



ECSA-C GOVERNING BOARD 2022-2024

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Thank you all for making this brochure possible!



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Welcome Note

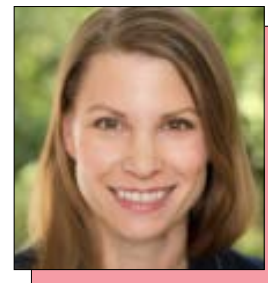
A 25-year anniversary is a special and proud occasion for the European Community Studies Association Canada (ECSA-C) to look back and to imagine its future. Over the past two and a half decades, ECSA-C has grown into an organization that provides critical support and valuable opportunities for Canada's European studies community. During this time, the organization's presidents and governing board members have worked to build an impactful, creative, and sustainable association that connects our members, highlighting and amplifying the excellent research they conduct across Canada. Moreover, due to ECSA-C's work over the years, the European studies community in Canada can now rely on a robust, nation-wide infrastructure for collaborative research, public outreach, and transatlantic initiatives.



Recent political developments have made our work more important than ever: the Canada-EU Strategic Partnership Agreement and the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement have created new research opportunities, making the field of European studies more relevant to diverse audiences and engaging new stakeholders of transatlantic exchange. The war in Ukraine has underlined the significance of the transatlantic alliance in political, economic, and military terms. At the same time, however, there have been new challenges to sustaining and deepening transatlantic collaboration. ECSA-C is not immune to these developments: The COVID-19 pandemic has halted or altered many ECSA-C initiatives, most notably the 2021 Biennial conference, which had to be held online. For an association such as ECSA-C, which thrives on the interactions between its members, it is vital to bring the European studies community together on a regular basis. Personal forms of exchange and networking are of critical importance to a scholarly community that, in a country as large as Canada, regularly works in relative isolation from each other. As in-person meetings resume, ECSA-C has the opportunity to strengthen these networks more than ever, not only through the resumption of its conferences, but also by a new range of virtual connections and activities. The 25th anniversary events planned across the country in May 2022 are an example of this synthesis, successfully bringing our community back together again in creative and productive ways.

This brochure is meant to take stock of what ECSA-C has achieved over the years, how it has supported the European studies community across Canada and what the road ahead might look like. We are happy to celebrate with you the association's manifold initiatives and accomplishments, as well as reflect on the future challenges and opportunities facing ECSA-C. And let us take the opportunity to thank all those who have worked tirelessly in their support of ECSA-C over the years. We are also grateful to the entire ECSA-C and EUCAnet team for putting this brochure together.

Dr. Lori Thorlakson, ECSA-C President 2021-2023, University of Alberta



Part I | About ECSA-C

ECSA Canada is the leading professional association for scholars that work in the field of European studies in Canada. It strives to promote understanding of the European Union and European affairs from a transatlantic and multidisciplinary perspective.

In addition, ECSA-C seeks to encourage scholarly collaborations and teaching related to the EU by promoting networks between academics in Canada and abroad. In this way, it is also the major facilitator for research and information exchanges in these fields. Especially through its international conferences and seminars, ECSA-C helps to draw international attention to Canadian research on the EU and Europe, and to encourage international exchanges.

The association's efforts are connected to ECSA-World, a loose global network of the European Community Studies Associations. Spread across 50 countries, including most of EU member-states, ECSA-World serves as an umbrella organization for the study of the European Union and Europe. The largest, most vibrant associations include [EUSA in the United States](#), [UACES in the United Kingdom](#), [ESAANZ of Australia and New Zealand](#), [EUSA-Japan](#), [EUSA-Korea](#), [AEI of Germany](#), [ESA of Sub Saharan Africa](#), [LACES of Latin America](#), and, notably, ECSA-Canada.



ECSA-C'S FORMATIVE PERIOD IN THE LATE 1990S

The **European Community Studies Association – Canada** was founded in 1995 by a small group of researchers under the leadership of Dr. Steven B. Wolinetz and Dr. Edelgard Mahant. The drive towards ECSA-C addressed the lack of a scholarly association for all the European studies scholars working in Canada. As Wolinetz recalls:

“It was a long shot but there were personal and intellectual reasons to get it done. Being a student of European politics on the eastern edge of Canada before e-mail and the net wasn't easy. Forays to Washington, Chicago and other cities for Council for European Studies (CES) and the European Union Studies Association (EUSA) conferences helped, but there was no setting in which colleagues across Canada could interact.”

According to him, the missing opportunities for collegial exchange and collaborations in Canada were also accompanied by the particular way in which European studies in Canada had evolved. In his reflections on the formative period of ECSA-C, Wolinetz remembers: “Equally frustrating was compartmentalization. In the United States, Europeanists were paying attention not only to the differences and similarities among countries, but also to political economy and the domestic impact on foreign policy and the growing importance of the European Union. In Canada, the study of European integration was walled off from the comparative study of European politics. Also important was the thought that Canadian scholars, schooled in the aches and pains of federalism, had something to contribute to the study of a Europe experiencing its own version of those and aches pains and en route to an “ever closer union.”

The widely shared sense that Canada needs an association supporting the EU and European studies community led to the foundation of ECSA-C. As Wolinetz observes, the push towards founding and launching ECSA-C was very much a collaborative initiative by leading scholars in the field:

“Building ECSA-C wouldn't have happened without Hans Michelmann, Peter Leslie, Patrick Fafard or people who picked up the torch like David Long and Amy Verdun, or help from colleagues in Canadian and comparative politics, among others.”

Since then, ECSA-C has developed a host of activities also outside of its regular biennial conferences to create a unique space for exchange, collaboration and networking.

Every two years, ECSA-C members vote on a new governing board: The presidents of ECSA-C have been responsible for hosting the ECSA-C Biennial and providing strategic leadership to the association. Many thanks to the leadership of **Dr. Steven Wolinetz** at Memorial University of Newfoundland (1997-1999), **Dr. David Long** at Carleton University (2000-2002), **Dr. Nanette Neuwahl** at the University of Montreal (2002-2004), **Dr. Oliver Schmidtke** at the University of Victoria (2004-2006), **Dr. Jeffrey Kopstein** at the University of Toronto (2006-2008), **Dr. Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly** at the University of Victoria (2008-2012), **Dr. Joan DeBardeleben** at Carleton University (2012-2014), **Dr. Frédéric Mérand** at the University of Montreal (2014-2016), **Dr. Ruben Zaiotti** at Dalhousie University (2016-2018), and **Dr. Heather MacRae** at York University (2018-2021). **Dr. Lori Thorlakson** (University of Alberta) is the current ECSA-C president.

See the complete list of [the ECSA-C Governing Board](#) members.



ECSCA-C President Frédéric Mérand with past presidents: David Long, Oliver Schmidtke and Joan Debardeleben at the 2014 Biennial in Montréal

HIGHLIGHTS

The central pillar of ECSCA-C is undoubtedly its biennial conference. The **Biennial** is a unique opportunity for the entire European studies community in Canada to come together, network, and exchange. Each conference is organized around a central theme related to European affairs or the European Union. This theme is then addressed and analyzed through panels and keynote addresses, bringing together scholars from a range of disciplinary backgrounds mainly in the Social Sciences, Law, and the Humanities.



Attendees of a panel discussion at the 2018 Toronto Biennial.

To date, ECSCA-C has organized thirteen biennial conferences in eight Canadian cities. The timeline of these key events can be found at the end of this section.

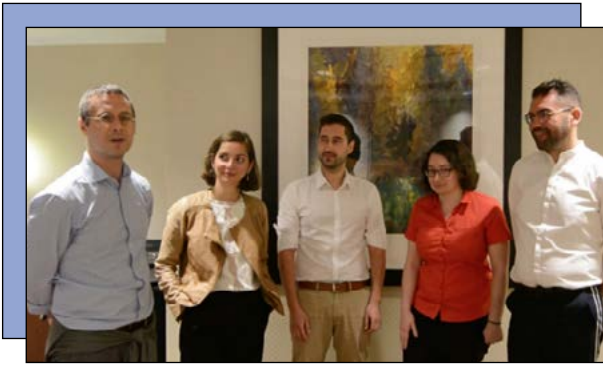
ECSCA-C members and associates often stress the “friendly and collegial atmosphere” that can be found at the ECSCA-C conferences. Over the years, the Biennials have offered a venue for young and senior scholars to come together in a constructive and accommodating atmosphere. As Dr. Achim Hurrelman explained at the last in-person ECSCA-C conference in 2018,

“people launch collaboration, they do not work against each other, but with each other for the shared objective of teaching Canadian students about the EU, advancing research on the EU in Canada and contributing to public discourse.”

The collegial atmosphere that characterizes the Biennials has been achieved thanks to the contributions and enthusiasm of many. Recalling one of the first conferences held in Quebec in 2000, Dr. David Long, then the ECSCA-C president, notes that on that occasion “there were three associations meeting in tandem” and ECSCA-C was “by far the smallest and youngest of the academic



Former YRN Co-President Johannes Müller Gómez at the 2018 Toronto Biennial.



YRN Members at 2018 Biennial

associations meeting in Quebec.” This detail, he stresses, did not prevent the event from being well attended. “There was an incredible ambience generally, a spirit that carried on after that. And it was a total blast!”

The success of the initial Biennials has been repeated and expanded upon in the years since. In particular, the growth of support and sponsorship helped ECSA-C conferences to extend their reach to a wider scholarly community, giving them public visibility and creating opportunities to host EU officials and leading international experts in the plenary sessions. For example, Dr. Laurent Pech, professor of European Law at the Middlesex University of London, emphasizes the importance of talking to people from different fields - an opportunity offered by the interdisciplinary nature of the ECSA-C conferences - as well as the importance of exchanging views with scholars from outside the EU,

“because they may see things that are obvious to see, but only when you look at the EU from outside.”

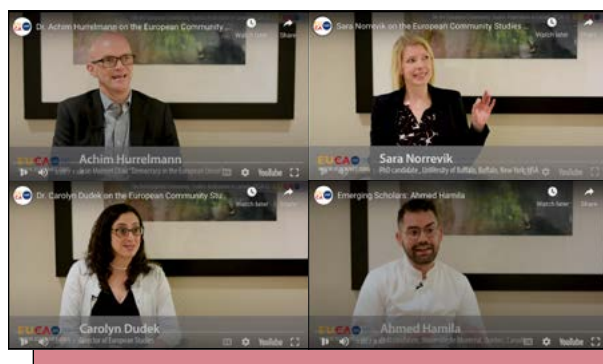
Dr. Oliver Schmidtke, commenting on the biennial conference held in Victoria in 2006, at the end of his presidency, notes that ECSA-C had been able to organize the event in Victoria’s Inner Harbour, at the Empress Hotel, thanks “to some extraordinary

success with raising funds.” The event, in Schmidtke’s words,

“turned out to be most memorable, for the scholarly debates and the beautiful setting in which it took place. In many respects, the Victoria Biennial set the agenda for collaborative initiatives in the European studies community in Canada for the subsequent years.”

Similarly, Dr. DeBardleben, who describes the Biennial organized in 2014 in Montreal as a “peak experience” of her presidency (2012-2014), stresses the importance of sufficient funds in order to include broad participation: “It was gratifying to have a grant from the European Commission to help support the participation of young scholars, and to see the breadth of attendees from across Canada and from Europe”. For DeBardleben, thanks to the Biennials, “Canada’s EU community has found a consistent and reliable point of interaction between young and established scholars, and between Canadian experts and European colleagues.” Indeed, Sara Norrevik, a young scholar at the University of Buffalo in the United States, highlights the importance of the networking possibilities offered by the ECSA-C Biennials, especially when the number of researchers concerned with EU studies in a given academic setting is otherwise limited. And from a different perspective, DeBardleben’s words are echoed by Dr. Frédéric Mérand, who succeeded DeBardleben in 2014. Mérand stresses the satisfaction of having been able to bring “a record number of French-speakers” to the bilingual conference in Montreal, including the keynote speaker of the event, Dr. Renaud Dehousse, President of the European University Institute in Florence.

The COVID-19 pandemic momentarily interrupted ECSA-C in-person Biennials, but in the coming years, we look forward to continuing to organize and expand this fundamental moment of encounter and exchange among the members of the association and beyond.



DISCOVER MORE

ECSA-C Biennials (video-links)

<https://www.ecsa-c.ca/ecsa-cn-video-series>

BIENNIALS TIMELINE

<p>First Biennial 1997 June 6–8</p>	<p>“Citizenship, Identity and Policy in a Changing European Union” Memorial University, St. John’s, NL</p>	
<p>Second Biennial 1999 October 16–17</p>	<p>“Conceptualizing the New Europe: European Monetary integration and beyond” University of Victoria, Victoria, BC</p>	
<p>Third Biennial 2000 July 30–August 1</p>	<p>European Odyssey: “The EU in the New Millennium” Quebec City, QC</p>	
<p>Fourth Biennial 2002 May 30–June 1</p>	<p>“Bigger and Better? The European Union, Enlargement and Reform” University of Toronto, Toronto, ON</p>	
<p>Fifth Biennial 2004 May 27–29</p>	<p>“A Constitution for Europe? Governance and Policy Making in the European Union” Université de Montréal, Montréal, QC</p>	
<p>Sixth Biennial 2006 May 19–20</p>	<p>“What Kind of Europe? Multiculturalism, Migration, Political Community and Lessons from Canada” University of Victoria, Victoria, BC</p>	

BIENNIALS TIMELINE (CONTINUED)

Seventh Biennial 2008 September 25-27	“The Maturing European Union” University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB	
Eighth Biennial 2010 April 30-May 1	“Whither Europe?” University of Victoria, Victoria, BC	
Ninth Biennial 2012 April 26-28	“Europe in an Age of Austerity: Integration, Disintegration, or Stagnation?” Carleton University, Ottawa, ON	
Tenth Biennial 2014 May 8-10	“Europe and Peace” University of Montreal, Montreal, QC	
Eleventh Biennial 2016 May 9-11	“The EU and North America: an Inevitable Partnership?” Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS	
Twelfth Biennial 2018 May 9-11	“Unity, Diversity, Populism: The European Union in Challenges Times” York University, Toronto, ON	
Thirteenth Biennial 2021 September 22-26	A Post-Pandemic EU: a Green, Digital and Democratic Future?” Online Event	

WHAT MAKES ECSA-C SPECIAL?

[During the 2018 Biennial in Toronto](#), a diverse group of scholars had the chance to share their thoughts on ECSA-C, discussing in particular the value of this unique scholarly community. Together, their insights provide a helpful snapshot of what ECSA-C offers, both to its individual members and the academy as a whole.



Julian Campisi, Heather MacRae (President of ECSA-C 2018-2021) and Hailey Murphy, Toronto Biennial 2018

“It is a great vehicle for understanding all things European in Canada”

Dr. Conrad King

“ECSA-C has not only put European Union Studies on the map in Canada; it has also provided an invaluable forum to showcase the work of scholars and students from the country’s ‘periphery’ (i.e. from universities not located in major cities). Therefore, thanks to ECSA-C, today the conversation about the European Union and its relations with Canada is truly a national one.”

Dr. Ruben Zaiotti

“ECSA-C is a network that sustained my interest in European Studies, and this is a network I feel I belong to.”

Dr. Lyubov Zhyznomirska

“It has been a very friendly collegial atmosphere, and I think the intimacy of the conference facilitates much more the networking and meeting people in your field.”

Dr. Carolyn Dudek

“All the people, all the professors and researchers and students who are interested in the European Union in a way, find a home under the umbrella of ECSA-C”.

Dr. Costanza Musu

“Since Canada is a federal system, I think we have a lot to learn as EU scholars from scholars based in Canada.”

Dr. Laurent Pech

“Moving forward it is a good idea for us to strengthen this association and build more activities.”

Dr. Joan Debardeleben

“ECSA-C is my academic family.”

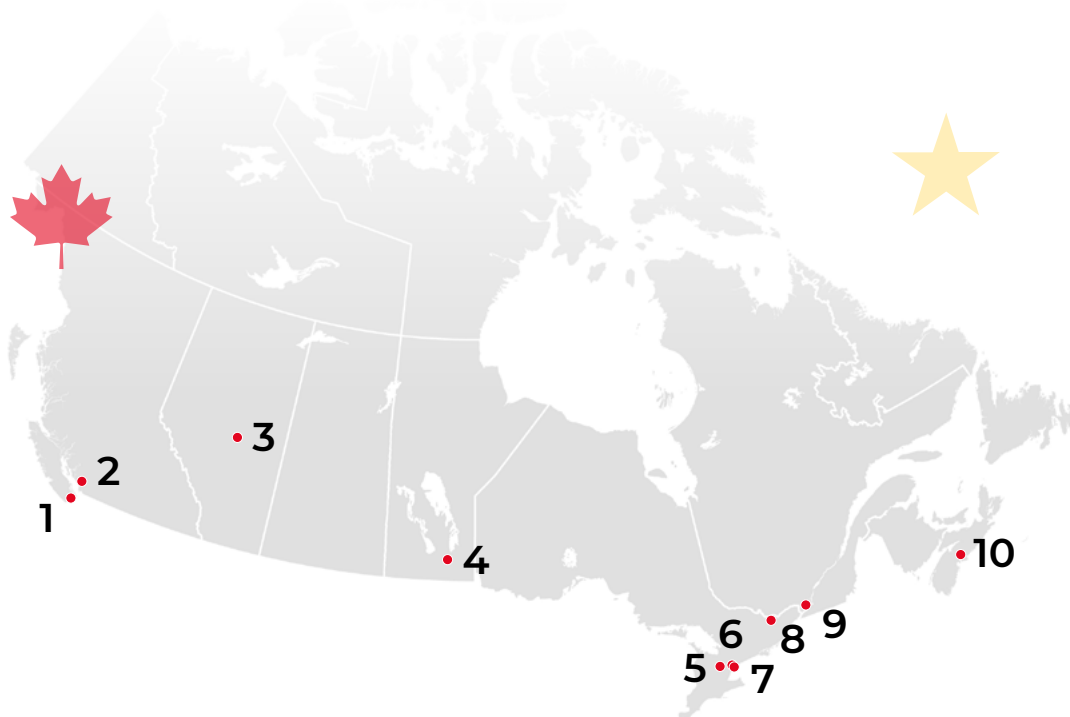
Dr. Achim Hurrelmann

“As a young scholar, I appreciate the multiple training activities, such as mentorship sessions and workshops on writing an academic resume, and the numerous outreach opportunities ECSA-C offers. I have also been able to experience the equal treatment young academics receive on panels at ECSA-C conferences. Postgraduate students, post-doctoral researchers and professors present their research side by side. As a result, the academic networks within our association are of a truly intergenerational nature.”

Johannes Müller Gómez

Part II | ECSA-C & the European Studies Community in Canada

ECSA-C is an integral part of a larger European studies community in Canada. This community relies on a multitude of institutional contexts, funding sources, and scholarly projects. ECSA-C sees it as its central objective to support this multi-stakeholder infrastructure and amplify its achievements. The following list provides an overview of the key actors and initiatives across the country. It underlines the success of the wider European studies community in terms of building a productive and well-funded network of research, outreach, and educational enterprises associated with ECSA-C.



- 1 University of Victoria**
European Studies Program
- 2 University of British Columbia**
Centre for European Studies
- 3 University of Alberta**
The Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies
- 4 University of Manitoba**
Central & East European Studies
- 5 University of Guelph**
European Studies Program
- 6 York University**
European Studies; Graduate Diploma in German and European Studies
- 7 University of Toronto**
Centre for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies
- 8 Université de Montréal**
Centre canadien d'études allemandes et européennes
- 9 Carleton University**
Institute of European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies
- 10 Dalhousie University**
European Studies Program

OVERVIEW

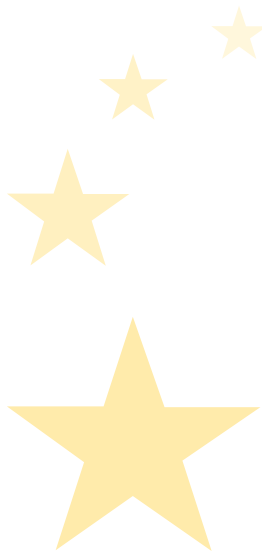
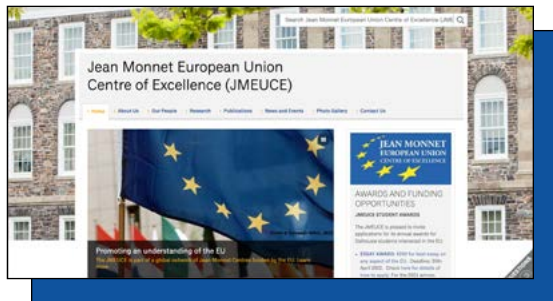
JEAN MONNET EUROPEAN UNION CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE (CURRENT)

[Jean Monnet EU Centre of Excellence, University of Victoria](#)

[Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence at, Carleton University](#)

[Jean Monnet European Union Centre of Excellence, Dalhousie University](#)

[Jean Monnet European Union Centre of Excellence Building Democratic Resilience in the EU, University of Montreal](#)



JEAN MONNET NETWORKS (RECENT)

2020-2023 Jean Monnet Network Borders, Human-to-Military Security, Database, University of Victoria (Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly)

2020-2023 Jean Monnet Network on Transatlantic Trade Politics, Carleton University (Achim Hurrelmann)

2019-2022 Genome Editing and Agricultural Policy, Practice and Public Perceptions, Dalhousie University (Matthew Schnurr)

2019-2023 Jean Monnet Network: European Memory Politics – Populism, Nationalism and the Challenges to a European Memory Culture (EuMePo), University of Victoria (Oliver Schmidtke)

2018-2021 Politics of the European Semester: EU Coordination and Domestic Political Institutions, University of Victoria (Amy Verdun)

2017-2020 Health Law and Policy Network, Dalhousie University (Katherine Fierlbeck)

2017-2020 Between the EU and Russia: Domains of Diversity and Contestation, McGill University (David Smith)

2017-2020 RÉseau Transatlantique sur l'Europe Politique, University of Montreal (Laurie Beaudonnet)

2017-2020 Jean Monnet Network on EU-Canada Relations: The EU and Canada in Dialogue, University of Carleton (Joan DeBardeleben)

2016-2019 Comparing and Contrasting EU Migration and Border Policies - Are they Exemplary?, University of Victoria (Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly)

JEAN MONNET PROJECTS

- 2020** Bringing EU Human Centered Design to British Columbia, University of Victoria (Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly)
- 2020** Summer Institute on Identity and Migration in Europe and Canada, Dalhousie University (Ruben Zaiotti)
- 2020** ECSA-C Conference Edmonton, University of Alberta (Lori Thorlakson)
- 2018** Canada-Europe Dialogues on Democracy (CEDoD): Democratic deficit and the rise of populism in Europe, University of Victoria (Oliver Schmidtke)
- 2019** EU Learning in Canadian high schools, Carleton University, (Crina Viju)
- 2018** Building Capacity for Canada's European Studies Community: the European Studies Association Canada as a research and outreach hub, ECSA-C (Beate Schmidtke)
- 2018** Youth, Migration and the European Union: Policy and Practical Lessons Learned from the Humanitarian Crisis, University of Manitoba (Lori Wilkinson)
- 2017** CETA Implementation and Implications Project, Dalhousie University (Robert Finbow)
- 2017** Communication and Media Strategies for EU Experts in Canada, University of Victoria (Oliver Schmidtke)
- 2017** ECSA-C conference 2018 Toronto, York University (Heather McRae)
- 2016** Canada-EU Dialogue on Migration, University of Victoria (Oliver Schmidtke)
- 2016** Studying EU in Canadian high schools, Carleton University (Crina Viju)
- 2016** European Union Policy on Asylum and Refugees, University of Toronto (Randall Hansen)
- 2016** Narratives of Memory, Migration, Xenophobia and European Identity: Intercultural Dialogues, University of Victoria (Helga Hallgrimsdottir)
- 2015** Political Leadership in the European Union, University of Victoria (Amy Verdun)

JEAN MONNET CHAIR AD PERSONAM

- 2016** Nannette Neuwahl, Université de Montréal
- 2010** Markus W. Gehring, University of Ottawa
- 2009** Amy Verdun, University of Victoria
- 2008** George Ross, Université de Montréal

CURRENT/PAST JEAN MONNET CHAIRS IN CANADA

- 2020** Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly, University of Victoria
- 2020** Debbie Folaron, Concordia University
- 2019** Andrea Wagner, Grant MacEwan University
- 2019** Willem Maas, York University
- 2018** Ruben Zaiotti, Dalhousie University
- 2017** Maria Popova, McGill University
- 2016** Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly, University of Victoria
- 2016** Joan DeBardeleben, Carleton University
- 2015** Achim Hurrelmann, Carleton University
- 2015** Laurie Beaudonnet, Université de Montréal
- 2014** Heather MacRae, York University
- 2013** Olivier Delas, Université Laval
- 2012** Lori Thorlakson, University of Alberta
- 2010** Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly, University of Victoria
- 2010** Kurt Hübner, University of British Columbia
- 2009** Amy Verdun, University of Victoria
- 2008** Willem Maas, York University
- 2008** Oliver Schmidtke, University of Victoria
- 2007** Amy Verdun, University of Victoria

ACADEMIC (DEGREE) PROGRAMS AND INSTITUTES

[Carleton University, Institute of European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies](#) (B.A. Hon. in European and Russian Studies; M.A. in European, Russian and Eurasian Studies, Graduate Diploma in European Integration Studies)

[Dalhousie University, European Studies Program](#) (B.A., Hon. B.A. in European Studies)

[Guelph University, European Studies](#) (B.A. in European Studies, M.A. in Exploring European Identities, Erasmus Mundus M.A. in Crossways in Cultural Narratives)

[Université de Montréal, Centre canadien d'études allemandes et européennes](#) (B.A. minor in European Studies)

[University of Alberta, The Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies](#), Doctoral Research Fellows

[University of British Columbia, Centre for European Studies](#), European Union Study Tour

[University of Manitoba, Central & East European Studies](#)

[University of Toronto, Centre for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies](#) (B.A. Major Program in European Studies; M.A. in European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies)

[University of Victoria, European Studies Program](#) (Undergraduate Minor in European Studies, European Studies Concentration in Political Science), European Union Study Tour

[York University](#) (B.A. in European Studies; Graduate Diploma in German and European Studies)

RECENT KEY INITIATIVES OF ECSA-C

The Jean Monnet project “Building capacity for Canada’s European Studies community (ECSA-Cn)” allowed enhancing the outreach and networking capacity of the ECSA-C during the years 2018-2020. It also provided public visibility to the EU as a key economic and political partner of Canada. With the collaboration between ECSA-C and the Europe-Canada Network initiative (www.EUCAnet.org) at the University of Victoria’s Centre for Global Studies, the project focused on key EU-related subjects, taking advantage of the changing political environment after the completion of the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) and the Canada-European Union Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA).

The [ECSA-Cn project’s activities and services](#) included for example the development of an ECSA-Cn Members Database (open service to ECSA-C members), the promotion of selected research groups (interviews; media alerts), fostering engagement of young academics (junior EU scholar interviews; policy memos) and the dissemination of ECSA-C member comments on COVID and the EU. This project was co-funded by the Erasmus+ Jean Monnet Action of the European Union and ECSA-C.

SELECTED RESEARCH GROUPS

The [ECSA-C research groups](#) are a crucial aspect of the association’s recent portfolio of research and outreach initiatives. These groups are open to all ECSA-C members, and each focuses on a distinct set of major contemporary challenges. They help structure and guide collective research efforts, and offer the opportunity for national and international collaboration.

Through the research groups, our members participate in organizing special panels at ECSA-C Biennials, support the work of young scholars, organize online meetings on current issues, and pursue joint initiatives, including research, publications, and public outreach. For example, in 2020 ECSA-C sponsored a series of [ten policy memos](#), written by a diverse group of young and senior scholars from across Canada.



Example of one of our policy memos, written by Keith Cherry from the University of Victoria.

There are currently [five research groups](#) - **Democracy; Environment, Climate Change, and Energy; Foreign Policy and Security; Migration; and Political Economy.**

Against the backdrop of the rise of populism and authoritarian leaders in Europe, the group on [democracy](#), led by Dr. Oliver Schmidtke, has recently addressed the paradoxes of and challenges to liberal democracy, and the ways in which the global pandemic has accentuated these challenges while also reinvigorating practices of

democratic engagement. With a view to highlight comparative research involving the European Union (EU) and Canada, [the environment, climate change and energy](#) group, led by Dr. Joan DeBardleben, has explored the challenges faced by the EU in realizing its policy objectives with regards to the fight against climate change and the institution of policies and mechanisms to promote the transition to a green economy. While exploring the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the group has also focused on concrete policy issues, policy instruments, political processes, and challenges of a multilevel governance context in addressing challenges.

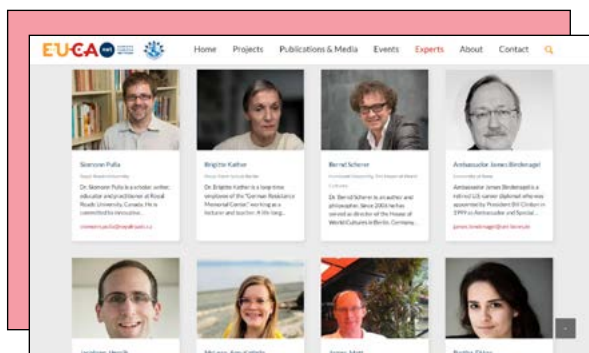
The [foreign policy and security](#) group, led by Dr. Frédéric Mérand, has tackled some of the daunting challenges faced by a self-proclaimed “geopolitical Europe”. The experts of the group has analyzed how the European Union tackles climate change, international security, global trade and migration in the age of populism, multipolarity, accelerated technological development, terrorism, environmental degradation, and the return of interstate rivalry.

The ECSA-C research group on [migration](#), led by Dr. Ruben Zaiotti, relying on relevant examples taken from the North American context, has tackled migration and mobility from an interdisciplinary and comparative perspective, as these issues and the debates they have engendered have increasingly come to shape economic, social and political dynamics both within Europe and in its relations with the outside world. The group has covered themes ranging from anti-immigration sentiments defining populist waves to the meaning of integration and the European ‘social model’, to challenges related to the freedom of movement, and to the transformation of migration into an item on Europe’s foreign policy agendas.

The research group on [political economy](#), led by Dr. Kurt Hübner, has focused on the economic costs and damages caused by the “Great Lockdown” imposed by Covid-19 in the EU, against the backdrop of fights about the Corona Bonds, shifting balances between state and markets and examples of authoritarian tendencies across Europe.

EXPERT DATABASE

The recently launched [ECSA-C Members Database](#) is embedded in the Canada-wide [Europe-Canada Network](#) database and features comprehensive search functions.



Some of the profiles available on the Experts Database.

The database provides access to experts from across Canada, their area of expertise, geographical focus, collaboration with one of the ECSA-C research groups, and media experience. The expert database has been widely used - most notably by media representatives - as a reference for different audiences to identify scholars working on particular issues.

Video and written interview series: [Why Study European Studies in Canada](#)

European studies represent a unique academic field in Canada. It is small but vibrant, with a highly integrated and communicative network of scholars. Accordingly, it can be much easier for young scholars to establish themselves in the

field, gaining valuable opportunities that are usually scarce in other fields of research.

In a recent video interview series ([EU experts in the spotlight](#)), scholars from across Canada reflected on the attractiveness, promises, and challenges of European studies as a field of study. In her interview, Dr. Costanza Musu, professor at the University of Ottawa, stressed that the variety of opportunities is one the main characteristics of studying Europe in Canada: “there are prizes for essays, opportunities to travel, there are internships, even if one does not hold a passport of a European Union member state [...] and there are many ways in fact to fund your studies, sometimes even more so because you are based in Canada, as the European Union tries to reach out to people who are interested in European studies and give them the opportunity to do so”.

This observation is something that Dr. Joan DeBardeleben of Carleton University has emphasized as well. With a background in Russian and German issues, she began studying the European Union and European issues more broadly “partly because of EU funding opportunities.” As Joan put it: “the EU in the year 2000 announced a competition for EU centers around Canada [...] and I thought, let’s try that. On the basis of the desire to take advantage of some of the EU funding, that was what personally led to my shift, and I guess that was partly what the EU wanted to have happen, to draw people into the field.”

Dr. Laurent Pech, head of the Law and Politics Department at Middlesex University, argued for the importance of professional development for junior scholars: “during the course of the PhD, what I found personally very helpful is that I took breaks to work in the real world, and it has benefitted my research...it makes you a well-rounded

academic. Usually when I have PhD students I tell them to spend one year working in the relevant environment.

”For scholars of European studies based in Canada, this is much more accessible, given the rich overlap between academia and the worlds of politics and policy. As Dr. Michelle Egan of American University put it, “there are a lot of professional opportunities in the policy world that you can also use a masters or PhD [for].”

In a [written interview series with young scholars on their career paths](#), ECSA-C collected some personal reflections on what has drawn researchers to the field of European studies and what has kept their scholarly enthusiasm alive over time. One issue that emerged from these interviews is how important it is to recognize the unique features of the European project itself, and the multidimensional significance of this project on the world stage. Indeed, the project of European integration and the purposeful pooling of sovereignty at the supranational level is without precedence in history, with few or no parallels. Benjamin Perrier stressed this aspect as part of his reason for getting involved in EU studies, noting that “the European Union seems to be a perfect field for empirical and theoretical research. It is an open-air research laboratory.” Dr. Julian Campisi touched on a similar idea, but emphasized the institutional dimension as the reason why he started down the EU path: “I wanted to learn more about the intricacies of the institutions, of multilevel governance, and of what exactly ‘success’ looks like for the EU, and if it will continue in the future.” And relating this research to Canada and its socio-political realities is critically significant. In particular after the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), the relationship

between Canada and the European Union seems set to deepen and broaden. Dr. Keith Cherry is a great example of fruitful potential for mutual learning, as his work compares Canada and the EU: “Both settings have birthed broad academic literatures which are centrally concerned with questions of pluralism and state sovereignty, yet the two are to a meaningful extent closed off from one another, with little academic or practical exchange on these matters. My work helps put these two profoundly different settings into conversation.”

Europe in general and the EU in particular are also worthy of study because of the hopes, aspirations, and experimentation they contain. Dr. Miriam Mueller-Rensch articulated this idea well in her interview: “I’ve lost nothing of my curiosity and drive to improve our understanding of social change towards the extremes, but also the ever-present possibility of hope after violence and destruction for which there is no better symbol out there than the European Union itself.” So did Franziska Fischer of UVic, who argued that

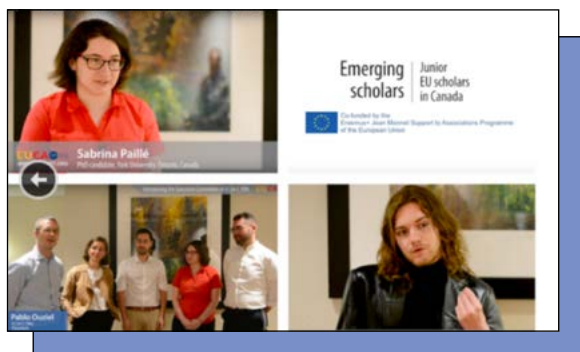
“despite its pitfalls and shortcomings manifesting themselves through recent issues such as the influx in refugees, I believe that the EU holds the key to bringing together minds, ideas and identities.”

BRANCHES OF ECSA-C AND SUPPORTING INITIATIVES

YRN - ENGAGING YOUNG RESEARCHERS



The Young Researchers Network (YRN) is an affiliate branch of ECSA-C and represents emerging scholars in the field of European studies. In 2003, a group of young researchers in European Studies identified a need to inform and involve young researchers so as to engender a research synergy among Europeanists across Canada.



YRN members, Pablo Ouziel, Juliette Dupont, Johannes Müller Gómez, Sabrina Paillé, Thibault Biscahie, and Ahmed Hamila giving interviews and catching up at the 2018 Toronto Biennial.

During the subsequent year, this network became an official section within the European Community Studies Association – Canada (ECSA-C) on the proposal of Lloy Wylie and Saime Ozcurumez at the General Assembly meeting during the 6th Biennial. In 2005/6/7, ECSA-C-YRN organized the ECSA-C YRN conference in Victoria and then in 2007 a trans-atlantic conference in Italy, hence initiating a new phase of its activities. The European Commission awarded the European Studies Programme at UVic grants for supporting young researchers networking

activities in Canada (a collaborative project with the UVic European Studies Program, EUCAnet and ECSA-C under the lead of Dr. Oliver Schmidtke). In the spring of 2007 YRN a group of 20 Canadian graduate students had the opportunity to attend a joint conference with their peers from the European University Institute in Florence. On this occasion, an ambitious agenda for YRN was drafted and, subsequently, launched at different universities across Canada. Since then, the YRN has held conferences and co-organized panels at the ECSA-C Biennials, facilitating the integration of students' paper presentations into general conference panels, and generally promoting professional and academic networking. In 2008, in collaboration with the Institute of European and Russian Studies and the Centre for European Studies at Carleton University as well as the University of Victoria, regional workshops were organized on "Reconciling diversity and integration: Canadian and EU approaches". Since then YRN has contributed to special workshops during the ECSA-C Biennials and was involved actively in the ECSA-Cn project 2017-2020.



YRN Co-Presidents Ann-Kathrin McLean, Laurence Claussen, and Noah Oder in a meeting with ECSA-C Admin and Communications Lead Beate Schmidtke, March 2022.

The collaboration between YRN and ECSA-C has generated some notable opportunities and support structures for young scholars in the field of European studies over the years.

As Johannes Müller Gómez, a recent YRN president, observes this collaboration

“offers a great opportunity for young scholars to make an entry into the academic milieu, interact with other academics and enlarge their professional network. [...] With ECSA-C welcoming comparative research, our conferences are a great asset for up-and-coming academics. This particularity allows us to get to know other perspectives on how to study the EU and enlarges our theoretical, conceptual and methodological toolbox.”

ECSA-C would like to recognize the outstanding leadership that the YRN presidents have provided over the years: **Lloy Wylie** and **Saime Ozcurumez** (2002-2006), **Bart Paudyn** (2006-2008), **Lyubov Zhyznomirska** (2008-2010), **Ece Ozlem Atikcan** (2010-2012), **Ahmed Hamila** (2014-2018), **Johannes Müller Gomez**, **Sabrina Paillé** and **Pablo Ouziel** (2018-2020).

The newly-elected YRN co-presidents (2021-2023) Laurence Claussen, Ann-Kathrin McLean, and Noah Oder summarize that the Network focuses on three priorities: “One, to promote and profile the network. This involves building a strong and engaging social media platform, through which it can engage with young scholars all over Canada establishing contacts with universities to foster institutional relationships and ensure that the Network is known to students. Two, to build a sense of community. In order to reach broader participation it aims at including satellite communities across Canada and Europe, with informal representatives at different universities contributing to a platform for young scholars to share their research and writing. And three, to advocate for interdisciplinary research. As young scholars continue to broaden and

integrate their research, the Network hopes to expand and advocate for the integration of interdisciplinary research studies that explore a topic from a multitude of perspectives.”

CANADIAN JOURNAL OF EUROPEAN AND RUSSIAN STUDIES (CJERS)



The Canadian Journal of European and Russian Studies (CJERS) allows the ECSA-C community to regularly publish its findings in an electronic academic journal. Founded as the Review of European and Russian Affairs (RERA), the journal in its early years (2005-2008), was housed within the EUCAnet project under the leadership of the chief editors Dr. Piotr Dutkiewicz (Carleton University) and Dr. Oliver Schmidtke (University of Victoria). A vibrant group of co-editors, editorial and guest board members allowed for publishing research outputs of graduate and post-graduate students and young scholars (original essays, research articles, editorials, notes, book reviews) on topics related to the European Union, its member states, the former Soviet Union, Central, Eastern and Southern European states, including their cultures, politics, international relations, history and languages. At the time, the goals of the journal were to provide an accessible forum for research and scholarship as well as to foster communication among young scholars through the publication of their works.



In 2008, Dr. Joan Debardeleben (Carleton University) became the chief-editor of the journal and gave the journal a new base at the [Centre for European Studies](#). RERA obtained the status of an open-access journal, which means that all published papers are available to users free of charge. Recently, the journal has changed its name to the [Canadian Journal of European and Russian Studies \(CJERS\)](#). CJERS is supported by the [Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada](#) under the Strategic Knowledge Cluster Program (2008-2017), as well as by participating universities, particularly [Carleton University](#) in Ottawa.

EUCANET



In 2004, [EUCANet \(Europe Canada Network\)](#) started as a joint initiative of ECSA-C (European Community Studies Association – Canada) and the European Studies Program at the University of Victoria. It operated as a hub for experts primarily located in Canada that work on European and Canadian issues from a transatlantic perspective. These experts offered diverse types of commentary and expertise and many are still available for media interviews and public talks. The project was initially financed by a grant from the European Commission (DG RELEX). During the following years (2008-2017), EUCANet was part of the Strategic Knowledge Cluster Canada-Europe Transatlantic Dialogue (CETD), co-financed by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), hosted at Carleton University. EUCANet’s team was based at the University of Victoria and facilitated the Cluster’s public outreach activities. Since 2016, EUCANet is co-led by Beate and Oliver Schmidtke providing ECSA-C with

collaborative synergies realized, for example, as part of the ECSA-Cn project (2017-2021). EUCANet has organized projects securing the financial support of the Erasmus+ Jean Monnet Program of the European Union, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and the Centre for Global Studies (CFGs) at the University of Victoria (UVic)



Oliver and Beate Schmidtke at the Toronto Biennial 2018, Co-Leads of EUCANet since 2006



Part III | The Future Challenges/Visions According to Past-Presidents

THE ROLE OF ECSA-C FOR EUROPEAN STUDIES IN CANADA

Across Canada, ECSA-C represents the network of academics and other professionals brought together by the shared objective to foster a critical understanding of the historical development, institutions, policies, programs, issues, and problems of the European Union (EU) and its member states. Its role goes beyond the activities of the single and geographically-defined centres of EU studies in Canada. “None of them, as important as they are, can perform what ECSA-C can,” notes Dr. David Long

“a better way of looking at the role of ECSA-C for European Studies in Canada is to ask what Canadian perspectives on the EU would be without ECSA-C. Impoverished, would be my answer”.

The importance of EU funding in supporting the development of the EU studies network in Canada has been clearly evident. Thanks to these funds, the EU Centres - now called Jean Monnet Centres of Excellence - located at Canadian universities from one coast to the other, have been able to perform their activities: “They have been able to support a range of outreach and scholarly activities. In the period from 2006-2016, EU funding was also available specifically for the purpose of supporting network coordination between these centres, which provided annual opportunities for meetings and outreach events that brought scholars together”, notes Dr. Joan DeBardeleben.



In this regard, it is worth highlighting the critical role played by the Canada-Europe Transatlantic Dialogue (CETD) during those same years, a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) funded Strategic Knowledge Cluster grant, coordinated by Dr. DeBardeleben out of Carleton University. Among other outputs, the project produced policy papers and briefs on current issues, as well as downloadable podcasts. It organized many workshops on targeted policy problems, bringing together experts and practitioners, as well as public symposia where the wider public met academic researchers, policy makers, NGO representatives, and experts from the business community. The symposia featured discussions on solutions to today’s critical policy concerns. The project, housed at the Centre for European Studies (EU Centre of Excellence), was supported by the Europe-Canada Network (EUCAnet) project and website - based at the University of Victoria -, which conducted outreach activities and developed its searchable database of experts on Europe. Over the last years, EUCAnet has also provided pivotal support for ECSA-C. For DeBardeleben, the fact that in recent years the funding available for network coordination has shrunk has made ECSA-C all the more important as the key vehicle for keeping the community linkages intact and vibrant.

In this respect, Dr. Oliver Schmidtke illustrates the importance of the role that ECSA-C could play in a country as vast as Canada. As stressed by Schmidtke, “scholars working in the broad field of European Studies regularly operate in relative isolation and depend on



opportunities for networking and exchange with their colleagues in the field”. Thus, ECSA-C could be greatly effective in building and supporting such scholarly networks across the country. But there are two other factors to consider. As Schmidtke notes, “the world of academia is changing quickly and there are new demands on scholars, most notably the emphasis on knowledge mobilization and public outreach. In this context, ECSA-C could play a more proactive role in creating and sustaining modes of amplifying research results and making them more meaningful through reaching a wider and more diverse set of audiences.”

Finally, as research has become more complex, regularly requiring more collaborative networks, ECSA-C could play a more proactive role by connecting scholars from different disciplinary backgrounds in Canada and Europe. As stressed by Schmidtke, this would mean “linking places of outstanding expertise of European Studies across Canada (research centres, institutes, Jean Monnet Chairs, Networks and Projects) and facilitating collaborative research initiatives (events, grant applications, etc.).”

Echoing Schmidtke’s views, Dr. Heather MacRae notes that while the COVID-19 pandemic has raised a number of difficulties, it has also shown possibilities for cooperation that lie beyond traditional forms and towards new technologies. “Moving forward, I hope that ECSA-C will continue to be the meeting place and gathering hub, both virtually and in person for European Studies in Canada. As we develop more connections and continue to foster these through a virtual environment it becomes more possible to bring in collaborators from outside of Canada. This can only benefit European studies as a whole”, says MacRae.

In conclusion, while ECSA-C has played a crucial role in shaping Canadian perspectives on the EU over the years, today its role as key vehicle for keeping the community linkages intact, vibrant and oriented towards future collaborations seems even more important.

FUTURE VISIONS FOR ECSA-C

Dr. Frédéric Mérand

“The main challenge is to sustain public interest and make sure there are still jobs in European studies at a time when other regions are understandably attracting more attention. The key is to show that European studies address many of the themes that remain fundamental, such as democracy, diversity, governance, gender, inequality or the environment. “



Dr. David Long

“The challenge is that interest in the world that you have invested your entire career (life?) in is only of fleeting interest to the broader society and indeed even the significantly narrower academic community. [...] Attention to the EU is often about its latest problems or its potential as a major player internationally. Neither view is tremendously helpful, except in filling university lecture halls.”



Dr. Joan DeBardleben

“In recent years the funding available for network coordination has shrunk, which has made ECSA-C

all the more important as the key vehicle for keeping our community linkages intact and vibrant”.



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE EUROPEAN STUDIES COMMUNITY IN CANADA

Over its 25-year-history, ECSA-C has encountered different sets of challenges, while also acting as a venue and vehicle for new opportunities.

During the years of its “consolidation”, in the early 2000s, the main challenge was to find ECSA-C’s place in the national and international scientific community. As reminded by Dr. Oliver Schmidtke, who held the presidency of the association between 2004-2006, during his time “the challenges were twofold: First, ECSA-C needed to determine the nature of EU or European Studies in a country far away from the European continent”. The goal was to find ways to be inclusive for scholars working on Europe, while at the same time needing to focus and communicate what European Studies is as an interdisciplinary field or “area study”. A second challenge was to determine the range of activities appropriate to take on. “As a result, ECSA-C developed a new set of networking and outreach initiatives that connected the European Studies community across Canada (and Europe) and provided it with a growing sense of joint purpose”, adds Schmidtke. The Europe Canada Network launched in 2006, at the end of his presidency, became the vehicle for launching innovative projects for transatlantic exchange in Canada.

Looking at challenges faced today by ECSA-C, one important difficulty is linked to the community’s dispersion across Canada. “In my estimation, one of ECSA-C’s largest challenges is the fact that our members are all scattered across so many different parts of the country. And, partly because of the diffuse membership, we hold very few events

Dr. Oliver Schmidtke

“While much attention in the current geopolitical constellation has shifted to Asia, Europe will stay a critical reference point for Canadian politics and society. In a more polarized world, we might indeed see a renewed emphasis on collaboration and exchange based on shared political values. European studies as a field of scholarly research and exchange could very well play an important part in this deepening of transatlantic collaboration”.



Dr. Heather MacRae

“The Covid-19 pandemic has encouraged us to adapt and to recognize the ways in which we can use these technologies to help bridge the spaces between us”.



in between the Biennials”, notes Dr. Heather MacRae, who held the presidency of ECSA-C between 2018-2020.

“When I took over the Presidency, we were considering encouraging regional networks that could meet more frequently. But we struggled with the logistics. It would certainly be useful to connect scholars in a specific geographic area, but it was more logical to connect scholars working on a particular topic. However, this type of network wouldn’t solve the problem of the vast geographic distances”, adds MacRae.



Other members of the association note the need to find sustained activities that go beyond the biennial conference, including offering more benefits to members, maintaining a more consistent membership base through the enhancement of the existing tools, networks and EUCAnet’s expert database. Suggesting ways of addressing some of these challenges, Dr. Joan DeBardleben says that “a digital calendar of events taking place across the country could be useful. It is also important that the EUCAnet database be kept up and continuously improved as a resource for those seeking research connections; specially highlighting ECSA-C members could be helpful”. The co-lead of EUCAnet, Beate Schmidtke, underlines how important it is to establish a continuous administrative support for ECSA-C: “An association such as ECSA-C thrives when supported by a dedicated and sustainable administrative framework.”

DeBardleben also notes that at Carleton University there is a plan that involves the Canadian Journal of European and Russian Studies. “We are hoping that the open-access peer-reviewed journal that we house can augment its role as focal point for disseminating Canadian research contributions by both early-stage and established researchers”. “All of these activities, as well as others, will, however, require resources. So it will take some creative thinking to figure out a funding base”, adds DeBardleben.

The Covid-19 pandemic has added further difficulties to the implementation of ECSA-C’s activities. “The pandemic upended all sorts of plans and saw all of us struggling to balance work and family and our commitments to various organizations. And, not surprisingly, at times, we found it difficult to find the energy to carry through on some of the plans that we had set”, says MacRae.

But the pandemic has also disclosed some opportunities that were not as evident before. “The pandemic forced us to think outside the box and acknowledge that virtual meetings could be an important way to stay connected between meetings. I think many of us were reluctant to take big projects and big meetings to a virtual forum, but the pandemic has encouraged us to adapt and to recognize the ways in which we can use these technologies to help bridge the spaces between us”, comments MacRae. As noted by MacRae, these virtual meetings have also been augmented by increased social media presence, searchable databases and a website with key information: “While none of this can replace the face-to-face of our biennial meetings, it has made the spaces between somewhat smaller”.

There are, however, other challenges faced by the European Studies community in Canada today that are more linked to the ability of European Studies to generate interest in the wider public and within academia. For Dr. Frédéric Mérand, “the main challenge is to sustain public interest and make sure there are still jobs in European studies at a time when other regions are understandably attracting more attention. The key is to show that European studies addresses many of the themes that remain fundamental, such as democracy, diversity, governance, gender, inequality or the environment”, notes Mérand.

In a similar vein, Dr. Steven Wolinetz points to the “alarming rise of populist sentiment and populist parties and streams of thinking that are difficult not only to channel but also to respond to. Signaling what people are feeling is not necessarily a bad thing – arguably it is essential – but poorly channeled, much of it is directed against institutions that provided Europe (or rather most of it) with seventy years of peace and prosperity.”

Similarly, Dr. David Long says that “paradoxically, attention to the EU is often about its latest problems or its potential as a major player internationally. Neither view is tremendously helpful, except in filling university lecture halls”. Long stresses also that the opportunities offered by European studies “remain what they have long been: Europe is, potentially anyway, a model for post-national politics or, as has been the case recently, it is a petri dish of the travails of democratic politics in – whether one likes it or not – a globalized era”.

By comparison, Dr. Schmidtke stresses how the Canada-EU Strategic Partnership Agreement and the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) have started to change the environment for transatlantic exchange and collaboration. “Scholarly communities will also see new

opportunities in terms of a deepened interest in Europe and increasing need for expert knowledge on Europe. The European Studies community in Canada could considerably benefit from an enhanced public visibility and recognition by providing research-driven knowledge and policy expertise”, says Schmidtke.

For Schmidtke, “the environment and climate change, migration, security and foreign policy, social welfare, democracy and political economy are just some policy fields in which transatlantic exchange will intensify”. While agreeing on the point that much attention in the current geopolitical constellation has shifted to Asia, Schmidtke notes that Europe will stay a critical reference point for Canadian politics and society. Thus,

“in a more polarized world, we might indeed see a renewed emphasis on collaboration and exchange based on shared political values. European Studies as a field of scholarly research and exchange could very well play an important part in this deepening of transatlantic collaboration”.

COVID & THE FUTURE OF THE EU

A topic that has universally interested ECSA-C’s research groups is the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the European Union. The solidarity among EU member states, already put to the test during the deep economic crisis 2008/9, has been greatly challenged by the global pandemic and its socio-economic effects. Covid has accentuated structural inequalities in the EU and, at least temporarily, led to reinforcing national borders and policy authority of member states in key areas. The members of our network have addressed these issues from different perspectives. See: www.ecsa-c.ca/covid-the-future-of-the-eu

MORE QUOTES

“This analysis points to the need for the EU to seize this moment of reckoning on issues of social cohesion and social justice”.

Dr. Roberta Guerrina & Dr. Maxine David

“The coronavirus crisis magnifies patterns of inequality persisting despite the EU’s decades-long commitment to gender equality”.

Dr. Agnès Hubert & Dr. Jane Jenson

“What COVID holds for the depth of European integration generally, and for the durability of the EU’s long-standing successful trade policy, remains to be seen”.

Dr. Valerie D’Erman

“The EU needs to build direct relationships with its mobile citizens. For the moment, most of the EU citizenship rights are left at the EU border”.

Dr. Agnieszka Weiner

“Despite major setbacks, a humanitarian crisis and the British decision to leave the Union, the European institutions have further expanded their reach into the lives of Europeans, demonstrating unusual resiliency and innovation.”

Dr. Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly

“Economic polarization goes hand in hand with political and cultural divergence within the block. The common denominator is getting smaller, and as a result, the project of European integration is losing its magic”.

Dr. Kurt Hübner

“If COVID has afforded European decision-makers a second chance to address long-standing problems, what can we say about the EU’s efforts to grasp it? My preliminary assessment is cautiously positive.”

Dr. Achim Hurrelmann

“Covid has dramatically highlighted the need for community and practiced solidarity. This experience, most immediately felt in local communities, could become a transformative force in politics also with respect to the project of European integration”.

Dr. Oliver Schmidtke

“The COVID 19 context brutally reminds all stakeholders that the EU and the Member States can no longer delay identifying and executing sustainable and effective resilience building strategies for conflict prevention, alleviation of poverty and food security”

Dr. Saime Özçürümez





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