

# EU-27 WATCH



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# EU-27 Watch

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## On the project

Due to the new treaty provisions of the Lisbon Treaty and the economic crises the enlarged EU of 27 member states is on the search for a new *modus operandi* while also continuing membership talks with candidate countries. The EU-27 Watch project is mapping out discourses on these and more issues in European policies all over Europe. Research institutes from all 27 member states and the four candidate countries give overviews on the discourses in their respective countries.

The reports focus on a **reporting period from December 2009 until May 2010**. This survey was conducted on the basis of a questionnaire that has been elaborated in March and April 2010. Most of the 31 reports were delivered in May 2010. This issue and all previous issues are available on the EU-27 Watch website: [www.EU-27Watch.org](http://www.EU-27Watch.org).

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**Spain****Implementation of the Lisbon Treaty under the Spanish Presidency****Ignacio Molina\***

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Spain chaired the EU Council of ministers during the first semester of 2010,<sup>1</sup> thus completing the first rotating presidency of the EU to be held under the Lisbon Treaty. From an institutional point of view – and much more from a substantive point of view, as is analysed in other sections of this EU-27 Watch report considering the rough economic circumstances of Europe and Spain – the task was not easy at all.

First of all, the Spanish Presidency was responsible for the implementation of very important innovations included in the new Treaty, such as the launching of the European External Action Service (EEAS), the approval of the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) or the way itself in which the rotating presidency exercises its functions: a completely new scheme of functions with less political leeway and media visibility, but with a greater need to ensure coordination of the entire inter-institutional system.

Secondly, even if the two new permanent EU top jobs – the President of the European Council and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy – had already been appointed in November 2009 under the Swedish Presidency, the definition of the role and the goals of both Herman Van Rompuy and, particularly, Catherine Ashton remained unclear until the first months of 2010.

Finally, uncertainties in the EU's institutional workings worsened further because of the two-month delay in getting the new European Commission under José Manuel Durão Barroso up and running. This caused a subsequent delay in all legislative initiatives for implementing Lisbon.

Nevertheless, despite these three obstacles, the terms of the Lisbon Treaty began to be applied smoothly in the first half of the year, and the institutional goals of the Spanish Presidency's ambitious programme were achieved almost completely.

Despite some minor incidents involving a lack of coordination and small clashes in the distribution of functions among the new officials – conveniently blown out of proportion by some media that confused the complexities of the new system with alleged rivalries between Van Rompuy and the Spanish Prime Minister, Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, or between Ashton and the Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Ángel Moratinos – this semester established a good precedent for co-habitation between the permanent and rotating presidencies. The link between the General Affairs Council and the European Council worked, and the Spanish Prime Minister accepted Van Rompuy's role of leadership and mediation among heads of state or government, appearing with him – and the President of the Commission – at news conferences after the European Council or summits with other countries when they were held in Spain. The holding of direct, personal meetings before major European or international events cleared the way for the two men to work well together.<sup>2</sup> In any case, this harmony should consolidate further in future presidencies.

The agreement establishing the EEAS was probably the major institutional achievement of the Spanish Presidency. On 26 April 2010, the Council approved a political agreement on the broad outlines of the service, based on a draft presented in March 2010 by the High Representative. In May and June 2010, on behalf of the Council, Ashton and Moratinos negotiated the issues of political control, budget and staffing with the main groups in the European Parliament. Finally, an accord was reached in Madrid on 21 June 2010 that might be ratified by a plenary session of the Parliament and thus possibly allow for the EEAS to be launched on 1 December of this year, coinciding with the first anniversary of the Treaty of Lisbon's coming into force. The plan creating the service calls for deploying more than 6,000 people in 138 diplomatic missions around the world over the next five years.<sup>3</sup>

While the EEAS was being negotiated – and, thus, not yet up and running – the Spanish Presidency had to undertake a transitional semester in terms of foreign policy. The two new authorities

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\* Elcano Royal Institute.

established by the Treaty had not yet been able to define their own goals. For this reason, the Spanish Prime Minister and Foreign Minister played a greater role than their colleagues of future rotating presidencies will. On the other hand, and little by little, the Commission's delegations abroad were being transformed into official delegations of the EU, but, consequently, the network of Spanish embassies continued to represent the EU in a special way in several places around the world.

Another interesting achievement of the semester was the regulation of the ECI called for in the Treaty. Here, the Presidency deserves credit for having pressed the new European Commission, which was not formed until February, to make up for lost time. Thanks to this pressure, on 31 March 2010 the Commission presented the draft on regulating the European Citizens' Initiative, a month ahead of schedule. Now it has to work its way through the European Parliament and the Council in the usual procedure. This timetable means that definitive approval will come some time after the Spanish Presidency is over. Still, no major changes in the draft are expected. Thus, European citizens will be able to propose legislative reforms directly to the Commission as long as they come up with a million signatures in the space of one year from a third of the member states, representing at least 0.2 percent of the population of each of those states.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> With the exception of the External Affairs Council, which is no longer chaired by the rotating Presidency, but by the High Representative.

<sup>2</sup> The Spanish Prime Minister Zapatero and President Van Rompuy met twice, in Madrid and Brussels, before the start of the semester to clarify their respective functions. They also co-signed an op-ed article, published in Europe's leading newspapers in early January, to present to the Union's public opinion the new institutional order established by the Treaty; the article was titled '2010, a Good Year for the Union'. It is available at:

[https://www.eu2010.es/export/sites/presidencia/comun/descargas/noticias/Artxculo\\_integro\\_zapatero-rompuy-EN-pdf-pdf.pdf](https://www.eu2010.es/export/sites/presidencia/comun/descargas/noticias/Artxculo_integro_zapatero-rompuy-EN-pdf-pdf.pdf) (last access: 29 July 2010).

<sup>3</sup> See the agreement on the European diplomatic service by the Council at:

[www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/114045.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/114045.pdf) (last access: 29 July 2010).

<sup>4</sup> See the Commission proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the citizens' initiative at: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat\\_general/citizens\\_initiative/docs/com\\_2010\\_119\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/citizens_initiative/docs/com_2010_119_en.pdf) (last access: 29 July 2010).

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**Spain****Spain backs future EU enlargements**

Ignacio Molina\*

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Having only joined the European Communities in 1986, thirty years after the signature of the Rome Treaty and ten years after the end of Franco's dictatorship, Spain's official position has always backed the idea that enlargement is a central element of the EU integration process and that further enlargement towards relatively new democracies in the Western Balkans and Turkey is a political priority that will contribute to peace and stability in Europe. Notwithstanding this, it must also be stressed that, in general, enlargement is a topic without relevance in the mass media and in domestic political debate.<sup>1</sup> Even so, the programme of the Spanish EU Presidency was also ambitious on this dimension.<sup>2</sup>

Successive Spanish governments – whether conservative or socialist – have backed Turkey's entry to the EU for a number of different reasons which have to do with the EU's general political, economic and security interests, while not considering questions of cultural or religious identity to be central to the issue. Prime Minister Rodriguez Zapatero told his Turkish counterpart, Recept Tayyip Erdogan, during a summit held in Madrid last February that he wanted to open as many EU accession chapters as possible and boost Ankara's bid to join the EU. However, despite Spanish diplomatic efforts, the expectations of opening up at least four negotiation chapters with Turkey came nowhere near being fulfilled – mainly because of Turkey's delays in carrying out reforms. It was finally accepted that only one technical chapter could be opened during the semester, although Turkey is expected to open one or two additional chapters during the remaining presidencies of the Trio team: Belgium and Hungary.

Concerning Croatia, in contrast with the limited progress made in its membership negotiations in 2009, two negotiation chapters were successfully concluded in 2010. The Spanish government supports the near conclusion of all negotiations considering that Croatia's future membership will be a decisive factor of stability for the Balkan region. Spain has a political commitment towards the entire Western Balkans – in particular towards Serbia because of a peculiar combination of factors – and backs the idea that their future should only be within the EU. During its Presidency, Spain organised a successful and pragmatic meeting in Sarajevo in which it was able to bring together representatives of Serbia and Kosovo, despite being one of the five EU member states that obstinately rejects recognising the new independent state.

Finally, in the accession negotiations with Iceland – expected to start in autumn 2010 – Spain is willing to participate actively in the preparations of common positions related to the first negotiation chapters. One of the most important topics for both Iceland and the EU will be the negotiations on the fishing chapter, a very sensitive issue for Spanish economic interests. The Secretary of State for the European Union, Diego López Garrido, expressed that “Spain is in favour of enlargement” although “the positive answer to the request of Iceland can not be detrimental to the requests of other countries to do the same, especially those countries that are in the area of the Western Balkans”.<sup>3</sup> Lopez Garrido admitted “that the negotiation process (with Iceland) will go relatively quickly”. It must be remembered that Iceland “meets most of the *acquis communautaire* and is part of the EEA and the Schengen zone”. However, the results of Iceland's referendum held last March 2010, in which 93.5 percent of voters voted “No” to the plans to reimburse the Netherlands and the UK for monies lost following the collapse of online bank Icesave, could undermine the country's application to join the European Union.

*Another missed opportunity to reinvigorate EU-Mediterranean relations*

The boost of the European Neighbourhood Policy, both to the east and in the Mediterranean area, was also considered a priority of the Spanish Presidency in the first semester of 2010. However, Spain has no strategic interests in the Eastern European vicinity, as its nearest geopolitical area of interest is the Mediterranean – the second national foreign policy priority after Latin America.

Spanish academic experts believe that the Eastern Partnership (EaP) does not constitute a direct threat to Spanish interests in the Mediterranean region. However, it is true that the EaP competes with

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\* Elcano Royal Institute.

Mediterranean initiatives. In this context, Spain is trying to guarantee that the EaP does not substrate economic resources from the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) project and will not interfere in the rapprochement between the EU and Russia.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, Miguel Angel Moratinos, in his role as Spanish Foreign Minister during the Spanish Presidency, stressed the importance of the EU policy of strengthening relations with both Eastern Europe and the Southern Caucasus regions, emphasising the significance of them not as "sanitary belts", but rather as areas of cooperation and interaction with the European Union.

Regarding the UfM, established at French instigation in July 2008, the Spanish initial reaction to the initiative was not enthusiastic at all. Spain's main concern was that the initiative could damage the Barcelona Process launched in 1995. After these initial hesitations, Spain has backed this project as a way to reinvigorate EU-Mediterranean cooperation. Traditionally, during Spanish presidencies, the southern Mediterranean has been given special attention, and Spain has sought to impulse European action in this area. However, this time, the escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has created great difficulties for the Spanish Presidency of the EU. Despite this negative environment, Jordanian Ahmed Khalaf Masad was appointed as the Secretary-General of the UfM, and the statutes of the Secretariat, which will be based in Barcelona, were finally approved. Nevertheless, the first warning over the difficulties to adopt any kind of agreement could be seen in April, with the failure of the adoption of a water-management strategy, it had to be dropped after a dispute over references to the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel.<sup>5</sup>

Spain had included the celebration of the second Heads of State Euromediterranean Summit in its presidency programme with the aim to address the main topics on the global agenda (economic crisis, climate change, energy, food security, etc.) from the Mediterranean standpoint. Regardless of the intense diplomatic work, Spain had to postpone the summit that was scheduled to take place in Barcelona on 7 June 2010. The postponement was agreed by Spain and co-chair nations France and Egypt. The Spanish government said the move was intended to give more time for indirect negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, which began on 19 May 2010 after more than a year.<sup>6</sup>

It must be noted that the preparations for the summit had been overshadowed by a threat by some Arab governments to abstain if Israel's Foreign Minister was to attend. Spain did not want to celebrate a Mediterranean summit without the attendance of the main Mediterranean leaders. The summit has now been tentatively scheduled for the third week in November 2010 with the aim to coincide with the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1995 Barcelona Summit. The postponement produced disappointment and was received by the mass media as a new diplomatic setback for Spain's EU Presidency, since an EU-U.S. summit that was to have been held in May in Madrid was also called off months ago when Washington announced that President Barack Obama would not attend. Besides the frustration of seeing the cancellation of the two main summits, the meeting held in Granada with Morocco cannot be considered a success either, if one judges it by the weight of the issues that were dealt with.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Even in the case of Turkey, there is no significant debate about the advantages and disadvantages of Turkish membership or of its consequences for Spain. According to the 23<sup>rd</sup> Wave of the Elcano barometer (March 2010), 44 percent of the Spaniards support Turkey's future membership. See: [www.realinstitutoelcano.org](http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org) (last access: 29 July 2010).

<sup>2</sup> See also: Graham Avery: The Expanding European Union: How to Evaluate the Policy? What Prospects for Spain's Presidency?, ARI 27/2010, Madrid 2010: Elcano Royal Institute, available at: [www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/ri/elcano\\_eng/Content?WCM\\_GLOBAL\\_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano\\_in/zonas\\_in/europe/ari27-2010](http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/ri/elcano_eng/Content?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_in/zonas_in/europe/ari27-2010) (last access: 29 July 2010).

<sup>3</sup> More information is available at: [www.maec.es](http://www.maec.es) (last access: 29 July 2010).

<sup>4</sup> Deniz Devrim/Evelina Schulz: The Eastern Partnership: An Interim Step Towards Enlargement?, ARI 22/2009 - 10/2/2009, available at: [www.realinstitutoelcano.org](http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org) (last access: 29 July 2010) and Alvaro García Navarro: The Eastern Partnership and the Regional Dynamics within The EU; What consequences for Spain?, available at: [www.falternativas.org](http://www.falternativas.org) (last access: 29 July 2010).

<sup>5</sup> More information regarding the water strategy is available at: <http://www.eu2010.es/en/documentosynoticias/noticias/abr13wass.html> (last access: 29 July 2010); <http://www.ufm-water.net/themes> (last access: 29 July 2010); [http://www.enpi-info.eu/mainmed.php?id=21257&id\\_type=1](http://www.enpi-info.eu/mainmed.php?id=21257&id_type=1) (last access: 29 July 2010).

<sup>6</sup> See: [http://www.eu2010.es/en/documentosynoticias/noticias/may23\\_moratinosupm.html](http://www.eu2010.es/en/documentosynoticias/noticias/may23_moratinosupm.html) (last access: 29 July 2010).

<sup>7</sup> See also Kristina Kausch: Morocco's 'Advanced Status': Model or Muddle?, FRIDE Policy Brief 43. Madrid 2010: FRIDE, available at: [www.fride.org/publicacion/745/el-estatuto-avanzado-de-marruecos:-¿que-significado-tiene?](http://www.fride.org/publicacion/745/el-estatuto-avanzado-de-marruecos:-¿que-significado-tiene?) (last access: 29 July 2010).

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**Spain****Greek debt crisis effects Spain indirectly**

Ignacio Molina\*

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After the implementation of the institutional innovations included in the Treaty, the second big priority of the Spanish EU Presidency was coordinating economic policies so as to encourage recovery.<sup>1</sup> However, the unprecedented Greek debt crisis dominated the semester and it ended up affecting Spain indirectly. It is true that crises usually provide an opportunity for rotating presidencies to enhance their leadership roles, but that was not the case this time. Spain's troubled economic situation prevented this from happening, or at least blocked it. Spain's fiscal situation was never nearly as serious as Greece's. Still, that did not stop people from comparing the two countries, thus raising doubts about Spain's neutrality and its authority for leading the debate on how to address the Greek problem or on how to reform European economic governance.<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless, the single biggest result of the Spanish Presidency was the decision to articulate a joint response aimed at defending the stability of the Euro and enhancing economic coordination among EU countries. Although it would not be accurate to say that the Spanish Presidency played the main role in producing this important outcome – as said, the Spanish government had to act in a reactive, defensive way, yielding the leading role to France, Germany and the Eurogroup Presidency – the truth is that the final outcome of the Presidency with regard to economic decisions has undoubtedly been outstanding.

Spain began its Presidency by raising the possibility of strengthening the EU's say over how member states run their economies, and, although the initial reaction from Germany and the UK was negative, the Spanish term ultimately made important strides in this direction. It is true that in January the Spanish government was not thinking so much about a more forceful role for European institutions in short-term fiscal consolidation as in medium- and long-term mechanisms for financial supervision and coordination of structural reforms. But the dramatic developments in the public debt markets during this six-month period led things toward the former of the two options. Despite the wavering and lack of leadership seen in February and April, the EU finally decided to bail out Greece. And what is more important, Ecofin, holding an extraordinary meeting on 9-10 May 2010, adopted the key decision to create a 750 billion Euro financial stability fund for troubled governments, moving to give a firm response to speculators. It is an impressive system geared towards protecting the Euro, to the point where a European monetary union can finally be considered complete and, what is even more novel, a true economic union is now beginning to take shape. Many member states, in particular Spain, have clearly seen the new, direct link that has been established during this Presidency between the creation of the new fund, rigorous application of the deficit limits of the Stability and Growth Pact and the adoption of economic reforms encouraged by Brussels in areas that, in principle, fall outside EU jurisdiction: the labour market, savings banks, pay for civil servants and retirement ages and pensions.

But on the economy there was even more during the semester. While the financial oversight mechanisms agreed in late 2009 – the European Systemic Risk Board and three additional measures – are close to being approved by the European Parliament, the Council added complementary measures on hedge funds and credit-ratings agencies during this Presidency.

As for approval of the Europe 2020 Strategy, which replaces the semi-failed Lisbon Agenda of 2000, the climate of economic urgency has caused it to go relatively unnoticed, even though it was the main declared priority of the Spanish Presidency and the other Trio Presidency members, Belgium and Hungary. In any case, on the basis of the Commission's proposal in early March 2010, the European Councils of March and June 2010 approved the broad outlines of a new and more sustainable productive model for the entire EU for ensuring economic growth and job creation in the future.<sup>3</sup> It identifies five basic goals and national plans to achieve them in the areas of employment, innovation, education, sustainability and the fight against poverty. But it remains to be seen how seriously member states and EU institutions will take these goals and what the consequences will be if they fail to do so.

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\* Elcano Royal Institute.

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<sup>1</sup> It has been discussed to what extent this should be the first and not the second priority of the semester. Financial Times published an editorial titled 'A stumbling Spain must guide Europe', with the subtitle 'Message for Zapatero: forget London, it's the economy!' The editorial called the programme proposed by the Spanish Presidency 'remarkably anodyne' and said it was a big mistake to focus on the fine-tuning of institutional reforms rather than address the problems of the 'real world', such as the economic crisis.

<sup>2</sup> Because of the Greek crisis and the poor state of the Spanish economy – deep recession, soaring unemployment, a bloated budget deficit and a swift increase in public debt – the Spanish officials tasked with leading the Ecofin had to spend a lot of time reassuring international investors or denying that Spain could be compared with Greece

<sup>3</sup> According to the president Van Rompuy, who chaired the European Council meeting on 25-26 March, the strategy sums up the European model of social market economy with a strong environmental dimension. „To protect this model, economic performance should be very strong.” It remains to be seen if the new strategy have sharper and more realistic goals than the Lisbon Agenda.

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**Spain****Disillusionment after the Copenhagen Conference on Climate Change****Lara Lázaro and Alicia Sorroza\***

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The Spanish government praised the technical advancements of the working groups at Copenhagen. It was also satisfied about having brought the largest polluters on board (albeit in the *in extremis* meeting). It nevertheless realised that international environmental agreements are inevitably slow and bound by the law of the least ambitious programme. In sum, there was an undisguised feeling of failure among government officials. This was reflected in the declarations made by the Spanish Office of Climate Change (OECC) at various seminars and workshops in the aftermath of the COP15. Too much to achieve in a short period of time, with misunderstandings and lack of trust among parties, could summarise the government's analysis of Copenhagen. The Spanish Presidency of the EU was expected to further the joint efforts of the European Union in the future achievement of a legally binding agreement.<sup>1</sup>

The main opposition party – the conservative Popular Party (PP) – believes that the agreement reached shows a low level of ambition and scant progress. They consider that there is an urgent need to reach a global agreement in order to ensure all parties and firms compete under the same conditions in a low carbon economy, thus avoiding relocation of national industry.<sup>2</sup> According to the leftist party Izquierda Unida, the Copenhagen international summit was an absolute failure.<sup>3</sup>

The Spanish Trade Unions (Unión General de Trabajadores, UGT and Confederación Sindical de Comisiones Obreras, CCOO) have expressed their disappointment with the lack of a binding agreement at the Copenhagen summit. It is considered an absolute failure as scientific mandates (to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions between 25 percent and 40 percent in relation to 1990 levels by 2020) have not been enshrined into the Copenhagen Accord. Current figures fall short of the above recommendations and amount to 15 percent of reductions. Copenhagen has been a missed opportunity in terms of the 'millions' of green collar jobs that could have been created. They also criticised the 'outrageous' exclusion of civil society in this historical meeting. For them, there was an unprecedented breach of historical participation of civil society in climate change negotiations. Future agreements should include not only civil society, but also all countries.<sup>4</sup>

The main Spanish non-governmental organisations highlighted the historical opportunity missed in Copenhagen. According to Intermon Oxfam, the international leaders, subservient to their own (economic) interests, forgot about the 'common good'. The Copenhagen Accord was a useless agreement that served the media-frenzy desire of offering headlines, but failed to ensure that lives are saved. This is especially worrisome for the poorest and most vulnerable. Copenhagen's failure and the possibility of facing the catastrophic consequences of climate change should be a wake-up call for policy-makers and political leaders alike.<sup>5</sup>

Ecologistas en Accion, a relevant non-profit ecological organisation, also believes that the lack of public participation and the exclusion of the 'global South' must be condemned. It stressed its disappointment with the non-existent long-term commitments to ensure binding GHG reductions. There is a long-standing and urgent need for decisive global climate agreements post 2012. The limited amount of natural resources, as sources or as sinks, has to be included in the parlance of international environmental agreements in an effective way if the worst consequences of climate change are to be avoided.<sup>6</sup> Greenpeace in Spain declared that Copenhagen was only a 'weak political declaration' that implicitly leads to increases in temperature above 2°C. The agreement can be seen, at best, as a step along the road to a legally binding agreement. Transfers agreed should be effectively made if engagement of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) is to be ensured.<sup>7</sup>

According to the Twenty-Third Wave of the Barometer of the Elcano Royal Institute (March 2010), Spanish public opinion is worried about the threat of climate change and rose to the level of other issues. A total of 90 percent consider it an important threat and half of these people feel it is a very important threat. Within this context, it should come as no surprise that one out of every two Spaniards is disappointed by the results of the climate change summit in Copenhagen. Only 1 percent assessed

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\* Elcano Royal Institute.

the results of the climate change summit as very good, 27 percent as good, 28 percent as bad, 13 percent as very bad, 22 percent gave no answer.

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<sup>1</sup> More information is available at: [http://www.mma.es/secciones/cambio\\_climatico/pdf/Nota\\_resultados\\_COP15.pdf](http://www.mma.es/secciones/cambio_climatico/pdf/Nota_resultados_COP15.pdf) (last access: 29 July 2010);

<http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2009/12/22/ciencia/1261507885.html> (last access: 29 July 2010).

<sup>2</sup> Available at: [http://www.pp.es/actualidad-noticia/pp-pide-informacion-al-gobierno-sobre-propuesta-espanola-cumbre-copenhague-sobre-cambio-climatico\\_971.html](http://www.pp.es/actualidad-noticia/pp-pide-informacion-al-gobierno-sobre-propuesta-espanola-cumbre-copenhague-sobre-cambio-climatico_971.html) (last access: 29 July 2010).

<sup>3</sup> Available at: <http://izquierda-unida.es/node/6811> (last access: 29 July 2010).

<sup>4</sup> Available at: <http://www.ugt.es/actualidad/2009/diciembre/a21122009.html> (last access: 29 July 2010).

<sup>5</sup> Intermon Oxfam: "Un clima de vergüenza: volved a la mesa. Análisis inicial de la reunión sobre el clima en Copenhague", 21/XII/2009, available at:

[http://www.intermonoxfam.org/UnidadesInformacion/anexos/11347/091223\\_Un\\_clima\\_de\\_verguenza\\_IO.pdf](http://www.intermonoxfam.org/UnidadesInformacion/anexos/11347/091223_Un_clima_de_verguenza_IO.pdf) (last access: 29 July 2010).

<sup>6</sup> Available at: <http://www.ecologistasenaccion.org/spip.php?article16104> (last access: 29 July 2010);

<http://www.ecologistasenaccion.org/spip.php?article16220> (last access: 29 July 2010).

<sup>7</sup> Available at: <http://www.greenpeace.org/raw/content/espana/reports/100210.pdf> (last access: 29 July 2010).

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**Spain****The domestic assessment of the Spanish Presidency****Ignacio Molina\***

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The very high domestic expectations linked to the Spanish 2010 EU Presidency and the highly challenging economic context that emerged after the Greek debt crisis – which hit Spain very harshly – make for an overall evaluation of the semester that is far below what would be expected from simply adding up what was achieved in the different areas of the Presidency’s programme.

The scenario of the EU after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty required ambition, and Spain – a mid-size or even large country within the expanded EU, with solid pro-European convictions and organisational and leadership skills that were proved by its earlier turns as EU President – seemed to be one of the states willing to take on the challenge. In fact, leading government officials and the ruling Socialist Party, rather than opt for a moderate approach as to what could be expected from this six-month period, chose to raise expectations by stressing the historic importance that the challenge held for Spain and for Europe. However, it soon became clear that the challenge – perhaps not quite historic but in any case quite important – was a very difficult one to meet.

In undertaking its Presidency, the Spanish government tried to make a legitimate, albeit complicated, connection with its major goals in domestic and foreign policy. But it did not pay enough attention to the institutional limits that rotating presidencies have always had and the fact that the Lisbon Treaty imposes even more limits, as it lowers the political profile of these six-month stints in power.

From an institutional standpoint, and despite uncertainty surrounding the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty and the delay in forming the European Commission, Spain correctly carried out its legislative role in the Council. It encouraged consensus, organised things efficiently and, above all, addressed the development of the treaty and future political debates properly: an ambitious diplomatic service, bringing the EU closer to its citizens, solidarity with Greece, strengthening economic governance, supporting innovation, progress in enlargement, attention to Latin America, etc.

However, the adverse combination of political and economic factors and broad and excessively high ambitions ended up overshadowing the final result of the Spanish Presidency. Today, the general political perception of the recently concluded Presidency – pending public opinion polls and a more thorough analysis from experts – is more on the negative side. The Spanish government made a naturally self-congratulatory assessment of the Presidency, calling it “tireless, efficient, committed, showing solidarity, and pro-European”. The overall judgment will probably be more critical, but it would not be fair for the assessment to be totally negative either.

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\* Elcano Royal Institute.

## Questionnaire for EU-27 Watch, No. 9

Reporting period December 2009 until May 2010 – Deadline for country reports 21 May

**All questions refer to the position/assessment of your country's government, opposition, political parties, civil society organisations, pressure groups, press/media, and public opinion. Please name sources wherever possible!**

### 1. Implementation of the Lisbon Treaty

On the 1 December 2009 the EU-reform ended with the entering into force of the Lisbon Treaty. However, the new treaty provisions still have to be implemented. Some procedures and conditions have to be determined. In other cases, procedures, power relations, and decision-making mechanisms will change due to the new provisions.

- How is the work of the new President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, assessed in your country? Which changes to the role of the rotating council presidency are expected?
- How is the work of the new High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, assessed in your country? Please take into particular consideration both her role within the European Commission and her relationship to the Council of the European Union.
- On 25 March 2010 a "Proposal for a Council Decision establishing the organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service" was presented. How is this concept perceived in your country? Which alternatives are discussed?
- On 31 March 2010 the European Commission presented a proposal defining the rules and procedures for the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI). What are the expectations for the ECI in your country? What are the various positions concerning the rules and procedures?

### 2. Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy

The European Commission has given its opinion on Iceland's application for EU-membership and a decision from the Council is expected before the end of June. Croatia seems to have settled its border dispute with Slovenia. Against this background:

- Which countries does your country expect to become members of the European Union in the next enlargement round? What are the opinions in your country on the membership of these countries?
- How are the membership perspectives of those countries discussed, which are not expected to become a member in the next enlargement round?

The Eastern Partnership and the Union for the Mediterranean were the last major projects dealing with the European neighbourhood:

- How are these projects assessed in your country?

### 3. European economic policy and the financial and economic crisis

The European Council agreed on 25/26 March on the key elements of the Europe 2020 strategy, the successor of the Lisbon strategy. While not being on the formal agenda the economic and financial situation in Greece was discussed. The European Council agreed on a finance package combining bilateral loans from the eurozone and financing through the International Monetary Fund.

- How is the finance package for Greece assessed in your country? Are there any opinions on the process, how the agreement on the package was reached?
- Which lessons should be drawn from the Greek case for a reform of the Stability and Growth Pact?
- How is the idea of "a strong coordination of economic policies in Europe" perceived in your country? What concepts of an European economic governance are discussed in your country and which role do they assign to the Euro group?
- How is the Europe 2020 strategy discussed in your country? What are the priorities for the Europe 2020 strategy from your country's perspective?

### 4. Climate and energy policy

The climate conference in Copenhagen took note of the Copenhagen Accord but did not reach a binding agreement. The next conference of the parties (COP 16 & CMP 6) will take place at the end of November 2010.

- How is the Copenhagen conference assessed in your country? Please take into consideration the negotiation strategy of European Union and the results of the conference.
- Does the European Union need to change its own energy and climate policy in order to give a new impulse to the international negotiations?
- Is a global agreement within the UNFCCC the best strategy to fight climate change? If not, which alternative strategy should the European Union follow?
- What is your country's position on financing mitigation and adaptation efforts in developing countries?

### 5. Current issues and discourses in your country

Which other topics and discourses are highly salient in your country but not covered by this questionnaire?