

EUROPEAN INTEGRATION AND ITS IMPACT ON DOMESTIC SYSTEMS: INFERENCES FOR TURKEY

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ABSTRACT

In this study, the European Integration concept, its mechanisms and its effect on domestic systems are investigated. Moreover, to explain the concept in depth, the features of the Integration concept and the policy transfer systems in the European Union are assessed. It is shown that the European Integration has a great effect over the domestic systems in both forming and implementing policies. By determining inferences for Turkey it is clarified that, although Turkey has not started the negotiation talks, the European Integration process is very dominant and significant over its dimensions of domestic change.

Keywords: European Integration, Domestic Systems, European Union.

1. Introduction: The Concept

Scholars of European integration increasingly employ the concept of “integration” to assess the European sources of national politics. This shift away from direct study of European institutions towards a more indirect approach via the national political domain has been evident since the mid-1990s in collections on the institutional adaptation of member states to European Union membership (Hanf and Soetendorp, 1998; Kassim et al, 2000). A new research agenda focusing more generally on changes in national political systems that can be attributed to European integration has now evolved (Vink, 2003:2).

In contrast with the liberal intergovernmentalist stress on the domestic sources of European politics (Moravcsik, 1998), the new European integration research agenda has provided a 'Second Image Reversed' (Gourevitch, 1978). This new agenda contests (or amends) not only the intergovernmental paradigm and its focus on 'grand bargains', but more generally all traditional approaches to European integration. After all, classic neo-functionalism (Haas, 1958), its contemporary counterpart, supranational governance (Stone Sweet and Sandholtz, 1997), and to a lesser extent the multilevel governance approach (Hooghe and Marks, 2001), all tend to concentrate on European institutions and their output in terms of European policies.

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Apart from this broader understanding Ladrech (1994) provided one of the first definitions that are widely accepted for European integration. That is to say, ‘an incremental process reorienting the direction and shape of politics to the degree that EU political and economic dynamics become part of the organizational logic of national politics and policy-making’ (Ladrech, 1994:69). This conception explains us the necessity of actors to redesign their interests and actions to meet the norms of EU membership. However, Smith argued that procedure and culture are important in applying EU norms into the domestic level. There can be an ambiguity over the application of the policies related with the national policy references (Smith, 2001:617-28).

Caporaso et al (2001) see European integration as political institutionalization. It involves the development of formal and informal rules, procedures, norms and practices governing politics at the European, national and sub-national levels. They recognize different levels on which European integration may take place: institution-building at the European level; the impact of EU membership at the national level; as a response to globalization (Caporaso, 2001). March and Olsen try to explain European integration for the aspect of national integration and differentiation. From this point of view, European nation-states are integrating and disintegrating in non-synchronized ways and European integration concept highlights an important dimension to the changes underway in domestic systems (March and Olsen, 1995).

In a more recent paper Olsen develops the theme of domestic adaptation to European integration pressures. In summarizing existing research, he argues that, external changes are interpreted and responded to through existing institutional frameworks, including existing causal and normative beliefs about legitimate institutions and the appropriate distribution, exercise and control of power (Olsen, 2002: 10).

1.1. Mechanisms of European integration

Knill and Lehmkuhl (1999) advocate three mechanisms to European integration. Each mechanism is at some degree about the domestic institutional change. The first mechanism is called “positive integration” and is found when EU obligations prescribe an institutional model to which domestic arrangements have to be adjusted, with limited national discretion. European integration here related with the “goodness of fit” of domestic and European arrangements which we are going to discuss later. The second mechanism is called “negative integration”. Here the case is not a question of institutional fit or misfit but the extent to which European policies have changed the position of domestic actors (1999:3). The third mechanism is where European policy alters the beliefs and

expectations may in turn involve a change of preferences and strategies, as well as institutional adaptation. They see this mechanism as one of “framing integration”, affecting perceptions.

According to the Featherstone and Radaelli, the first mechanism reflects a new institutionalists (esp. historically institutionalist) perspective. The second one can be related to multilevel bargaining games and rational choice and the third mechanism is linked with the sociological institutionalism and this schema of domestic structural transformation represents significant conceptual refinement and stresses the potential significance of divergences between different national settings, accommodating the asymmetries of the process (2003:14-15).

To give an example, Scharpf's study (1999) is related with the one of the distinctions in the European integration theory, that is to say between 'negative integration' and 'positive integration', which involves both market-making and market-correcting policies. Negative integration follows the rationale of the common market and has a deregulatory or 'market-making' nature in that it demands that states comply with the principles of the internal market. It can be quite effective in achieving liberalisation in such fields as competition policy, by removing tariffs and other barriers to trade, often in tandem with supranational agencies such as the European Commission and the European Court of Justice. However, positive integration, by contrast, is an attempt to counteract the unwanted side effects of liberalisation processes through re-regulation at the European level. It is 'market-shaping' because it tries to intervene in the economy, in such areas as consumer protection, environmental policy, or safety at work and it involves a broader institutional adaptation to a specific European model at the domestic level (Scharpf, 1999: 45).

1.2. The Goodness of Fit Notion in Domestic Systems

New institutionalist arguments are needed to be distinguished in order to clarify the framework of analysis (Hall and Taylor; 1996). The most important aspect is the “the goodness of fit”. That is to say the fit between EU level processes, policies and institutions and those found at the domestic level. There are two logics which help domestic systems to cope with this EU-applicant state relationship in the operation of institutions (March and Olsen 1995). The first one is logic of appropriateness, in which actors develop a commitment to the institution or are persuaded of the legitimacy of its claims. The second logic is “consequentialism” that affects the opportunities and constraints of actors within institutions, so the distribution of power. However,

Börzel and Risse (2003) put the logic of appropriateness into the sociological institutionalism and the logic of consequentialism into the rationalist institutionalism. They argue that the impact of European integration is differential across policies, polities and politics. The logic of appropriateness depends on the activities of norm entrepreneurs and the nature of political culture, the logic of consequentialism rests on the existence of multiple veto points and the distribution of institutional resources between actors.

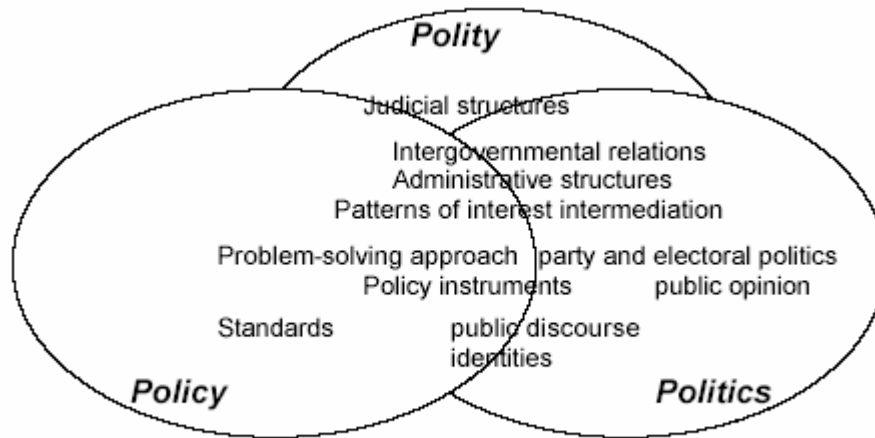


Figure1. Dimensions of Domestic Change: Polity, Policy, and Politics

Börzel and Risse add that while it is useful to analytically distinguish between the three dimensions of domestic change, reality is more complex. European policies, processes and institutions tend to affect not only one but two or all three dimensions. Domestic policy changes, for instance, often have broader repercussions since problem-solving approaches and policy instruments are closely linked to legal and administrative structures and patterns of interest intermediation (Héritier et al. 2001). Christoph Knill and Dirk Lehmkuhl distinguish between *institutional compliance*, where the EU prescribes a particular model which is ‘imposed’ on the Member States, *changing domestic opportunity structures*, which leads to a redistribution of resources between domestic actors, and *policy framing*, which alters the beliefs of domestic actors (Knill and Lehmkuhl 1999; Knill 2001). Irrespective of the theoretical approach chosen, most studies find that there must be some ‘misfit’ (Börzel 1999; Duina

1999) or ‘mismatch’ (Héritier 1996) between European and domestic policies, processes, and institutions. (Börzel, 2003:8).

There are two types of misfits by which Europe exerts adaptational pressure on the Member States. First, European policies might cause a ‘*policy misfit*’ between European rules and regulations, on the one hand, and domestic policies, on the other (cf. Héritier, Knill, and Mingers 1996; Schmidt 2001; Börzel 2003). Here, policy misfits essentially equal compliance problems. European policies can challenge national policy goals, regulatory standards, the instruments used to achieve policy goals, and/or the underlying problem-solving approach. Member state resistance to adapt domestic policies usually results in violations against European legal requirements (Börzel 2003). Policy misfit can also exert adaptational pressure on underlying institutions and political processes.

Second, Europe can cause ‘*institutional misfit*’ challenging domestic rules and procedures and the collective understandings attached to them. European rules and procedures, which give national governments privileged decision powers vis-à-vis other domestic actors, conflict with the territorial institutions of highly decentralized Member States which grant their regions autonomous decision powers (Börzel 2002).

About the goodness of fit understanding, Radaelli says that goodness of fit is relevant when an EU model exists to be implemented. He argues that the “goodness of fit” notion must be qualified according to the type of domestic institutional setting that exists, taking account of strong/weak institutional differences, the institutional conditions that can resist or be thwarted by EU impacts (Radaelli, 2003). This extends the understanding of how EU developments can be transmitted into domestic politics and it focuses attention on the need to differentiate institutional settings (Featherstone and Radaelli, 2003:17).

2. The Impact of European Integration on Domestic Systems

The impact of European integration on domestic systems has been increased in the recent years with the accelerated interdependence after the cold-war. Schmidt argues that the impact of EU policies has had different domestic effects in member states, depending on a number of variables. These variables are the economic vulnerability to global and European pressures, the political institutional capacity to respond as necessary, the fit of EU policies with national policy legacies and preferences and the discourses that influence policy preferences and thus affect the sense of vulnerability and capacity (Schmidt, 2002).

Looking more closely at the domestic impact of European integration, intergovernmentalists depart from two-level theories where national executives are simultaneously involved in international negotiations and bargaining with domestic interest groups. Governments, or powerful groups within the executive, can achieve more optimal outcomes at the international level if they convincingly show that their hands are tied by domestic commitments. More importantly, they can avoid blame at home for unpopular policies by pointing to international package deals and the need to live up to international obligations (Putnam, 1988). One could argue that European integration redistributes domestic political influence in favour of the executive because it shifts control over agenda setting, alters decision-making procedures, and creates informational asymmetries and new justifications for domestic policies. National executives are increasingly able to 'cut slack' and loosen the constraints imposed by legislatures, interest groups and other domestic actors (Moravcsik, 1994). By pointing to the manifestation of European integration in changing opportunity structures, where calculating actors strategically adapt to new circumstances, the intergovernmentalist theory of integration clearly connects to the rational strain of new institutionalism (Börzel, 2003:11).

In order to prove the impact of European Integration on domestic systems, we can easily witness in all applicant state-EU relationship:

- extra-national pressures have affected domestic policy change and the formation of preferences (Ward and House 1988, 3-36);
- domestic dynamics and systems of preference have been translated into the EU-and the candidates' political dialogue, and this has affected in some ways the development and the strengthening of EU-obligations.

Hence, the question is whether the examination of European Integration should come from theories exploring the way in which decisions are reached within organisations or should they come from theories concentrating on the interaction between domestic politics and international pressures (Gourevich 1978; Putnam, 1988). In other words, this circular process should give proof that there is not a path-dependent way for EU membership. This could demonstrate that European Integration works within and between this continuum: external pressures-internal responses-external reorganization of domestic pressures (Cole, 2001:19).

For most of its history, the EU's traditional policy method was the so-called "Community method" of decision-making (Devuyst 1999). In simple terms, the method involved the sharing of powers between EU institutions: the European Commission proposed, the European Parliament (EP) amended, the

Council of Ministers disposed. The Community method specified a procedure for making policy which fit with a broader political agenda pursued via the so-called “Monnet method” of partnership. Inspired by Jean Monnet, one of the EU’s Founding Fathers, the Monnet method tasked the EU’s institutions with defining and delivering “shared European public goods”. It was assumed that the Union’s institutions would, for a time anyway, coexist with the institutions of the participating countries but would eventually displace them as the primary focus of political activity in those issue arenas where they had significant authority. (Wallace, 1996: 43).

2.1. The Importance of Policy Transfer in the European Integration

The tools of policy transfer, despite variations in their application, already have been employed to achieve more uniform application of internal market rules, create the Euro, and seek to lower EU unemployment. In all of these cases, Member States have agreed to report on their own domestic practices, with the Commission charged with scrutinising and comparing national policies or plans. League tables - ranking best to worst performers among Member States - are constructed on the basis of agreed criteria (Bomberg and Peterson, 2000:20).

In the EU, as in other policy systems, the key agents in policy transfer are usually portrayed as traditional state actors: elected and non-elected officials, political parties, and advisory experts. It is a rational process wherein imitation, copying and adaptation are the consequences of rational decisions by policymakers. However, the nature of the EU gives state agents incentives to be active “projectors” or exporters of national policy methods, standards and ideas, and not just passive recipients of lessons from practices pursued elsewhere. States naturally seek to export their own national policies and educate state agents from other Member States about the superiority of national methods, practices and achievements. National EU leaders and officials push for their favoured policy at the EU level, and take credit when their own national practices are generalised across the EU (Radaelli, 2000:38).

The more general point is that EU policy debates are rarely a state-centric competition between Member States advocating clearly differentiated policy alternatives. More often, policy debates are a more complex process involving the pooling of policy ideas with diverse origins and the construction of new alternatives that may closely resemble no existing national policy. Sometimes, the end result is the shaping of something like a common EU policy, even if it is adopted voluntarily and individually by member states. They point out that policy transfer seems designed to achieve a sort of European

integration by stealth. That is, it encourages the adjustment of national policies in the interest of eliminating market distortions and providing collective European goods. But it does so without the need for a permissive consensus to develop or extend the “European Project”. The dynamic of lesson-learning through exchanges within policy networks raises concerns of principle, especially if we focus on input sources of legitimacy such as representation, transparency and accountability. Purpose-built EU monetary, employment, and policy networks seem to share certain characteristics:

- broad representation of societal interests is weak;
- transparency is minimal: those who are not direct participants in network deliberation have difficulty following it, and
- accountability is weak: it is difficult to monitor and hold accountable actors engaged in exchanges within structures that are by definition informal, ad hoc, loose and slippery (Bomberg and Peterson,2000:37)

In as much as input sources of legitimacy matter at the EU level, there seems little reason to assume that the policy transfer method makes the European integration process any more legitimate than old fashioned, elite-driven EU methods. Compared to domestic state agents -particularly officials in national bureaucracies- EU citizens appear to have little or no capacity to shape policies that are made or adjusted via policy transfer at the EU level. However, it is more convenient than the Monnet method at specifying collective European public goods but it seems to offer little scope for shaping a vision of how the Europe of tomorrow can be made better than the Europe of today through collective action because policy transfer is driven ultimately by narrow, national goals and aspirations, which may or may not converge with the broader European collective good (Börzel, 2000:39).

2.2. The Different Features of the European Integration

Olsen (2002) identified European integration as the changes taking place in member states then outlined processes of institutional change that may indicate how/why it took place. However, even though he identified separate interpretations of European integration, the different conceptualisations are inclusive rather than exclusive. Olsen separated European integration into five possible phenomena when examining what is actually changing and considered that it may be seen as:

- Changes in external territorial boundaries;
- Governance institutions developed at the supranational level;

European Integration

- Influencing and imposing supranational at the sub-national and national levels;
- Exporting governance procedure and policy specific for EU beyond EU borders;

- A project of a political nature aimed at intensifying the unification of the EU.

However, areas identified by these five points indicated what some considered European integration might entail. For instance, the development of supranational institutions, the formulation of legislation by these institutions and the political nature of the project could be seen as involving European integration (Howell,2004:8).

A discussion of the ways in which European space may be politically organized and governed presupposes that Europe as a geographical concept, the external boundary of Europe as a space or territory, can be delimited and defined (Jönsson et al., 2000:7). In the literature, however “Europe” is used in variety of ways. Recently, it has become common to use “Europe” with reference to the EU and its member states (Olsen,2002:926).

3. Inferences for Turkey

In applying these theoretical approaches to Turkish integration, one must consider a number of important differences between Turkey and EU-member states in the European integration process.

At present, Turkey is negotiating country, which has already been engaged in a process of “self-european integration,” based on a widespread consensus among the electorate and the political elite on the advantages of membership. Governments thus have had little difficulty legitimizing their EU policies, except some key issues like the “minority rights”.

Thus, the role of Turkish governments is even greater than in member states, as the central government is the only negotiator regarding conditions of accession. Subsequently they are able to monopolize the access to both the European Commission and the European Council. Because of being a highly centralized state culture, sub-national units in Turkey are not strong enough to impose pressure on their governments based on national resources and powers.

Although Member states, the European Council and the European Parliament must make final decisions on enlargement, the European Commission plays a very strong role. First, the Commission prepares the Progress Reports, thereby shaping the opinion of other European institutions and actors. Second, as the Commission was appointed to coordinate the accession process, laying out the terms and procedures, they have been granted

an unusual amount of authority in creating a single “plan” for enlargement. Thus a greater than usual level of convergence may be evident in enlargement policy and procedures.

Nevertheless, Turkey had a relationship with the EU for over forty years, negotiation talks has started recently. And only for three years the great transformations were made to fulfill the Copenhagen political criteria. These transformations have left domestic institutions in a considerable change. Therefore we can not still guess the response to challenges posed by EU integration can allow for more flexible strategies or not, because of Turkish state institutions and networks are firmly entrenched.

We can easily increase the number of the inferences from Turkish integration to the European Union. But the above inferences are sufficient to clarify that, the European Integration process is very dominant and significant over its dimensions of domestic change.

4. Conclusion

To understand the concept in a broader perspective, we must not forget that European Integration is a long and hard way to deal with. But there are two types of innovation that makes us the concept easier: First, the revision and/or synthesis of existing conceptual frameworks in political science and international relations and second an empirical focus that cuts across traditional analytical dimensions. In this context we could see European integration as an analytical focus stresses key changes in contemporary politics. European Integration helps us to understand the adaptation of institutional settings in the broadest sense at different political levels in response to the dynamics of integration, emergence of new cross-national policy networks and communities, nature of policy transfer between states and sub-national authorities, restructuring of the strategic opportunities available to domestic actors, as EU commitments, how and why they have a differential impact on different actors.

In the sphere of European integration, however, one might encounter a more significant amount of “misfit” between European policies and national traditions. Adaptation can only be successful if necessary mediating structures are present. Due to the centralized national tradition of Turkey, sub-national entities were nonexistent or lacked competencies and political power in Turkish state. For example, in order to implement a European regional policy on the regional level, Turkey needs a process of radical decentralization. One should expect the grade of “misfit” in these cases to be enormous. As a result, the politics of European integration may lead to symbolic or “virtual” policy, whereby political actors, particularly on the national level, will try to fulfill the

“European requirements” on paper without granting the newly established structure with significant political power. This political power will be the main determinant over the Turkish attempt in integration to the European systems.

AVRUPA ENTEGRASYONU VE YEREL SİSTEMLER ÜZERİNE ETKİSİ: TÜRKİYE BOYUTU

ÖZET

Bu çalışmada Avrupa Entegrasyonu kavramı, mekanizmaları ve yerel sistemler üzerindeki etkileri incelenmektedir. Ayrıca, kavramı derinlemesine açıklamak için, Avrupa Entegrasyonu kavramının çeşitli kullanılışları ve Avrupa Birliği’ndeki politika transfer sistemleri de değerlendirilmiştir. Avrupa Entegrasyonu’nun hem politika oluşturulmasında hem de uygulanmasında yerel sistemler üzerinde çok büyük etkisi olduğu görülmüştür. Türkiye ile ilgili çıkarsamalarla da, Türkiye’nin henüz müzakere görüşmelerine başlamamasına rağmen, yerel değişim boyutları üzerinde Avrupa Entegrasyon sürecinin çok baskın ve belirleyici olduğu ortaya konulmaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Avrupa Entegrasyonu, Yerel Sistemler, Avrupa Birliği.

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European Integration

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