

The Manchester Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence

Annual Review of Activities, 2022-2023



July 2023

1. Introduction

The Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence was created in 2003 with the financial support of the European Commission under its [Jean Monnet Action](#) and co-funded by the University of Manchester. At the end of a three-year funding period its focus was broadened away from its initial concern with the European Union to European Studies more generally. At the same time, the JMCE became more broadly based with partners from the University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University and other local organisations.

The JMCE aims to provide a platform for European Studies-related activities and research in Greater Manchester and the North West of England. The Centre aims to strengthen the intellectual community in European Studies, while also facilitating local, regional and international links with practitioners, researchers, students and others interested in European affairs.

The JMCE relies on subscriptions from its principal stakeholders for its operation and is grateful for their continuing support.

The following pages report specifically on the structure and achievements of the Centre during the academic year 2022-23. This year, the JMCE has continued adjusting to the new realities of post COVID-19 academic life. As the new Director of the Centre, my focus has been on continuing to navigate the Centre through this transition. In Semester I, we retained a hybrid format for our seminar series. In Semester II, all of our activities reverted to a face-to-face format, as we actively shape and promote a vibrant and Manchester-based community of scholars and thinkers of Europe.

In the coming academic year, the JMCE will be welcoming a new Deputy Director, Dr Davide Schmid (MMU)! You can find out more about Davide's profile inside this report. We are also transitioning to a new administrator, Stanley Wilshire, who has already worked to support our Semester II events this academic year.

In terms of our strategy, we see the JMCE as the natural space to promote European Studies in Manchester and the UK, and to promote the standing of Manchester and UK-based researchers in the field of European Studies. We are therefore planning to extend our bursary schemes in order to more extensively support the intellectual community for European Studies in Manchester and the North of England. We will also engage in joint activities with other research institutes and policy-facing institutes and organisations in order to expand and consolidate this space. As the Director of the Centre, I would be delighted to receive your thoughts and feedback on our activities, past, present and future! I also wish to thank personally all of our stakeholders for supporting the work of the JMCE over the years!



Dr. Silke Trommer

Director of the Manchester Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence

2. Stakeholders

The Manchester Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence showcases European expertise across the main Universities of the city. Its principal stakeholders are:

- **The University of Manchester**
 - School of Arts, Languages and Cultures
 - School of Social Sciences
 - Alliance Manchester Business School
- **Manchester Metropolitan University**
 - Department of History, Politics and Philosophy

3. The JMCE Board

The JMCE Board sets and approves the JMCE budget as well as the priorities of the Centre. We met three times in the academic year 2022/23. Our board members are:



Dr. Silke Trommer,
Director (UoM)



Dr. Paul Tobin,
Deputy Director (UoM)



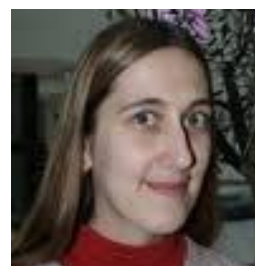
Dr. Kathryn Simpson,
Deputy Director (MMU)



Dr Eleanor Bindman,
Board Member (MMU)



Dr. Dimitrios Doukas,
Board Member (UoM)



Dr. Olga Krushcheva,
Board Member (MMU)



Dr. Christian Goeschel,
Board Member (UoM)



Dr. Davide Schmid,
Board Member (MMU)

4. Review of Activities

4.1. JMCE Seminar Series

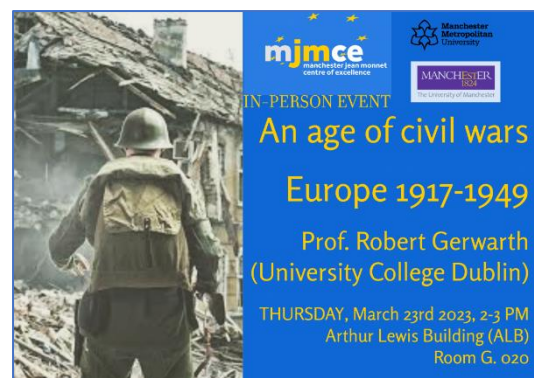
This academic year, our seminar series covered a wide range of fields of inquiry in line with the multidisciplinary tradition of the Centre and our mission to strengthen the intellectual community in European Studies across Manchester and the North of England.

Our research talks covered a wide range of EU policy areas (state building, accession, external relations, trade & development, peace & security), disciplinary engagements with Europe (history, political economy, international relations, politics, social movement studies, feminism), and thematic focal points addressing current debates (East European politics, LGBTQ+ politics, Brexit, the War on Ukraine, nationalism).

Semester I



Semester II





4.2. The JMCE Annual Lecture 2023

The 2023 Annual Lecture took place in the form of a Roundtable as part of our commitment to actively engaging civil society, policy-makers and local communities in how academics reflect on, debate and study Europe and European issues.

This year's theme was "The Spectre of a Nuclear Threat in Europe".

We welcomed three very distinguished panellists to the JMCE to discuss with us:

[Dr Rebecca Johnson](#) is an ecofeminist peace activist who is executive director of the Acronym Institute of Disarmament Diplomacy and founding president of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) who won the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize.

[Professor Holger Nehring](#) is a specialist in the history of Cold War military infrastructure and social movements at the University of Stirling.

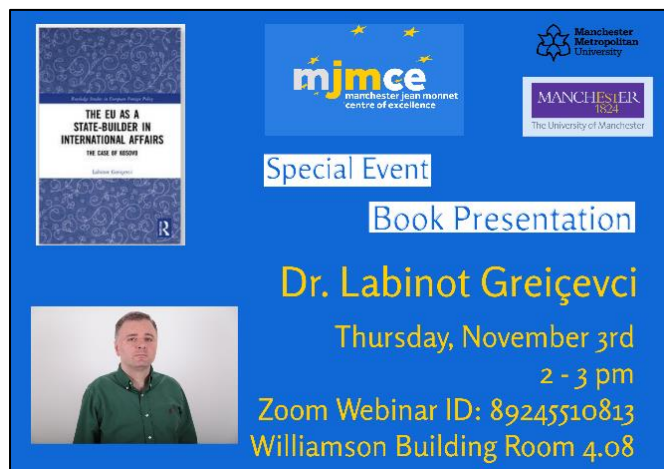
[Sebastian Brixey-Williams](#) is executive director of and researcher, facilitator and mediator for BASIC, an independent think tank that aims to safeguard humanity and the Earth's ecosystem from nuclear risks and interconnected security threats and has a global reputation for promoting dialogue among states, including hostile states, in accordance with this mission.

We had an excellent discussion with participants from both of our university communities, as well as local and transnational civil society and local policy-makers. We also held a very engaging closed-door workshop after the Roundtable bringing together our speakers with interested colleagues and PhD students.



4.3. Special Events

We held one special event in Semester I in the form of a book presentation and one special event in Semester II to mark the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement.



4.4. JMCE sponsored awards and workshops

We funded a range of fieldtrips, workshops and other activities across our institutional members. These included:

PhD Bursaries:

Angel Martin Caballero (AMBS, UoM): Fieldwork to Madrid, Spain



Angel said: “The experience exceeded my expectations and enriched me in numerous ways. I had the privilege of meeting fascinating individuals both within and outside the academic sphere. At UAM, the professors were incredibly generous and assisted me in establishing connections with various trade union and business representatives. I also had the chance to present my preliminary findings at two academic events—an engaging seminar organised by the Digital Economy Research Centre of UAM and a session hosted by the Department of Sociology. In both settings, I received valuable feedback and established connections with prominent researchers in my field.”

Daniel Stratford (Chester): Fieldwork in Spain. David said: “Without Manchester JMCE, fieldwork would not have been possible. Manchester JMCE supported the funding of fieldwork to Ibiza in April 2023, from which my thesis saw new developments and exciting research trajectories, such as understanding street drug dealing from the perspective of Islam. Beginning in October 2021, I aim to submit my thesis in September 2024.”



Robert Gyorgyi (SALC, UoM): Fieldwork to Hungary.

Workshops:

Aida Fernández Prieto & April Pudsey (MMU): Poverty and Vulnerability in Classical Antiquity: Gendered and Life-Cycle Approaches

This two-day conference hosted at MMU featured two prestigious key-note speakers, Professor Violaine Sebillotte-Cuchet (l'Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne) and Dr Claire Holleran (University of Exeter), and brought together, in hybrid format, 24 speakers from the UK and other institutions overseas (Spain, Greece, Finland, Switzerland, the USA and Colombia), as well as a significant number of attendants (both postgraduate and PhD students and established academics).



Olga Onuch and Alina Nychyk (SoSS, UoM): Russia's War Against Ukraine



On 19th June 2023, a workshop “Russia’s War Against Ukraine: Resistance, Reform and Reconstruction” was held at the University of Manchester. Among other funders, the workshop was also supported by Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence funds.

The organisers (Dr Alina Nychyk, Prof Olga Onuch and Dr Emma Mateo) managed to gather the most prominent Political Science scholars working on Ukraine: Prof Gwendolyn Sasse, Dr Lenka Bustikova, Dr Tymofii Brik, Prof Paul D’Anieri, Dr Inna Melnykovska, Dr Maria Popova, Prof Anastasia Shesterinina, Prof Gulnaz Sharafutdinova, Dr Oxana Shevel, Prof Kataryna Wolczuk and many others. Although some scholars joined online from Canada, US or UK, others were able to travel to Manchester (e.g. Prof Paul D’Anieri travelled from the University of California), which facilitated scientific exchange and networking over the lunch and dinner.

The aim of the workshop was to present 6 papers that make major empirical (and policy relevant) contributions to the contemporary study of Russia’s war against Ukraine and Ukraine’s recovery and reform challenges in the context of all-out war. 3 key voices in the discipline responded and discussed the papers, thus, promoting further dialogue. The immediate aim is to publish the set of papers and discussant essays as a symposium in a leading journal. In this way, after the workshop, participants stay in touch working on the Special Issue.



Eleanor Bindmann & Kathryn Starnes (MMU): Eastern Europe in the Context of Russia's War Against Ukraine

Two workshops were organised:

- a talk by Aliaksandr Herasimenka (University of Oxford) on Misleading Narratives and the War in Ukraine
- an online event where Tanya Lokot (Dublin City University) presented on Digital Rights, Networked Authoritarianism, Internet Freedom and Internet Governance and Protest in Eastern Europe

Cathy Gelbin (SALC, UoM) and Katja Stuerzenhofecker (SALC, UoM): Jews, Gay People and the Holocaust



Welcome to Holocaust Memorial Day 2023: Jews, Gay People and the Holocaust

Panel discussion and Q&A with Rabbi Robyn Ashworth-Steen (Manchester Reform Synagogue and co-chair of Greater Manchester Citizens); Dr. Hannah Ewence (University of Chester); Dr. Andreas Pretzel (Magnus-Hirschfeld-Society, Berlin); and Greg Thorpe (GAZE film festival, Ireland).

Moderation: Cathy Gelbin (The University of Manchester)

The panel discussion will begin at 8pm.



The winner of our UG Dissertation Prize 2023 was **Jay Swinnerton** (UoM SALC), writing on **the experiences of homosexuals under the Italian Fascist regime**, While **Evie Freemantle** (SALC, UoM) received a Special Commendation.

The winner of our PG Dissertation Prize 2022 was Joseph Duluc (UoM Politics), whose dissertation explores **campaigners' digital strategies during the 2022 French presidential election** using a mixed-method approach.



4.5. The JMCE-sponsored Book Series on European Politics (MUP)

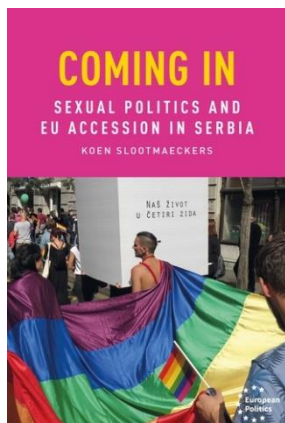
Since 2019 senior members of the JMCE's Board have teamed up with Manchester University Press to relaunch the European Politics Series. The JMCE is actively sponsoring the series, both in terms of editorial guidance and promotion.

For more details visit: <https://www.manchesteruniversitypress.co.uk/series/european-politics/>

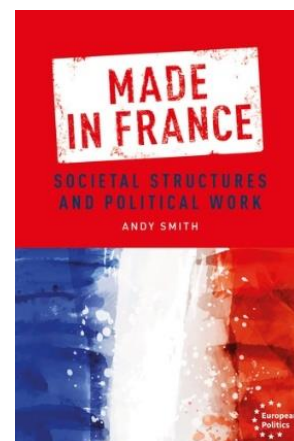
New titles:

Koen Slootmaeckers, *Coming in: Sexual politics and EU accession in Serbia*

Andy Smith, *Made in France: Societal structures and political work*



Prof. Papadimitriou and JMCE board members Dr. Simpson and Dr. Tobin are the series editors



5. News

5.1. Meet the new JMCE Deputy Director!



Dr Davide Schmid is Senior Lecturer in International Relations at Manchester Metropolitan University. His areas of specialism are Critical Theory and International Political Economy. In his research, he addresses the Frankfurt School tradition of critique and the analysis of contemporary capitalist crisis in relation to European integration and the European border regime. He published his research in high-ranking academic journals such as *The European Journal of International Relations*, *Geoforum*, the *Journal of European Public Policy*, the *Journal of Common Market Studies* and *Geopolitics*. His monograph, *The Poverty of Critical Theory in International Relations*, is published with Palgrave Macmillan (2023).

5.2. The JMCE in the News



JMCE board member Eleanor Bindman has regularly commented about Russia's invasion of Ukraine and Belarusian politics on a wide range of BBC outlets, Times Radio and LBC.



JMCE board member Christian Goeschel has featured in a BBC broadcast on the Rise of the Nazis and a high profile history broadcast on Hitler and Mussolini.



5.3. Save the Date!

- **September 2023:** Watch out for the publication of our seminar series and joint events!
- **Academic Year 2023/24:** Watch out for JMCE-funded Workshops, Postgraduate Research Bursaries and BA, MA and PhD Dissertation Prizes!
- **January 2024:** Watch out for the JMCE's first New Year's Lecture & Reception!