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About the EU Centre

Welcome to the first newsletter of the EU Centre.

The European Union (EU) Centre at RMIT University was established in January 2010 to promote a better understanding of the EU and EU-Australia relations. The Centre provides a focal point for teaching, research and outreach activities with the EU, Australia and the Asia Pacific Region. It acts as an advocate for the EU in the region and facilitates the dissemination of information and knowledge from academia to industry and the community at large.

One of the unique strengths of the European Union Centre at RMIT University is its access to established, and rapidly developing, international networks within the university to facilitate staff and student mobility.

This is reflected in the university's globally engaged students and staff, formal linkages with institutions around the world and global network of partnerships and industry relationships, all of which support student and staff mobility and prepare students for the new globalised workplace.

RMIT University has over 30 Memoranda of Understanding with universities in the European Union including Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

It is through the University's commitment to international mobility, collaborative research and global industry engagement that the European Union Centre at RMIT will further build strategic partnerships between educational institutions, enterprises, industries and governments across the EU, the university and its communities.

From the Director

The European Union Centre at RMIT enters 2011 ready to implement a broad range of activities. First and foremost amongst these will be our emphasis on outreach, offering a range of events for different audiences. Some will be focused on key policy-makers, offering opportunities to explore significant initiatives of the European Union and their implications for Australian policy-making, while others will be targeted at students, staff and the general public.



Encouraging more Australian students to consider studying in the EU is another major priority for 2011. There are many opportunities for this to occur, ranging from undertaking an exchange as part of their studies, being part of a study tour, or undertaking a work-integrated learning project. Beyond their undergraduate studies there are extensive opportunities to study in Europe in joint Masters or doctoral programs, or to join research networks, with funding support from the European Commission. Staff as well can contribute to these teaching and research activities with European Commission support.

In 2011, students from RMIT and the Australian Technology Network (ATN) of which RMIT University is a part, will have new opportunities to study contemporary Europe, and the many issues which the European Union is addressing. New research projects also are under development and a number of these activities will lead to conferences and symposia in the latter part of the year. The Centre's first Annual Conference, for example, will be held in September 2011 in conjunction with the RMIT School of Media and Communications on the topic of *Media and Democracy*.

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All of these activities are underway at a time of great change in the European Union, and in the role of Europe in global affairs. While financial matters tend to capture much of the current media attention, work is developing on all kinds of issues, not least the evolution of its external affairs capability. The Centre will provide various opportunities for exploration of these contemporary developments, and for contributing to Australians' awareness of the European Union and the opportunities for further engagement. We look forward to collaborating with many partners in undertaking this work.

Professor Bruce Wilson
February 2011

EU Centre Staff

The European Union Centre at RMIT University is staffed by a full-time Director,

Bruce Wilson;
Program Manager,
Amanda Crichton;
Administrative
Assistant, Fran
Martens and part-
time Research
Project Officer, Dean
Eddy. We also have
with us Mary Serafim,
part-time
administrative
assistant employed
by the university to
specifically manage
the PASCAL
International



Observatory activities. In addition, the Centre benefits from research and curriculum support and development from academic and specialist staff across the University.

Student Interns

Student interns undertaking placements for their course requirements also spend time a term of approximately three months with the Centre. During this time, the students benefit from being involved in the decision making and activities of the Centre as well as undertaking their research project incorporating aspects of Europe-Australia relations.

Students interested in undertaking placement at the EU Centre can contact the Centre at eucentre@rmit.edu.au.

Past Activities

May 2010
Launch of the European Union Centre at RMIT

May 2010
“The Lisbon treaty: making Europe a stronger partner in the world”

A Seminar led by His Excellence David Daly, Ambassador and Head of the European Union Delegation to Australia and New Zealand.

June 2010
“Europe in Turmoil: The ongoing aftermath of the global recession” A Seminar organised by the EU Centre in conjunction with CESAA.
About: An examination of the UK elections, Greek deficit/debt crisis, the plunging Euro and globalising pressures in the European context with Dr Andrew Scott, Mr. John Tinney and Associate Professor Stephen Alomes

July 2010
“Strengthening Skills Formation in Australia: Lessons from Germany?”
A Policy Briefing Forum that intended to share insights for Australian public policy from Germany and the EU on the contemporary significance of human capital issues in Australia and of the importance of skills formation in Government policy. The key speakers at this Briefing were Thomas Kaulisch from the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Australia, and Mr Richard Sweet, a former Principal Analyst in the OECD's Directorate for Education.

August 2010
“European identity: between Politics and Fiction”
A Seminar presented by prize winning author of novels, short stories, travel books, plays and poetry Jose Ovejero. Organised by the EU Centre in conjunction with Spanish Programs, School of Global Studies, Social Sciences & Planning and the Consulate General of Spain in Melbourne.

September 2010
“Sustainable Procurement: is Europe leading the way?”
A Policy Briefing with the aim to share insights on sustainable procurement for Australian public policy from Europe and locally thru contemporary significance of procurement policies and practices. The key speakers at this Briefing were Professor Stephen Gough, from the University of Bath, and Mr Hugh Wareham, Chief Executive Office of Eco-Buy.

October 2010
“Berlo and Sarko and the Politics of Global Celebrity”
A seminar Organised by the EU Centre in conjunction with CESAA, which explores the role of global celebrity politics as personified by “Berlo” and “Sarko” in Italy and France.
Key Speakers: France/ Sarkozy - Dr Natalie Doyle, Monash University and Italy/ Berlusconi - Dr Bruno Mascitelli, Swinburne University

November 2010

“Lunch with Dr Martin Blake” former head of CSR, Sustainability and Social Policy for Royal Mail, Professor Bruce Wilson, Director, European Union Centre at RMIT University and Anne-Maree Huxley, CEO MOSS
About: How does a corporation go from losing a £1million a day to profit making £1million a day and win over 75 awards for CSR and Carbon Management?

Activities held in early 2011

February 2010

“Transposing Concepts: Lifelong Learning and the Learning Region”

A public lecture delivered by Professor Chris Duke, Pascal International Observatory. The lecture offered some general and perhaps provocative observations on East-West relations as manifested in the aspirations of the European Union (EU) apropos Asia and reflected upon this relationship in the arena of educational policy.

Roundtable with visiting Members of the European Parliament including presentations by Monash University, LaTrobe University and the University of Melbourne.

“Post Cancun UNFCCC Briefing”

Held in conjunction with MOSS this event provided expert speakers from Models of Success & Sustainability (MOSS) the industry body for Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability in Australia, Carbon Trade Exchange (the world’s first electronically linked global platform for trading voluntary carbon credits) and global legal firm Baker & McKenzie who all attended the recent UN Environment Conference in Cancun.

Some Forthcoming Activities

“What Europe has learned about greenhouse gas emissions trading”

To be presented by Jill Duggan, DG for climate Action in the European Commission on developments within the EU ETS, lessons learned from phases I and II as well as what is likely to eventuate in phase III. Being held in conjunction with Monash European and EU Centre and the Carbon Market Institute.

“A FEAST of Information”

A workshop on opportunities for research collaboration and funding for mobility to Europe conducted by Rado Faletic from FEAST (the Forum for European-Australian Science and Technology cooperation), and Lynne Hunter from the European Union Delegation to Australia and New Zealand

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“The Europe 2020 strategy: Putting the EU back on track”

A seminar with Paolo Canelas de Castro held in conjunction with CESSA.

“Berlin and its Jewish Community”

A lecture by Joseph Hadju.

Adult Education and the Australian VET System
Policy Briefing

Green’ Jobs and Skills
Policy Briefing

‘Media, Communication and Democracy: Global and National Environments’
Annual Conference

Please contact the Centre for further information on any of these activities.

European Union Centre Publications

Policy Briefing Series:

1. Skills Formation in Australia: Lessons from Germany
2. Sustainable Procurement: is Europe leading the way? (forthcoming)

Working Paper Series:

1. C. Duke (2011) *Transposing Concepts: Lifelong Learning and Learning Regions*
2. B. Wilson (2011) *Regional Policy After Lisbon*

PASCAL International Observatory

Also located at the EU Centre is the Pascal International Observatory. PASCAL is a world-wide research and policy development alliance which focuses on issues in relation to place management, social capital and learning regions. It develops, communicates and explains new and emerging ideas in order to assist regional authorities and organisations achieve their social and strategic aims.

PASCAL has recently undertaken a major project on universities and regional engagement, involving 19 regions in various parts of the world. It has been successful also in obtaining funding from the European Union for a program of further research into learning cities and regions. Further details can be obtained from www.pascalobservatory.org.

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