

Workshop Report
Imperial Power Europe? The EU's Quest for Supremacy

27th of May 2010, University of Manchester

Funded by: UACES and the Manchester Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence
Organizer: Angelos Sepos

The workshop examined the 'External Relations of the EU' from the conceptual and theoretical lenses of the related literatures of Imperialism and Power. Participants were asked to reflect on key ontological questions regarding the nature and forms of the EU's power projection in the world. What kind of power is the EU? In what forms is this power projected in the world? Who are the main drivers of the EU's power? What are the consequences of the EU's power projection for its identity, legitimacy and credibility? In other words, what is, what does but also what should the Union be doing in the world? More broadly, the workshop sought to understand how power is embedded in the notion of imperialism and how the former manifests itself through the latter. Participants from diverse academic backgrounds presented papers examining these questions. In particular, Morten Bomberg (University of Copenhagen) examined how the various provisions of the Lisbon Treaty contribute to furthering the EU's power projection in the world, while Roberto Roccu (LSE) examined evidence of hegemonic and imperial elements in the EU's relationship with Egypt while Bohdana Dimitrovova (CEPS) investigated such evidence in the EU's European Neighbourhood Policy. Maria Garcia (Birkbeck College) and Angelos Sepos (Manchester University) examined the various forms of the EU's power projection towards Latin America and the ACP Countries respectively, while David Styan (Birkbeck College) focused on the EU's ESDP missions in Africa to understand the nature of this power. Bezen Balamir Coskun (Zivre University) examined the EU's relationship with the Maghreb & Mashreq countries towards that goal while Stefano Braghiroli (University of Siena) and Nelli Babayan (University of Trento) provided a comparative assessment of the imperial nature of the EU, US and Russia. Overall, the workshop provided a platform for paper givers and external participants to discuss in depth an issue which has garnered significant recent attention in academic and policy circles alike. The workshop also provided the ground for participating and other scholars to further their collaboration towards publishing the results of their research in an edited volume.