

ecpr executive committee election 2006, nicosia joint sessions

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The election for new members of the ECPR Executive Committee took place during the meeting of the ECPR Council on Saturday, 29 April 2006. Of the 266 institutions entitled to vote, 110 votes were cast, with one ballot paper spoilt. The results were as follows:

The six vacancies are, therefore, filled by Carlos Alba, Klaus Armingeon, Luciano Bardi, Eileen Connolly, Vello Pettai and Jacob Torfing. Joaquim Molins and Kostas Ifantis are the first and second alternates, respectively.

Clare Dekker
ECPR Central Services

ALBA, Carlos	Universidad Autónoma de Madrid	78
ARMINGEON, Klaus	University of Bern	80
BARDI, Luciano	University of Pisa	99
CONNOLLY, Eileen	Dublin City University	70
IFANTIS, Kostas	University of Athens	27
MOLINS, Joaquim	Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona	57
PETTAI, Vello	University of Tartu	90
TORFING, Jacob	Roskilde University	79

martin bull appointed new academic director of the ecpr

The new Executive Committee met on Sunday, 30 April 2006 to interview for and appoint a new Academic Director to replace Richard Bellamy, whose term of office came to an end at the end of April. Martin Bull was appointed to replace him and subsequently resigned his place on the Execu-

tive Committee. The vacancy is filled by Joaquim Molins. For a full list of short biographies of all members of the Executive Committee that will serve until 2009, please see the Executive Committee page on the ECPR web site http://www.essex.ac.uk/ecpr/about/exec_committee.aspx.

HOW WAS IT FOR YOU? THE NICOSIA JOINT SESSIONS 2006

'Before ECPR News was transformed into EPS, it used to run an annual column on one individual's personal experience of the Joint Sessions. Following the re-launch of the News in the pages of EPS in its last issue, the following arrived in the ECPR's inbox.'

There's a saying that, 'There's nothing in Cyprus so small that it can't be blown out of all proportion'. I know this because the local organiser told me and the rest of the ECPR Council when trying to explain the furore surrounding the removal of the institutional affiliations from the badges of those individuals attending the Nicosia Joint Sessions from a member institution in Northern Cyprus. So while the rest of us went round with our university names on our lapels, those from Northern Cyprus had to be content with just 'Cyprus'. Except that some of them were not content, and during the Roundtable on the Cyprus Question on the opening day, one of the speakers took the opportunity of brandishing his badge as an example of how real the issue was, saying something along the lines of, 'look, we don't even get properly represented here!'

The ECPR was visibly embarrassed, not only because (as the Chair said to Council) it was against standard procedure, but because they were unaware that this local policy decision had been taken and implemented before it was too late, and the damage done. Yet, it transpired that it was the product of an agreement reached between the Official Representatives of the local organising institution and the member institution in Northern Cyprus! At Council, both reps were both adamant that there would have been more lost than gained if this arrangement had not been implemented. So many situations in Cyprus, the local organiser said, were zero-sum,

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meaning that you caused offence whether you did something or did not do anything at all. And that was the situation with the badges...I could understand this, but was at the same time slightly bemused that the two representatives from the institutions involved in this badge-labeling exercise were both British ex-pats.

If this was, as I think the local organiser was trying to suggest, a 'storm in a tea cup', it nonetheless rounded off a meteorologically and politically 'hot' Joint Sessions. Politically 'hot' because 2006 was also Council year with fresh elections to the Executive Committee. As a first-timer to this event, I was intrigued to see how the elections were conducted. I was warned in advance to watch the politicking at the Council Dinner, but in fact did not need to look far. Not only were CVs being distributed, but the Chair of the Executive Committee, after the local Cypriot dancers had left the stage, held a form of hustings – but without questions being put to the candidates. And those candidates who missed the dinner were given an opportunity to speak to the Council at the meeting the following day shortly before voting commenced.

I am not sure this helped me to decide how to vote. There were two Spanish

candidates, and the first Spanish candidate told me why I should vote for the second Spanish candidate, and the second Spanish candidate told me why I should vote for the first. Was this a zero-sum game? In the vote, the first Spaniard was elected, the second missed the cut. The Greek also seemed to be telling me why I should not vote for him, but not who I should vote for instead (he missed out too). Only the Italian made any sense, saying that he wished to comment on a nasty rumour going round that if he was not elected to the Executive Committee the wine at the ECPR biennial General Conference in Pisa 2007 (he is the local organiser) would be rubbish: 'It's true!' he shouted. Well, he got my vote, and that of 98 others.

He was followed onto the Committee by candidates from the universities of Madrid (78 votes), Bern (80 votes), Dublin (70 votes), Tartu (90 votes) and Roskilde (79 votes). A good cosmopolitan mix, true to ECPR tradition. The actual voting proved to be a bit of a struggle with no voting booth provided to cast a secret ballot. I rushed outside with my form to find a quiet place and was alarmed to find no one trying to follow me. However, it has to be said that the Returning Officer (Ken Newton) conducted a rigorous check of all people trying to enter the Council at the start of the meeting – I would not want to try and get past him on a night club door.

And then there were the workshops. Mine was excellent and I heard only

positive comments from others about theirs. The facilities and assistance were first rate and the local hospitality very warm and welcoming. The Cypriots are a splendid people! And don't they love their food and drink!! And finally there was the island itself, a veritable treasure trove of sights and places to visit...if only we had more time to visit them.

However, despite its considerable natural beauty and cultural riches, there seemed to be chiefly one 'line' of conversation among us visitors: the 'green line' of course. No one likes a wall, but there is a magnetic attraction towards seeing it and crossing it when it does exist, to see the life near the wall and to discuss its effects. Going across the check point in Nicosia and seeing beautiful villas abandoned and with sand bags in the windows from over 30 years ago brought home to one the reality of politics...and war. The more I meandered in Nicosia the more I wished I had been a participant on the workshop dedicated to the Cyprus question. I am sure that was no 'storm in a teacup': those people were grappling with real world issues, and if present I could only have aspired to learn.

Back home in the evenings, sipping my Filfar (a liqueur made from Cypriot oranges), I ruminate on a mind-stretching experience, and also reflect on how the ECPR seems to go to places other organisations just do not reach. Let us hope it keeps up that tradition!

prizes

THE JEAN BLONDEL PhD PRIZE

Awarded by the ECPR every year for an outstanding thesis presented at an ECPR member institution, the

ECPR PhD Prize has now been awarded three times, with the most recent recipient due to collect his prize at the first Graduate Conference at the University of Essex in September. At the Executive Committee meeting that took place during

the Nicosia Joint Sessions, the decision was taken to name the prize after ECPR founding father, Jean Blondel.

The closing date for the 2007 prize is the 31 January 2007, and all Official Representatives and Heads of Department are urged to submit a nomination. Below are profiles of the first three recipients of this prize.

KEVIN CASAS-ZAMORA, 2004 PRIZE WINNER

Kevin Casas-Zamora graduated as a lawyer in 1991 from the University of Costa Rica, before obtaining a masters degree in Latin American Government and Politics at the University of Essex in 1993, and then a DPhil in Politics at the University of Oxford in 2003.

At Oxford he wrote a comparative study of the financing of political campaigns in Costa Rica and Uruguay and the impact of public funding systems on the dynamics of parties and party systems. Looking back, Dr Casas-Zamora sees his thesis 'as above all a brave effort in a topic about which reliable information is very difficult to find, offering a useful example for would-be researchers on political finance issues, in so far as it shows that doing rigorous research on this topic is possible and, indeed, very important for the health of democracy.'

Dr Casas-Zamora says that winning the 2004 ECPR PhD Prize was an immense and unexpected honour, bringing him a lot of exposure in his country, as, he notes, 'it is rather uncommon for a Central American student to win an academic prize at the European level'. He adds that he feels the prize offered recognition not only of his own academic work but also to the quality of his country's education system.

The revised version of this thesis was published by the ECPR Press under the title *Paying for Democracy: Political Finance and State Funding for Parties* in April 2005, and since has become one of the ECPR Monographs series' best selling titles.

Upon obtaining his doctorate Dr Casas-Zamora worked at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as general coordinator for the Costa Rican National Human Development Report titled '*Beating Fear: Crime and Human Development in Costa Rica*', which was published in late 2005. Subsequently, he was called by Dr Oscar Arias (former President of Costa Rican and 1987 Peace Nobel Laureate), to join his political campaign and coordinate fundamental campaign duties, such as drafting and publicly presenting Dr Arias' election manifesto. He was eventually offered a place by Dr Arias in his ballot as vice-presidential candidate for the General Election in February 2006. The party won the election and Dr Casas-Zamora has recently started his government duties for the 2006–2010 period.

Dr Casas-Zamora occupies the position of second vice-president of the Republic of Costa Rica, with the additional charge of Minister of National Planning and Economic Policy. Dr Casas-Zamora describes this as a 'strategic position, guiding Costa Rica's path towards democracy amidst globalisation, but also a focal position in order to promote state reform programmes, modernisation strategies, public and economic policies, and, last but not least, the creation of this present administration's e-government strategy.' He adds that from his current position, he is 'able to fulfil one of my many dreams in life, inspiring people. Currently, Costa Rica is in the middle of a crossroad, facing huge challenges, some of which are inherent to many small countries, and yet having to deal with the inevitable force of globalisation.'

LAURA MORALES, 2005 PRIZE WINNER

Laura Morales obtained a BA in Political Science at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, followed by an MSc in

Social Research Methods at the LSE and an MA in Social Sciences at the Juan March Institute, before receiving a PhD in Political Science at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. Dr Morales is an assistant professor of Political Science at the Universidad de Murcia. She has previously taught at Universidad Autónoma de Madrid and Universidad Complutense de Madrid. Her interests lie especially in the areas of electoral behaviour and political participation. She was a researcher of the ESF network on Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy, and she is a member of the Spanish National Coordination team of the European Social Survey.

Dr Morales has been awarded both the ECPR and the Spanish Political Science Association prizes for the best PhD thesis in 2004 for her dissertation 'Institutions, Mobilisation and Political Participation: Political Membership in Western Countries'. Her dissertation argues that we cannot fully understand citizens' political membership behaviours unless we go beyond analysing individual characteristics; that is, unless we aim at grasping the effect that the political and social context in which citizens act has on their political behaviour. Resources and socio-economic features grant opportunities for citizens to join political organisations. Political attitudes and orientations provide (or, inversely, fail to provide) the motivation to join associations with political goals. However, these individual traits are not necessarily acting as factors of political inequality in all societies nor with the same effects. The social and political context in which citizens make decisions about their participation interacts, in important ways, with individual traits to foster or hinder the political impact of the former. In addition, the social and political context that surrounds individuals does also have an independent effect on their political behaviour. Political institutions and the patterns

of political mobilisation fundamentally condition political membership. These two sets of factors – institutions and mobilisation – structure the opportunities for participation citizens really have.

Her book *Nations of Political Joiners?* which is a revised version of the dissertation, will be published by the ECPR Press in 2007. Dr Morales feels that the publication of the book will certainly have an impact on her career, as it will allow her research to reach a wider audience of scholars in Political Science and Sociology.

DANIEL NAURIN, 2006 PRIZE WINNER

Daniel Naurin defended his dissertation 'Dressed For Politics. Why Increasing Transparency In The European Union Will Not Make Lobbyists Behave Any Better Than They Already Do' at Göteborg University in December 2004.

The thesis seeks to demonstrate the value of combining normative theory and empirical research. If it is well done it can make the former more realistic and the latter more relevant. More specifically the theory of publicity's civilizing effect, as promoted by deliberative democratic theorists, is scrutinised, developed and tested empirically on business lobbyists acting in public and private settings in Sweden and the EU. It is shown that while deliberative theorists overrate the positive force of transparency and publicity, they also tend to underestimate the inherent civilising power of democratic politics itself.

Dr Naurin studied political science, economics, history and statistics as an undergraduate at Göteborg University, and as an exchange student at the University of Leiden. During his postgraduate studies he spent five months as a research fellow at Sussex European Institute, Sussex University. After receiving the doctorate Dr Naurin was a

research fellow at the Swedish Institute for International Affairs in Stockholm for a period of six months. Since August 2005 he is a Marie Curie Fellow at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies at the European University Institute in Florence.

Dr Naurin feels that winning 'the ECPR PhD Prize is a true honour as it gives your research a quality mark that no one can question.' To the extent that academic posts in Europe and elsewhere are appointed on the basis of merit this is clearly an important asset to include in applications.' A revised version of Dr Naurin's thesis will be published as part of the ECPR Monographs series in 2007.

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Dr Naurin was recently ranked first in a Swedish national competition for a four-year research post financed by the Swedish Research Council. He will take up this post at a Swedish university (most likely Göteborg) on the return from Florence in September 2006. After that he feels it would be stimulating to have a new opportunity to work in an international research environment.

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