

EUROPEANISATION in Candidate Countries from Central and Eastern Europe.¹

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Abstract:

This article examines what Europeanisation denotes and how it matters for the Candidate countries.² The EU Member States will be also referred to for a comparison. The concept of Europeanisation encompasses “denotational properties” thus allowing for its broad application. Rational and sociological models of Europeanisation mechanisms may be utilised in both the EU member states and candidate countries. Apparently, Europeanisation poses a series of direct and indirect policy challenges and opportunities for nation-states; no matter whether they are part of the European Union or not. Hence, the non-Europeanisation or theoretical discrepancy arguments will be challenged.

¹ The purpose of the paper is primarily explorative, and it is the first step in a larger project, i.e. PhD dissertation on Europeanisation effects in Poland entitled: “Europeanisation and Polish competition policy. A rational explanation of variance in compliance with the EU rules,” Trinity College Dublin

² Candidate countries include: Hungary, Poland, Estonia, the Czech Republic, Slovenia (accession negotiations were started on 31 March 1998) as well as the Slovak Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria and Romania (accession negotiations were started in February 2000).

Introduction

The *sine qua non* for accession to the European Union is the compliance of prospective entrants with the EU requirements. They are the political, economic and *acquis* criteria as laid down by the Copenhagen European Council in June 1993. In particular, the *acquis* criteria are important. They refer to applicant country's "ability to assume the obligations of membership - that is, the legal and institutional framework, known as the *acquis*." In fact, the legal obligation to approximate existing and future legislation to that of the Community derives from the Europe Agreements. The countries from Central and Eastern Europe have been taking on all the obligations of EU membership for some years now.

The scholarly *raison d'être* of the paper is twofold. First, it is to contribute to a debate on Europeanisation. Europeanisation is an essentially contested concept. There is no single definition but only internal complexity and Wittgensteinian ambiguity. Therefore, it has been argued that it is pointless to use it as an organizing concept (Kassim, 2000). Contrary to this argument, I will claim that the argument of essential contestedness gives philosophical grounds for constructing a definition which applies to candidate countries. Second, the paper aims to shed more light on the impact of Europeanisation on domestic politics in (non-)member states. It has been suggested that processes of Europeanisation may be observed only in the EU member states (Wessels and Rometsch, 1996; Morlino, 1999).³ Even those few, who accepted that Europeanisation may matter in other countries, have restricted their theoretical and empirical research to the EU member states (Börzel and Risse 2000; Radaelli, 2000; Schmidt 2001; Cowles, Caporaso and Risse, 2001; Börzel, 2001).

Theoretical and empirical analyses are essential because "we do not know enough about the processes of Europeanisation and its effects" (Radaelli, 2000). By applying the concept of Europeanisation and different mechanisms of Europeanisation to applicant countries I will utilise 'Europeanisation literature' models. As there is no "enlargement theory" (Sedelmeier, 2001) and no single paradigm that could provide a reasonable analysis I propose to refer to rational, historical and sociological institutional insights in order to shed more light on mechanisms of Europeanisation. Hence, I will challenge Agh's argument that "the study of their [candidate

³ Wessels and Rometsch (1996) claim that "with the EC membership [states] will start moving in the direction of Europeanisation and convergence whereas countries outside the EC... will not follow this direction until they have gained *full* membership (Wessels and Rometsch, 1996; 357). Similarly, Morlino (1999) rules out the hypothesis of Europeanisation processes taking place outside the Union (see Radaelli, 2000).

countries] Europeanisation is theoretically and methodically different [...]. The candidate countries have always been in a completely different situation as far as Europeanisation is concerned” (2002;4).

This article is divided into four main sections. The first section elucidates the meaning of the Socratic question: *what is X*, where X, in this case, is Europeanisation. Here, I will employ Gallie’s *essential contestedness*, Wittgenstein’s *family resemblance* and Sartori’s *intension/extension* to argue for the application of the concept to non-member states. The second section introduces a theoretical framework on mechanisms by which Europeanisation generates the prospect of change and three models are proposed. I will briefly summarise the basic assumptions of each model. The validity and applicability of theoretical considerations will be illustrated in the third section. Finally, the last section presents some concluding remarks.

And last but not least, given a limited scope of this paper I could not cover all aspects of Europeanisation. First, the analysis is restricted to the impact of Europeanisation on domestic public policies and not *all* possible effects are discussed.⁴ Second, it does not provide detailed comparative case studies. Hence, more empirical research is needed.

A conceptual analysis

Theorising is taken up with the clarification of concepts (Merton, 1958). Thus, I will begin with a conceptual analysis which is fundamental for any scientific inquiry. The issue, here, is one of definition: what does Europeanisation mean? Because a definition is “an aid to clear thinking

⁴ The impact of Europeanisation on domestic institutions can be analysed from different political science perspectives. The scholarship concentrates on (whether and) to what extent Europeanisation influences public policy⁴ in member states (Knill and Lehmkuhl 1999; Börzel&Risse 2000; Radaelli, 2000; Schmidt 2001; Cowles 2001; Cowles, Carporaso and Risse, 2001; Heritier et al. forthcoming, etc.), national governance structure (Meny, Muller, and Quermonne, 1996; Schmidt 1999; Marks et al. 1996), national executive (Goetz 2000), relationship between the executive and legislature (Andersen and Burns 1996; Borzel 2000), national administrations (Harmsen 1999, Knill forthcoming), national bureaucracies (Page and Wouters 1995), intergovernmental relations (Goetz 1995; Jeffery 1997; Borzel 2001), legal structures (Stone Sweet and Brunell 1998; Conant 2001; Caporaso and Jupille 2001), macro-economic institutions (Dyson&Featherstone 1999), regulatory structures (Majone 1997; Schneider 2000), electoral and party politics (Grevén 1992; Ladrech and Marliere, 1999, Mair 2000), national interest intermediation (Schmidt 1996; Cowles 2001, Heritier et al. forthcoming), public discourse (Schmidt 2000; Marcussen 2000; Liebert 2000), national identities (Risse 2001; Checkel 2001), etc. Finally, there is an agreement that the impact of Europeanisation is differential (Borzel 1999; Knill and Lehmkuhl 1999, Cowles, Carporaso and Risse, 2001; Schmidt 2001; Heritier et al. 2001)

and, therefore, to the communication of thought,”⁵ I will employ insights of analytic philosophy in order to address the issue of the *definiendum*

Insights of Analytic philosophy

Universal conceptual determinacy presumes that there is a Platonic essence of the concept that the proposed definitions describe correctly. The philosophical theories such as the Wittgensteinian *family resemblance* theory and the Gallie *essential contestability* theory have questioned the assumptions of universal conceptual determinacy.

There exist the “concepts the proper use of which inevitably involves endless disputes about their proper uses on the part of their users.”⁶ Gallie (1964) defines the concept to be essentially contested when “there is no one use of any of them (i.e. concepts) which can be set up as its generally accepted and therefore correct or standard use.” He puts forward logical conditions to which the use of any essentially contested concept must conform; *inter alia* internal complexity, recognition of its value achievement, possibility of considerable modification in the light of changing circumstances, recognition of its contestation by those of other parties and no universal method for deciding between different claims.

In fact, essential contestation is a particular kind of Wittgensteinian vagueness, indeterminacy and ambiguity. In ‘Philosophical Investigations’ Wittgenstein puts forward the claim that the application of a concept needs not be bounded by sharply defined rules. The members of the extension of the concept-word may be united by a family resemblance. The family resemblance is a network of overlapping but discontinuous similarities: “you will not see something that is common to all, but similarities, relationships, and a whole series of them at that” (Wittgenstein, 1953).

Given Wittgenstein’s propositions that language is coherent but subject to a large degree of indeterminacy the Sartori’s argument of extension versus intension fits well into the debate, although his concept of definition is a more traditional one. Intension (or connotation) refers to the collection of properties covered by a concept. Sartori (1983) claims that “intension consists of all the characteristics of that term, that is, assignable to a term under the constraints of a given

⁵ Stebbing, L.S. 1961. *A modern introduction to logic*. London; Methuen&Co. Ltd.

⁶ Gallie, W.B. 1964. *Philosophy and the Historical Understanding*. London

linguistic-semantic system.”⁷ Extension (or denotation) represents the class of entities to which the concept applies. There is a trade-off between intension and extension. The more properties are included in the concept, the smaller will be the class of empirical instances.

The concept of Europeanisation

Europeanisation means European integration and institution-building (Stone Sweet and Sandholtz 1998; Colino, 1997; Moravcsik, 1999). Europeanisation is the emergence and the development at the European level of different structures of governance, that is, of political, legal, and social institutions associated with political problem-solving that formalise interactions among the actors, and of policy networks specialising in the creation of authoritative rules (Cowles, Risse and Caporaso, 2001). Europeanisation is a set of regional economic, institutional, and ideational forces for change also affecting national policies, practices and politics (Schmidt, 2001). Europeanisation is a “processes of construction, diffusion and 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 making of EU decisions and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures and public policies” (Radaelli, 2000). Europeanisation means incremental process re-orienting the direction and shape of politics to the degree that EC political and economic dynamics become part of the organizational logic of national politics and policy-making (Ladrecht, 1994). Europeanisation implies a seemingly unavoidable, irresistible shift towards a common EU/EC practice away from traditionally diverse national public policies (Lodge, 2000). Europeanisation can be conceptualised as the regional manifestation of globalisation or European integration process (see Anderson, 2001). Europeanisation may be the outcome of previous processes of transformation (Colino, 1997). Europeanisation is a competence shift (Colino, 1997). Europeanisation is continuity and change in domestic political systems (Hix and Goetz, 2001). Europeanisation is similar to modernization (Hood, 1998). Europeanisation is policy and institutional convergence (Colino, 1997). Europeanisation is defined as the process of influence deriving from European decisions and impacting member states’ policies and political and administrative structures (Hertier, et al, 2001). Europeanisation is the influence of the European level on the national level. Moreover, Europeanisation is presented as a ‘back to Europe’ argument (Agh, 1998; Stawarska, 1999; Agh, 2002) or as democratisation (Agh, 1998; Agh

⁷ On the other hand, Salmon (1964) claims that “the intension of a word consists of the properties a thing must have in order to be in the extension of the word” However, Sartori finds this definition circular.

2002). Europeanisation (at the level of market making) means the emergence and the strengthening of a state with strong capacities to preserve and regulate markets, while having at the same time increased administrative and transformed planning capacities (Bruszt, 2001). Some Europeanists have chosen to focus on process-oriented phenomena, others choose to define Europeanisation in output-oriented terms (see Anderson, 2001).

Given the above, Europeanisation belongs to “essentially contested concepts,” as does its base-form Europe.⁸ First, it is widely agreed that the term is used to describe a variety of phenomena and processes of change (see Börzel and Risse, 2000; Olsen, 2001) and no general method has been proposed for deciding between the claims made by different scholars. Moreover, there is a possibility of considerable modification in the light of altering circumstances. For example, Agh (2002) assumes that there is anticipative Europeanisation as democratisation and adaptive one as a specific EU democratisation because of changing situation. In addition, it seems that there is a degree of a family resemblance, namely “similarities, relationships” of these different definitions. There is no doubt that a similarity has something to do with the EU.

It has been argued that it is pointless to use Europeanisation as an organising concept because there is no single definition but only internal complexity and Wittgensteinian ambiguity. Instead, I claim that numerous, sometimes conflicting or overlapping definitions are indicators of the vitality of the debate. Moreover, an essential contestability argument gives grounds for constructing one's own definition.

The essential contestability theory is leading me to the necessity of constructing a definition which will be, to use Sartori's terminology, an extensive one. I propose a methodological approach, namely constructing a concept of Europeanisation whose value is to be demonstrated by the theoretical use to which it can be put. Accordingly, I want to prove the argument that the concept of Europeanisation may be applied to non-member states and 'deontological properties' allow to do that. This, in turn, has further implications for a theoretical analysis. A framework of Europeanisation mechanisms may be applied and utilised in order to explain the effects of Europeanisation in both member states and candidate countries.

⁸ On the debate of the boundaries of Europe see Agh 1998; Olsen 2001.

For me Europeanisation is ‘distinct structures of governance which are out there - at the EU level.’ It explicitly refers to EU-isation.⁹ This definition is characterised by a high degree of extension and vagueness, it is not connotatively precise. However, it allows for “seizing the object” as it includes “denotational properties.” Moreover, it does not have high discriminatory power as a concept with high intension, i.e. connotative precision, does. The fewer properties are included in the concept of Europeanisation, the larger will be the class of empirical instances.

The most apparent advantage of such definition is a degree of a conceptual equivalence and possibility of its wide application. The definition I propose is based on the one applied to member states, (see for example, Cowles, Risse and Caporaso, 2001) or at least it is a sufficient approximation of it. Warwick and Osherson (1973) claim that “the most basic theoretical question in comparative analysis” is “whether the concepts under study have any meaning in the social units considered.” This is the problem of a conceptual equivalence. I claim that there is a degree of conceptual equivalence and the concept has similar meaning for both member states and applicant countries: at least similarity has something to do with the EU. However, the definition does not deny that Europeanisation may be “a two-way process” for member states. According to Börzel (2001) it entails a “bottom-up” and a “top-down” dimension. In the case of applicant countries I advance a top-down perspective only as obviously they did not participate in the process of creating the structures but are affected by them.

Theoretical models of Europeanisation mechanisms

Three competing theories appear particularly informative about the impact of Europeanisation on domestic politics: constructivism, liberal intergovernmentalism and historical institutionalism (Montpetit, 2000). There are three different varieties of new institutionalism, namely, sociological, rational and historical which attempt to shed more light on a domestic impact of Europe. New institutionalism aims to “elucidate the role that institutions play in the determination of social and political outcomes”¹⁰ (Hall and Taylor, 1996) while institutions are “the rules of the game in a society” and “the humanly devised constraints that structure human interaction.”¹¹

⁹ EU-isation is a term coined by Wallace, 2000

¹⁰ Hall, P.A. and Taylor R.C.R. 1996. ‘Political Science and the three new institutionalisms.’ *Political Studies* 44, 1996

¹¹ North, Douglass, C. 1990. *Institutions, Institutional change and Economic Performance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Rational choice institutionalism explains outcomes as results of choices made by rationally self-interested utility-maximizing agents. Political and economic institutions define the strategies that political actors adopt in the pursuit of their interests. Rational choice insights privilege methodological individualism and consequentialist mechanism with agents calculating in response to assumed benefits (material or social) or the threat of sanctions. A rationalist logic embodies a 'logic of consequentialism' (March and Olsen, 1989) in which rational actors engage in strategic interactions using their resources to maximize their utilities on the basis of the preferences. The existence of multiple veto points in a country's institutional structure can allow actors to avoid constraints and thus effectively hamper domestic adaptation (Tsebelis, 1995). Moreover, existing formal institutions can provide actors with material and ideational resources which are indispensable for exploiting European opportunities and consequently promoting domestic adaptation.

A sociological understanding of institutions stresses their constitutive, identity-forming roles (Checkel, 1998). Constructivists insist on the primacy of intersubjective structures that give the material world meaning. These structures have different components that help in specifying the interests that motivate action: norms, identity, knowledge, and culture (Katzenstein, Keohane and Krasner, 1998; 675). A sociological logic refers to cognitive and normative mechanisms. It proposes two explanations for a domestic change. The first one focuses on institutional isomorphism which implies that institutions which frequently interact over time develop similarities in formal organizational structure, principles, practices, etc. The second account focuses on socialisation processes when actors learn to internalise new norms and rules in order to become members of international society (see Börzel and Risse, 2000).

Historical institutionalism highlights path dependency of institutional change. It shows an interest in explaining ("endogenising") preferences and identities (Cowles, Caporaso, Risse, 2001). Historical institutionalist such as Hall, Katzenstein and Skocpol elucidate policy continuities over time within countries. Hall (1986) stresses the way institutions shape the goals political actors pursue and the way they structure power relations among them. A historical institutional analysis may be employed in order to address the issue of compatibility between European and domestic institutions. Policy legacies involve questions of 'fit' that is whether a country's long-standing policies and policymaking institutions are compatible with the new, whether in terms of the substantive content of policies or the regulatory structures and processes

(Schmidt, 2001). This ‘mismatch’ or ‘goodness-of-fit’ between European and domestic policies, processes and institutions influences domestic change (Heritier, Knill and Mingers 1996; in Cowles Caporaso and Risse 2001). There are policy and institutional misfits. The former refers to differences between European rules and regulations and domestic policies. The latter challenges domestic rules and procedures.

From a rationalist institutionalist perspective the misfit between European and domestic pressures, policies and institutions provides societal and/or political actors with new opportunities and constraints in the pursuance of their interests (Börzel and Risse, 2000). In contrast, in a sociological institutionalist perspective European policies, norms and the collective understandings attached to them exert adaptational pressures on domestic-level processes because they do not resonate well with domestic norms and collective understandings.

Models

Model 1 refers to coercive and constraining pressures emanating from Europeanisation. This is a coercive mechanism when European institutions and laws force policy change at the domestic level (Lodge, 2001). Rational institutionalism explains how imposed constraints reduce the capacity of national political systems to pursue democratically legitimised political goals. European requirements yield domestic institutional change by prescribing an institutional model to which domestic arrangements have to be adjusted. Schmidt (2001) calls the model a required EU model. The impact of the model on a potential convergence is the highest as the adjustment mechanism force member states to conform to the EU model. However, the real outcome is mediated by the mediating factors (Schmidt, 2001)

Model 2 refers to adaptational pressures which are not of coercive character. European influence is confined “to altering domestic opportunity structures” and hence a distribution of power and resources between domestic actors (Knill and Lehmkuhl, 1999). It does not prescribe any distinctive institutional form but modifies the context. Schmidt (2001) calls it a recommended EU model. In this case European policies leave a good degree of leeway for adjusting domestic arrangements in the light of the particular national constellations (Knill and Lehmkuhl, 1999). The pressures for convergence are lesser where the EU only recommends a model. This is because countries are freer to choose how to implement the decision, with the adjustment mechanism more likely to be adaptation rather than coercion (Schmidt, 2001). The insights of rational or/and sociological institutionalism may be utilized.

Model 3 refers to ideational influence and a social constructivist account of change. The beliefs and expectations of domestic actors are altered or directed to increase support for domestic reforms that may facilitate further steps towards integration. Socialisation is a subtle but powerful mechanism of Europeanisation. It materialises when domestic policy-makers think in terms of standards of 'good policy' defined in Brussels (Radaelli, 2000). For Knill and Lehmkuhl (1999) framing integration is dominated by a cognitive logic. For Schmidt (2001) this is a suggested EU model. Suggested models for a policy sector imply that countries are only expected to consider the EU's ideas and they lack explicit institutional pressures for domestic adaptation. Hence, a divergence in policies is the most likely, though convergence may be possible.

It is widely agreed that Europeanisation results in some different outcomes in policy sectors and across countries (Börzel 1999; Börzel and Risse 2000; Heritier 2000; Radaelli 2000; Cowles, Caporaso, and Risse 2001; Schmidt 2001). Inertia, absorption, retrenchment and transformation are possible outcomes. In general, the level of European adaptation pressure on domestic political economy and the extent to which the domestic context facilitates or inhibits adjustments explain a differentiation in institutional adjustment across countries and policy sectors (Knill and Lehmkuhl, 1999; Börzel and Risse, 2000; Radaelli, 2000; Schmidt, 2001).

Empirical studies of policy sectors

The validity of analytical considerations may be tested by applying them to policy sectors in both the EU member states and candidate countries. I restrict the analysis to presenting examples of policy sectors in order to assess the impact of Europeanisation in candidate countries. This is beyond the scope of the paper to present detailed analyses and empirical findings from European policy areas and how they impact on domestic counterparts.

EU Member States

As regards Model 1, it has been applied to European monetary integration and environmental policy (see Schmidt, 2001). For example, the EU member states were influenced by very strong pressures to adapt to the new paradigm of public finance embedded in the Maastricht Treaty in order to join Economic and Monetary Union. The Maastricht convergence criteria were the

European constraints. Moreover, this model refers to positive integration and a new regulatory policy, for example, environmental policy being the case in point (Knill and Lehmkuhl, 1999).

Model 2 has been utilised when analysing negative integration policies. Negative integration policies include the establishment of the single market and competition policies (Hix, 1999). Knill and Lehmkuhl (1999) claim that ‘domestic opportunity structures’ are altered in negative integration and old regulatory policies. They illustrate the logic of negative integration with reference to a road haulage policy. Schmidt (2001) applies the model to financial services sector, telecommunications and electricity services sector.

As far as Model 3 is concerned, the European railways policy was proposed as an example of framing integration (Knill and Lehmkuhl, 1999). Schmidt (2001) applies the model to employment strategies. In areas where the EU provides only suggested models for a policy sector or no model at all, the divergence in policies as well as policymaking institutions remains high (Schmidt, 2001). The Open Method of Coordination (OMC) is to be the means of cognitive convergence. As defined by the Lisbon Council of March 2000, the aim of the OMC is to produce convergence by diffusing best practice. The idea is to use the EU as a transfer platform rather than a law-making system. The main instruments of the method are guidelines and timetables, benchmarking, indicators and scoreboards. The method is based on mutual learning processes of peer review. Direct tax policy is an example of OMC policy (Radaelli, 2001).

Candidate countries

It is expected that in the case of candidate countries adaptational pressures of coercive character will be dominant. The EU accession conditionality implies that EU membership and technical pre-accession assistance are dependent on the extent to which an applicant country complies with the requirements prescribed by the EU. Given the status of the candidate countries, there is no doubt that the obligations of meeting the accession criteria constrain national governments and coercive pressures result, to a great extent, in policy convergence.

In candidate countries Europeanisation tends to create degrees of adaptational pressures depending on the accession deadline. A positive/negative/framing integration taxonomy applied for the EU member states is not valid for applicant countries. This is because the bulk of the *acquis* must be implemented in legislation prior to the date of accession no matter whether

policies are of positive or negative character. In fact, the Accession Partnerships indicate the priority areas for membership preparations. Moreover, each candidate country's compliance with the *acquis* is assessed by the Commission in its annual Regular Reports. Hence, Model 1 is dominant. One could argue that pressures emanating from the EU accession conditionality for applicant countries are in several respects similar to the pressures emanating from EMU for member states. In both cases they are the coercive pressures because the lack of compliance would result in the refusal of membership in the EU or EMU respectively.

There are elements of the *acquis* that only have to be complied with from the date of accession. The very example is one of the requirements of Economic and Monetary Union, namely, adherence to the provisions of the Stability and Growth Pact. (However, there are elements of the EMU *acquis* that must be implemented in legislation prior to the date of accession, for example, independence of Central Bank and price stability as the explicit objective of the National Central Bank.)¹² Moreover, this is also the case that the EU does not have a coherent corpus of directives in some fields, or is in the process of developing such. Then, the mechanism of influence is more indirect, or ideational. Direct taxation is the case in point.

Conclusions

The article sought to elucidate an important research question on Europeanisation and its impact on domestic politics and political economy. The use of extensive definition ("deontological properties") and an expected degree of theoretical equivalence allow for the analysis of Europeanisation in candidate countries. On the one hand, an insiders/outside dichotomy becomes blurred because both the EU member states and European non-member states are highly vulnerable to the European pressures. On the other hand, a different taxonomy should be applied in the case of applicant countries.

Europeanisation matters. Both the EU member states and applicant countries from Central and Eastern Europe have been affected by 'distinct structures of governance which are out there - at the EU level.' Europeanisation shapes domestic policies, practices and politics and affects change of status quo. However, a domestic context is important as adjustments remain nationally

¹² Article 84 of the Europe Agreements stipulates: "At the request of the Polish authorities, the Community shall provide technical assistance designed to support the efforts of Poland towards [...] the gradual approximation of its policies to those of the European Monetary System. This will include informal exchange of information concerning the principles and the functioning of the European Monetary System."

specific and path dependent. “Europe is domesticated”¹³ both in member states and candidate countries. The question of the degree of this domestication remains and this is a research agenda for the future.

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¹³ a term used by Wallace, 2001

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