

„EU Governance – Are we on the right track?“

Research meets practice: Leading EU researchers discuss key issues of „efficiency and democracy in the EU“ with practitioners of the EU Commission and the European Parliament on April 10th in Brussels, DG-Research, Square de Meeûs 8, Room 136-137.

The EU-experts are members of CONNEX, a European scientific network of excellence (*Connecting Excellence on European Governance*) and of another pan-European project labelled NEWGOV (*Integrated Project on New Modes of Governance*, <http://www.eu-newgov.org/>).

The researchers do not only want to contribute to a better understanding of EU governance, but also to give a science based input to institutional reforms. It is the aim of the conference to present the results of four years of extensive research and the central questions to be discussed are how well represented are European citizens in Brussels and how political accountability can be ensured.

Professor Beate Kohler-Koch, political scientist and network coordinator of CONNEX, summarises the findings: „Not the efficiency of the EU is the problem, it’s much more the democratic quality that we are worried about“. Obscured from the citizen’s view, a „Europeanisation“ has long taken place on the level of administrations. Across Europe researchers have joined their knowledge and are reaching compromises even on difficult questions. However, although the administrations work for the citizens, the citizens themselves have no control. According to Beate Kohler-Koch „the EU is a complex multi-level system, in which political accountability is a problem beyond the reach of national regulation, and also the European Parliament has difficulties to claim responsibility“.

Both, CONNEX and NEWGOV have been funded by the European Union within the Sixth Framework Programme of Research. Cooperation with practitioners and the dissemination of research insights beyond the academic community has always been important to them. „The results of our research can be directly applied because we can show where the expectations of Europe’s citizens and the political actions taken in Brussels diverge“ explains Dr Fabrice Larat, network manager of CONNEX.

Contact details:

Dr Fabrice Larat
CONNEX Network Manager
Universität Mannheim, MZES
phone: +49 (0)621 181 2840
Fabrice.Larat@mzes.uni-mannheim.de
www.connex-network.org

Prof Dr Beate Kohler-Koch
CONNEX Coordinator
Universität Mannheim, MZES
phone: +49 (0)621 181 2844
beate.kohler@mzes.uni-mannheim.de
www.connex-network.org