

A Space for Ideas: The Catalan Observatory at LSE

From the Greeks to the Goths, Catalonia has long been a meeting place for the world. But contemporary globalisation and European integration are creating new challenges for Catalanian public sector efficiency, private sector competitiveness, the welfare state sustainability, national recognition, cultural development and more.

The Patronat Catalunya Món approached LSE to provide a platform to debate these issues, strengthening Catalonia's international ties.

In response, LSE Enterprise launched the Catalan Observatory, a collaboration with Patronat Catalunya Món, at LSE on 28 October 2009.

Led by Professor Paul Preston and Dr Joan Costa-i-Font of LSE, the programme will see the exchange of ideas on topics such as European health, Catalanian media trends, the Catalan economy and economic competitiveness. Seminars, workshops, conferences, exchanges and regular publications will complement LSE's flourishing work in contemporary Spanish studies, and continue promoting its relationships with Spanish regional governments.

Dr Costa-i-Font, Lecturer in European Social Policy and Senior Research Fellow in Health Economics, says he is 'really looking forward to getting involved with this programme. It will strengthen LSE's interaction with the rest of the world, especially with European and Mediterranean countries.'

Ms Roser Clavell, Secretary General of Patronat Catalunya Món and Vice President for External Relations and Cooperation of the Government of Catalunya, was there to sign the document. She says that 'It is a privilege to link Catalonia to such a prestigious institution as LSE. While Barcelona is well known, Catalonia is less so, and this Observatory will help us portray Catalonia internationally. It will be good to promote our interests directly, especially with a professor so well recognised in Catalonia as Paul Preston.'

