

BUSINESS MEETING

6 September 2023

Minutes

32 Attendees

Agenda

- Welcome/Update on the Standing Group activities/Membership Renewal/Facebook group and Twitter
- General Conference 2023 Best Paper Award
- Section at the 2024 General Conference (University College Dublin, 12-15 August) and proposals for a workshop for ECPR Joint Sessions endorsed by our SG
- ECPR opportunities (Research Development Grants, webinars, etc.)
- Your SG – Open discussion

Welcome/Update on the Standing Group activities/Membership Renewal/Facebook group and Twitter

Our SG is very engaged in many different activities.

- Currently 381 members. Thanks to the incredible work done over the years (a note of thank to the past Steering Committee members/Chair), we are ever growing as a SG! But don't forget to renew/apply for membership, the deadline for this year will soon expire at the end of September (renewal rate at the end of August was still below 50% probably due to the Summer break).
- We had 10 Panels (11 accepted, one withdrew) in our SG sponsored Section at the 2023 ECPR General conference in Prague with a record high number of proposals received. We are among the SGs that have contributed the most to the conference programme. A big thank goes to Section chairs, Panel chairs, discussants and all panelists.
- 2023 PSA international conference: we organized one co-sponsored panel with the Greek Politics Specialist Group of the Political Studies Association (PSA) titled 'What future for Southern Europe'.
- In 2023, we launched the Webinar series of the SG, with two events organized by the Steering Committee during Spring (speakers: Catherine De Vries and Raul Gomez/Luis Ramiro). These two events have been advertised in the ECPR newsletter and website, through the SG mailing list and by some national scientific associations. More webinars will be offered in the future.
- As it was agreed at our last Business Meeting in 2022, in 2023 we launched a call for volunteers for the EDI (Equality, Diversity, Inclusion) group. Our SG member, Roula Nezi, kindly offered to head up and help in this area sharing her experience acquired at PSA. The call attracted too few candidates, in order to build a reasonably diverse group of members we need to relaunch the call and try to attract more volunteers. In the meeting, we discussed how, in a way or another, equality, diversity and inclusion are problems that may affect all of us. For example, the problem of funding is very sensitive in SE and may exclude students/scholars from less funded institutions from participation

to ECPR events. The problem of funds has repeatedly emerged as a top concern within the SG. The EDI group could help elaborate proposals on EDI issues that our SG could forward to ECPR, possibly in cooperation with other SGs.

- We have an active Facebook group that members and those interested can join and we can be followed on Twitter. Everyone is invited to tag us on Tweets about publications and academic events related to Southern Europe, which we will retweet.

General Conference 2023 Best Paper Award

- This year, we are launching a Prize for the best paper presented at our sponsored Section of the General conference. The winner will be given full recognition and a space in different ECPR channels (Newsletter, House series, the Loop, etc.). In the Summer, we launched a call for volunteers as Jury members and we received several applications. After deliberation, the Steering Committee decided on the following composition of the Jury (and the Jury decided on its internal roles):
 - Sofia Vasilopoulou (Chair)
 - Carolina Plaza Colodro (member)
 - Nicolò Conti (in representation of the Steering Committee).

After the General conference, a call will be launched for nominating candidate papers (everyone will be allowed to nominate).

Section at the 2024 General Conference (University College Dublin, 12-15 August) and proposals for a workshop for ECPR Joint Sessions endorsed by our SG

- Stronger chances of acceptance (and more panel space) at the General conference with Standing group sponsorship. Ideally, we need two Section chairs, one representative of the Steering Committee + one member of the SG. A call for volunteers will be launched in due time.
- Stronger chances of acceptance also at the Joint Sessions, but this is a very competitive call and last year, unfortunately, we could not secure a space to our endorsed workshop. We will soon launch a call for proposals for the 2024 Joint Sessions.

ECPR opportunities (Research Development Grants, webinars, etc.)

- The ECPR Research Development Grant supports meetings, small workshops, publications or other activities related to research projects, multinational teaching programmes, or other scientific activities. Only one proposal can be submitted by every SG per calendar year, if accepted funds are paid directly to the SG. Next deadline: 21 September 2023. We will soon launch a call for proposals.
- We encourage members to have a strong presence in the ECPR Loop with blogs on Southern Europe.
- We can promote our SG webinars also with other SGs (and some of our webinars could be organized jointly with other SGs).

Open discussion

- We discussed if it would be useful having a regional conference on Southern Europe sponsored by ECPR and our SG. We discussed pros and cons and found that there are already many different conference venues – including the ECPR general conference where our sponsored Section has proved very attractive. Creating a new dedicated event could be in competition with other popular events and fail to secure reasonable numbers. At the same time, if there are external events organised independently of ECPR but of interest to the SG, we can help advertise them. Moreover, we can check with ECPR if we are allowed to give some kind of formal endorsement.
- We discussed how we can stimulate our community to cooperate in terms of funding application. There was a general agreement that events such as the General conference or the Joint Sessions can be very helpful in creating synergies across SG members with a view to apply for funding. The ECPR Research Development Grant can also help in this effort.
- We discussed how interesting it would be for the specialised scholarship to promote through the SG up-to-date (lists of) must-read papers with a focus on Southern Europe. The best way to do that would probably be through selected speakers and dedicated seminars to be offered within our SG webinar series.