

Call for Papers  
EISA's 9<sup>th</sup> European Workshops in International Studies, Thessaloniki, 6-9 July 2022

Workshop Title: **Adapting to the Unforeseen: The Protean Power and Weakness of Europe**

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Current institutions and practices of regional and global governance are confronted by complex processes of change whose character and scale are not fully predictable. This uncertainty derives from two sources: first, the particular difficulty of foreseeing exactly how observable trends - such as the redistribution of power among states, the empowerment of non-state actors, and the disruptive effects of climate change, migration, and crypto-currencies, to name just a few variables - will interact with each other; and second, the virtual certainty of unforeseen developments (Donald Rumsfeld's 'unknown unknowns') that will defy even the best informed contingency plans. As such, the only real certainty is that both global and European institutions will be confronted in the coming decades with governance challenges that cannot be foreseen, and thus controlled or even planned for, in advance.

The capacity of an actor, organisation or network to improvise and re-shape itself in the face of unexpected and incalculable developments has recently been conceptualised as 'protean power' (Katzenstein and Seybert 2018, Katzenstein 2020). This ability is radically different from and not reducible to more familiar forms of power such as coercive or compulsory power, normative or rule-making power, and structural power (Barnett and Duvall 2005), which rely in different ways on the ability to estimate risk and control the course of events. The degree to which an actor is able to exercise protean power is thus independent of its possession of other forms of power. It is also distinct from traditional understandings of 'crisis management,' which focus on the ability to control threats by deploying resources, and from 'resilience,' which reflects the ability of societies and institutions to bounce back from external shocks.

The purpose of this workshop is to discuss the applicability of the new concept of protean power to the European Union in different policy areas. In so doing, the workshop will develop a new way of thinking about the EU's role in the world and new, evidence-based arguments about how to maximise its ability to shape global developments in the 21<sup>st</sup> century – not by controlling foreseeable trends but by being ready and able to innovate in the face of the unforeseeable. The European Union's ability to innovate in the face of uncertainty and unpredictability (i.e., to exercise protean power) is likely to be critical to promoting its interests and its values in this era.

We invite contributions addressing the following questions:

- To what extent or under which conditions does the EU experience the world as uncertain and unpredictable?
- How does the EU's decentralised structure, its commitment to decision-making by consensus, and its dependence on rule-guided behaviour affect its ability to exercise protean power?
- How does the EU exercise protean power in concrete situations?

We are open to explorations in a range of issue areas, such as foreign and security policy, health policy, fiscal and monetary policy, neighbourhood and enlargement policy, regional security, migration, and cyber security, among others.