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# **Part I**

## **Introduction**



# 1

## Challenges of a New Research Agenda

*Maarten P. Vink and Paolo Graziano*

### 1.1 Connecting domestic and European politics

The concept of Europeanization may have been, and perhaps still is, essentially contested as to its usefulness for the study of European politics. Yet few will dispute the claim that it has enjoyed increasing popularity in academic circles since the late 1990s. Scholars use the concept to assess the effectiveness of European-level policies at the domestic level, as well as to understand how new European opportunities and constraints affect national politics. This new research agenda thus focuses on changes in national political systems that can be attributed to the development of European regional integration, and brings together scholars from the fields of international relations, EU studies, and comparative politics.

Where did this research agenda come from? First, mirroring the liberal inter-governmentalist stress on the domestic sources of European politics (Moravcsik 1993, 1998), and somewhat reminiscent of earlier debates in international relations, the new research agenda of Europeanization has provided the study of European integration with a “Second Image Reversed” (Gourevitch 1978). It is true, of course, that the intergovernmental paradigm and its overwhelming attention for “grand bargains” has always taken a “domestic route” to the study of European politics. In a famous unpublished paper, Moravcsik (1994) even explicitly dwells on the strategic use governments make of two-level strategies; yet this “feedback” perspective has never been systematically developed and was instrumental to understanding European-level politics. To an even greater degree, classic neo-functionalism (Haas 1958), its contemporary counterpart supranational governance (Stone Sweet and Sandholtz 1997; Stone Sweet *et al.* 2001) and to some extent also the multi-level governance approach (Hooghe and Marks 2001) tend to concentrate on European institutions and their output in terms of European policies. In these traditional integration theories the focus is rather on the creation of a European political arena and on the addition of

new governance structures more generally, than on the diffusion of EU policies and institutional practices at the national and subnational level (see Wiener and Diez 2003 for a more elaborate overview of European integration theory).

The Europeanization approach goes beyond this European-level orientation of classic integration theories by shifting the attention principally to the domestic level. An early manifestation of this “domestic” shift was the increasing attention for the administrative adaptation of member states to EU membership (Rometsch and Wessels 1996; Mény *et al.* 1996; Hanf and Soetendorp 1998; Kassim *et al.* 2000; Zeff and Pirro 2001). These works, as well as more explicit Europeanization studies (cf. Harmsen 1999), are principally centered on the executive branch of government, although others have focused in a broader sense on changes in the “organizational logic of national politics and policy making” induced by EU membership (Ladrech 1994: 70; see also Falkner 2001).

The classic strand of Europeanization literature focuses particularly on the domestic implementation of EU policies. As Sverdrup argues in his overview chapter on Implementation, these studies begin primarily from the idea that European integration remains an incomplete project as long as European rules are not implemented according to their intentions (see Chapter 15). “Classic” European policy domains such as environmental policy (Knill 1998), transport policy (Héritier *et al.* 2001), or cohesion policy (Gualini 2003) have been extensively studied, but work has also been done in policy areas for which competence is traditionally located rather at the national level, such as social policy (Graziano 2005), refugee policy (Lavenex 2001a, b) or even citizenship policy (Checkel 2001a; Vink 2001). These studies are often qualitative case studies or focused comparisons of a limited number of countries, although recent work with a wider empirical scope can also be found (e.g. Falkner 2005 on social policy). Typical quantitative work related to Europeanization in this “policy strand” has been concerned mainly with the differences in transposition rates of European directives in EU member states (e.g. Börzel 2002; Mastenbroek 2003).

Secondly, Europeanization research also provides a “European” route to the study of national politics. Comparative political scientists and sociologists increasingly realize that the European Union, as an advanced instance of regional integration, becomes a natural part of “national” politics. Whether this implies a “hollowing out” of the nation-state, or new opportunities for national social and political actors, new analytical tools and simply a broader empirical knowledge that goes beyond the traditional units of analysis for comparativists, are needed to understand national political dynamics in an integrating Europe. This has been more obvious for the study of executives, as already referred to above, in terms of the need for governments to coordinate national positions in EU negotiations and to oversee the implementation of EU policies (see, for example, an early study by Helen Wallace (1973)). This scholarly

interest is, however, of a much more recent vintage for aspects of national politics that have traditionally been assumed less subject to European influence, such as political parties (Ladrech 2002), party systems (Mair 2000) or local government (De Rooij 2002). Sometimes, as in the case of national parliaments and particularly the issue of government scrutiny (Holzhacker 2002), this timing has to do very much with political actors only discovering or acknowledging the need to adjust to a new political game; or simply with the EU becoming increasingly more competent in an increasing number of policy areas, as with immigration policy (Vink 2002). In other cases, the importance of European integration for domestic affairs may be a long-established yet relatively “silent” phenomenon, as with domestic courts who have since long applied and interpreted European law (Stone Sweet 2004). The judicial construction of Europe may even be a commonplace by now, but, as Nyikos argues, so far very little is known about how national judges in fact make use of EU law (see Chapter 14 on Courts). The strong calls for further research, in particular for much more systematic comparative work, put forward in many of the chapters of this handbook, underline the fact that despite a hitherto abundant literature the study of Europeanization has only just begun.

It is precisely because these gaps in the literature, and thus these shortcomings in our understanding of domestic politics in an integrating Europe, are now becoming increasingly clear that we think a more comprehensive approach to Europeanization research is well-timed. This handbook thus presents a critical overview of the state of the art in Europeanization research, evaluates what more than a decade of scholarly contributions has brought us, taking Ladrech’s (1994) seminal paper on France as a starting point, and provides directions for further research. The approach of this handbook is “critical” to the extent that it explicitly does not assume a *domain réservé* for Europeanization research among the traditional disciplines of international relations, comparative politics and EU studies, but rather tries to present a comprehensive stocktaking that enables a balanced judgment of the added value of Europeanization research. Hence this book is very much about assessing the potentials and pitfalls of an evolving research agenda, to cite the title of Lehmkuhl’s concluding chapter of this volume. The reader would be mistaken, however, to deduce a pessimistic view on the contribution of Europeanization research to understanding the workings of contemporary European politics from our “critical” approach. On the contrary, we think there is a good “minimal” case to make for the argument that Europeanization research has at least enriched the study of European politics by providing new empirical data on previously under-researched questions related to domestic politics in an integrating Europe. In fact, the mere pointing out of new questions for further exploration, even critics argue, makes Europeanization valuable as an “attention-directing device” (Olsen 2002).

Why a new book on Europeanization? There are at least three reasons why we want to add to the still-growing literature. By including a large number of relatively concise chapters on whether and how national politics, polities and policies change under pressure from “Europe”, this handbook first of all aims to satisfy a growing “encyclopedic” desire that has naturally evolved alongside the “academic growth industry” of Europeanization research (Olsen 2002: 921). Though recognizing the important volumes from recent years that bring together theoretical reflections as well as empirical contributions (Cowles, Caporaso and Risse 2001; Featherstone and Radaelli 2003a; Kohler-Koch 2003; Dyson and Goetz 2004; Bulmer and Lequesne 2005a), this book presents the core conceptual, theoretical and methodological questions and – uniquely – a comprehensive overview of the main empirical fields of Europeanization research. Secondly, by pointing out exactly what the gaps of the literature are in its current stage of development, this book also intends to serve the scholarly community by pointing out explicit directions for further research. This book thus aims to present the different research agendas related to the various aspects of the phenomenon of Europeanization.

The final ambition of this book, making up the balance of more than a decade of Europeanization research, is even more challenging. The jury is still out on the question of whether Europeanization research is a “passing fad” or rather a more permanent part of the study of European politics (Featherstone and Radaelli 2003b). At this stage of development of the “new” research agenda, therefore, a comprehensive and clear-cut presentation of the key achievements and shortcomings of Europeanization research may well be very timely. With this timing we mean that, as probably with many new research agendas, early Europeanization research has focused very much on conceptual delimitation, construction of analytical frameworks and mostly illustrative and informative case studies. The online journal *European Integration online Papers* has greatly advanced the conceptualization and study of Europeanization (Radaelli 2003 (2000); Knill and Lehmkuhl 2002 (2000); and Börzel and Risse 2003 (2002) were all first published as EIoP papers). Notwithstanding the invaluable contribution to a developing research agenda, however, much of that early research – certainly as far as some conceptual (e.g. on top-down vs bottom-up definitions, or on convergence) or theoretical (e.g. on the fit-misfit model) discussions are concerned – has been relatively inward-looking. Given the need to delimit a certain reserved space amongst the traditional disciplines of international relations, comparative politics and EU studies and to clarify the conceptual perimeter for Europeanization research, there is probably little surprise regarding the somewhat abstract and self-contained scholarly discourse in those years. As Radaelli and Pasquier argue, debates on definitions

are particularly important in the genetic stage of a new field of inquiry (Chapter 3).

By contrast, more recent Europeanization work is rather straightforward in tackling empirical puzzles in a more down-to-earth inductive manner and also more willing to connect to, particularly, comparative politics and comparative (institutional) sociology. Two preliminary comments can be made about what might be called this “empirical turn”. First, having moved beyond conceptual issues, there is now – much more than before – attention for methodological aspects of Europeanization research. Haverland’s (2005) paper on methodology is not only path-breaking because simply no such work existed before, but substantially also presents a first attempt to bring rigor to the typical tool of counterfactual reasoning in Europeanization research (see also Chapter 5). In fact, apart from obvious research gaps due to overconcentration on the “usual suspects” of comparative Europeanization studies (foremost France, Germany and the United Kingdom), or a lack of large-N studies more generally, the most common methodological problem noticed by many contributors to this volume is surely the overdetermination of research designs (see e.g. Eising on interest representation, or Lavenex on asylum policy). Secondly, the empirical turn in Europeanization studies does not mean that theoretical debates are closed. On the contrary, a major challenge exists as to how to theorize Europeanization. The research challenge is after all not one of inventing definitions or doing straightforward descriptions, but rather one of modeling of the dynamics of change coupled with empirical tests (Olsen 2002: 944; but see Caporaso’s argument in Chapter 2).

In the remainder of this chapter we briefly introduce the kind of discussions that readers may expect as to conceptualizing, theorizing and measuring Europeanization. We end with an outline of the book and a brief explanation of the uniform chapter format.

## 1.2 Conceptualizing Europeanization

So what is Europeanization? Without prejudging Radaelli and Pasquier’s discussion of conceptual issues (Chapter 3), we wish to provide the reader here with at least a brief delimitation of the conceptual scope of Europeanization research. Although some scholars have underlined the relevance of both construction and diffusion of EU institutions and policies (see, for example, Börzel 2003b; Radaelli 2003), most of the contributions have mainly considered Europeanization as an adaptive process triggered by European regional integration. For the purpose of this handbook we thus understand Europeanization very broadly as *the domestic adaptation to European regional integration*. Let us clarify this briefly. With “regional integration” we mean the formation of closer

economic and/or political linkages among countries that are geographically near each other. Note that our explicit use of the term “Europeanization” means we specifically do not restrict Europeanization to adaptation to the EU only. “Domestic adaptation” should be understood here in a broad sense, and can include, for example, the administrative adaptation of executive government to a “continuous system of negotiations” within the EU (Chapter 10), the adaptation of interest groups and social movements to new institutional opportunity structures (Chapter 13), and also the normative consequences in terms of substantial political issues (see e.g. Chapter 8 on Regulatory Governance, Chapter 19 on Social Policy, or Chapter 21 on Economic Policy). In all cases the contributions to this book deal with research agendas concerned with how European regional integration “feeds back” in national political systems, and thus have a principal (though not exclusive) focus on the domestic level. The chapter on Courts, for example, deals with domestic courts rather than with European courts, though needless to say the rulings of the European Court of Justice may be an important source for explaining enhanced judicial activism at the national level (Chapter 14). And all policy chapters (Part III) deal not so much with the development of policies at the European level, though a quick overview will be presented in most cases, but rather with how these policies are implemented nationally (or how domestic policies change indirectly even in cases where explicit European models are absent).

It is important to note that this definition, in Radaelli and Pasquier’s terminology, serves more as a “background concept” to clarify in a very general sense the scope of research presented here, than as a “systematized concept” that encompasses all intricacies of the phenomenon of Europeanization. We would see five points that need to be taken into account were one to go beyond our very basic definition and see more explicitly what the scope of the Europeanization research agenda is. These points, which we elaborate below, also summarize the main contested areas related to the conceptual scope of Europeanization research:

- There is nothing necessarily “top-down” about focusing on domestic adaptation to European regional integration;
- The research scope should include both direct effects (implementation of European legislation) as well as indirect effects (horizontal effects of European integration);
- The research scope should not be restricted to a uniform impact (harmonization or convergence) but should also allow for a differential impact of European integration;
- The research scope should not be restricted to changing policy domains only but should allow for a wide potential domain of impact and thus include the wider polity and politics dimensions (e.g. political structures, domestic discourses, identities, etc.).

- The research scope goes beyond the mere impact on EU member states, and also beyond the impact of the European Union, and therefore the dynamics of change should be generalizable to the effects of regional integration processes as such.

On the first point, many scholars distinguish the new research agenda of Europeanization from traditional approaches to European integration by pointing out its exclusively top-down approach. This perspective is perhaps best expressed by Hix and Goetz (2000: 3–4) who argue that

[t]o understand the impact of European integration on domestic systems it is not decisive whether delegation is determined by domestic government preferences, driven by transnational economic actors, or “cultivated” by supranational entrepreneurs. What matters for domestic actors and institutions is how the delegation to the European level affects policy outcomes in the domestic arena. Put another way, who are the winners and losers from the EU?

At face value, such an approach would imply that we need to look at domestic policy A, domestic institution B, or domestic actor C, and analyze change in terms of policy substance, institutional set-up, or political behaviour between the time before ( $t_0$ ) and after ( $t_1$ ) a specific European dimension is introduced in a given policy area or a new European agency or coordination mechanism is created. In this way one can, as it were, analyze Europeanization by observing the “net change” at the domestic level between  $t_0$  and  $t_1$ . Apart from the problem that in reality increasingly intertwined political systems make it difficult to detect what causes what (as Mair notes in Chapter 12 on political parties acting at both the national and the European level), it is crucial to see that even in this simplistic modelling there is nothing inherently “top-down” about Europeanization research. Implementation research related to the transposition of European directives may admittedly have such a distinct Europe-to-national characteristic, but this is research much more interested in questions of effectiveness and performance within a European system of governance rather than in explaining domestic change as such (see also Sverdrup on implementation performance in Chapter 15). By contrast, to assess the “net result” of European regional integration without making that European factor “a cause in search of an effect” (Goetz 2000), domestic change can only be accounted for by starting from a – hypothesized – domestic situation *ex ante* (the  $t_0$  situation). This means that in order to study Europeanization we need to start at the domestic level, analyze how policies or institutions are formed at the EU level, and subsequently determine the effects of political challenges and pressures exerted by the diffusion of European integration at the domestic level (cf. Börzel 2002b: 193). Such

a “bottom-up-down” design is probably the only guarantee, if any (cf. Haverland 2005), for a due consideration of the European factor as one of several alternative explanations.

On the second point, of direct versus indirect effects, our background definition of Europeanization is basically agnostic on the question whether pressure from either specific European models or more indirectly from new opportunities and constraints results in political change. “Horizontal effects” may be understood as the result of both increased competition and cooperation between countries and also of increased exchange of information and mutual learning simply by being part of an integrated Europe. Although empirically the difference might not be very easy to capture, in principle these effects can be categorized alongside the mechanisms of adaptation, the magnitude of the effects, and the actors involved. The mechanisms of adaptation are clearly more predictable in the case of direct EU pressure and effects since specific objectives and policy instruments have to be put in place in order to comply to EU regulation. By contrast, where there is no EU regulation or only a “soft” framework such as the Open Method of Coordination (OMC), indirect effects could introduce new mechanisms such as diffusion or learning that are more difficult to detect. The magnitude of these effects could also be different due to a greater discretion for member state governments when policy objectives and instruments are not formally imposed by Brussels. Finally, in the case of indirect effects, we might expect a greater role for non-state actors, such as political parties, pressure groups and think tanks, as vital catalysts of Europeanization.

On the third point, of focusing not purely on convergence in terms of the substantial outcome of Europeanization, we need to specify not only what Europeanization is, but also what it is *not*. To avoid the danger of conceptual stretching, as Radaelli (2003) rightly notes, Europeanization should not be confused with convergence, harmonization or political integration. *Convergence* can be a consequence of European integration, but it must not be used synonymously with Europeanization because there is a difference between a process and its consequences (Radaelli 2003: 33). There may have been convergence in monetary policies towards monetarist policy and away from Keynesianism in the member states that joined the EMU (Sbragia 2001; see also Dyson’s chapter on Economic Policy). Yet, as Eising argues, the responses to European integration may very well be differential, as the effects on interest representation show, which are very much embedded in a specific domestic context (Chapter 13). Laffan also sees a continuing diversity in administrative adaptation of executive government rather than convergence upon a certain model (Chapter 10). *Harmonization* of national policies is often seen as an important goal of European integration, but empirical research suggests that Europeanization is often manifest in a “differential” impact of European requirements on domestic policies (Héritier *et al.* 2001). For example, European directives aimed at

harmonizing gender equality policy, in effect often leave much room for continued national diversity (Caporaso and Jupille 2001). Understanding, finally, why countries pool and delegate sovereignty (Milward 1994; Moravcsik 1998) is not the same as understanding the specific dynamics, or even the unexpected consequences, this process of *political integration* brings about at the domestic level.

On the fourth point, about the need for Europeanization research not being restricted solely to policy domains, this is not so much a point many will contest, as a point that needs to be stressed in terms of opening new avenues for further research. Since EU institutions or policies provide not only specific goals and targets, but also simultaneously new resources to national actors, the national political domain needs to be investigated in a broad sense to properly understand the dynamics of change caused by Europeanization. Broadly speaking, effects can display for all the traditional levels of a political regime: politics, policy and policies (Börzel and Risse 2003). Although the literature has initially been very much policy oriented, more recently also political processes and actors such as parties and interest groups on the one hand, and national polities on the other, have widened the analytical spectrum. In fact, both the search for political power and the functioning of national political institutions have been challenged by the deepening of European regional integration. To begin with, parties now have to deal with a multi-level political system where there is not only a national parliament but also a supranational political arena – the European Parliament – where party competition takes place. As Mair shows in his contribution to this volume, over the years parties have been influenced not only as potential decision makers but also as political actors primarily aimed at representing electorates in specific political arenas (cf. Mair 2000, 2004). Similarly, interest groups have been challenged by the development of increasing competences at the EU level: not only have they tried to influence supranational political actors such the European Commission and the European Parliament, but they also have witnessed domestic organizational changes due to Europeanization (Grote and Lang 2003). Furthermore, national polities have been at the centre of pressures for adaptation originated by the EU, as clearly manifested in the enlargement process, but also for example by a new politics of regulatory governance that at least partially originates in increased regional integration in Europe (see Levi-Faur on Regulatory Governance).

On the fifth point, of clarifying the “European” aspect of Europeanization, it seems that the concept of Europeanization is monopolized by scholars of the unification process between the member states of the European Union, and concentrates on adaptation to “Brussels”. As the following contributions will show, this handbook is no exception to this rule and probably strongly reflects the EU domination of Europeanization research. Europeanization research has, of course, not been restricted to EU member states only, but has also included

non-members Switzerland and Norway (Mach *et al.* 2002) and candidate countries in Central and Eastern Europe (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2004). In both cases, however, domestic adaptation is still seen as a response to the EU, either as quasi-member or as candidate member. Yet it must be recognized that “European integration” in itself covers a wider range of processes and institutions than just the EU. Europeanization is more than and different from EU-ization (Wallace 2000; Schmidt and Wiener 2005). Recent Europeanization research may have been boosted by the specific case of the European Union, but there is much to say to include other instances of regional integration within that same research agenda. Within Europe, one may think of such regional institutions as the European Free Trade Area (EFTA) in the economic sphere, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in the field of international relations, and the Council of Europe (COE) in the area of human rights. These institutions are often highly intertwined with the European Union in terms of organization and even identity, as in the case of the European Economic Area Agreement (EEA) between the EU and the EFTA. Furthermore, the EU and the COE share both flag (twelve golden stars on field of blue) and anthem (Beethoven’s “Ode to Joy”). These overlaps do not preclude, however, the distinct origins and institutions of the different European organizations. Perhaps more importantly, by not restricting the concept of Europeanization solely to the impact of the EU, we can apply the same methodological tools to larger processes within Europe, and for other cases of regional integration. By opening up to more generalizable dynamics we can embrace the theoretical argument that views the European Union not as a unique phenomenon requiring a *sui generis* explanation, but as an advanced instance of regional co-operation (Moravcsik 1998: 4–5; cf. Caporaso 1999: 161). Since other regional organizations as ASEAN, MERCOSUR or WAU are evolving rapidly tools developed theoretically in the Europeanization literature could be applied in other cases, and vice versa. We see such a wider scope as an important catalyst of this developing research agenda (but see Lehmkuhl’s skepticism on this point in Chapter 25).

### 1.3 Theorizing Europeanization

Our last point about broadening the conceptual scope very much relates to the issue of how to theorize the domestic adaptation to European regional integration. As Bulmer notes in his contribution (Chapter 4), Europeanization as such is not a theory, but rather a phenomenon that needs to be explained. Radaelli (2004; cf. Featherstone and Radaelli 2003b: 340) also stresses that Europeanization should be seen as a problem, rather than a solution. Theory thus comes in where we need to answer *how* European policies, rules and norms are affecting domestic political systems. Here Europeanization scholars have

reverted almost without exception to the broad spectrum of theories that fall under the umbrella of the so-called “new institutionalism”. In fact, one might even go so far as to say that the Europeanization research agenda as such exemplifies the institutionalist turn in the political science of the 1980s (Hix and Goetz 2000: 18; Börzel and Risse 2003; Olsen 2002). And as far as institutions are seen as norms or collective understandings that constitute the self-images and preferences of actors, in other words as far as the sociological institutionalist strand is concerned, one may also see a clear link between the Europeanization agenda and the constructivist turn in international relations theory (Checkel 1998: 326, 341).

Institutional approaches are characterized most concisely by the notion that “institutions matter” (Pierson 1996). Institutions are classically understood as the formal rules, standard operating procedures and organizations of government. In its “new” understanding, however, institutions may also encompass informal rules, routines and conventions. Following March and Olsen’s (1989) two institutional logics, those of consequentiality and of appropriateness, two main logics of change are usually distinguished when applying institutional theory to Europeanization research. A most common, rationalist, story accounts for change by pointing at evolving political opportunity structures. We referred earlier to Moravcsik’s paper about executives enhancing their bargaining leverage by playing simultaneously a domestic and a European game. Yet other well-known “rationalist” examples may be interest groups or business associations profiting from a reshuffling of the domestic power structure (Chapter 13). And not only may judges be empowered by a new European referral process, but litigants and lawyers may also profit from “a second line of defense against unfavorable national legislation”, as Nyikos argues (Chapter 14). A sociological perspective, on the other hand, accounts for change by pointing at norm entrepreneurs and cooperative informal institutions mobilizing in favor of adaptation. Socialization and learning, although under-researched according to Laffan (Chapter 10), may thus be very relevant for the “EU cadre” in domestic administrative systems. The securitization literature in the field of asylum policy is another example that draws on such socialization mechanisms (Chapter 23). Finally, one may also distinguish a third historical strand of institutionalism that points more directly at the temporal dynamics of change (Hall and Taylor 1996; see also Bulmer in Chapter 4). These two, or three, logics need not be mutually exclusive but may be seen as part of a synthetic theoretical framework for Europeanization research (Börzel 2002b; Börzel and Risse 2003).

Apart from these insights from institutional theory, one perhaps less noticed shortcoming of current theorizing of Europeanization is its failure to feed back to the traditional integration theories. The case of the European Union is one of the most advanced instances of nation-states working towards an “ever-closer

union” and seemingly becoming ever more porous. European integration studies have by consequence always been occupied with the viability of the sovereign state as such since the early days of post-war European economic cooperation, but have approached this question very much via the study of how a regional institution as the EU with a supranational legal order has evolved. In questioning the state of the state, therefore, the Europeanization research agenda responds much better to the general concern of “unit variation” in contemporary political science (Kahler 2002; Rhodes 1994). Yet, precisely because it is more specifically directed at the study of state porosity, there is also a very good opportunity to reflect on how these insights feed back to the process of institution building at the European level. This connection between institutional logics of change and theories of integration may be briefly explained as follows.

First, as to neofunctional theories of integration, although the endpoint of the integration process has never been a univocal “United States of Europe”, even a quasi-federal trajectory would indeed signify the beginning of the end of the nation-state as the dominant unit for political organization. Jean Monnet, for example, the first President of the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), advocated supranational competencies only in certain economic sectors, but not without seeing the potential for further integration. Such “spillover” from limited to wider economic cooperation forms the core of the neo-functional theories of European integration (Haas 1958; Lindberg 1963). These theories are functionalist to the extent that they acknowledge that specific goals, such as exchange rate stability, can sometimes only be achieved by taking further actions, such as wider monetary cooperation. The “hollowing out” of the state in this model is then preordained by the fact that member states are “resolved to ensure the economic and social progress of their countries by common action to eliminate the barriers which divide Europe” (EC Treaty, Preamble). With regard to the logic of institutionalization, neo-functionalism and its contemporary counterpart of supranational governance underline the importance of transnational activities (Stone Sweet and Sandholtz 1997: 311). Although supranational theories do not necessarily exclude actor-centered strains of institutionalism (see e.g. Pierson 1996), they do tend to emphasize the broader cultural environment in which decisions are being made and their historical background and determinants. European organizations and rules are increasingly taken for granted and structure the behavior of national actors. Hence we might connect those “thicker” and “historically driven” forms of Europeanization, as hypothesized by sociological and historical institutionalism, to supranational theories of European integration (cf. Stone Sweet *et al.* 2001: 6).

Second, a contrasting model of European integration is provided by inter-governmentalist theory. Here the development of a supranational political

organization is viewed as contributing not so much to the demise, but rather to the rescue of the nation-state. “The surrenders of national sovereignty after 1950 were one aspect of the successful reassertion of the nation-state as the basic organizational entity of Europe” (Milward 1994: 438). According to Moravcsik (1993: 474), a proponent of so-called liberal intergovernmentalism, “the EC can be analyzed as a successful international regime designed to manage economic interdependence through negotiated policy co-ordination.” What matters for understanding the European Union are the preferences and power of its member states because these explain the choices of sovereign governments to shift decision-making powers to European institutions. By implication, because member state governments remain in the driver’s seat, European integration is by no means preordained to an “ever-closer” federal union. The persistence of national power, on the contrary, shows the unlikelihood of the disappearance of the nation-state (see Moravcsik 1998 for a fuller account). 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, it allows them to avoid blame at home for unpopular policies by pointing at international package deals and the need to honor their international obligations (Putnam 1988). One could argue that European integration redistributes domestic political influence in favor 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 Europeanization 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.

#### 1.4 Measuring Europeanization

As Haverland argues in his chapter on methodology there has so far been little, yet some, attention for the issue of how to measure the decisiveness of the European factor. We highlight four points here, one about taking a broad approach to how Europe impacts on domestic political systems, one about counterfactual reasoning, one more generally about doing more comparative and possibly quantitative work, and a final note about the remaining importance of thick description and process tracing.

First, direct effects of European integration should be distinguished from indirect effects. As Mair points out in his chapter with reference to parties and party systems, the introduction of elections to the European Parliament has led to the formation and mobilization of new political alternatives in those elections as well as in national contests. Other examples could be the organizational restructuring of a ministry in order to cope with EU obligations, or the legal transposition of a European directive into national legislation. In other cases, however, effects might be rather indirect, as in the case of political parties that might be weakened through the encouragement of alternative forms of interest representation (Chapter 12). Another example of indirect Europeanization are the cost containment pressures experienced by European welfare states before the European Employment Strategy and the Open Method of Coordination were launched. Or so-called horizontal effects may be seen as indirect Europeanization where domestic changes are the result not so much of “top down” imposition from Brussels, but rather of increased policy competition between countries as a result of growing exchange of information, as for example in the case of asylum policy (Chapter 23). From a methodological point of view, this means that we cannot always (or probably not even in most cases) see a “European effect” by looking for a label that says “European”. Laws that are introduced to transpose a directive may say so in the legal motivation, and also parliamentary debates may in such cases refer to the straightforward need to implement European law, but in most other cases researchers may observe a European effect only by the hypothesized direct or indirect effects of European integration.

Secondly, counterfactual reasoning is a natural and indispensable methodological tool for Europeanization research. One key problem of much of the Europeanization literature is an over-determination of the European factor, when explaining domestic change. Especially when looking at policy changes at the national level, we should carefully try to distinguish Europeanization from, for instance, globalization (Graziano 2003). At the same time, plausible alternative explanations for domestic change may not only be derived by looking beyond European pressures, but also by taking into account endogenous processes within national political systems. To use a simple example, change of government, could well be a better explanation for, say, a restriction of immigration policy than a still vague notion of “fortress Europe” (Vink 2005). Bursens’ example of the Belgian federalization process being the result rather of an internal domestic political dynamic rather than of a so-called “Europe of the regions” strategy by the Commission is another classic example of where counterfactual reasoning comes in (Chapter 9). The reader will find other examples in the contributions to this handbook, together with an equally common call in most critical sections to take counterfactual reasoning seriously.

Thirdly, a more general point about using different research designs. It is true that much Europeanization research to date has been of a qualitative nature

and restricted mostly to either case studies or focused comparisons of a limited number of countries. The reader will find in the following contributions many calls for more research that goes beyond this small-N, often thick descriptive work. Eising points at the research gap that currently exists as to the simple lack of comprehensive information about the scope of interest group Europeanization across the EU (Chapter 13). Even in a much-researched field as environmental policy, Börzel argues, we are still missing the bigger picture (Chapter 17). The same can be said, according to Falkner, about the field of social policy (Chapter 19). This problem of generalizability of findings is probably exacerbated even further by the fact that where comparative work is undertaken, this is often restricted to such “usual suspects” as Germany, France and the United Kingdom. Or comparative work is done within a certain group of states, such as the new member states, Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier argue, but not within a theoretically more interesting group of earlier candidates and new member states (Chapter 7). Case selection and the focus of the study should be explicitly linked, Guiraudon also concludes, as different designs may be needed for attempting to explain different degrees of Europeanization between countries, weighing the explanatory value of the European sources of domestic change against alternative explanations, and trying to understand the meaning of “EU pressure” (Chapter 22).

At the same time, finally, such calls for broader comparisons in no way imply a uniform consensus on the need for more quantitative work at the expense of older qualitative traditions of Europeanization research. Yet what is generally accepted is that, at minimum, methodological reflection should be more visible in forthcoming research. A more explicit and transparent use of interviews, and qualitative work more generally, could be of great use to Europeanization research. Although there has been criticism on the use of interviews within the European integration literature (Moravcsik 1998; but see Scharpf 1999), interviews constitute a major source of information and may be plausibly used to trace motivations for certain actions. As Haverland argues, process tracing may be indispensable not only in finding out about the historical context of a policy domain or domestic actor, but also in elucidating the causal mechanisms through which regional integration actually matters for European domestic political systems. Bulmer’s call for more explicit historical institutionalist theorizing also implies that we need thick description to point out the critical junctures in European and national policy or institutional changes.

## 1.5 Outline

We stated three main ambitions for this book at the outset of this introduction: to satisfy emerging requests for a well-informed and comprehensive overview of Europeanization research, to set out directions for further research, *and* to make up the balance of the evolving Europeanization research agenda. As to

whether this book lives up to its ambitions it is worthwhile stressing that this volume is not merely a collection of previously written work on Europeanization by internationally renowned scholars. Every contribution has been written with the explicit purpose of providing a state-of-the-art review of a specific aspect of the new research agenda of Europeanization, and this has been done within a uniform chapter structure. We should also stress that there was no expectation from our side to apply a common framework to a particular field and, apart from our broad background definition, we in fact resisted several requests from contributors to provide even as much as a more systematic understanding of Europeanization. The considerable diversity in understandings of Europeanization by the different contributors reflects an ongoing discussion within the literature and our aim is to reflect, rather than suppress that diversity.

Contributors were also asked not to expose their own theories and empirical findings on a specific topic beyond what was reasonable given their own contributions to the literature. By contrast, each contributor was encouraged by us to provide more than just a summary of their own writings, or the literature at large, and expected to critically reflect on the achievements and pitfalls of the research agenda of Europeanization, to focus on general problems in research design and methodology, on conceptual and theoretical issues. We also asked contributors to do all this in a concise manner and to stick to a restrictive word limit of 5,500 words, excluding references. In order to secure a comprehensive *and* critical survey of the evolving literature we furthermore sent out draft versions of all chapters to anonymous expert reviewers with the request to assess which parts of the research domain were not well covered by the author, which major trends should be included, and which other shortcomings of the literature should at least be discussed.

The stocktaking approach of this handbook is reflected by the uniform four-section outline according to which Chapters 3 to 24 are structured: Introduction, Core Research Questions, Key Problems, and Conclusion. In the introduction each chapter gives a short historical overview of Europeanization research in the specific field. The second section presents the main focus of inquiry by going into the core research questions regarding a specific topic. Here one can find which research questions scholars have been occupied with, what the main names are in the field, and how they have gone about in their research. Subsequently, the third section highlights the key problems of past and current research with regard to addressing these core questions, and points at the main theoretical, methodological and empirical shortcomings of the literature. The fourth section of each chapter concludes with a brief evaluation of what has been achieved so far and with some suggestions for further research.

The Handbook is structured into five parts. The two central parts are dedicated to the most common empirical fields of study covered by existing research on Europeanization, focusing on politics and polity, and on policies. The third part is fully devoted to the polity and politics dimensions of national political systems. Contributions deal with the three classic institutions of government (legislatures, executives, judiciary), but also with power relations (for instance, among various state structures), territorial differentiation in Europeanization patterns (north–south, or between old and new member states), regulation and deregulation, and with national political actors (parties, interest groups, social movements). The fourth part, on policies, comprises a number of policy chapters which illustrate the main results in the most studied public policy fields. It starts with a more general chapter on the central issue of implementation, and then includes chapters on both policy domains which have been longer established at the European level (such as agricultural policy and cohesion policy), as well as on fields which are fairly new in terms of EU competence but already a firm part of the Europeanization literature (such as social policy, asylum policy and foreign policy).

The second part of the book deals with the three issues of how to conceptualize, how to theorize, and how to measure Europeanization. Caporaso's chapter on the "three worlds of regional integration theory" provides readers with a further introduction from the point of view of regional integration theories. That contribution is meant to remind readers of the tradition in which this new research agenda is embedded, and also to picture the three-step approach that has become one (if not the) classic model of Europeanization so far, and thus very much represents the state of the art against which this handbook is set. We have highlighted some main issues for an assessment in this introduction in order to provide the reader with some basic terminology of Europeanization research. Three further chapters in Part II very much set out the theoretical and methodological lines much more specifically along which readers can evaluate the empirical chapters and judge what Europeanization research is about, what its potentials are, and what hurdles are yet to be taken to further progress this developing research agenda.

The final part of the book comes back to the background and overall evaluation of this new research agenda. In the closing chapter of the book Lehmkuhl approaches the promises and pitfalls of Europeanization research from a more generalist perspective of the theory and methodology of political science and public policy research. That conclusion comes back to the issues discussed in this introductory chapter and aims at a vital "closing" of the book by reflecting on what has been achieved so far by this new research agenda. With its explicitly critical perspective, however, the book ends with a chapter aiming to stimulate, rather than closing, an ongoing discussion on the proper status of Europeanization research.

## Key readings

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- Cowles, M.G., J. Caporaso and T. Risse (eds) (2001) *Transforming Europe: Europeanization and Domestic Change*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
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- Zeff, E.E. and E.B. Pirro (eds) (2001) *The European Union and the Member States: Co-operation, Co-ordination and Compromise*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

A note on bibliography: given the inevitable overlap between references in the 25 chapters of this volume, and because of limited space, we have opted to include all references in one main reference list at the end of the book. That fifty-page reference list may also usefully serve as a comprehensive bibliography of Europeanization literature. In addition, all chapters end with a short list of "Key readings."

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