The Europeanisation of National Policy?[*]

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Abstract
Europeanisation has had a profound impact upon the public policy functions of the member states. However, the impact has not been uniform. Member states have lost much of the scope for independent action in some areas, such as monetary policy or trade. In others the impact has been much more fragmented: on areas such as health care or employment policy. Between these two extremes lie the majority of policy areas. In reviewing this subject matter we explore the dynamics of Europeanisation: what are the processes involved and the effects produced? We then relate the processes and effects to categories of policy in order to map the Europeanisation of public policy.

Why Europeanisation?

Although both the general notion of 'Europeanisation of member states' and the more specific idea of 'Europeanisation of domestic policy' are not new, in recent years there has been an exponential growth of research projects adopting this perspective (Cowles, Caporaso and Risse 2001; Featherstone 2003). Some aspects of what goes under the label of Europeanisation are more often than not a simple re-branding of classic research themes. However, there are also substantive reasons for the growth of interest in this topic. They refer both to the evolution of European integration and to the internal dynamics of research agendas in political science and public policy analysis. Let us look at the changing nature of integration in the European Union (EU) first and then consider the internal dynamics.

There are at least four macro-dynamics in 'the real world out there' that stimulated a re-direction of the intellectual debate toward Europeanisation. One is the institutionalisation of the single market. Although the EU is in a sense still completing the internal market, the sheer volume of EU directives, regulations, and jurisprudence affecting domestic markets increased dramatically from the Single European Act (1986) onwards (see Fligstein and McNichol 1998: 75-85).

The second reason refers to the advent of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). Not only has EMU created a single currency and interest rate regime across participant member states (the euro-zone) but it has heightened still further the degree of interdependency amongst other policies. Within the Euro-zone, the 'culture of stability'

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enshrined in EMU has provided direction to the debate on major issues such as labour market reforms and changes in national pension regimes. The consequences are not confined simply to the character of national policy but also affect the process by which it is formulated. Thus employment policy has become more subject to EU-wide considerations as a consequence of EMU. At the same time there is also evidence that EMU may have changed the 'game' of politics in some countries, by empowering certain actors and disempowering others (Dyson and Featherstone 1999).

Europeanisation is not simply the product of a widening in the array of policies carried out at EU level. It also occurs as a result of processes that are more market-driven: a third macro-dynamic. A process that ran parallel to the creation of the single market was an emergent pattern of regulatory competition. Although we still do not know very much about regulatory competition in Europe (Sun and Pelkmans 1985), there are political preoccupations concerning its unforeseen (and for some people undesirable) consequences. Mutual recognition and competition policy – this is the political argument – have locked domestic choices into a web of regulatory competition. A number of European policy-makers think that 'excessive' regulatory competition may have already spawned a race-to-the-bottom, detrimental to the cause of the welfare state and the European social model. It is interesting to observe that the *Foreign Affairs* article by Krugman (1994) on the 'obsession with competitiveness' was extremely well received in Europe. So much so that Rudolf Scharping (at that time chairman of the German Social Democrats), writing in the same journal a few months later, turned Krugman's academic analysis into a plea for immediate action against the 'market for tax evasion' and other monsters created by excessive competition (Scharping 1994: 193). Europeanisation may thus be a process whereby national policies adjust to seek competitive advantage within a broad EU policy context. In other words the adjustment of national policy is not simply to some EU requirement but in this case to a market dynamic unleashed by the global economy but 'framed' by a set of EU rules.

A final key dynamic that is currently coming to the fore is the process of enlargement. Although this process has not yet concluded, the negotiations with candidate countries represented a colossal exercise in policy transfer. The EU was trying to export the *acquis communautaire* lock, stock, & barrel. Additionally, the EU was making an effort to transfer rules and norms of democratic behaviour to new member states, going well beyond the domain of the single market. The Copenhagen criteria (1993) governing accession identified standards that would-be members had to meet with regard to the rule of law, democracy, human rights as well as on economic adjustment. Not only was the EU engaged in a formidable export of its regulatory pillar, it was also seeking to transfer the normative pillar (see Laffan 2001 on the relations between these pillars of the EU). Insofar as Europeanisation has the EU as its source, enlargement represented the largest example of this process. The 'Europeanisation effect' was therefore very strong externally – at least until the accession of those states to the EU, at which point the process became internal.

The accumulated effect of these developments prompts the question: what is left for national public policy? Virtually every policy area is now affected to a greater or lesser extent by the EU. The ramifications of this development reach well beyond the bounds of this paper. They include, not least, the question 'what is left to be decided by national politics and, specifically, domestic elections'? National elections are still

contested on the basis of policy choices, but policies are substantially decided in Brussels. At the same time, there is no real political debate at the EU level on policies, because the EU policy process is technocratic (Mair 2001). This political asymmetry is a major reason for concern about the hollowing out of elections as a tool to decide the content of public policy.

Looking at these changes to Europe, it is little surprise that there has been an increased academic interest in Europeanisation (see Featherstone 2003: 5). And this is precisely what has happened over the last few years. Having spent intellectual energy in seeking to understand the 'nature of the beast', that is, the nature of European integration, political scientists have now realised that a EU political system is in place, produces decisions, and impacts on domestic policies in various guises. Hence the focus has shifted to studying those impacts. Additionally, Europeanisation intrigues political scientists because it is a model-building exercise. The challenge is to model the impact of European integration on domestic policy, knowing that at the same time domestic politics is a major factor at work in EU political change (Olsen 2002). The boundaries between cause and effect, independent and dependent variables are blurred, as is demonstrated in Tanja Börzel's discussion of Europeanisation as uploading and downloading (see Börzel 2001). And if this is not enough to make the modelling of Europeanisation complex, there are two further problems. One is that neither the EU nor the member states are static, so Europeanisation is a matter of reciprocity between moving features. The second is that attribution of domestic change to the EU is not always easy, since globalisation is also a force at work. Europeanisation thus offers the opportunity to take a fresher look at domestic policy change caused by open and interdependent markets. Classic international political economy has dealt with the implications of globalisation for domestic policy choices, often emphasising the constraints that are imposed. New research agendas associated with Europeanisation raise other questions:

- Is Europeanisation a bastion against globalisation (in this case understood as 'Americanisation')?
- Is Europeanisation (as opposed to globalisation) a convenient discourse for legitimising domestic reform (Hay and Rosamond 2002)? Put another way, is Europeanisation a manifestation of globalisation?
- Or is it a 'mix' of both of these that is dependent on the particular circumstances within individual member states (also see Hay and Rosamond 2002)?

Types of Europeanisation
Having explained why Europeanisation of policy is a hot topic, one needs to understand it. In the literature a range of definitions has been utilised. In this paper we understand it in a relatively broad manner, as set out in Box 1. This definition is important because it identifies a number of features of Europeanisation that we will deploy in the empirical part of the paper. It highlights three particular features of Europeanisation:

- It can derive from different stages and forms of the policy process: policy formulation (construction); putting policy into practice (institutionalisation); and in a much less structured manner (diffusion), where the EU's role may be quite limited.
- Europeanisation is not simply about formal policy rules but about less tangible aspects, such as beliefs and values.

- The concept of Europeanisation is about the *impact* of European policy within member states. It thus entails two steps: adoption at EU level and then incorporation at the domestic level. The former step alone is only part of the story. That is why Europeanisation and EU policy-making are distinct from each other conceptually.

Box 1: A Definition of Europeanisation

> Europeanisation consists of processes of a) construction, b) diffusion and c) institutionalisation of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things' and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the EU policy process and then incorporated in the logic of domestic (national and subnational) discourse, political structures and public policies.

How can we move from these preliminary observations to something more analytical: something that allows us to understand the dynamics of the Europeanisation process? One way is to look at the different modes of EU policy-making, as identified in the existing literature.[1] However, these modes have not been devised with Europeanisation in mind and fall foul of the concerns raised in the third bullet point above. Our preference is to devise a typology that is built on analytical categories which target the research questions of Europeanisation studies.

Drawing upon the work of Fritz Scharpf (1998), Christoph Knill (2001) and Bulmer and Padgett (2003), we identify four characteristic patterns of governance in the European Union, each associated with a particular type of policy. As with any framework with only four patterns, we should point out that this simplifies what is a more complex situation. We then seek to identify the analytical core, the mechanism of Europeanisation and the explanatory factors that apply to each of the four patterns. Later in the paper we go on to utilise these categories to explain 'the real world' of the Europeanisation of national policy. Let us look at each of the four patterns of governance in turn.

Governance by negotiation
The European Union is in a constant state of negotiation across multiple policy areas: everything from fisheries through foreign policy to immigration. The EU's authority varies considerably across the range of policy areas: from having exclusive authority (for instance, on the internal market) to having limited powers of setting targets (employment policy). However, in each case where the EU takes a decision – whether legally binding or a mere declaration – it is the culmination of a process of negotiation. The analytical core concerning how such decisions come about derives from the long-standing debate about the relative authority of the supranational institutions and the member states.

How does governance by negotiation relate to Europeanisation? The answer to this question lies in the fact that European policy does not emerge from thin air but derives from a process, namely that of negotiation. The member governments are central to this process: either by being directly seated at the negotiating table or by means of having set the terms under which power has been delegated to such supranational bodies

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[1] One categorisation of policy-making is that proposed by Helen Wallace, and comprising five variants: the Community method, the EU regulatory model, multi-level governance, policy coordination and benchmarking, and intensive transgovernmentalism (Wallace 2000: 28-35).

as the Commission or the European Court of Justice. The typical form that Europeanisation takes at this stage is the 'uploading' that is outlined by Tanja Börzel (2001). National policy models or rules are inserted into EU-level negotiations, with the most likely outcome being a synthesis, although very occasionally one state may be especially influential. An example of the latter was in environmental emissions policy, specifically with the large combustion directive. As Albert Weale puts it 'the relevant official … was simply given the agreed German large combustion ordinance and told to translate it into Euro-speak' (Weale 1996: 603). It then became the basis for negotiation amongst governments. More typically, however, EU policy templates are a synthetic construction arising from different national approaches and the inevitable horse-trading during negotiations.

In the initial negotiating phase, namely where policy is under construction, the explanations for the extent of Europeanisation lie in the extent of convergence of preferences on the part of the member states, the voting rules in the Council, and the learning that takes place over repeated sessions of negotiation. The potential for the Europeanisation of national policy is greatest where the member governments are able to agree policy because their interests converge. It is also greatest where they are encouraged by Council rules to avoid unanimous voting and the use of national veto power. In consequence, individual members are much less likely to pursue obstructionist negotiating strategies in the Council of Ministers, for fear that they will be over-ruled. Finally, repeated negotiations may encourage the construction of a shared understanding of the issues. Some policy areas require several rounds of legislation as part of a process of building up a shared understanding of new arrangements, for instance in the case of air transport liberalisation's three packages (Armstrong and Bulmer 1998: 169-97). The creation of a shared understanding of policy through learning on the part of the participants is important for the potential for the success of Europeanisation when policy comes to be put into practice. In each of the three factors, where the converse conditions apply, the prospects for Europeanisation of national policy are likely to be much weaker.[2]

We have included this form of Europeanisation in the paper for the sake of completeness in understanding the process. However, we are not suggesting that Europeanisation is synonymous with European integration or EU policy-making. Rather, we are making clear that the process of agreeing EU policy is inextricably linked with the prospect, later in the policy process, that a change in policy will ensue at the national level. If national policy is to be Europeanised, EU policy must have an impact at the domestic level. In moving to this next stage in the policy process, we explore the different patterns of governance whereby EU policy is put into practice at domestic level: governance by hierarchy and facilitated coordination.

Governance by hierarchy
Governance by hierarchy relates to those circumstances where the supranational institutions have a considerable amount of power delegated to them. The institutions concerned are the Commission, the Council and the European Court of Justice (ECJ). At

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[2] It is worth pointing out that EU governance by negotiation is not always consistent with the patterns predominating in individual member states. France and the UK have strong traditions of political confrontation. For them Europeanisation requires some kind of cultural shift towards negotiated governance.

the end of the negotiation phase of governance (see above) the Council typically has agreed European legislation which needs to be put into practice in the member states. A set of 'command and control' mechanisms comes into play at this stage. These mechanisms derive from the uniquely supranational character of the EU and help to assure that agreements are put into effect by the member states. The enforcement mechanisms are designed to build trust by limiting the scope for individual states to cheat on the negotiated agreements. The exact character of the mechanisms and the consequent explanations of the dynamics of Europeanisation vary according to what are known as positive and negative integration (Pinder 1968). We explore each of these in turn.

Positive integration
Positive integration requires the introduction of an active, supranational policy. Typically, the EU has negotiated a policy template, and the task is to put it into operation in the member states. In economic policy areas positive integration often entails market-correcting rules. That is to say, policy is designed to limit damaging effects of market processes: through pollution control, social policy, regional policy, veterinary policy to accompany the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), and so on. In policy areas such as these the EU has to go through often arduous negotiations in order to agree the policy rules. But what is of key interest here is that the agreed policy template has to be 'downloaded' to the member state level. The Commission has to ensure that legislation is properly implemented, and it can refer laggard governments to the ECJ if necessary. The supremacy of European law is indicative of the hierarchical nature of arrangements. There is a pronounced coercive dimension in these arrangements, and it is the member governments that have to ensure that market-correction is put into practice effectively.

Negative integration
By contrast with positive integration, negative integration relates to areas where the removal of national barriers suffices to create a common policy. National legislation is often not required to put policy into practice. Indeed, in some cases even European legislation is unnecessary, since the rules may be embedded in the treaties themselves. The Commission is delegated extensive powers and the jurisprudence of the ECJ can be relied upon to enforce the framework of rules, such as those set down in the supranational treaties. Negative integration is typically concerned with 'market-making'. In other words, EU-level rules are designed to allow the efficient functioning of the market. A classic case is the EU's competition policy, which specifies what is admissible in terms of mergers or joint ventures between companies, pricing and market-sharing agreements between them and so on. Where there is doubt about the admissibility of an arrangement, the companies concerned must seek approval from the EU authorities. Similar arrangements obtain in the single market, where discrimination by nationality is outlawed, whether through through physical barriers (border controls), fiscal ones (tax regimes) or technical ones. In particular sectors of the economy, special rules may be needed in order to facilitate 'market-making'. Thus, there are special policy arrangements for areas such as telecommunications, energy, air transport, postal services and so on. In these cases measures of positive integration are needed initially but the aim is still to allow markets to function subject to oversight, normally by the Commission.

The market that is created in this way has two dimensions. It is, first, a market amongst economic actors. Second, it is a market amongst differing national regimes. If the UK regime for the financial services sector or the new media is perceived as creating a better environment for the flourishing of business, then other member states may find they have to adjust their national set of rules. In short, the market-making character of negative integration creates a much more horizontal process of policy adjustment associated with Europeanisation. In negative integration it is the competition amongst rules or amongst socio-economic actors that accounts for Europeanisation rather than the need for national policy to comply with EU policy templates, as under positive integration.

Facilitated coordination

Facilitated coordination relates to those policy areas where the national governments are the key actors. This situation obtains where the policy process is not (or is negligibly) subject to European law; where decisions are subject to unanimity amongst the governments; or where the EU is simply an arena for the exchange of ideas. In practice these circumstances apply in such areas as foreign policy, police cooperation and the whole range of policies covered by what is known as the Open Method of Coordination (OMC). In these areas agreements predominantly take two forms: political declarations or 'soft law'. Soft law relates to rules of conduct that are not legally enforceable but none the less have a legal scope in that they guide the conduct of the institutions, the member states and other policy participants (Wellens and Borchardt 1980: 285; see also Snyder 1994). Political declarations are often explicitly made in order *not* to have legal scope, such as in conclusions reached at the end of European summit meetings.

Whichever of these forms the agreements take, the supranational institutions have very weak powers: they cannot act as strong agents promoting Europeanisation. Nevertheless, that does not mean that no Europeanisation takes place, but simply that it is much more voluntary and non-hierarchical. If the member states cannot reach an agreement on policy, such as occurred in 2003 with foreign policy owing to the fundamental divisions on how to deal with the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein, then policy is not Europeanised. On the other hand, the exchange of practice on employment policy may lead to the cross-fertilisation of ideas and learning. This is why this form of policy is concerned with the convergence of ideas. The lack of supranational powers in these policy areas explains the horizontal pattern of Europeanisation. This pattern has prevailed in the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Whilst many commentators have focused on the institutional shortcomings of the CFSP, a strong 'coordination reflex' (procedural learning) developed (e.g. see Glarbo 1999: 643-5) and in some areas of policy a shared set of policy understandings has emerged, for instance over the Palestinian issue. These developments did not come about because of hierarchical governance but because of 'horizontal' exchanges between member government and the resultant learning of shared policy principles.

To summarise this section, we have identified three modes of governance in the EU, and they intersect with different types of policy to produce different mechanisms of Europeanisation (see Table 1). These mechanisms may be vertical (uploading or downloading) or horizontal. In other words, Europeanisation follows no single 'logic'.

Table 1: Governance, policy and the mechanisms of Europeanisation

MODE OF GOVERNANCE	TYPE OF POLICY	ANALYTICAL CORE	MAIN MECHANISM
Negotiation	Any of those below	Formation of EU policy	Vertical (uploading)
Hierarchy	Positive integration	Market-correcting rules; EU policy templates	Vertical (downloading)
Hierarchy	Negative integration	Market-making rules; absence of policy templates	Horizontal
Facilitated coordination	Coordination	Soft law, OMC, policy exchange	Horizontal

Understanding the dynamics of Europeanisation

We now turn our attention to the *interpretations* of the dynamics of Europeanisation. At this stage we omit detailed consideration of Europeanisation by negotiation, since this form is essentially a synonym for European integration or policy-making: a topic which has been covered extensively elsewhere (e.g. see Wallace and Wallace 2000). However, what we do wish to point out is that an absence of learning at this stage of the policy process – i.e. of all the member states developing a shared understanding of policy goals – may be storing up problems such that the Europeanisation process is more fragile later on. We also draw attention to the evidence from some areas of market integration that the process of EU-level policy negotiation may bring forward domestic reforms already under consideration. There is evidence of this Europeanisation-effect in the liberalisation of the telecommunications and electricity sectors, where some states accelerated domestic reform in order to synchronise it with EU policy developments.[3] The main effects of Europeanisation, however, are felt in connection with the other three modes of governance.

Goodness of fit

Let us start with the 'goodness of fit' argument, which was advanced by Risse, Cowles and Caporaso (2000). They argued that, in order to produce domestic effects, EU policy must be somewhat difficult to absorb at the domestic level. If the policy of country A fits in well with EU policy, there will no impact: things can go on as they were before. At the other extreme, where country A has a policy which is completely different from the EU policy, it would be almost impossible to adapt to Europe. They argued that the impact of Europeanisation will be most pronounced in cases of moderate goodness of fit (Börzel

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[3] This evidence has been revealed in a study of utilities regulation - undertaken by Simon Bulmer, David Dolowitz, Peter Humphreys and Stephen Padgett and funded by the UK Economic and Social Research Council ('The European Union as a Medium of Policy Transfer: Case Studies in Utility Regulation', award no. L216252001-A).

and Risse 2003; Cowles *et al.* 2000). Domestic institutions play a key role in absorbing, rejecting, or domesticating Europe. Indeed, the 'goodness of fit' explanation is rooted in new institutionalist approaches to political behaviour.[4]

We argue that the 'goodness of fit' argument is valid under certain conditions (namely, the presence of EU policy templates or models). As such, it best applies to one type of policy – positive integration – rather than offering a general explanation. Let us see what the problems are if, following the suggestions of those who have put forward the 'goodness of fit' interpretation, one tries to use it as a general explanation of Europeanisation. 'Goodness of fit' assumes a clear, vertical, chain-of-command, in which EU policy descends from Brussels into the member states. Domestic institutions are like rigid posts channeling the impact of Europe. But we know of cases in which EU policy has been an absolute innovation for domestic institutions. EU environmental policy started before Spanish environmental policy became a reality. The same applies to the transfer of competition policy to some candidate countries. To speak of 'goodness of fit' between EU policy and non-existent domestic policy is unconvincing.

More importantly still, the 'goodness of fit' explanation may be a special case rather than a general explanation). As shown by Mark Thatcher (forthcoming 2004) in the case of telecommunications, governments have been under little adaptational pressure from EU regulation. Yet they have used European policy to justify and legitimate change. Governments already seeking reform have been able to use European policy as an opportunity, rather than responding to a 'pressure'. The effects of this type of Europeanization have been large in terms of the clash between the reformers and the advocates of the status quo in telecommunications. But these effects are not captured by the 'goodness of fit' argument. Héritier and Knill (2001) have presented empirical evidence of European policies leading to domestic reforms even in the absence of adaptational pressure. Their argument is that European policies can be exploited by national actors engaged in policy reforms even if European and national arrangements are compatible. The implication is that adaptational pressure is not a necessary condition for Europeanisation to cause domestic change or that adaptational pressure is politically constructed.

Other authors have observed that adaptational pressure is not the best predictor of how a country responds to Europeanization. A country can be under strong adaptational pressure, yet it can implement EU policy without too many problems, as shown by the implementation of the packaging waste directive in the UK (Haverland 2000). The intervening variable in this process is the presence or absence of institutional veto points, as argued by Haverland (2003). Institutional veto points available to those opposing EU policy can make Europeanization very problematic even in the case of low adaptational pressure. Conversely, in the absence of veto points, it is quite possible for large adaptational steps to be taken.[5]

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[4] The type of new institutionalism usually deployed is usually termed historical institutionalism. Other analysts adopt a more sociological approach, e.g. arguing that Europeanisation operates via socialisation effects, e.g. (Börzel and Risse 2003). It is possible to envisage a more rationalist variant of new institutionalism being applied, although the 'snapshot' analysis – as opposed to historical institutionalism's 'movie' approach – militates against its utility somewhat.

[5] The role of veto players is acknowledged in recent versions of the 'goodness of fit' explanation. See Börzel and Risse (2003).

The 'goodness of fit' interpretation, works well in cases where EU policy prescribes a model or a template of how a country should go about putting policy into practice. However, one drawback of the 'goodness of fit' explanation is that it is couched in a 'vertical' (chain-of-command type) view of Europeanisation. It best corresponds, therefore, to governance by hierarchy and patterns of positive integration. But, as Table 1 indicates, this represents only one of the mechanisms of Europeanisation, so what of the horizontal variants?

Regulatory competition

One of these variants is regulatory competition in the shadow of EU negative integration. In this case a policy template is either absent or plays a limited role. A range of actions (such as discrimination between residents and non-residents) are prohibited by EU law and some key principles are established by the jurisprudence of the European Court of Justice, most importantly mutual recognition. Countries can play the regulatory competition game in different ways. They can be more or less aggressive, for example. But this game is always 'horizontal' that is, one country versus the others in the 'race' for highly skilled labour and capital. Fitting in with EU models plays a limited role.[6]

Despite the importance often attributed to regulatory competition, the fact is that studies of competition amongst rules have been few and far between. Indeed, there are some significant problems to be tackled in conducting such projects. Arguably the most significant is to isolate the impact of European market rules from those emanating from the global economy. Let us take a hypothetical example of how Europeanisation impacts upon regulatory competition in the telecommunications sector. Two counter-arguments would need to be isolated first of all, namely: a) competition amongst rules is a product of global regulatory competition, and the EU does not matter; b) national traditions of regulation are so embedded in their domestic context that adaptation may not give rise to convergence: whether in response to EU or global stimuli (see as illustrations Héritier *et. al.* 2001; Teubner 2001). Without being able to isolate these other explanations it would be difficult to demonstrate that Europeanisation is the explanation for regulatory competition in the first place.

In reality what we find in seeking evidence of the impact of Europeanisation upon competing regulatory regimes is pretty mixed. A well established literature sets out how the EU, through its internal market programme, provided for mutual recognition (see, for instance, Egan, 2001). However, the impact of mutual recognition on (competing) regimes of national standards has received much less treatment. In those sectors, such as telecommunications or electricity, where specific legislation was introduced to facilitate liberalisation, we find Europeanisation studies concentrating on the policy templates that were introduced with a view to phasing in competition rather than on any competition amongst rules subsequently unleashed (Schneider 2000; Héritier *et. al.* 2001; Bulmer, Dolowitz, Humphreys and Padgett, 2003 forthcoming). In one of the rare exceptions, Susanne Schmidt explores the consequences of opening up the internal market to competition in the insurance and road haulage sectors (Schmidt 2002). Her findings are that there has been relatively little use of regulatory competition in these sectors. In her

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[6] This circumstance only arises when legislation is needed in order to attain a liberalised market, such as has occurred in the telecommunications and electricity sectors. In such circumstances adaptation to an EU template may be needed during these transitional stages.

case-study states (France and Germany) she found that liberalisation of the sectors had led to major domestic change but, alas, found little evidence of competition amongst rules. Our evidence-base on this form of Europeanisation remains negligible.

Learning

Learning is an important dimension in all stages of Europeanisation, including negotiation. However, it becomes an especially important feature where the EU does not work as a law-making system but, rather, as a platform for the convergence of ideas and policy transfer between member states. This is especially the case with the open method of coordination (OMC). However, intergovernmental forms of EU policy-making are decades old and soft-law has been known to legal scholars for a long time (Snyder 1994). Indeed, the OMC itself, as defined by the Lisbon Council in the year 2000, is more an attempt to provide a definition to modes of policy-making that emerged in different policy areas in the 1990s than a dramatic innovation. Be that as it may, what is the OMC?

The OMC is a means of spreading best practice and achieving convergence towards the EU goals. The idea is to use the EU as a transfer platform rather than a law-making system. Thus, the OMC should assist member states in developing their own policies. As such, it hinges on horizontal mechanisms of governance rather than on the vertical imposition of models coming from Brussels. The 'method' is defined by the following characteristics: EU guidelines combined with specific timetables; action to be undertaken at the national and regional level; benchmarking and sharing of best practice; qualitative and, when appropriate, quantitative indicators; 'period monitoring, evaluation, and peer review organised as mutual learning processes' (Presidency Conclusions, Lisbon European Council, 23-24 March 2000). OMC introduces into the political sphere some of the practices of the business sector, such as benchmarking. In some policy areas (that is, immigration and social policy) the method works in conjunction with traditional legislative EU instruments. In other areas, however, the method enables the EU to enter new policy domains, where no legislation is operating and where the member states think that there is no scope for legislative action at the EU level.

Scholars looking at the OMC as an emerging governance architecture stress its potential for policy learning (de la Porte and Pochet 2002; Mosher and Trubek 2003). Some authors have argued that the major impact of this mode of policy-making is at the ideational level (Bertozzi and Bonoli 2002; Radaelli 2003). Policy-makers engage in the definition of criteria of best practice and, as in the case of taxation, worst practice. They also accept the principle of peer review of their policies. Criteria and peer review are fundamental instruments of ideational convergence. In areas in which it is either impossible or politically too sensitive to say what the EU 'model' should be, policy-makers seek to develop some ideas of how to improve their policies and notions of good and bad policy. They develop common benchmarks. They also elaborate a common vocabulary. Thus in areas previously impenetrable to Europeanisation, 'communities of discourse' with their own vocabulary, criteria, and belief systems are emerging. The OMC now covers several policy areas, such as asylum policy, the information society and the European research area.

As a recent development the OMC inevitably receives a great deal of attention. However, longer-standing patterns of intergovernmental policy-making have been subject to similar types of dynamic. Like the OMC they feature a prominent role for national

ministers and officials, with the supranational institutions playing a relatively small role. European law is largely absent as a policy instrument, with 'soft law' and political agreements predominant. Similarly, there are relatively discrete communities of policy-makers concerned with a particular set of issues. Whether it be CFSP, Justice and Home Affairs or even the cooperation amongst central bankers in the European Monetary System, the same horizontal dimension applies to the Europeanisation process. In other words, if Europeanisatyion occurs, it is a process of learning amongst national elites. The EU simply provides the arena. Indeed, the transgovernmental cooperation need not be across all EU member states, as the Schengen process demonstrated, when a sub-set of states cooperated on JHA business outside the formal EU framework (den Boer and Wallace 2000; Monar 2002: 188).

The key question is how powerful is Europeanisation in the case of governance by coordination? How far can it go? Longer-established forms, such as the Schengen process or the EMS, reveal that the Europeanisation process was such that member governments – or most of them – were prepared to go one step further, and transfer some of these policies to governance by hierarchy. That occurred when, respectively, some aspects of the Schengen Treaty were brought into the Treaty of the European Community under the terms of the 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam (see Monar 2002), and when the steps were taken to create EMU. However, the CFSP shows that member governments are very reluctant to forego their own powers, as revealed by the failure to agree a common policy in the early 1990s on the Yugoslav crisis or in 2003 on Iraq.

With the OMC it is unclear what pattern of development will transpire. The main point to bear in mind is that the expectation on which the whole OMC is based is that ideational convergence will produce policy change at the domestic level. The EU is a platform for learning about good policy practice. Then – the argument goes on – policy-makers with the same 'Europeanised' ideas will learn and change their domestic policies accordingly. Of course, policy-makers can also learn without the OMC. In the absence of collective learning platforms such as the OMC, however, policy-makers typically learn through crisis and sustained policy fiascos. The advantage of the OMC is that it can enable policy-makers to learn ahead of failure (Hemerijck and Visser 2001).

The relationship between ideational convergence, learning, and policy change is rather problematic. People may adopt the same language and talk in terms of the same criteria without necessarily taking the same decisions. To make things more complicated, decisions may not be followed by actions, or may be followed by unforeseen actions, 'deviant' administrative behaviour, and 'creative' bottom-up interpretations of decisions (Brunsson 1989, Pollitt 2001). The 'linear causal relationship between the formation of a European ideational consensus and local action' has also been questioned by projects on areas outside the OMC, such as regional policy (Kohler-Koch 2002).

Briefly, the jury is still out on the issue of the results achieved by the OMC and soft-law in general. One point is clear, though. The potential of the OMC is all in terms of creating ideational convergence and learning (with the aspiration of improvement to domestic policy); not necessarily in terms of creating the basis for hard law in the future. The OMC is not a poor substitute (under conditions of political necessity) for hard law, but a radically different way forward for Europeanisation. Those who criticise the OMC for its lack of sanctions do not understand its mechanisms. The method is based on changes in the cognitive frameworks used by policy-makers to understand and assess

reality. This potential for learning does not hinge on sanctions but on conviction. A separate, empirical question concerns whether learning actually occurs.

It would be wrong to assume that when the EU does not work in a law-making mode, horizontal mechanisms are all about deliberation, participatory governance, and cooperation. Networks can be more hierarchical than one would imagine (see the evidence presented by Kohler-Koch 2002 on networks of regional policy). Collective learning can be a very political exercise. Competitive benchmarking can be used to establish hierarchies of national practice. A key question for the future, therefore, is whether the OMC will Europeanise the national models of capitalism by forcing convergence towards the Anglo-Saxon model. This is unlikely, considering the resiliency of different models of capitalism in Europe (Hall and Soskice 2001). However, the OMC was introduced by the Lisbon Council as a means to the end of making Europe the most competitive knowledge society in the world. Thus the expectation is that the OMC will improve the competitiveness of Europe, although not necessarily in an Anglo-Saxon direction.

Researching Europeanisation

What we have established thus far in this paper is that Europeanisation is more variegated in nature than how it was explained in the early stages of its exploration. However, this inevitably comes at a cost: that of simplicity. Owing to its variegated character it is not easy to provide a single research strategy or analytical framework to analyse the impact of Europeanisation on different types of policies.[7] The first type of policy – positive integration – lends itself to research designs informed by new institutionalism. This is the predominant framework deployed in the first major collection of studies of Europeanisation, although the role of domestic actors is also taken into account (Cowles, Caporaso and Risse 2001). Institutions are seen as mediating pressures from the EU and shaping the consequent impact in terms of domestic change. A similar admixture of institutional and actor-centred analysis is to be found in the study by Héritier *et. al.* of the EU's impact on domestic transport policy across the member states (2001). In the case of negative integration, where we have limited policy templates, a similar approach can be pursued. However, in view of the expected impact here of a competition amongst rules, it would seem particularly appropriate to apply a more rationalist framework, emphasising the strategic calculations of actors in responding to the opportunities available to them in the context of liberalised markets. In reality, we still await the emergence of such analyses. The third type of policy, that is, facilitated coordination, is arguably the most difficult to assess. Research strategies on this type need to be extremely sensitive to the local context. They also need to avoid the fallacy of assuming a linear relationship between the emergence of ideas of good practice or policy at the EU level and domestic policy change. The question is how does one know if changes in domestic policy are the result of the engagement in the European policy process and not the product of other variables at work at the domestic level?

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[7] We omit once again Europeanisation at the negotiation stage. The research methodologies and analytical tools available for such cases are essentially those to hand for studies of policy- and decision-making. See Wallace and Wallace (2000) and Peterson and Bomberg (1999) for coverage of them.

The more traditional forms of intergovernmental cooperation are perhaps easier to research by process tracing, monitoring shifting national policy positions in light of repeated negotiations within, say, CFSP on some aspect of foreign policy, such as the Middle East. This task has been attempted by Alistair Miskimmon and William Paterson in respect of German foreign and security policy during the 1990s (Miskimmon and Paterson 2003 forthcoming). Their framework comes from the same institutionalist toolkit as that used by Cowles, Caporaso and Risse (2001) but includes cognitive dimensions, too. This use of the cognitive dimension forms a bridge with some of the considerations which come into play when exploring Europeanisation in the OMC.

When it comes to isolating the impact of Europeanisation upon policy areas covered by the OMC, one needs a focus on the local level, not on Brussels. The idea is to look at the problems, resources, and ideas most relevant to policy-makers 'at the hub of the problem' and then examine to what extent the ideational resources made available by the OMC do or do not matter in the games domestic actors play. Systematic research on the OMC is still in its early stages. However, research on cohesion policy provides evidence that one may find widely shared European ideas and norms at the local level, yet their support cannot be traced back to origin with the EU (Kohler-Koch 2002). The implication is that there is 'a European space of ideas that stretches beyond the realm of EU policy-making' (Kohler-Koch 2002: 9).

Kohler-Koch's statement alerts us to the role of contextual variables at work in Europeanisation processes and to the importance of looking for Europeanisation beyond the narrow space of EU policy-making processes. This is a difficult task. Bilateral relationships, notably between France and Germany, have served to generate policy models or ideas that have then been adopted at EU level, such as the European Monetary System. And one of the most interesting findings of research on the Europeanisation of policies in candidate countries is that the EU is only one of the actors promoting Europeanisation. Organisations such as the Council of Europe are also deeply involved (perhaps to a higher degree than the EU) in the transfer of European models, as shown by Harcourt's study on media policy regulation in four candidate countries (Harcourt 2002). More broadly, the Council of Europe's role in Europeanisation has perhaps been under-estimated; see Lovecy's exploration of gender mainstreaming in Europe (2002).

Enlargement is a process characterised by the asymmetry of power – rooted in conditionality for accession – between the EU and candidate countries. The major mechanisms of policy transformation in candidate countries include the provision of models, financial and technical aid, advice and twinning, and benchmarking (Grabbe 2003). All three types of policy portrayed in Table 1 are involved in these mechanisms. The EU has made use of asymmetric power to Europeanise the policies of candidate countries. Yet the use of power is also constrained by uncertainty, as shown by Grabbe (2003). There is uncertainty about the content of the EU policy agenda in areas such as social policy, justice and home affairs, and taxation. There is uncertainty about whom to satisfy: the Commission, the Council or specific governments. And there is uncertainty about standards and thresholds, that is, what degree of compliance will really count as the candidates 'meeting the EU conditions' in the economic domain?

There are also forms of radical uncertainty, when candidate countries have to draft major legislation in haste (for example, competition policy or the regulation of utilities), under pressure from both the EU and US providers of models, with limited knowledge

and expertise in house. Radical uncertainty can make it impossible to map out neat policy strategies. Under these conditions, what comes out as Europeanisation may be nothing but the outcome of political expediency and contingency.

On balance, asymmetric power is the major force, but one should not underestimate the counter-forces produced by uncertainty. Consequently, policy emulation (of EU models) in candidate countries can be highly selective (Jacoby 2001; 2002). Candidate countries may import, imitate, and absorb EU policies creatively. Leaders in the former communist states in Eastern and Central Europe distinguish between those aspects of EU policy which are useful for domestic political purposes and those which are politically damaging or useless. Imitation has a political logic (Jacoby 2001:173; Olsen 2002). More importantly still, candidate countries played a game of catch-up with the EU via the negotiation of the chapters of the *acquis communautaire*. But occasionally, they also played a leap-frogging game. Not only can the advantages of relative backwardness – to paraphrase Gerschenkron (1962) – show how to avoid the mistakes of the past, but candidate countries can find creative solutions to cope with the puzzles posed by the *acquis communautaire*.

The Europeanization of public policy can take different forms. In principle, it can impinge on all the basic elements of the policy process, such as actors, resources, and policy instruments. Additionally, Europeanization can affect the policy style, for example by making it more or less conflictual, corporatist or pluralist, or more or less regulative. This kind of effect potentially has major implications, such as by re-balancing the power of national policy actors and policy-makers. Finally, it can impact on the cognitive and normative dimensions. Changes of cognitive and normative frames (Surel 2000) may trigger transformative effects on all the elements of policy. For example, they may alter the interpretation of a political dilemma facing a political party. Or they may impact on the perception of what is at stake in a policy controversy. They may even transform the interests and preferences upon which negotiations are structured. Policy discourses can be decisive in terms of securing legitimacy for choices in line with EU policy (Schmidt 2001). To conclude, research designs should be clear on the type of impact that is to be measured. They should distinguish between impacts on the elements of the policy process, impacts on cognitive and normative frames (a topical issue for research on the OMC), and impacts at the level of actual policy results (or, simply, what goes under the label 'policy change').

Empirical overview

How can we bring together the analytical discussion in this paper with some suggestive characterisation of the Europeanisation of national policy? We cannot possibly do this in great detail, given that there are 15 (and soon 25) member states, each with a different story in many different policy areas. Detailed accounts must be the province of case studies. However, we seek to map our typology onto the EU's policy areas by way of concluding (see Table 2).

Table 2: Europeanisation and policy illustration

TYPE OF POLICY	ILLUSTRATIVE POLICY AREAS	'DEFAULT' EXPLANATION OF EURO-PEANISATION
Positive integration	Environment, social policy, EMU, CAP	Goodness of fit
Negative integration	Internal market in goods and services, utilities sectors (e.g. telecommunications, electricity), corporate governance	Regulatory competition
Coordination	CFSP, third pillar, OMC policies (e.g. employment, social inclusion, pensions, enterprise policy, asylum policy)	Learning

- Positive integration, with its utilisation of policy templates to achieve market-correcting goals, has the most coercive form of Europeanisation. Backed up by European law, measures have a formal expectation that they will be put into effect in the member states. Amongst the policy areas concerned are the Common Agricultural Policy, EMU, social and environmental policies. In each case the supranational character of policy provides the adjustment pressure behind adaptation. The potential for regulatory intrusion is high. In these cases the goodness of fit argument seems to be the default interpretation: how well does the EU policy template match up with the existing domestic policy? What adjustments are necessary?
- Negative integration uses policy templates in a limited sector-specific way. They are designed to bring about an internal market of the kind that exists in the general market for goods and services as a result of the treaties, and as understood from the mid-1980s onwards. Here also European legal measures spell out policy requirements. However, regulatory intrusion is less than in positive integration, since the whole idea of policy is to allow markets to function. In the transitional phase of legislation, some member states will be faced with the need to adjust policy following the goodness of fit explanation. However, once the transition is complete, regulatory competition should become the key dynamic. Member states (or even sub-national entities) will seek to position themselves competitively. The internal market and the utilities sectors (telecommunications, transport, electricity) should be exemplars here. The conundrum thus far is that there has been no in-depth study of regulatory competition as a means of Europeanisation. Arguably it is in the competition amongst EU regions to attract inward investment that a kind of regulatory competition is most prominent.
- Coordination comes about in those policy areas where the EU is itself weak, thus severely limiting the scope for coercion. Policy is made through intergovernmental negotiations or looser exchanges. Legal measures are downplayed in favour of political declarations, targets and so on. A whole host of policy areas is covered by the term coordination, including more recent developments under the OMC: the CFSP, the third pillar, economic policy, employment policy, social inclusion, research and development and so on. Whether coordination occurs in longer-standing areas of

policy cooperation, such as foreign policy, or through newer ones, such as the OMC, the process is essentially horizontal and dependent on learning. In older forms the learning is typically part of agreeing a European policy intergovernmentally. In the OMC the learning is much more *ad hoc*, with the EU serving as an arena within which member governments may find policy solutions to domestic problems.

Our brief section on empirical illustration must carry with it a health warning. First, in the absence of an EU constitution – notwithstanding the Convention on the Future of Europe that reported out in 2003 – there is no clear delineation of competences between the EU itself and the member states. This means that there is no orderly designation of policy areas to particular levels of government, such as was set out in the German Basic Law of 1949, nor an immediate correspondence between policy area and mode of governance. In consequence, some policy areas are quite difficult to assign to one of our three categories. Taxation policy, for instance, entails some elements of positive integration (e.g. regarding Value Added Tax regimes), some competition amongst national regimes in accordance with negative integration (e.g. on savings or corporation taxation) and a means of monitoring *harmful* tax competition through coordination. Another illustration is environmental policy, where there is a mix of policy instruments, including directives and non-binding codes. In some cases, therefore, it is the policy issue rather than the policy area that is the more suitable basis for classification. Second, we underline that Table 2 refers to the *default* patterns of Europeanisation. As we already noted in discussion above, deviant cases will always exist.

Conclusion

The European Union has had a very significant impact upon the policies of the member states. It has also impacted upon near-neighbours, such as states in the European Economic Area, and outside Europe, for instance on the recipients of aid programmes. This paper, however, has been concerned only with the member states. Over the last decade the EU's impact has become a focus of attention for academic scholars, taking the debate beyond its long-standing concerns with (largely 'bottom-up') processes of integration and policy-making. The debate has now become a fully fledged one at the start of the twenty-first century.

Empirical studies of Europeanisation can be organised in various ways: by the member state or by the policy/issue area concerned. In this paper we have not sought to concentrate on summarising empirical studies, for that would probably result in a bewildering array of findings. Instead we have sought to concentrate on the dynamics, processes and effects involved by developing typologies and classifications derived from patterns of governance within the EU. We have argued that governance by negotiation – the agreement on EU policy – bears upon the Europeanisation process. The identification of a set of "default" explanations of Europeanisation effects draws upon recent analytical and empirical work in the area. With the ongoing institutional, policy (and now constitutional) reform process over the period since the Single Act of 1986, not to mention successive waves of enlargement, studying the empirical effects of the Europeanisation process looks likely to be a similarly long-term pursuit on the part of students of the EU. In the cases of regulatory competition and coordination, the empirical

analyses of Europeanisation are pretty much still on the starting-grid. Analyses deploying the goodness of fit explanation have set off from pole-position at speed. However, the intellectual history of Europeanisation is still short and the likely prospect of one interpretation predominating is improbable.

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