

## Call for Papers

### National societal actors in a multilevel environment - from 1945 to the present

**12th HEIRS Conference, Louvain-la-Neuve (Belgium), 21-22 April 2016**

Processes of globalization have given birth to new (or renewed) fields of research in the social sciences. Numerous attempts have been made to develop transnational or global studies and history. It has been argued that history has to be written within a new framework that transcends national boundaries and takes into consideration the interconnectedness of human societies (Knudsen and Gram Skoldager; 2014: 146). Some authors have suggested a need to overcome an excessive focus on the state as the “primary unit of historical inquest” (Robin, 2009: 486). While recognizing the necessity to go beyond national histories for social science and historical analysis, however, the state and national actors are not *necessarily* weakened. We take the epistemological stance that there is no “necessary trade-off in power between national governmental and supranational institutional actors” (Kaiser and Meyer; 2013:1).

Societal actors such as trade unions, employers’ associations, NGOs and political parties (Kaiser and Meyer; 2013: 5) are often constituted within a national context, where they evolve and from which they derive their resources and legitimacy. But while remaining firmly anchored in a particular country, these actors are also confronted with an evolving multilevel environment. Whilst more recent examples have undoubtedly been shaped by forces of globalization, it should be noted that the multilevel environment is not necessarily synonymous with globalization and naturally predates its emergence. This conference focuses on the way in which national societal actors cope with such an environment that offers them several possible tiers of action: the national, European and global as well as transnational forms of cooperation. Papers for this conference can discuss any (preferably European) national societal actor in national, comparative or transnational (cooperation) perspective, and any cause they might have been engaged in from EC legislation to the UN or other multilateral forum, from a contemporary or historical perspective. Papers can discuss many different questions: e.g. women’s rights (including equal pay), the control of multinationals, cooperation between national groups at the supranational level, global trade negotiations, environmental issues, problems arising from the delegation of power from a principal (the national actor) to an agent (the supranational actor), or changing dynamics between labour, capital and the state. We equally welcome papers with an empirical or theoretical focus.

PhD students and early postdoctoral researchers are invited to submit an abstract of no more than 300 words and a short CV by **23 August 2015** to both Quentin Jouan at [quentin.jouan@uclouvain.be](mailto:quentin.jouan@uclouvain.be) and Andrew Waterman at [andrew.waterman@port.ac.uk](mailto:andrew.waterman@port.ac.uk). There will be no conference fee. Depending on funding obtained we may be able to partially cover travel and accommodation costs of participants in need of financial support.

The History of European Integration Research Society (HEIRS) is a postgraduate student network. HEIRS strives to foster collaboration and interaction among postgraduate researchers across Europe with an interest in European integration history. This conference will bring together PhD students and academics from various disciplines to discuss their work in a number of panels. In addition, there will be keynote lectures and speakers will be available for in-depth discussions. The conference is supported by the Centre for European and International Studies Research (CEISR) and the associated Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence for the Study of Transnational Europe at the University of Portsmouth as well as the Centre d’étude d’histoire de l’Europe contemporaine (CEHEC) and the Institute of European Studies at the Université catholique de Louvain.