in the country's leadership. Spanish elections followed on 14 March, in the immediate aftermath of a major terrorist attack in Madrid. The bombings provided an unexpected turn to the elections.

Early in the month President Aznar gave an interview in Le Monde. Polls and public opinion gave the Aznar government guarantees of a further legislature with only the size of its parliamentary majority being a matter of political speculation. A few days later the situation took a totally new turn. The bombings in Madrid, and in particular

the management by the government of the events turned the electorate towards refusal of the government. The bombings turned the focus of the electoral campaign, which had been largely played on internal and economic themes, towards international affairs; but most specially, allegations of media manipulation and misinformation threw the government into widespread discredit.

The new leadership was quick to capitalise on the loss of credibility of the Aznar administration and announced an immediate U-turn on European and international matters, notably distancing itself from the Bush administration and moving back to the more traditional pro-European stance characteristic of previous administrations. On the European front the socialist government announced a willingness to find compromise on the EU Constitution, and the achievement that compromise will be one of the main subjects at the IGC. Spain, on the other hand, could become more inflexible on budget negotiations in the attempt to protect and be seen to protect its national stance in Europe.

[Greek elections results](#)

[Le Monde](#)

[Spanish elections results](#)

[La Vanguardia](#)

[El Mundo](#)

[La Vanguardia](#)

[Le Monde](#)

[Liberation](#)

[International Herald Tribune](#)

## Fight against terrorism

The bomb attacks in Madrid on 11 March, which left close to 200 people dead, catapulted the fight against terrorism to the top of the agenda. The reality of a terrorist threat in Europe and the urgency to respond to it acquired a prominence that eclipsed other items on the EU agenda such as the Lisbon process or the negotiations over the EU budget.

An extra-ordinary meeting of interior ministers was called on 19 March, and subsequently the General Affairs and External Relations Council of 23 March and then the March European Council

were occupied with the fight against terrorism. The first call for renewed action was made on 16 March. At a joint Franco-German meeting in Paris, leaders of both countries called for closer co-operation to fight terrorism and discussed measures to increase European security efforts. The establishment of an anti-terror 'pioneer group' among five Member States (UK, France, Germany, Italy and Spain) followed.

The Presidency has assumed the initiative and it has declared to be committed to accelerating the implementation of the European Security Strategy (adopted by the European Council last December), the existing legislative mechanisms as well as rapid adoption of texts on the table of the Council such as those to limit the financial means of criminal organisations. Through the Declaration the Presidency has also sought political commitment to assume the obligations contained in the solidarity clause which is included in the not yet adopted Constitutional Treaty. The Declaration on solidarity against terrorism foresees that such solidarity will provide mutual inter-state support with all available means including military means in the case of a terrorist attack. A package of counter-terrorism measures, including the appointment of a co-ordinator within the Council Secretariat to assist the fight against terrorism, and a Declaration on terrorism were adopted by the European Council in March.

In parallel to these measures EU-wide co-operation on the fight against terrorism may well take the option for 'flexible' co-operation i.e. for the undertaking of further specific co-operation by smaller groups.

[BBC News](#)

[International Herald Tribune](#)

[Euractiv](#)

[Irish Presidency site](#)

[Irish Presidency site](#)

[EU Observer](#)

[Declaration on combating terrorism](#)

[European Security Strategy, \(Solana Report\) 12 December 2003](#)

[Statwatch](#)

## 4. Forthcoming

On the IGC scene the bilateral consultations conducted by the Presidency will continue. A formal resumption of the IGC 'format' is likely to occur when the change in the Spanish government is consummated. Among the factors to watch out for will be the evolution of the political situation in Poland and the EP elections.

### Poland

During March the political situation in Poland has deteriorated. Amidst corruption scandals, unpopularity and party schism, the current Social Democratic leader Leszek Miller is set to step down on 2 May. Calls for advanced general elections are likely to be disregarded by the Social Democrats in control of the Polish Parliament while the opposition parties, populists and pro-European liberals, seek the immediate convening of elections.

Although the change in the leadership is not due until early May the weakness of the Social Democratic government in Poland poses an element of 'unexpected' on the European front. On European and international matters the Social Democrats in office have shifted positions. The U-turn from the defence of the Nice Treaty ('Nice or death') to the announcement of the withdrawal of its opposition to the double majorities could not be more evident. The discredit of the government in office has been aggravated by the unexpected results in the Spanish elections. The Polish government became isolated in both its trans-atlantic and European policy. President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland announced that he had been 'deceived' by information on weapons of mass destruction before the Iraq war and that Poland might pull some troops out of Iraq earlier than planned.

[Le Figaro](#)

[La Vanguardia](#)

### EP Elections

In the last months re-groupings and realignments between political forces at

the EP have taken place. The re-positioning of regional parties, federalist parties and the broader political families will have effects on the global groups balance. The biggest worry however remains the turn out. Polls suggest the lowest ever in European elections.

Hopes of a larger participation by linking (timewise) the adoption of the Constitution with the Parliament elections were removed by the failure of the European Council last December to agree on the Constitutional Treaty in time for citizens to get to know it before the European elections. The idea of an indirect endorsement of the Constitutional Treaty by the European citizens through the European Parliament elections, and thus for popular legitimacy for the text, was thus put aside. The Spring European Council undertook to conclude the negotiations on the Constitution by the 17-19 June European Council at the latest.

[EU Observer](#)

[EU Observer](#)

## 5. UK Debate

Events during March have weakened the UK government's position in the context of intra-EU political alliances. The downfall of the Spanish and Polish leaders implies the break up of the Spanish-Polish-British axis which had contested the leadership of France and Germany. Besides the loss of allies in the European front, arguably Blair's government has also lost the strategic role of interlocutor between opposing conceptions on the Constitution, or in other words, France and Germany will not depend on Britain to put pressure on Poland and Spain. The loss of its role to act as a bridge between those opposed to the Convention's package may affect its ability to resist unwanted elements in the Constitutional Treaty. The UK government will have to search for new allies in the final run up to the adoption of the Constitution.

[e-politix](#)

[EU Observer](#)

In the UK, the debate emerging from the outcome of the Summit has concentrated on the political timing of the adoption

of a Constitution and the well-known calls for a referendum on the EU Constitution.

Is the adoption of the Constitutional Treaty in June a good timing for the UK Prime Minister? Michael Howard has indicated that he would place the Constitution at the heart of the Conservative campaign in the general elections in the summer of 2005. Michael Ancram, the Shadow Foreign Secretary, told *The Times*: 'The European constitution's return has come at a bad time for Labour. The British people will seriously resist being bounced out of their right to decide their own future'.

Departing from a previous 'no rush' approach, the UK government is seemingly willing to strike a deal and resolve the Constitution issue before the next general election expected in summer 2005. The Prime Minister made a statement to the House on 29 March announcing that he wanted to secure a deal on a new EU constitution by June. Blair would want to push the constitution through as early as possible taking advantage of the political climate of European consensus. Legislation ratifying a new constitution for Europe could come before MPs during the present parliamentary session.

The shift towards a EU deal from both Spain and Poland has revived hopes - and fears - that the draft Constitutional Treaty will after all be agreed under the Irish Presidency. If it is going to happen, the sooner the better, according to *The Guardian*, which claims that Tony Blair has been advised to put the Constitutional Treaty to the Parliament soon seeking tactical electoral advantage from the political momentum. An early agreement on the EU Constitution and pushing ratification through parliament as soon as possible would hamper attempts by the House of Lords to insist on a referendum. Domestic pressure on a referendum comes from various fronts. A referendum on the treaty is official policy of the Conservative party and Liberal Democrats but also has support from some Labour MPs. Allegedly, the prospect of a campaign on the

Constitution makes Labour campaigners nervous. Labour strategists fear that the increasingly assertive peers will insert a referendum clause into the ratification bill which is needed to confirm the Constitutional Treaty.

In his statement to the Commons the Prime Minister on 30 March 2004 kept to the known position that 'this Treaty is right for Europe and right for Britain' if the UK red lines are preserved. Britain will ensure that control is kept over the UK tax and social security systems, over the future of the UK rebate, over the criminal justice system and over defence and foreign policy, as stated in the White Paper of September 2003.

[The Times](#)

[The Guardian](#)

[epolitix](#)

[Euractiv](#)

[PM Statement to the Commons, 29 March 2004](#)

[The Times](#)

## 6. News from the EU Constitution Project



### Federal Trust/UACES Conference and formal dinner

Registration for this Conference on 1-2 July 2004 in London which will conclude our 3 year EU Constitution project, is now open.

The Conference will explore the constitutional dimension of the EU and it will provide a platform for debate on the Convention and the IGC as well as on the broader theme of the EU as a constitutional project.

Confirmed speakers include Prof. Neil Walker, Prof. Neil MacCormick, Prof. Deirdre Curtin, Ana Palacio, John Kerr, Advocate General Miguel Poiares Maduro, Andrew Duff, Linda McAvan, Dr. Thomas Christiansen, Dr David Phinnemore, Prof. Charlie Jeffery, Prof. Larry Backer, as well as European Commission and Foreign Office officials.

The Conference will be accompanied by a formal dinner on 1st of July. Peter Sutherland (Chairman of BP plc, Chairman of Goldman Sachs International, founding Director-General of the World Trade Organisation, and former Director General of GATT) will be our dinner speaker. Dinner can be booked separately from attendance to the Conference. However, those attending the Conference will enjoy a special rate.

A late registration fee will apply to Conference registrations after 1st May. Federal Trust Friends, UACES and BIICL members will also enjoy a special rate. For Conference information, registration and special membership rates see: [www.fedtrust.co.uk/conference2004](http://www.fedtrust.co.uk/conference2004)

**New Constitutional Online Papers:**

Andreas Føllesdal, 'Achieving Balance? Forms and Arenas of Institutional and National Balances in the Draft Constitutional Treaty', [Paper no. 06/04](#)

Takis Tridimas, 'The European Court of Justice and the Draft Constitution: A Supreme Court for the Union?' [Paper no. 05/04](#)

**Graduate Students Essay Competition**

We welcome submissions from Graduate students on the broad topic of 'the future of the Union'. Essays could focus on European constitutionalism, EU reform, theories of integration or policy issues such as

developments in defence or economic governance. See details of the competition at [www.fedtrust.co.uk/graduatecompetition](http://www.fedtrust.co.uk/graduatecompetition)

**7. Web corner and events**

Talking EU Enlargement: The Federal Trust has just published the second edition of the 'Talking EU Enlargement' Newsletter. This is part of the 'Talking EU Enlargement' project, through which the Federal Trust promotes UK wide discussion of the issues relating to EU Enlargement. [www.fedtrust.co.uk/enlargement](http://www.fedtrust.co.uk/enlargement)

'Tomorrow Europe' Newsletter, published online by the European Social Observatory, offers analysis and follow up of the reform of the Treaties. [February 2004 Issue.](#)

Irish Presidency Updates: The Institute of European Affairs is publishing a series of 'Irish Presidency Updates' following developments during the Presidency, [Update no. 2](#)

The European Constitution website hosted by the University of Zaragoza (Spain) brings together facts, official documents, bibliographies, links and other resources relevant to EU's constitutional reform. [www.unizar.es/euroconstitucion/Home.htm](http://www.unizar.es/euroconstitucion/Home.htm)

SSE is a web portal of Central and Eastern European think tanks and

research institutes specialising in EU affairs. The site contains a vast collection of publications and links to online papers [www.singlesourceurope.com](http://www.singlesourceurope.com)

'What future is there for the European Constitution? Chronicle of a tour around the Parliaments of Europe', Report from the delegation of the National Assembly for the European Union and presented by Pierre Lequiller. [Paper](#)

**Events**

Workshop on the European Union and Conflict Resolution, 13-18 April 2004 ECPR Joint Session of Workshops, Uppsala.

Contact: [t.diez@bham.ac.uk](mailto:t.diez@bham.ac.uk)

'EU enlargement: from 15 to 25 and more?' 28 April 2004, European Parliament UK Office, This is part of a series of debates across the United Kingdom organised by the Federal Trust.

For dates, venues and registration please visit: [www.fedtrust.co.uk/enlargement](http://www.fedtrust.co.uk/enlargement)

Café Jean Monnet, 'Germany and the EU: the 'Sick Man on the Spree?'' Joachim Fritz-Vannahme, Brussels Editor of Die Zeit, 6 May 2004, Café Muse, Oxford Road, Manchester 6.30-8.00 pm. Organised by Jean Monnet Centre at the University of Manchester. All Café Jean Monnet events are free, but booking is required.

Contact: [jan.dormann@man.ac.uk](mailto:jan.dormann@man.ac.uk)

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