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Causal Explanation in Studies of Europeanisation

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1. Introduction

Europeanisation is like one of those bumble bees that seem to defy the laws of aerodynamics, yet they fly. In 2002 Johan Olsen was lamenting that, several years after his seminal paper on *Europeanisation and Nation State Dynamics* (Olsen, 1995), political scientists were still debating about concepts and definitions (Olsen, 2002). Each author - he argued - appeared to go on with her own concepts and frameworks in mind, and merrily ignore more substantive questions concerning how exactly Europeanisation is changing politics and policy at the domestic level. Hussein Kassim (cited by Olsen, 2002) had therefore already concluded in 2000 that such an unwieldy field did not deserve too much attention, suggesting the futility of the whole exercise. In the end - Olsen reasoned - Europeanisation may be nothing but an attention-directing device.

Some years later, in the third edition of J.J. Richardson's *European Union's* textbook, Andrea Lenschow discussed the methods used by different authors to disentangle 'Europe as pressure' and 'Europe as usage' without being able to find how all this work could lead to 'concrete hypotheses about when and to what extent Europe affects the domestic level' (Lenschow, 2005: 67). Yet this question, that is, how European Union policy and politics affect the domestic level, is one of the defining questions for this field of research.

In the meantime, the academic enthusiasm for Europeanisation has remained stable, practically undeterred by these fundamental doubts, as shown by the growing number of articles, books, and doctoral dissertations on this topic, in different European languages. The bumble bee is flying, indeed. Other authors have produced more optimistic appraisals of the field. Peter Mair for example, in a short review piece (Mair, 2004: 346), praises the freshness of the Europeanisation approach, contrasting it with the dull and a-theoretical work that dominated the field of EU politics until recently. Radaelli and Exadaktylos (2009: 208) also come to qualify Lenschow's conclusion, arguing that the field is ready to move towards the exploration of 'more ambitious questions, such as: what does Europeanisation tell us about the politics of integration, power and legitimacy?'. So, not only does Europeanisation have the task of explaining the effects of the European Union (EU) on the domestic level. It should also engage with questions that have defined the whole academic

struggle to understand the politics of integration. The bumble bee has turned into a modern aircraft.

Amidst pessimistic and optimistic assessments lies the question of establishing causality. Perhaps this is only a modest question when compared to the grandiose plan to address power and the politics of integration. Perhaps it is not as exciting as engaging with definitions and concepts. But it is on this terrain that this field of research should either take off or admit its futility. To get close to causality, however, one has to take some distance. Causality, in fact, is a component of research design. It can be studied by different methods and with research strategies that may criss-cross the qualitative-quantitative divide. It may focus on mechanisms, cases or variables. It can also raise ontological questions, as reminded by Peter Hall's argument about the alignment of ontology and methodology (2003) or produce questions about the usefulness of a meta-theory in European Union studies—a field that experiences an increasing fragmentation or specialization (Jupille, 2005).

In this paper we examine the issue of causality by looking at different aspects, including variables and mechanisms, as well as case selection and other features of research design. The paper is organised as follows. In Section 2 we introduce the research questions, the methodological approach and the data used in the paper. Section 3 presents our results, and Section 4 the discussion. Section 5 briefly concludes.

2. Research questions, methods, and data

Before we describe our research questions, a note on what political scientists do when they attend to examine Europeanisation is in order. The classic question we often hear from our students is: When we talk about 'findings' in this literature, do we mean 'more' or 'less' Europeanisation? What is the relationship between the notion of findings and Europeanisation?

For most political scientists, Europeanisation is a process, not an outcome variable. Most authors define Europeanisation as a process with some specific properties. They measure the dependent variable NOT as 'Europeanisation' but in terms of political change, change in the constellation of actors at the domestic level, or variation in certain elements of policy (ideas, instruments, or procedures). This means that questions about the findings raise

some issues both in terms of process and in terms of outcome variables. We have therefore to clarify that it would be wrong to start with the assumption that the dependent variable is Europeanisation. As will become clear in the remainder of the paper there are many different operationalisations of the dependent variable.

With this caveat in mind, we can turn to specific research questions. This paper addresses the following questions:

RQ1—Are the findings about Europeanisation correlated to research design features of the studies in the sample we examined, such as 'case selection' (type of countries examined), the choice to examine policy or politics, the presence or absence of clearly articulated hypotheses, the preference for a lever of change or another (such as path-dependency or opportunity structure)? We do not have any strong prior expectations about RQ1, although we suspect that the more rigorous the design is, the more difficult it is to find Europeanisation. This is because authors such as Dyson (2002) and Radaelli and Pasquier (2007) have argued that in this type of research it is easy to pre-judge Europeanisation. Consequently, only by using thoughtful designs to examine complex temporal causal sentences can one avoid over-estimating Europeanisation. Findings may also be related to the dimensions considered. Broadly speaking, some authors are concerned with politics, some (more) authors with public policy, a few other authors work on the 'polity' dimension (Börzel and Risse, 2003).

RQ2—Granted, that for most of the authors Europeanisation is a process, rather than an outcome, is there a common pattern in the identification of the dependent variable? The question is whether the authors talk past each other because they are using different operationalisations of the dependent variable, or vice versa. Our prior expectation here is that there are very different definitions of the dependent variable, since there is no consensus on what exactly researchers are trying to measure (Lenschow, 2005, Raunio and Wiberg, 2010:76).

RQ3—Authors working on the *politics* dimension of Europeanisation are typically informed by comparative politics, whilst the authors dealing with the *policy* dimension draw on policy analysis or neo-institutionalism (Featherstone and Radaelli, 2003). This is a broad

categorisation, but it leads us to the question to what extent does the choice to look at either politics or policy make a difference, and precisely in relation to what?

RQ4—Given that explanation (at least in this field) revolves around both variables and mechanisms, what are the mechanisms used to explain Europeanisation? Particularly in this field of research, but not just in this field, causal explanations tend to go beyond correlational analysis between a set of independent variables and a dependent variable. Most authors engage with mechanisms, no matter how contested a mechanism-based approach to explanation may be (for very reasonable perplexities on 'mechanistic approaches' to social mechanisms see Gerring, 2010; see also Falletti and Lynch, 2010 on mechanisms and context). Some mechanisms have been tailored-made to suit the specific questions of this field of research. Others are more general mechanisms well-known in the literature on social interaction and causal explanation (Hedström, 2005). In the more general social sciences literature, the categories of mechanisms are much broader, covering for example relational (that is, mechanisms triggered by the interaction between one social actor and another, such as collective action problems and heresthetics), behavioural (cognition, learning, positive feedback, individual emotional responses to perceptions of threat) or environmental mechanisms (pressure and opportunities arising out of factors exogenous to the system under examination).

Within Europeanisation as field of research, Vivien Schmidt highlights mechanisms of coordinative and communicative discourse to explain the dependent variable of domestic policy change (Schmidt, 2002). Knill and Lehmkuhl (2002) draw attention to the mechanisms of competition, hierarchy and framing. In later work, Knill and Lenschow (2005) look at Europeanisation through the lenses of governance theory. They point to three mechanisms - i.e., coercion, competition, and communication. Thus the question we address here is whether we can find patterns in the choice of explanatory mechanisms. We expect to find mechanisms that have been suggested by the Europeanisation literature, such as competition, hierarchy and framing (Bulmer and Radaelli, 2005). We expect to find that mechanisms featuring in the more general political science-sociology literature (Hedström, 2005) are less explored.

To answer these questions, we used meta-analysis of the articles (for various approaches to this technique see Newig and Fritsch, 2009). We extracted a sample of highly cited articles from the social science citation index, searching for Europeanisation and filtering for political science. We cut the sample at the H-index point. The H-index is usually defined for individual researchers - a scholar with an H index of 5 has published 5 papers each of which has been cited by others at least 5 times. We can however calculate the index for a given field, in our case Europeanisation, to provide a synthetic number of the impact of the field. In our case, after having refined Europeanisation by excluding papers from outside the field of political science, we end up with an H index of 14. All the articles with at least 14 citations were published between 1997 and 2007. This left us with no recent articles in the sample.

To increase the number of observations, as well as to gather information from more recent trends, we added all the political science articles on Europeanisation that have published since January 2007 (up to September 2009) in the same journals where the articles with at least 14 citations had been published. We combined the two sets of articles and checked for statistical artefacts, that is, papers that had nothing to do with this field but accidentally included the word 'Europeanisation' somewhere in the abstract or in the title. Eventually, this process produced a sample of 46 articles, with a balanced distribution between highly cited and more recent articles.

20 articles stick to one of the classic definitions of Europeanisation, 4 provide their own original definition, and 22 do not provide any definition—this is often because the authors take for granted that the field is rather mature and there is a common understanding of what Europeanisation is. Some 21 articles work inside the conceptual-analytical framework of Europeanisation as defined in previous studies, 10 use it in contrast with alternative analytical frameworks, and 15 criticise and significantly amend the framework. These 15 articles show that there is a lively debate on what Europeanisation as conceptual framework is. There is no correlation between definition or not and the use of the Europeanization framework as the main drive for the research.

Table 1 - Sample				
ID	Name	Journal	Year	Citations
1	Anderson	AmBeSc	2002	16
2	Barbe et al	JEPP	2009	2
3	Benz & Eberlein	JEPP	1999	33
4	Beyers & Trondal	WEP	2004	14
5	Blavoukos & Pagoulatos	WEP	2008	2
6	Boerzel 1999	JCMS	1999	43
7	Boerzel 2002	JCMS	2000	36
8	Bursens	Scandinavian Pol Studies	2002	18
9	Cole & Drake	JEPP	2000	20
10	Dardanelli	Party Politics	2009	0
11	Dimitrova & Toshkov	WEP	2007	1
12	Dimitrova	WEP	2002	26
13	Dyson	JCMS	2000	14
14	Esmark	PA	2008	0
15	Gilardi	Annals	2005	23
16	Grabbe	JEPP	2001	57
17	Harmsen	Governance	1999	19
18	Hauray & Urfalino	JEPP	2009	0
19	Kern & Bulkeley	JCMS	2009	1
20	Knill et al	PA	2009	0
21	Knill & Lehmkuhl	EJPR	2002	40
22	Knill & Tosun	JEPP	2009	1
23	Ladrech 2002	Party Politics	2002	26
24	Ladrech 2007	WEP	2007	3
25	Lavenex	JCMS	2001	16
26	Levi-Faur	CPS	2004	14
27	Lippert et al	JEPP	2001	19
28	Marcussen et al	JEPP	1999	27
29	Martinsen & Vrangbaek	PA	2008	0
30	Michelsen	JEPP	2008	1
31	Noutcheva	JEPP	2009	0
32	Parau	WEP	2009	0
33	Piana	CPS	2009	0
34	Quaglia	JCMS	2009	5
35	Radaelli	CPS	1997	14
36	Scharpf	JEPP	1997	46
37	Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier	JEPP	2004	31
38	Schmidt	JEPP	2002	19
39	Schneider & Hage	JEPP	2008	1
40	Semetko et al	WEP	2000	14

41	Sitter	WEP	2001	14
42	Stolfi	JEPP	2008	0
43	Tocci	JCMS	2008	0
44	Trampusch	Governance	2009	0
45	Warleigh	JCMS	2001	17
46	Wessels	JEPP	1998	30

We designed a scorecard to measure 15 variables for each article. Scoring was carried out by a team of three doctoral students and the two authors of this paper. We piloted the scorecard on test articles, redefined the measurement of some variables, and proceeded to score the whole sample. Each article was scored independently by two researchers.

Later, we confronted the scorecard results and discussed in bilateral meetings in order to find agreement on the values of the variables. When no agreement was possible, we left the value of that specific variable within a given article blank (missing value). The final results were then used as dataset for this paper.

3. Findings

In this Section we present the results of the meta-analysis. The univariate analysis shows certain regularities and confirms prior expectations about the methods, the causal mechanisms and the research design. The bivariate analysis provides certain insights into the deeper implications of the use of various methodological tools. The logit and probit models test the expectations how research design features (such as the choice to study politics or policy, mechanisms-based explanations, the presence of absence of causal hypotheses and so on) affect the findings.

a. Univariate analysis

To begin with, let us first look at the two sub-samples, highly cited vs. recent papers. Authors are more or less equally explicit about providing a section about research design, although awareness is slightly greater in the newer articles. Overall, the sample is split

exactly in two on the presence or absence of a research design section. The motivation for case selection is higher for the highly cited.

Since this field of research is led by political scientists coming from the qualitative tradition it is not surprising to see a preference for qualitative methods—a strong preference indeed that has been a trend in EU studies in general (Jupille 2005). Only three studies use explicitly proper quantitative methods (regression, econometrics et al.). In terms of the hypotheses, the vast majority make an explicit reference to a causal hypothesis tested in the article (27 articles). Yet, out of those 15 do not offer a set of rival hypotheses—this adds to the 19 articles that did not include causal hypotheses at all. Finally, 33 make an explicit reference to time as a variable, with 13 specifying a time period. The following table provides an aggregate view of these findings:

Table 2: Aggregate data on design issues:

<i>Research Design</i>	Highly Cited	New	Total
Yes, there is a section	9	12	21
No such section	14	7	21
Unclear	3	1	4
<i>Case Selection</i>			
Justified	11	8	19
Not Justified	7	5	12
Irrelevant	8	7	15
<i>Measurement Method</i>			
Quantitative	1	2	3
Qualitative	21	12	33
Single Case Narrative	4	5	9
<i>Hypotheses</i>			
Yes specific hypotheses	8	4	12
Yes but no rival offered	8	7	15
No causal hypotheses	10	9	19

<i>Time as variable</i>			
Yes, specific period	5	8	13
Yes, vaguely specified	13	7	20
No or irrelevant	8	5	13

* Total of 45, one case was marked as missing as the assessment was not conclusive

In terms of the politics-policy choice—a dimension we introduced earlier on with reference to RQ3—there is a preference for studying policy effects, thus revealing a bias (table 3). Most of the papers fall in the categories of public administration, political economy and generic public policy analysis. In a sense, what Bulmer and Radaelli observed in 2005—that, roughly speaking, there is more Europeanisation of public policy than of politics—may be just an opinion, but there is definitively less intellectual appetite for appraising the politics dimension. This, however, stands in contrast with recent projects that have shown that the politics dimension is very important for this field. In particular, it has been argued that politics may be Europeanized in a subtle way yet deep way—for example via the EU-induced transformation of party organisation and party politics (Poguntke, et al., 2007).

Table 3: Field and Framework for total and sub-samples

Field and Framework	Highly Cited	New	Total
Policy Analysis	6	6	12
Public Administration	6	4	10
Parties, Government, Comparative Politics	6	2	8
Political Economy	2	3	5
International Relations, Identity	2	3	5
Elections, Public Opinion	1	0	1
Political Theory	1	0	1
Impossible to find	2	2	4

As for the choice of countries, the so-called awkward partners like the UK (8 articles), and, proportionately even more so, Denmark (5) receive a lot of attention. This is also explained by the high concentration of scholars publishing in English-speaking journals in these two countries. It is a well-known fact that the social science citation index discriminates against journals that use languages different from English. Overall, there is still much more interest in Europeanisation effects in the old-12/15 member states of the EU (43) than in the new members (13). Non-EU countries such as Switzerland are examined in 9 cases. Overall, there is bias in country selection, both in terms of the choice of old or new member states, and even within the six founding members (e.g., Italy features in 4 articles and Belgium in 3, but there are 7 articles for France and 8 for Germany, and no articles dedicated explicitly to the Netherlands).

The sample shows that the Commission and the Council or COREPER are the main European-level actors. The national executive and the political parties are the most important at the domestic level. The scorecard question was 'which of the following actors are found in the article'? Actors are defined as 'purposeful agents that participate in social interaction'.

Let us now look at what kinds of variables (politics-level and policy-level) are explained. The scorecard question was 'does the article try to explain variation of any of the following variables?' We found that in terms of policies, competition, the internal market, trade and regulation; economic policies (both fiscal and monetary); and environmental policies—which are directly controlled at the EU-level - feature prominently. As for the politics-level variables, the national executive and the political parties appear along with various interest groups. The following table summarizes these findings.

Table 4: Actors and independent variables (total actors, N = 183, total variables N = 68)

Actors	Observations	Variables	Observations
Commission	25	Agricultural Policy	1
European Parliament	6	Cohesion Policy	1
ECJ	4	Competition, Internal Market, Trade and Regulation	7
Council/COREPER	15	Economic (Monetary and Fiscal)	5
Other EU actors	3	Environmental Policy	7
National Executive	34	Foreign and Security Policy	3
Political Parties	11	Refugee, Asylum and Migration Policy	1
National Parliaments	6	Social, welfare and education policy	3
Domestic Courts	2	Urban and regional policy	2
Other Domestic Actors	22	National Elections	2
Public Opinion	9	Political Parties	5
EU Business Groups	2	National Executive	5
Domestic Business Groups	12	Media	1
EU NGOs	4	Public Opinion	1
Domestic NGOs	6	Interest or other groups	4
Media	2	Other political actors	7
Epistemic Community	6	Other variables	13
Other actors	14		

We tracked down the explanatory factors, distinguishing between those which are simply 'controlled for' and those that are also found significant. We use these concepts in a non-statistical sense, given the high number of qualitative articles in the sample. Indeed, we found a strong emphasis on ideational explanations (in the sense of Stolfi, 2010), covering factors such as discourse, ideas, and norms; socialisation and identity; followed by the composition of the executive; bureaucracy; and learning. Learning is frequently examined, but it is found significant only in a handful of cases. The table below summarizes the results for all factors examined in the study.

Table 5: Explanatory factors: controlled-for (N = 200) and significant (N = 131)

Explanatory Factor	Controls for	Significance
Discourse, ideas, norms and frames	30	22
Socialisation and identity	24	13
Executive, composition of government	19	15
Bureaucracy	17	12
Learning	16	7
Veto players and veto points	14	9
Type of political system	13	8
Transnational Actors	12	7
Economic Variables	12	7
Pressure Groups/NGOs	11	7
Electoral Competition	8	7
Legal system	7	4
Political Parties	6	3
Media	1	1
Other	10	9

b. Bivariate analysis

One of our research questions is about the relationship between findings and research design choices made by the authors. We coded a variable “Europeyes” with value of 1 for papers that find Europeanisation effects either qualitatively or quantitatively; 0 for papers that found no effects (for example because rival alternative hypotheses were confirmed and Europeanisation hypotheses falsified) or unclear results.

Simple cross-tabulation shows that whether the authors find Europeanisation or not, depends on the presence or absence mechanisms, time, or normative issues. If authors address mechanisms or are clear about their time period, they increase the probability of finding Europeanisation effects. Articles that address normative issues tend to find 'less' effects of Europeanisation processes on their dependent variable—a finding not supported by any prior expectation since we did not assume that normative issues arise out of pre-judging Europeanisation in whatever way. There is no statistical significance for variables

such as research design, case selection or causal hypotheses, although, the tabulation reveals a certain bias in the expected direction, e.g. when no causal hypotheses are present there is a bias towards finding Europeanisation.

Table 6: Cross tabulation between Europeanisation effects and (i) time, (ii) causal mechanisms, and (iii) normative issues.

(i) europeyes * time Crosstabulation: if Time period is included, the likelihood of finding Europeanisation effects is higher.

		time		Total
		.00	1.00	
europeyes	.00	61.5%	39.4%	45.7%
	1.00	38.5%	60.6%	54.3%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

(ii) europeyes * mechan Crosstabulation: if articles use causal mechanisms, the likelihood of finding Europeanisation effects is higher

		mechan		Total
		.00	1.00	
europeyes	.00	73.7%	25.9%	45.7%
	1.00	26.3%	74.1%	54.3%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

(iii) europeyes * norm Crosstabulation: if the articles discuss normative issues, the likelihood of finding Europeanisation effects is lower

		norm		Total
		.00	1.00	
europeyes	.00	38.7%	60.0%	45.7%
	1.00	61.3%	40.0%	54.3%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

c. Logistic regression

We ran a simple logistic regression to explore statistical significance (see Pampel, 2000 on logistic regression) of the variables we used in cross-tabulation. We found significance in items (i), (ii), and (iii) of table 6 with a greater emphasis on mechanisms and time (table 7).

Table 7: Logistic regression: time, mechanisms, normative issues

(i) Variables in the Equation – Time

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1(a) time	.901	.672	1.795	1	.180	2.462
Constant	-.470	.570	.680	1	.410	.625

a Variable(s) entered on step 1: time.

(ii) Variables in the Equation – Mechanisms

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1(a) mechan	2.079	.681	9.313	1	.002	8.000
Constant	-1.030	.521	3.906	1	.048	.357

a Variable(s) entered on step 1: mechan.

(iii) Variables in the Equation – Normative Issues

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1(a) norm	-.865	.643	1.808	1	.179	.421
Constant	.460	.369	1.553	1	.213	1.583

a Variable(s) entered on step 1: norm.

Although the authors work on different dimensions of 'explanation' we scored the articles in relation to three main levers of change. One way to map explanations in political science is to distinguish between structuralist and ideational levers of change (Stolfi, 2010). Thus, our first lever is ideational. The second is structuralist—variations of the 'opportunity structure' type of explanation, including veto points and strategic reactions to changes in electoral laws, incentives, policy resources and so on. The third lever of change is based on a notion of causality that is intimately different from the ideational and structuralist explanations (following Hall, 2003) – we cover these approaches under the category of path-dependent levers of change. The results show that if the lever is ideational, then change is most likely to be triggered by a policy variable. If the lever of change is identified as opportunity structure, then it is most likely to have been triggered by a politics variable. Finally, if change is path dependent, then change is likely to be triggered by a policy variable although this is not statistically significant. These results are further reinforced, at least for the ideational and

opportunity structure levers that are statistically significant, by a simple logistic regression (table 8):

Table 8: Logistic regression: levers of change

(i) Variables in the Equation - Ideational

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1(a)	polpot	2.079	1.167	3.174	1	.075	8.000
	Constant	-2.773	1.031	7.235	1	.007	.063

a Variable(s) entered on step 1: polpot.

(ii) Variables in the Equation – Opportunity Structure

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1(a)	polpot	-1.618	.774	4.373	1	.037	.198
	Constant	.606	.508	1.426	1	.232	1.833

a Variable(s) entered on step 1: polpot.

(iii) Variables in the Equation – Path Dependency

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1(a)	polpot	.470	.749	.394	1	.530	1.600
	Constant	-.875	.532	2.705	1	.100	.417

a Variable(s) entered on step 1: polpot.

Based on the results of the regression and the cross-tabulation analysis, we ran a simple *probit* model reporting on the marginal effects (see the model in appendix). The results are indeed encouraging for our intuitive hypothesis on how research design and mechanisms affect Europeanisation findings. The probit model shows a $\chi^2 = 0.0067$ and the results verify the importance of mechanisms and research design. Transforming this into an equation based on the probit analysis we obtain the following: the constant is not statically significant; if mechanisms are part of the equation there is a 57.8% increase in the probability of finding Europeanisation; if there are normative issues discussed there is probability of finding Europeanisation decreases by 37.9%; and finally, if there is a research design section in the study the probability of finding Europeanisation drops by 33.5%.

Discussion

In this Section we answer our research questions and add more information drawn from a broader conceptual analysis of the sample. The first research question was about the role of research design in finding Europeanisation effects (or lack thereof). Research design shows some elements of bias, such as lack of justification of case selection and the lack of explicit causal hypotheses that can be tested rigorously. The presence of a clear time-period and the inclusion of mechanism are also significant for appraising the effects of Europeanisation processes on the dependent variables of the sample. The role of normative issues is also statistically significant, although we found no explanation for this. Overall, these particular features of research design are not insignificant for the findings.

Let us now turn to RQ2 on the dependent variable. Do the papers in the sample exhibit a common understanding of the explanans? We found all sorts of characterisations of Europeanisation: as process, as context in which the study is situated, as outcome, and as *sui generis* independent variable (that is, Europeanisation causing some other outcomes). Clearly Europeanisation as such is not the dependent variable. For most papers it is a process. There are also cases in which Europeanisation as framework is problematized and criticized (Hauray & Urfalino, 2009; Trampusch, 2009). Discouragingly perhaps, almost each article has its own way of defining and operationalizing the dependent variable – arguably one of the features that, at least according to some critics, makes this field a clumsy bumble-bee. However, there are at least some broad categories, based on the type of variables examined. The following categories are present:

- a) Development and change of ideas or identities (9 articles);
- b) Variation of policy, regulations; and implementation (19);
- c) Governance-related variations; institutional development and building (10); and
- d) Change of processes or procedural change (7).

In category A we find articles that deal with a measurement of the impact of the EU on the development of certain ideas or the development of identities within member states or within institutions. They explore the impact on the strategic goals of parties in party competition and the exploitation of the idea of Europe as well as the development of

Euroscepticism as a political trend (ID number 9, 10, 23, 41 in table 1). They deal with the development of the supranational identity of public officials within EU institutions (4) or at home within party elites (24). They also refer to the development of European identities in the member states (28) and how this is reflected on media coverage (40) or within the involvement of the civil society in European affairs (32).

In category B we encounter mainly articles problematizing issues of policy change or convergence (16, 34), initiation of regulation and implementation records of EU directives (8, 29, 35) or more generally rules (17, 20, 22, 31). Issues of policy convergence are discussed (2, 21), as well as domestic policy responses to European-wide policies like economic and monetary policies (13, 38); more concrete creation of specific market rules (18, 26, 30); or even in non-classic Community areas like the welfare state or education and public procurement (36, 39, 44).

In category C papers the explanans lies in institution building and development and issues of governance. Examples of this type would include hierarchical and power relations between institutions (1, 6, 27) as well as institutional framework creation and institutional capacity building (9, 12), coordination of market (11) through independent authorities (15), issues of good governance (19) and institutional reform (7, 42).

Finally, in category D, the explanans is process creation or procedural change. This includes territorial interaction and network building (3), deliberation with transnational interest groups and NGOs (5, 45) and procedural relations (14, 37), judicial procedures at different levels (33, 46).

As for RQ3, there is a widespread impression (Bulmer and Radaelli, 2005) that there is more Europeanisation of policy than on politics. This is confirmed by more authors studying the former rather than the latter – a possible source of bias in selecting the object of research. Interestingly, we found that if policy is the main concern of the paper, there is a tendency to use ideational explanations, whilst the politics-oriented papers draw on opportunity structure arguments.

RQ4 leads us to the discussion of mechanisms. Since most of the articles in the sample are qualitative, there is considerable work on mechanisms here. The majority of the papers seek

to establish causality by drawing on mechanisms-oriented explanations. We concur with Gerring that, at least in our sample, the emphasis on mechanisms is 'not at variance with traditional practices in the social sciences, and thus hardly qualifies as a distinct approach to causal assessment' (Gerring, 2010, 2)—only a minority of articles draw on mechanisms to explore non-traditional approaches to causality (see Saurugger, 2009 on types of causality).

The trouble is that there are almost as many names for mechanisms as the articles that utilize a mechanism-based approach. (Very) broadly speaking we found the classic Knill & Lehmkuhl triad of hierarchy, competition, and framing effects. There are also traces of the (ideational and rational-choice theoretic) variations of the goodness of fit model that is the baseline model for Europeanisation explanations (Caporaso, 2007 adds the notion of 'institutional' goodness of fit to the 'policy'-level goodness of fit). Some articles contain more than one key mechanism. However, a more precise categorisation of the families of mechanisms is the following.

- a) Ideational and discursive mechanisms (11 articles);
- b) Mechanisms of (mainly regulatory) compliance or competition (12);
- c) Mechanisms of institutional change and goodness of fit (12); and
- d) Cognitive mechanisms: heresthetics, learning and diffusion (6).

The first category contains mechanisms that deal with the ideational pressures and the legitimisation of discourse arenas, including development of cultural norms and norms entrepreneurs (ID number 13, 32 in table 1), socialisation and networking (18, 22, 33, 43, 45, 46), acclimatisation and diffusion of ideas (9, 16, 46).

The second category of mechanisms refers to those on (regulatory) compliance and competition such as policy-level pace-setting, foot-dragging and fence-sitting (7), policy conditionality (33, 37, 43), horizontal emulation (15); market competition and cooperation (18, 22, 39), exit and voice (29), policy-level conflict (30) and policy compliance (20, 38).

The third category of mechanisms includes those that deal with adaptation of domestic institutions to EU pressures: institutional adaptation (including adaptation in anticipation of EU membership and conditionality) & goodness of fit mechanisms (5, 6, 12, 14, 15, 16, 21, 27, 32, 33), institutional coercion and mimesis (38), opportunity structure (42), or passive

enforcement (43). Finally, the fourth category refers to mechanisms that frame expectations and beliefs of the member states and the public: for example heresthetics (10); learning and lesson-drawing (37); diffusion and transfer of knowledge and best practices (5, 18, 21, 34). Overall, we found evidence of the mechanisms that have been theorized within the field, but also traces of the wider debate on social mechanisms.

5. Conclusions

A decade from its inception, Europeanisation is still a field of research that attracts considerable interest among political scientists. Both English-speaking and French/Italian textbooks include a chapter on this topic (Attinà and Natalicchi, 2007, ch. 5; Cini and Perez-Solorzano Borragan, 2009, ch.25; Saurugger, 2009, ch.8). However, there are different opinions about the added value of looking at Europeanisation. One question that lingers over the field is 'how is it possible to establish causality'?

In this paper we have examined both highly-cited papers and recent articles. We have found that research design features impact on whether authors find Europeanisation effects or not – the clearest result being that research design choices statistically alter the probability of finding Europeanisation effects. Another result is that the choice to study politics or public policy has important consequences for the logic of explanation. Country selection is not even, with some countries more systematically studied, and others neglected.

Finally, we explored the role of mechanisms in causal explanations, showing that the field is slowly exploring some general categories of mechanisms, although there is still considerable interest in the mechanisms theorized within the field. Overall, ideational explanations are preferred to structural explanations. Ideational approaches lead to policy-level explanations, whilst structuralist approaches determine a preference for politics-level explanations. Qualitative modes prevail over quantitative approaches. Researchers could usefully spend some more time in quantitative analyses, possibly strengthening the link between this field and the contiguous field of quantitative analysis of legislation (Raunio and Wiberg, 2010; Töller, 2010) - particularly because the latter has already explored ways to measure the scope and extent of Europeanisation effects. It is striking that the quantitative analysis of legislation is not (as yet) represented in the highly cited articles on Europeanisation.

There are several caveats that come with our results. We did not examine all the papers on Europeanisation included in the social science citation index. We did not score books but only articles. And we used a scorecard that, although validated by discussion and deliberation in a team of five researchers, may contain its own bias. Finally, in contrast to our previous research (Exadaktylos and Radaelli, 2009) we did not use a control-group for our meta-analysis, since we did not think it could have helped us to answer the research questions that motivate this paper.

Future research will probably have to dig deeper into the issue of causality, by examining ontological as well as methodological issues, and by exploring what is the exact role of mechanisms-based explanations in appraising and establishing causality (Gerring, forthcoming). The bumble-bee is indeed clumsy, but so are several other fields of political science and this does not prevent them from flying high in the sky of the social sciences.

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APPENDIX

We construct the following probit equation based on the rounded results of our probit model:

$$y_{(europeyes)} = -.88\chi_{(resdes)} - .1\chi_{(hypoht)} + .4\chi_{(casejust)} + .54\chi_{(time)} + 1.61\chi_{(mechan)} - .99\chi_{(norm)}$$

The variable *europeyes* denotes the dependent of whether a study concludes positively on Europeanisation or not; the independent variables are *resdes* on the presence of a clear research design section, *hypoht* on the presence of hypotheses or not, *casejust* on whether case selection is justified or is arbitrary, *time* on whether the study examines a certain time period or not, *mechanisms* on the use of mechanisms of Europeanisation or not, and, finally, *norm* on whether the study includes a discussion of normative issues.

```
. dprobit europeyes resdes casejust hypoht time mechan norm, r
Iteration 0:   log pseudolikelihood = -31.710637
Iteration 1:   log pseudolikelihood = -22.72568
Iteration 2:   log pseudolikelihood = -22.360938
Iteration 3:   log pseudolikelihood = -22.357651
Iteration 4:   log pseudolikelihood = -22.357651
Probit regression, reporting marginal effects           Number of obs =      46
                                                         Wald chi2(6) =    17.83
                                                         Prob > chi2 = 0.0067
Log pseudolikelihood = -22.357651                     Pseudo R2 = 0.2949
```

	Robust						
europe~s	dF/dx	Std. Err.	z	P> z	x-bar	[95% C. I.]
resdes*	-.3384674	.1817653	-1.78	0.076***	.456522	-.694721	.017786
casejust*	.1539839	.1812729	0.84	0.402	.413043	-.201305	.509272
hypoht*	-.0403576	.1882311	-0.21	0.831	.586957	-.409284	.328569
time*	.2114302	.1907444	1.09	0.276	.717391	-.162422	.585282
mechan*	.5784436	.1286762	3.63	0.000*	.586957	.326243	.830644
norm*	-.3792213	.1727695	-2.02	0.044**	.326087	-.717843	-.040599
obs. P	.5434783						
pred. P	.5655667 (at x-bar)						

(*) dF/dx is for discrete change of dummy variable from 0 to 1

z and P>|z| correspond to the test of the underlying coefficient being 0

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