

European Union Studies Association
Political Economy Interest Section

The Politics of Market Integration in the European Union
(Former Project Name: Completing the Single Market)

Progress Report
Fall 2008

The Section's project on *Completing the Single Market* (see previous issues of the newsletter) – now renamed as *The Politics of Market Integration in the European Union* – which we launched in EUSA's tenth biennial meeting in Montreal in May 2007, has progressed to its advanced stages. As you may recall the objective of this project is to provide an opportunity for section members to participate in a collective endeavour, network with other members, gain useful feedback on their academic work from a diverse range of colleagues and produce a high quality journal publication on an important theme.

Last November we selected 17 paper proposals for the second stage of the project, in which participants were invited to submit synopses of their papers. These synopses, received between April and August, allowed us to look into the direction of the papers and start to draw out themes for further exploration.

The third stage of our project took place in the form of six successive panels in Edinburgh during the UACES (ECSA-UK) annual conference in September 2008. The delivered papers and presentations covered diverse specific aspects of the Single Market, such as taxation, state aid, external trade policy, integration in financial services, environment, healthcare and transportation. Some papers dealt with broader issues such as the liberalization of service provision, Commission attempts at investigating the nature of market malfunctioning, the debate on the origins of the Single Market, and the case for market liberalization in Europe. Theoretically, some of the papers emphasized the literature on varieties of capitalism, others explored integration through an analysis of interest group preferences, while others applied sociological institutionalism and theories of public policy. Surprisingly, the analysis of only one paper was rooted in traditional integration theory. A few papers also employed quantitative tools. While this diversity poses a challenge for us as editors of a future special issue, it reflects the breadth of the central theme (Single Market) and the Section members' research agendas. The participants in the six conference panels appreciated the rich diversity of approaches applied. The impressive attendance at the project's panels, and the lively discussion that was generated provided a further boost to our project, and enriched all the participants with good comments and insights.

In the fourth stage of the project we will select 10-12 of the draft papers on the basis of clearly established criteria. We will send revised versions of these drafts to external reviewers. Their reports will be used to select the final set of papers to be included in a special issue of a leading academic journal which we are in the process of securing.