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## Presidentialism in the ex-Soviet Union and the Trend Towards Parliamentarism in East-Central Europe and the Balkans

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On May 15-17 2012, **Jean Blondel**, Emeritus Professor at the European University Institute, Florence, held a three-session seminar at the Faculty of Political Science "Roberto Ruffilli". The lectures were organized in the framework of the Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Research and Studies on Eastern Europe (MIREES) and hosted by the Faculty of Political Science "Roberto Ruffilli".

The first session examined the forms taken by **presidential government** (which constitutes the majority of the countries of the world) and the characteristics of parliamentary government, which has developed primarily in Europe and in the British Commonwealth, as well as to an extent in Asia, especially in India and Japan.

The second session was devoted to the forms taken by presidential government in eleven countries which emerged from the Soviet Union, a presidentialism which is very different from that of the United States. The speaker argued that the ex-Communist countries have moved in two markedly different directions since 1990. Eleven of the fifteen **Soviet Republics** which formed the Soviet Union became presidential, following the move made by Yeltsin to become President of Russia.



The third session examined the move towards the **parliamentary system in East Central Europe**, a move which is by now completed, and to a trend in the same direction in the Balkans.

The countries of East-Central Europe have become parliamentary, although there were doubts in **the case of Poland** (twice); there were also doubts with respect to the countries of the Balkans, many of which were presidential in the 1990s and early in the twenty-first century: yet they are gradually becoming parliamentary, the main exception being Romania.

During the lecture, statistical data on the characteristics of political regimes of the countries of the world was extensively analyzed.

The lecture stirred a great interest of the audience and was accompanied by a lively discussion.

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