



## **Newsletter April 2007**

### **PROF NICHOLAS REES RESIGNS AFTER LONG SERVICE TO EUROPEAN INTEGRATION RESEARCH AND TEACHING AT UL**

Prof Nick Rees has resigned from the University of Limerick after serving here for over 18 years. He is a graduate (BA) of the University of Kent, and then earned his postgraduate degrees (MA, PhD) from the University of South Carolina (Columbia). At UL he headed the Dept of Government and Society, he was Director of the MA European Integration, Jean Monnet Chair of European Institutions and External Relations; and most recently Dean of UL's fledgling Graduate School. He was founder, and first Director, of the Centre for European Studies. He was active in TEMPUS projects in the early 1990s; he was a key organiser of the ECPR Joint Sessions at UL in 1992. He helped to develop UL's Erasmus linkages and, in particular, pioneered exchanges with several Canadian universities. Many graduate students will remember him as an assiduous supervisor for their PhD dissertations where he specialised in EU foreign policy, and external relations. He was a member of the IAES, the PSAI, UACES, EUSA, and the Institute for European Affairs (IEA) in Dublin; and for many years he has been a member of the Royal Irish Academy's Committee for the Study of International Affairs where he initiated an annual Graduate Conference that has become a key fixture in the academic calendar. Among his recent publications were: (co-author) UN Peacekeeping in the Post Cold War Era (2005) and (co-editor) EU Enlargement and Multilevel Governance in Public Policy-making (2006) . He leaves UL to take up a post at the National College of Ireland in Dublin.

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### **DR BARRIE WHARTON PARTICIPATES IN 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ROME TREATY IN NEW ZEALAND**

On March 26th, Dr. Barrie Wharton of the Centre for European Studies gave a public lecture in Victoria University at Wellington in New Zealand to celebrate Europa Week, the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Rome and the foundation of what is now, the European Union. The lecture entitled, "From Cordoba to the Central Line: Islam and Cultural Identity in the New Europe" was only part of a series of events held throughout New Zealand to mark this anniversary. The lecture was well attended by members of the academic and diplomatic community in Wellington, New Zealand's capital and was covered in the national media and press. The continued presence in New Zealand of Ahmed Zaoui, the well-known Algerian Islamist leader who arrived in New

Zealand via a long road beginning in Europe has aroused much public debate on the hitherto neglected topic of Islam in New Zealand. The Prime Minister, Helen Clark was unable to attend lecture but sent a representative as she was meeting George Bush in the United States, a sign interpreted by some during Europa Week as an indicator of the new direction of New Zealand's foreign policy. Dr. Barrie Wharton will be giving further lectures in the University of Otago in Dunedin in April under their Invited Speakers in Cultural Studies Programme and at the Jean Monnet Centre for European Studies in the University of Melbourne (Australia) in May.

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## **BA EUROPEAN STUDIES PILOT SCHEME WILL REMEDY DEFICIT IN TRANSFERABLE SKILLS**

Course Board meetings of the BA European Studies have identified a recurring problem: ES students have no modules at all in their 4-year programme where they meet as a group. In their classes, they are mixed in with students from other degree programmes. While, on the one hand, this reinforces intrinsically valuable interdisciplinary perspectives, it tends to devalue the core characteristics of European Studies as a discipline. Consequently, and more seriously, students argue that they have virtually no academic guidance in the coherence of their discipline or its linkage forward to relevant career opportunities, and this latter problem is compounded if (as sometimes happens) Co-op placements are not directly related to the students' field of study. The BA ES programme also lacks any modules where transferable skills are taught. In response to these discrete, but linked, shortcomings, this initiative involves organising a series of seminars run fortnightly throughout the academic year for 3rd/4th year BA ES students. The following themes will be addressed: ECDL training, PowerPoint, an introduction to the Brussels EU institutions; a history of European integration; theories of European integration ; updates on current affairs in the EU. In sum, these seminars will provide a focal point for the BA ES degree so that students become aware of their peer-group but, more importantly, the seminars will provide a unifying "capstone" experience that enhances the value of the academic achievement and provides a "bridge" forward to the world of work, thus satisfying a key feature of the University's mission: "excellence and relevance". Where possible, expertise will be brought in from outside the campus to avoid adding any burden to existing faculty. It is hoped that this initiative will help to foster a sense of identity for the degree which is lacking at the moment. The opinion of student representatives that they feel like academic "orphans" in the College of Humanities is something that this initiative tries, albeit modestly, to address by providing, for the first time, some academic experience attended by all BA ES students, and designed uniquely for them. CEUROS is grateful to the College Teaching Board for recognising the need for this initiative and giving it financial support.

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## **SOME FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES**

- 5 May 2007 Peace and Democracy in the D R Congo (CPDS at UL)
- 17-19 May 2007 EUSA 10th Biennial (Le Sheraton Montreal PQ Canada)
- 20-23 May 2007 EU Constitutional Treaty Research Conference (Dalhousie, Halifax NS Canada)
- 28-29 May 2007 Persian Gulf Security and International Law (Institute for Political and International Studies, Tehran)
- 1st June 2007 EU Constitution (University of Bristol)
- 16 June 2007 International Role of the EU (Aston University)
- 27-28 June 2007 Reviewing the Good Friday Agreement: Effects, Impacts and Prospects (University of Wolverhampton)
- 2-14 July 2007 Standing Group on International Relations: EU Enlargement in SE Europe (Centre for International Relations, Faculty of Social Sciences, Ljubljana)
- 11-14 July 2007 European Conference on African Studies (Leiden, Netherlands)
- 2-3 September 2007 Czech-Israeli Conference Integrating with the European Union: Accession, Association, and Neighbourhood Policy (Charles University Prague)
- 3-5 September 2007 UACES Annual Conference Exchanging Ideas on Europe (University of Portsmouth)
- 5-8 September 2007 The 17th Economic Forum (Krynica, Poland [www.forum-ekonomiczne.pl](http://www.forum-ekonomiczne.pl))
- 11-12 September 2007 Japan Politics Colloquium (St Antony's Oxford)
- 12-14 September 2007 Beyond the Nation? (Queens, Belfast)
- 19-20 September 2007 Security and Energy Supply in the New Europe (University of Glasgow)
- 11-16 April 2008 ECPR Joint Sessions 2008 (University of Rennes)

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