

Abstract

The Lisbon Treaty has made significant changes to the institutional functioning of the whole system of the European Union. Most notably, it has constituted a non-rotating long-term Presidency for the European Council and Foreign Affairs Council. Before the Lisbon Treaty, the Member State of the European Union presided over all Council constellations, including the European Council, for a six-month term. These changes certainly contributed to the solution of some issues (for instance continuity issues), on the other hand these changes affected in some ways the performance of the rotating Presidency. I focus on these changes to the institutional form of the Presidency and on the effects these changes had on the Presidency's performance in its functions, namely the negotiation and external representation. I draw on the experience of the first two post-Lisbon Presidencies, Spanish and Belgian one. My aim is to examine the changing role of the Presidency in these functions. I explore the role of the Presidency before and during negotiations of the founding Treaties of the European Union and its role after the reforms introduced by the Lisbon Treaty. Mainly, I focus on examining the relationship between the rotating Presidency and newly-established permanent Presidency of the European Council and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. I also explore the roles of the Presidencies which were not adequately addressed in the Lisbon Treaty and were left to emerge during the performance of specific Presidency.