

Panel 11: Europeanization: The EU as a transformative force?

Organizers:

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European integration does not stop to fascinate students of public administration and political science. Many of us are thrilled about this institution that overcomes collective action problems. The EU constitutes such an authoritative regime that member states lose much of their policy discretion. Or do they? Despite the EU's impressive track record, many of us have troubles escaping our realist reflexes. To what extent does the EU really affect member states? Can we isolate an "EU-effect" and if so, when does it occur? More specifically, does the EU have the clout to force member states to adopt unwanted policies? How about the persistent implementation deficit and the European Commission's difficulties in improving compliance? The tension between supranational control and member state dominance continues to offer a well of fascinating research topics. Yet the core question instilled by decades of realist hegemony in IR still remains unresolved: to what extent does the EU effectively transform national institutions and policies? We therefore proposed a panel focusing on the Europeanization of national polities, politics, and policies. More specifically, we invited theoretical and empirical papers on the following sub-themes:

- Pathways of Europeanization: How, and under what conditions does Europeanization occur? What are the alternatives to the intuitively appealing, but empirically questionable 'goodness of fit' hypothesis?
- The net impact of Europe: What is the net impact of the EU on the polities, politics, and policies of member states? At this point, for instance, we have no clear idea of the extent of policy freedom left to the member states in the face of ever-intensifying European integration.
- The EU as a transformative force? Finally, we would like to invite papers focusing on the question to what extent processes of Europeanization truly transform member states' policies and institutions, or remain parallel to national polities, politics, and policies.

Link to NIG research programme

Besides New Public Management and globalization, Europeanization is one of the main sources of state transformation. The question we addressed in our panel, i.e. to what extent Europeanization impacts, and possibly even transforms the state, connects well to the NIG' research theme 'The future of the nation state'. Central to this programme was the question to what extent the pre-eminence of the state is under threat. In addition, our proposed topic fitted a main ambition of the NIG, namely to strengthen the links between research in political science and public administration.