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The Conference on the Future of Europe in New Times of Crisis

Since 2008, the EU has faced a number of crises. They created new policy challenges and disclosed the need for institutional reforms. The crisis in the Euro zone revived the debate on completing the monetary union; increasing numbers of refugees showed that decision-making procedures in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice are insufficient; the Brexit stimulated proposals to deepen integration through the means of differentiation; and anti-democratic reforms of the Hungarian and Polish governments call for new instruments to enforce European values. There is agreement that the required institutional reforms have to be targeted at delivering concrete policy outputs in the short-term to face Europesceptics who question the legitimacy of the Union.

Following the European elections in 2019, the new President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, promised to organise a Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFoE) to address these reform needs. The EU institutions, national governments and MPs as well as civil society organisations and individual citizens shall discuss the future course of EU policy. While the European Parliament is pushing for a new “Convention on the Future of Europe” to reform the EU Treaties, the member states are reluctant to address the reform needs.

Against this backdrop, the course participants will discuss how the CoFoE could be structured to allow for real citizens’ participation and whether it can result in a reform of the EU Treaties. After taking stock of the EU’s current challenges, the participants will discuss their priorities for the CoFoE.

Literature:

- Julian Plottka: Die Konferenz zur Zukunft Europas zwischen „Konvent 2.0“ und „Intergouvernementalismus 3.0“: Warum Europa diese Chance zur Reform nutzen muss, in: integration 3/2020, im Erscheinen.
- Dominika Biegon/Julia Klein/Julian Plottka/Alexander Schilin/Jana Schubert: The Relaunch of Europe. Mapping Member States’ Reform Interests. A Comparative Analysis, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2018, available at: <http://iep-berlin.de/forschung/debatte-zur-zukunft-der-europaeischen-union/the-relaunch-of-europe/> [19.8.2020].
- John Pinder/Simon Usherwood: The European Union. A very Short Introduction. 3rd edition. Oxford 2013.

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