

RESEARCH FORUM 2018 / 2019

Department of Political and Social Sciences
Institutions and Political Actors Research Group

Thursday, October 25th at 15:00

Room 13.104. Ramon Turró Building

Christian Lequesne,

Sciences Po, Paris

will present

Why comparative research on foreign services is not an old fashioned issue for International Relations?



Abstract:

In many conferences devoted to international relations, foreign policy analysis and diplomatic studies, scholars will find panels and roundtables dealing with new trends in State diplomacies. Public diplomacy, cyber-diplomacy or digital diplomacy will be at the core of new research. It will be much more limited when States foreign institutions and organizations are concerned. Some monographic books do exist on national ministries of foreign affairs (MFAs), testing in particular the hypotheses of practice theory and political sociology. But when we look at a comparative perspective on MFAs, scholars often refer to books published in the late 1990s and to practitioners' insights, which remain rather descriptive.

The objective of this presentation is to demonstrate that studying State foreign services, and ministries of foreign affairs (MFAs) in particular, is not an old fashion enterprise. It is because MFAs have to cope with strong competition inside and outside the State institutions and no longer have the monopoly to design foreign policies, that their study requires a new research agenda. It is time for international relations, foreign policy analysis and diplomatic studies to bring new empirical, theoretical and methodological questions about the influence of State MFAs on foreign policies and international relations.

Short bio:

Christian Lequesne is professor of political science at Sciences Po (Paris). He was previously the director of the Centre for International Research (CERI) at Sciences Po. His research has been devoted to two main issues : EU politics and more recently sociology of diplomacy. His last book *Ethnographie du Quai d'Orsay. Les pratiques des diplomates français* (2017) has received a lot of comments in the field of diplomatic studies.

