

Roundtable

Fit for 35? Reforming the Politics and Institutions of the EU for an Enlarged Union

16 November 2023

sala del Capitolo - Badia Fiesolana, Via dei Roccettini 9 - San Domenico di Fiesole (Fiesole, Florence)

organised by SIEPS and RSCAS

Introduction

After a long period of absence, enlargement is back on the EU's agenda. Following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022, it took only days for Ukraine to file its application to become member of the EU. All of a sudden, the EU is not only facing a brutal war in its immediate neighbourhood but also the prospect of being substantially transformed as we may be looking at a union of no less than 35 members in the years to come. Some would argue that this will take a very long time and there is therefore little need to dive into discussions about how the EU should operate, once it has grown. Others refer to the notion of 'absorption capacity' and emphasise that unless the EU changes its own policies, budget, decision-making rules and institutional set-up there is a risk that it will simply stop working following enlargement.

The aim of this roundtable is to discuss the scholarly contributions to the SIEPS volume "Fit for 35? Reforming the Politics and Institutions of the EU for an Enlarged Union", which [can be downloaded from the SIEPS website](#), on how the EU should – or should not – change for further enlargement. The authors – Frank Schimmelfennig, Yves Mény, Sonja Puntischer Riekmann, Tanja Börzel and Sergio Fabbrini – will present their chapters and receive comments from the discussants Erik Jones and Anja Thomas. Each of the two sessions will also include a Q&A session with the audience to discuss the overarching themes. Printed copies of the publication will be available.

Programme

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| 13.30 - 14.00 | Welcome coffee |
| 14.00 - 14.05 | Welcome by Erik Jones Director of the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute |

Session I: Presentation and discussion of the authors' chapters

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| 14.05 -15.35 | Chair: Göran von Sydow Director of SIEPS |
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Frank Schimmelfennig | Professor of European Politics at ETH Zürich
Fit through Flexibility? Differentiated Integration and Geopolitical EU Enlargement

Yves Mény | Emeritus President of the European University Institute (2002-09)
Fit for Reform? The Implacable Logic of Numbers



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Sonja Puntscher Riekmann | Professor emerita of Political Theory and European Politics at the University of Salzburg

Fit for What Purpose? Enlargement and the Goals of the European Union

Discussant: **Erik Jones** | Director of the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute

15.35 - 15.50 Coffee break

Session II: Presentation and discussion of the authors' chapters

15.50 - 16.50 Chair: **Valentin Kreilinger** | Senior Researcher at SIEPS

Tanja A. Börzel | Professor of Political Science and Chair for European Integration at the Otto-Suhr-Institute for Political Science of Freie Universität Berlin

Widening without Deepening: Why Treaty Reforms Will Not Make the EU Fit for Enlargement

Sergio Fabbrini | Professor of Political Science and International Relations and Intesa Sanpaolo Chair on European Governance at LUISS Guido Carli in Rome

From Multi-speed to Multi-tier: Making Europe Fit for Herself

Discussant: **Anja Thomas** | Assistant Professor at the University of Lille and Visiting Fellow at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute

16.50 - 17.00 Conclusion by **Göran von Sydow** | Director of SIEPS