

Jean Monnet Centre for European Studies/UniHB**Research Program “Integration in the New Europe”***Ulrike Liebert/ Susanne K. Schmidt*

The way Europe has integrated over the past 50 years has led to serious imbalances between economic and political integration. Traditionally focusing on market integration the existing imbalance came originally to the fore in the analysis of the different conditions for positive and negative integration in the European Union. The latter, implying market-making, could rely on provisions for market freedoms and competition law, being enforced by the Commission and the European Court of Justice as non-majoritarian institutions. The former, implying market-shaping, met with many more prohibitions needing support in the Council and the European Parliament. The political embedding of markets in the EU has therefore always been comparatively difficult. With Eastern enlargement, the constraints on joint policy-making in the Union have tightened. More heterogeneous interests do not offer favourable conditions for achieving qualified majorities, posing difficulties for cooperation in new policy fields and for constantly reforming the large *acquis communautaire* alike. New modes of governance are playing an increasing role in the Union and may answer to some coordination needs; yet recent research indicates their limits. At the same time, market-making through the interpretation of the Treaty seriously undermines the existing varieties of capitalism in Europe in favour of the Anglo-Saxon liberal kind. Accordingly, regulatory policy imposes increasingly redistributive issues; hence the political contention surrounding the services directive. Given their societal impact, regulatory choices of the Commission and the European Court of Justice can no longer be legitimated with Pareto-efficiency, if they ever could. But the legitimation of the European polity has encountered increasing difficulties given the limits of a parliamentary democracy in this setting.

Given the increasing contradictions between widening, deepening and legitimating the Union, a complex research agenda is opened, to be tackled by political scientists, lawyers, and sociologists alike. While there is a lack of viable perspectives, it seems certain that a legitimate and functioning European Union can only be a multi-level polity. Here, the lower national and regional levels will remain capable of using their stronger legitimacy resources for pursuing policy goals in some areas that remain unchallenged. This leads to three sets of research questions to be tackled in this field:

1) In view of the current overlapping of legal orders in Europe, analytical-empirical as well as normative questions arise as to the possibilities of arriving at a legal order of the multi-level polity that safeguards competences at all levels. Though Member states have not delegated competences for all policy fields to the EU, the preponderance of the single market has led to increasing inroads of European judicial reasoning in reserved fields. It is one of the greatest challenges to combine an integrated European market with sustained political options of embedding economic activities at the national and regional level. Moreover, in the field of Justice and Home Affairs similar issues are raised of how to link national legitimation and transnational action.

2) In addition, the question of furthering the efficiency and legitimacy of supranational policy-making remains key. Proposals of an increased use of flexible integration belong here as much as the potential of new modes of governance, and suggestions for enhancing the legitimacy of the European polity through representative and participatory constitutional processes. In this context, the emerging transnational European public sphere will be studied as well as party political and civil society mechanisms for linking public opinion and political will formation to European decision-making.

3) Finally, integration in the new Europe also means dealing with increased heterogeneity within Member states. With respect to social integration, three kinds of questions will be addressed: First, how does Europeanization affect social welfare and social inequality and how are European member states coping with the undermining of their national formulae of social solidarity? Second, can the European Union enhance social cohesion and convergence and foster a sense of European community, solidarity and mutual recognition? Finally, how does the European Union affect its neighbors, and can it resolve the tensions from the new social divisions emerging there?

CEuS is part of a European-wide network of EU research centers, and hosts international research groups exploring the politics of European integration and Europeanization. Current international and interdisciplinary research projects include “Citizenship, Constitutionalisation and the European Public Sphere” and the “Reconstitution of Democracy in Europe/WP5: civil society and the public sphere” (with ARENA/ Oslo) both directed by Ulrike Liebert, and “The Domestic Impact of European Law” directed by Susanne K. Schmidt. The RCES, directed by Wolfgang Eichwede, has for more than two decades developed a strong research record on the historical, economic, political and cultural transformations of the new EU member states.

CEuS cooperates with several research institutions active in this area: (1) ZERP, with a longstanding record in legal and political research, including EU constitutionalization (Josef Falke), supranational codification (Christoph Schmid), transnational civil society (Patrizia Nanz), and in governance from a legal and political science perspective (Christian Joerges). (2) sociologists with an explicit interest in the EU (Jan Delhey/Jacobs University; Martin Heidenreich/Oldenburg University). A number of scholars cooperate in international Bachelor (Hanse Law School; Integrated European Studies) and Master programs (International and European Law). An RTG works on the risks of exclusion and strategies of inclusion in the enlarged EU (Karin Gottschall/ Steffen Mau, GSSS). In addition, Beate Kohler-Koch’s work on multi-level governance is as renowned as it is central for the activities of the field, and Fritz W. Scharpf’s seminal contributions to European integration research clearly form a basis for several of its core interests (both faculty members of ^{BI}GSSS). The CEuS research program cooperates closely with the field of “Global Integration” (IniiS, GSSS) given the many parallels between European and global integration; with “Social Integration and the Welfare State” concerning the scope and limits of the EU’s social dimension (ZeS); and with “Conflict and Integration in Heterogeneous Democracies” (ZeS, Jacobs University) and “Attitude Formation, Value Orientations, and Cultural Change” on topics covering transnational citizenship and civil society (Jacobs University).