

Book Review

Andrew Jordan and Duncan Liefferink (eds) *Environmental Policy on Europe. The Europeanization of National Environmental Policy*, London: Routledge (2005)

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When reading the introductory chapter of this book, I could not help myself humming the beginning of the U2-song 'Zoo Station', where Bono sings "I'm ready....I'm ready for what's next". The editors of this volume clearly were equally well-prepared when they decided to study the Europeanization of national environmental policy. After too much introductory literature on 'Europeanization', this book finally takes the debate one step further. Instead of using it as a fashionable catch-phrase, the editors and authors undertake a praiseworthy effort to actually test the degree of Europeanization empirically, in this case in the issue area of environmental policy in ten countries (nine EU member states and Norway). The first two chapters set out the theoretical background by discussing the state of the literature regarding Europeanization (chapter one) and policy convergence (chapter two). Chapter three then introduces a well thought-out, rigorous methodological framework to test the degree of Europeanization by exploring the impact of the regulatory framework of the European Union on the policy structure, policy style and policy content of the countries under study. The only, relatively minor, methodological question that remains unanswered is why exactly those ten countries were singled out. The editors defend their choice by pointing out that these countries acceded to the EU at different points in time and thus allow for introducing a dynamic element into the analysis (are 'older' member states more Europeanized than 'younger' ones?). While this is true, all of the member states that were not included into the analysis have acceded at the same time as at least one other member state that was included in the analysis and, since no other selection criteria are given, the question whether a different case selection might have influenced the result thus remains unanswered. Furthermore, the rationale for including Norway is not entirely convincing. The editors proclaim to want to use Norway as a "test-case", since it is the only country that is not an EU-member. However, this immediately raises eyebrows with an alert reader since in the case of most of the EFTA-countries, not being member of the EU certainly does not entail that they are cut-off from the *acquis*, and hence immune to the process of Europeanization. This is confirmed by Eivind Hovden, the chapter author on Norway, who points out that Norway "has been a policy 'taker', not a policy 'maker'" (p. 154). This leaves the question open why/if Norway should be included as a case study. This is particularly relevant if one considers that EU environmental policy is developing as well, and has developed substantially over the past 15 years or so. While countries such as Austria, Sweden and Finland have all acceded within this period of time, they were developed countries on this side of the iron curtain. It might therefore have been instructive to include some of the most recent member states into the analysis. After all, one would expect the impact of Europeanization to be much greater in these countries. Certainly in the issue area of environment, given Communism's

general lack of environmental concern. But then again, one cannot tackle everything in one monograph and maybe introducing this dimension as well would risk overburdening the book. It could be an interesting avenue for further research, though.

After these three introductory chapters, one chapter is devoted to each of the member states selected (Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom). Every chapter follows the same, logical set-up, which greatly improves the readability and allows the reader to falsify his or her expectations every chapter again so that one can follow the story very closely, as it unfolds. Almost every chapter is equally well-written and paints a clear and concise picture of the situation in each of the countries under study.

The book concludes that there is policy convergence, although not nearly as much as one would have thought, based on the expectations raised and predictions made by the earlier literature on Europeanization. This is an important insight given that this book is the first comprehensive comparative study that studies policy convergence over a longer period of time. This finding might suggest that it is time to tone down the superlative rhetoric that accompanied (and often characterized) the early studies of Europeanization. One of the important lessons of this study is that, yes, Europeanization is a useful lens in EU studies, but one should not lose sight of the bigger picture either. EU legislation is not imposed upon the member states, but is shaped by them. The value of the Europeanization literature has been to focus attention on the impact of the EU on the member states rather than the other way around, but one should not lose sight either of what the literature on two level-games has taught us: that the levels are intrinsically interrelated. This excellent book is a timely step in testing the concept of Europeanization. This should be encouraged and copied because the more refined our knowledge and understanding of how the EU impacts on its member states, the more complete and nuanced our understanding of the European integration process more generally.

Karen Hussey

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The European Union's (EU) impact on the national politics, policies and administrative structures of its member states is no longer a question of 'if', rather the debate has turned toward establishing the extent of that impact: which national policies are most affected and is there a common, European model of governance emerging? In addressing these questions new theories and models of Europeanization are being developed, so much so that it will no doubt keep a good few scholars employed for years to come. However, the theories of Europeanisation are not always substantiated by empirical research which makes Jordan and Liefferink's edited volume a welcome and timely contribution to the debate.

The book has two stated aims: (1) to document empirically the Europeanisation of ten national environmental policies in the period 1970-2000; and (2) to assess the extent to which Europeanisation is causing these ten national policies to converge. The ten European states examined are Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom (UK). The case studies include both old and new member states, and some states lesser-known in the area of environmental policy. Thus the book is a detailed comparative empirical study based around the two themes of Europeanization and convergence: where convergence is the effect, and Europeanisation the cause.

In the first three chapters Jordan and Liefferink analyze the emergence of Europeanization research and stress that they focus exclusively on Europeanization as "a top down process impacting on states", thereby excluding the other, more complicated, definitions of Europeanization that are reviewed in the preliminary chapter. The authors carefully establish their scale of domestic policy change, relating the extent of domestic change to the amount of divergence or 'misfit' between EU requirements and domestic-level characteristics. Thus, the larger the 'misfit' the greater the adaptive pressure and the greater the likelihood of domestic change. Chapter 3 constructs the baselines for each country in c. 1970 which are based along three inter-related variables, namely policy content, policy structure and policy style which provides the basis for the subsequent ten country chapters, which are all written to a common template. The authors emphasize the need for the empirical study to span a thirty year period in order to reveal the full pattern of domestic

changes, including those which are often held to take place either very slowly or not at all, such as administrative structures and policy styles.

In answering the first question the authors conclude that the EU has had an impact on all ten of the national policies, although to varying degrees. This in itself is an interesting find as it is often assumed that a core of northern, highly industrialized member states form the political impetus of EU environmental policymaking (mostly in their own image) while the geographically peripheral parts of Europe (namely Ireland, Spain and Portugal) are forced to make significant policy changes. The empirical research confirms significant variations across the ten countries, the various sub-sectors of environmental policy and even across the three dimensions of national policy, in particular in the national policy structures. For instance, in order to work more effectively in the Environment Council, states have strengthened their environment ministries and have developed new, more EU-focused working practices.

In answering the second research question the authors are testing the often-held assumption that Europeanisation has caused the national policies of member states to converge. That is, that the national policies of the ten member states were originally different in style, structure and content but that over time the "top-down" impact of the EU on member states has seen national policies moving towards a common, European model of governance. However, in establishing the baselines for each country it became apparent that the content and style of national policies were already broadly convergent prior to the EU's involvement. A common set of national imperatives existed between the ten countries, which were soon to be built on with the need to produce a credible suite of policies for the 1972 Stockholm conference. Thus, the first assumption often made in Europeanisation studies – that member state policies were initially different but have since converged thanks to 'Brussels' – was proved false.

Too often comparative studies lack the breadth of coverage to make useful comparisons, or the framework for comparison has not been sufficiently thought out as to provide a clearly identified objective. Herein lies one of the principle strengths of the volume: the number of case studies and the authors' use of a baseline for each country together with the common use of the primary concepts afford a greater degree of clarity in identifying where change has taken place, and some interesting conclusions are found. However, the authors concede the difficulty in distinguishing between the 'EU effect' in policy changes as opposed to other causal effects, such as the influence of international organizations (i.e. the UN) or paradigm shifts (i.e. globalised, integrated markets). I am not entirely convinced that this distinction was adequately explored, especially given that environmentalism and the subsequent development of environmental regulation is the one policy arena that has penetrated almost all industrialized countries since 1970, not just those states in the EU. The concluding remarks for the country chapter on the Netherlands states the point quite nicely: "if the Netherlands had not been a member state, Dutch environmental policy would probably not have been fundamentally different from what it is now". (p.150)

While the focus of the book is on European integration theories and convergence, it does offer other interesting conclusions for scholars and students interested in environmental policy and natural resource management more broadly. For instance, the emergence of 'new environmental policy instruments' has captured the attention of environmental regulatory scholars, and this volume offers some useful incite into their adoption, or otherwise, across the member states. Similarly, the individual country chapters provide comprehensive analyses of environmental policy style, structure and content in ten countries, which is of considerable benefit to students or scholars in the environmental governance field, irrespective of whether one is interested in the Europeanisation of those policies.

Overall, the book provided the reader with in-depth insights into how European environmental policy is elaborated and the extent to which the EU can be deemed responsible for developments in national environmental policy. The book should be recommended for its theoretical clarity and empirical richness and fits very nicely into the 'Routledge Research in Environmental Politics' series.

Claudia Dias Soares

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The book analyses the evolutionary process undergone by national environmental policies in ten Western European countries since 1970 as a consequence of the continuing developments of the European Union (EU). The approach taken to uncover this refraction of EU policies by national institutional forms ('top down' or 'boomerang' effect) is a political analysis of Europeanization from a comparative perspective focused on a single policy sector. To assess state of the art theoretical models on Europeanization both empirical data previously available on the implementation of EU environmental policy and new empirical material from a temporal and spatial perspective are brought in.

The first chapter is used to develop on the understanding of the term 'Europeanization', as well as on the variables which shape this process, which the editors prefer rather to call 'EU-ization'. Both this and the following two chapters are home to an extensive but synthesized critical literature review both on the concept of 'Europeanization' and its intertwinement with the idea of 'policy convergence'. Chapters four to thirteen are used by leading country specialist to shed new light on different manifestations of Europeanization which are reshaping national environmental policies. These empirical data are used by the editors in the closing chapter to assess the extent to which Europeanization is causing national environmental policies to converge in the reality sample.

In the national cases it is assessed the contribution the studied process had on the convergence of the latter policies, both as far as causal relationships and degree of impact are concerned. This analysis takes a double dimension. Within the observed countries are drawn discernible trends in the distribution of costs and benefits operated in the environmental sector and across the same countries a pattern of convergence is investigated. The focus is on the content of national policies as well as on the administrative structures and styles of policy, with less attention dedicated to how far structure and content have influenced policy outputs as sub-national interpretation and implementation of EU laws. Likewise, policy outcomes in terms of actual changes in environmental quality brought about by the EU's interventions are left mostly untouched.

By using as theoretical support for the comparative analysis 'Europeanization' and 'policy convergence' the editors were forced to endeavour in the abridgement of the gap between the two literatures. This is, however, done without refusing the lack of a necessary simultaneity of the two phenomena. Therefore, this work brings in a contribution that can represent a valuable methodological development for the study of more complex patterns of Europeanization. The analytical devices brought forward might be useful to pinpoint dominant patterns of change and to assert the degree of causality associated to different kinds of factors.

To measure the degree of policy convergence, the editors constructed national policy 'baselines' for each of the case studies temporally set around 1970. The accuracy of the conclusions drawn on the level of Europeanization reached in each country as well as on the degree of causal relationship between the changes observed and the EU's influence will, hence, strongly depend upon the quality reached whilst setting the reference point. It is, therefore, worth careful attention the potential constrain played by the results reached on broadly convergent national policies prior to the EU's involvement, particularly regarding policy content but not so much policy styles and structures. This aspect requires all the more attention as it undermines the traditional public discourse according to which national policies converged in great part due to the EU's influence, whereas the editors do not find 'deep' Europeanization neither consistent policy convergence in the environmental sector.

Among the main findings of the research presented is the fact that the content of environmental policies seems to have become 'Europeanized' more strongly than policy structures and styles. The relevance of this result is obvious when one has to address the problem of continuing national divergences. This phenomenon harms to different degrees the goal of common policy implementation, with potential severe consequences on competition, which protection was a major argument for the development of a common environmental policy. Furthermore, divergent policy structures and styles raise issues at the political level where MEP are forced to explain political failures to irate constituencies.

Bringing one step forward the analysis on the potential influence this book might have in EU policy-making, one can envisage still another potential positive input. The assessment that there are different levels of convergence between policy contents, on one hand, and policy styles and

structures, on the other, can provide an important contribution to the decision-making process. A more effective common policy implementation might demand a differentiated distribution of resources depending on the object of the convergence effort being policy contents or policy styles or structures. And this would affect the present situation of the EU being a disseminator of policy goals and targets, not styles and structures.

As a valuable contribution on the dynamics which is reshaping national policies, both in member countries and potential members States, the work under scrutiny is therefore expected to leave an imprint both in real world policy and politics and in the academic world. A better understanding of the whole 'Europeanization' and 'policy convergence' processes allows recommendations for the *modus agendi* of the political agents. Moreover, this work's legacy of theoretical and empirical knowledge sets the base for further developments in the literature. The altogether outcome hopefully will be an improvement in the scientific drive of common policy implementation.

To the previous we add that the originality of the book resides mainly on two aspects. On one hand, it accesses how far Europeanization has produced greater policy convergence by combining vanguard accounts of national policy developments along a long time period (1970-2000) on a specific sector (environmental policy), with an updated perspective of the theoretical debate. And, on the other hand, it focuses the research on some country cases which are still scarcely known, including a non-full member State as Norway. Therefore, students and academics working in the field of European studies find here an important source of fresh empirical data and a throughout summary of the main theories on 'Europeanization' and policy convergence.