



**Jean Monnet
Centre for
European Studies**

ConstEPS

Citizenship and Constitutionalisation: Transforming the Public Sphere in East-West European Integration?

Research Project

headed by Prof. Ulrike Liebert

*Jean Monnet Centre for European Studies
University of Bremen*

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ConstEPS Project description:

The Treaty on a Constitution for Europe of 2004 aimed at transforming the Union of states into a Union of citizens and states. Although it was elaborated by the „Convention on the Future of Europe“ whose representatives from member states' parliaments and governments and from the EU institutions over 16 months have deliberated in public, neither the Constitutional Treaty nor its follow-up, the Lisbon Reform Treaty will enter in force in the enlarged EU-27. Were political leaders mistaken to build the European polity on principles of democratic citizenship, civil society participation and public deliberation? How did the contested EU constitutional treaty reform shape the Europeanisation of national public spheres? This interdisciplinary project combines survey, political discourse and Q-method research as a novel theoretical, conceptual and empirical devices for studying the socio-political dynamics of European integration in general, and of EU treaty reform politics in particular.

The comparative design includes the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Latvia, Poland and the UK. The international research group analyzes European constitutional, citizenship and democratic norms and practices in the fields of (1.) national publics framed by the mass media, (2.) national parliamentary arenas; (3) mass public opinion; (4) party political communication; (5) civil society and economic interest organisations; (6.) European citizens' political participatory practices. Political parties, NGO's and mass mediated political discourses are conceived as core mechanisms of transmission and translation, vertically between EU institutions and citizens, as well as horizontally across member state borders. Against the background of historical and political cultural divisions between new and old member states that have been shaped by the cold war, the research ultimately aims at understanding the interactions between European political integration, democratic citizenship and the public sphere and its potentials for overcoming the East-West divisions in post-enlargement Europe. The research group consists of doctoral researchers with diverse country expertise – based at CeuS/UniHB – and scholars from the countries under investigation.

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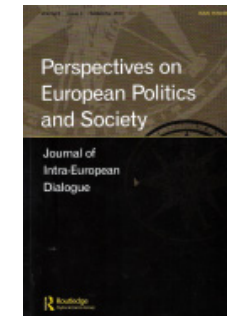


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