

THE LOGICS OF DIFFERENTIATION OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION: DEFINITIONS, CAUSES, STRATEGIES, EFFECTS

Call for Papers

Workshop organised by the French Political Science Association's (AFSP)
Research Group on the European Union (GrUE)

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University of Strasbourg (SAGE)

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This workshop focuses on the logics of differentiation of European integration. The logics of differentiation of European integration refer to various dynamics, strategies, ideas and political discourses also known as 'variable-geometry Europe' or 'Europe à la carte'. These logics of differentiation of the European integration are shaped by the territorial variations of membership and implementation of the European public policies (Eurozone, Schengen area, Brexit) and by the variations of their politico-institutional degree of integration (monetary policy, CAP, defense policy). They can be interrogated from the point of view of their definitions (*what?*), their causes (*why?*), their strategies (*how?*) and their effects (*which results?*).

To explain the territorial, political or institutional variations observed, institutionalist liberal (Leufen, Rittberger, Schimmelfennig 2012 ; Schimmelfennig, Leufen, Rittberger 2015), constructivist (Börzel, Risse, 2017) and sociological (Adler-Nissen 2014) arguments have been developed. They contributed significantly to our understanding of the logics of differentiation of European integration thanks to complementary theoretical angles. However, they converge methodologically towards a deductive preference that does not take into account as seriously as possible the production of original data through empirical inquiries (Holzinger, Schimmelfennig, 2012).

This workshop aims to present and discuss communications that develop an explanatory argument based on an inductive methodology, thus enhancing field surveys, comparative and historical approaches. To do this, it is structured around three working axes, without prejudging the final form that the organization of the workshop will take. Political scientists but also all social scientists (anthropologists, economists, historians, sociologists) whose research deals with this object are encouraged to participate.

1. Definitions and causes of the logics of differentiation

The first line of research questions the definitions (*what?*) and the causes (*why?*) of the logics of differentiation of European integration. How can we conceptually define the notion of 'differentiation'? What political and institutional realities, more or less formalized and objectified, does it cover? Can we put on the same level all the forms of differentiation that are observable through the processes of European integration? It could even be said that the process of differentiation goes back to the origins of the Communities. Are not the 'European Communities' above all the result of a decision of 'differentiation' made by a small group of States in 1951 and then in 1957, to pool a limited number of policies under specific treaties? Are not the ECSC, the EEC and Euratom at the same time different and interdependent

organizations, but also ‘different Europes’ from the “Europe” of the Council of Europe created a few years earlier?? The communications in this field will thus question possible changes in the issues to which the logics of differentiation that have crossed the EU's history are likely to lead. They will also develop a comparative approach to question the conditions for the possibility of differentiation in the EU: what are the logics that make it possible to understand that two ‘similar’ Member States have taken dissimilar decisions, the first by integrating a policy European public, the latter by staying out? Why are some European public policies more integrated than others, and what are the historical trends and patterns of these sectoral differentiations over time?

2. Strategies and uses of the logics of differentiation

The second line of research questions the strategies (how?) that cover the logics of differentiation of European integration. What decision-makers call a ‘variable-geometry Europe’ is not only an institutional regulatory framework, making EU common rules more flexible. It can also be analyzed as the result of political and institutional strategies. The papers will focus here on the uses and mobilizations that the individual and collective actors make of the ‘variable-geometry Europe’ narrative. They would try to show how the logics of differentiation sometimes become a strategy, for example, to overcome any institutional or political blockages related to decision-making at national or European levels. The historical implementation of the various ‘*opt-out*’ or ‘*opt-in*’ mechanisms could constitute privileged examples. Communications would study the bureaucratic instruments used to implement them that will also be at the heart of this axis. The creation of new administrative structures to manage the implementation of a public policy could also be a subject of particular attention. The investigation of these new bureaucratic spaces will ideally be based on an analysis of the trajectories of the actors concerned as well as the resources they mobilize in their daily activity. In this perspective, this second line of research intends to enrich the questions raised so far and not only to consider differentiation for what it is and much more for what it says about the transformations of European governance.

3. Effects of the logics of differentiation

The third line of research brings together studies on the effects (or lack of effects) of the logics of differentiation at European level or within the Member States. The papers proposed could rely on the research on Europeanization and its effects, showing how the "differentiated" structuring of the EU entails pressures for adaptation in the Member States (depending on their participation or not to a particular European policy or institutional subset) and how the Member States respond to it. In this perspective, this axis of research could also present communications looking at the divisions and internal struggles within the Member States, induced by these logics of differentiation, such as the competitions between potential beneficiaries of the CAP, the Structural Funds or any other ‘European policy’ in each Member State. Another avenue that could be explored would be to ask what are the effects of these logics of differentiation on the political ‘readability’ of the EU and, consequently, on political accountability. What is the effect of the EU's ‘polyarchical’ structure on the ‘democratic deficit’?

Proposal submission

Please send all paper proposals to samuel.faure@politics.ox.ac.uk, vincent.lebrou@misha.fr and francisco.roabastos@unistra.fr . It should include the title of the proposed paper, the name of the contributor(s), your affiliation(s), the axis of research to which they wish to be attached as a priority and an abstract of no more than 400 words.

Deadlines

Call for papers	20th October 2017
Deadline for sending paper proposals	5th December 2017
Decision on selected papers	15th December 2017
Deadline for sending papers	25th January 2018
Workshop	1st January 2018

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