



College of Europe
Collège d'Europe



Call for papers - A narrative turn in EU studies?

College of Europe, Bruges campus

13 October 2015

The General Studies Programme of the College of Europe (Campus Bruges) is calling for paper submission for the workshop "A narrative turn in EU studies?" that is to be organised with the financial support of UACES on 13/10/2015.

Abstracts (max 250 words) and author details should be submitted to Luis Bouza García (luis.bouza@coleurope.eu) by 15th April 2015. Authors of accepted papers will be contacted shortly after and their travel and accommodation will be reimbursed by organisers. The selected papers will be submitted by 31st August at the latest. PhD candidates working in related areas are encouraged to apply.

Content of the workshop

The aim of this interdisciplinary workshop is to gather academics working on the European public sphere, the European Union's legitimacy crisis, European identity, history and historical memory to discuss the potential and limits of the narrative turn to analyse the current situation of the EU.

"Narratives" have recently become prominent in political discourse and practices. This emergence may be closely related to the global crisis of 2007-2009 and the euro crisis. Some scholars, intellectuals and former Commission President Barroso have argued that the traditional narrative of the permissive consensus period – the European Union is a guarantee for peace – is fading away because of generational changes and the consolidation of peace among EU member states. These authors thus argue that the European Union should search for a new narrative better adapted to its current challenges.

However the implications of this narrative turn need to be discussed. Can we speak of an existing narrative of the European Union in the first place? The thin public sphere and elitist nature of the European integration process make it difficult to argue that the EU has had an all-encompassing narrative so far. Has there ever been a single narrative or are there competing – complementary narratives? What are the elements of the emerging narratives on European integration? Who are the producers of these narratives, what are their content, how and in which public spaces are they circulated? Are the narratives of European integration the product of a strategy by political, social and economic actors or emergent devices produced by popular press, historical memories and party competition? What is the place of instrumental rationality discourses versus emotions, myths and identities? Do the institutions of the EU contribute to create official myths, patrons and saints of European integration?