



Centre in Singapore

presents

The Upcoming European Parliament Elections

Why is it different this time and why should we care?

A public talk by Thomas Christiansen, Jean Monnet Professor of European Institutional Politics, Maastricht University

In May 2014, elections to the European Parliament (EP) - the world's only directly elected legislature beyond the nation-state - will usher in a new phase in the political life of the European Union: following these elections, a new European Commission, the EU's executive, will be appointed, and later this year the successors to the European Council President Herman van Rompuy and the EU's foreign policy chief, Catherine Ashton, will be chosen. 2014 is therefore a year of a comprehensive leadership change in the European Union. The official campaign to raise interest among EU citizens in the EP elections claims that "this time it's different!", in an effort to reverse the trend of declining turnout that has marred previous elections. But why is it different this time round?

The formal answer refers to a change in the EU constitution, according to which the parliament now for the first time has the right to elect the President of the Commission. The talk will discuss the significance of this change and the resulting dynamics, but also look at another reason why matters are different on this occasion, namely the fact these elections occur against the background of the severe economic and institutional crisis that Europe has been undergoing for the past four years, and which has also raised questions about the degree to which economic governance in the Eurozone requires greater democratic legitimacy.



Thomas Christiansen is Jean Monnet Professor of European Institutional Politics and Co-Director of the Maastricht Centre for European Governance (MCEG, www.mceg-maastricht.eu) at Maastricht University, The Netherlands. He is Executive Editor (with Simon Duke) of the Journal of European Integration, co-editor (with Sophie Vanhoonacker) of the 'European Administration Governance' book series at Palgrave Macmillan and acts as academic coordinator of the Observatory of National Parliaments after Lisbon (OPAL, www.opal-europe.org).

He has published widely on different aspects of European integration. The Palgrave Handbook of EU-Asia Relations, co-edited jointly with Emil Kirchner and Philomena Murray, was published in 2013, and The European Union and China, co-authored with Emil Kirchner and Uwe Wissenbach, is forthcoming with Palgrave in 2015.



**29th January 2014
11.00am - 12.30pm**

CIT Auditorium
Second Floor
Computer Centre
National University
of Singapore (NUS)
2 Engineering Drive 4
Singapore 117584

Please register at www.eucentre.sg by **28th January 2014**. Places are available on a **first-come first-served basis**.

About the Speaker

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