

Lifetime: September 2018 – August 2020

By: Cologne Monnet Association for EU-Studies COMOS ([www.comos-cologne.eu](http://www.comos-cologne.eu))

## **Abstract**

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The DAFEUS project has four objectives. It enhances the debate on the future development of the EU, fosters public knowledge and awareness of EU politics, promotes EU studies in new research areas, and strengthens the exchange between both academics and practitioners as well as civil society and the general public.

By comparing the EU to federally organised countries, the project will shed new light on strengths and deficits of the EU's political system. On this basis, DAFEUS develops concrete recommendations how to make the EU and its federal elements more effective, more efficient and more democratic.

DAFEUS will focus on three key topics:

- 1) Institutions and decision-making in federal systems
- 2) Democracy in federal systems
- 3) Differentiation in federal systems

DAFEUS combines academic research, public outreach and policy dialogue by organising three DAFEUS weeks, each of which includes a policy lab and an annual conference. The events will bring together senior and junior experts with diverse academic and professional backgrounds, policy-makers, civil society organisations and the wider public.

The project's output will comprise a set of webcasts, including expert interviews and speeches, three background papers on the project's key topics, three policy papers with recommendations from the policy labs, three conference reports with key results, a journal article and an edited volume gathering contributors to the project's events. A state-of-the-art website and a corresponding online platform for debate via Facebook complement DAFEUS' outreach activities.

DAFEUS will be implemented by the Cologne Monnet Association for EU Studies (COMOS) in cooperation with the Université de Montréal, the Centre international de formation européenne and the University of Cologne.

## Staff and partners

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### Key staff members

Academic coordinator:	Hartmut Marhold President of COMOS, Centre international de formation européenne & University of Cologne
Project directors:	Johannes Müller Gómez Programme director of COMOS, LMU Munich & Université de Montréal Alina Thieme Programme director of COMOS, University of Cologne
Financial manager:	Cyril Gläser, Executive manager and treasurer of COMOS, University of Cologne
Scientific curators:	Tobias Kunstein University of Cologne Wulf Reiners Vice-president of COMOS, German Development Institute

### Project partners

Université de Montréal:	Laurie Beaudonnet Frédéric Merand Martin Papillon
Centre international de formation européenne:	Matthias Waechter
University of Cologne :	André Kaiser Wolfgang Wessels

### Advisory board

John Erik Fossum, head of the advisory board, University of Oslo  
Gianni Bonvincini, Istituto Affari Internazionali  
Andrew Duff, former Member of the European Parliament  
Ulrike Guérot, Danube University Krems & European Democracy Lab  
Yvonne Nasshoven, German Federal Foreign Office  
Christine Neuhold, Maastricht University  
Lenka Rovná, Charles University  
Frank Schimmelfennig, ETH Zurich  
Lori Thorlakson, University of Alberta

## Summary

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DAFEUS will contribute to the current reform debate of the European Union by taking a comparative perspective on EU politics and by addressing academia, practitioners, the general public and civil society.

### DAFEUS' key points:

- DAFEUS will grasp and contribute to the current **reform debate of the European Union**.
- DAFEUS will provide a bridge connecting **academia, practitioners, the general public and civil society**.
- DAFEUS will grasp EU politics from a **comparative perspective** in order to identify strengths and deficits of the EU's political system, and develop concrete recommendations which seek to make the EU more effective, more efficient and more democratic.
- DAFEUS will focus on **three key topics**: 'Institutions and decision-making in federal systems', 'Democracy in federal systems' and 'Differentiation in federal systems'.
- DAFEUS will **cooperate with three outstanding institutions** in the area of EU studies, comparative politics and federalism: Université de Montréal, Centre international de formation européenne and University of Cologne.
- DAFEUS will have a strong **transnational, intergenerational and interdisciplinary character** by organising six events in Europe and Canada bringing together senior and junior experts with diverse academic and professional backgrounds and the wider public.
- DAFEUS will supply an international audience with comprehensive material on the EU and the future debate via a **multidimensional approach**.
- DAFEUS will strengthen **COMOS's role as a civil society organisation** in the area of European integration, which links the academic and practitioners' sphere with the civil society dimension.

### DAFEUS' background and rationale:

- The background of DAFEUS is the current **debate on the future of the Union** which gained new momentum after the decision of the United Kingdom to withdraw from the European Union.
- DAFEUS follows the conviction that a **comparative and multi-stakeholder perspective** is decisive for a successful reform debate on the future of the EU. The project therefore links **academia and practitioners with civil society and the general public**.

## DAFEUS' activities and main outputs:

- DAFEUS will organise three “**DAFEUS weeks**”, which will comprise each a
  - **policy lab** on the project's three key topics which will elaborate concrete policy recommendations, and an
  - **international conference** bringing together practitioners, academics, students, civil society and the general public to discuss the future of the EU

The DAFEUS weeks are scheduled as follows:

- DAFEUS week I on “**The future of the European Union: Towards a federal Union?**” at the Université de Montréal in October/November 2018
  - DAFEUS week II on “**The future of the European Union: Towards a democratic Union?**” at the Centre international de formation européenne in Nice in May 2019
  - DAFEUS week III on “**The future of the European Union: Towards a differentiated Union?**” in cooperation with the University of Cologne in Berlin in June 2020
- DAFEUS will produce
    - **a set of webcasts**, including expert interviews and speeches from the DAFEUS weeks,
    - **three background papers** on the project's three key topics before each event,
    - **three policy papers** which will be produced in the policy labs and include policy recommendations,
    - **three conference reports** with the events' key results,
    - **an academic journal article** examining the projects' main results,
    - **an edited volume** on the future of the EU as federal system gathering contributors to the DAFEUS events, and
    - **a website and Facebook page** to disseminate information and stimulate debates.