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Multiple connections in European co-operation: international organizations, policy ideas, practices and transfers 1967–92

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ABSTRACT

International organizations are ubiquitous in contemporary Europe and the wider world. This special issue takes a historical approach to exploring their relations with each other in Western Europe between 1967 and 1992. The authors seek to 'provincialize' and 'de-centre' the European Union's role, exploring the interactions of its predecessors with other organizations like NATO, the OECD and the Council of Europe. This article develops the new historical-research agenda of co-operation and competition among IOs and their role in European co-operation. The first section discusses the limited existing work on such questions among historians and in adjacent disciplines. The second section introduces the five articles and their main arguments. The third section goes on to elaborate common findings, especially regarding what the authors call the vectors for the development of policy ideas and practices and their transfer across different institutional platforms.

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International organizations (IOs) are ubiquitous in contemporary Europe and the wider world. They are even highly active in policy fields like education that are usually seen as closely connected with sensitive issues of culture and identity and often regarded as an exclusive national, or even in federal or unevenly decentralized states, sub-national competence. Thus, to give but a few examples, the global United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization promotes Holocaust education in co-operation with the formally international, but European-dominated, International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance.¹ The equally global Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) seeks to compare the success of different education systems, co-ordinating member-states in joint evaluation programmes like PISA for testing the skills of 15-year-old pupils in mathematics, reading and the natural sciences.² The pan-European Council of Europe in turn fosters the comparison and convergence of history-teaching methods and content and the development of European school textbooks.³ Finally, the European Union (EU), with its smaller membership and only subsidiary competences in education, nevertheless runs multiple programmes for strengthening transnational co-operation and mobility, such as the Erasmus student exchanges, launched in 1987.⁴

Thus, despite the strong inclination of European states to protect their competences in this policy field, as in some others, IOs are heavily involved in developing policy ideas, shaping practices and facilitating the transfer of ideas and solutions across borders. Clearly, the activism of IOs is even more marked in policy fields with a long history of technical or economic regulation and integration like transport, telecommunication and trade. As in the case of education, their spatial, regulatory and thematic scope frequently varies, often resulting in overlapping competences, initiatives and activities. It seems, as Karen Alter and Sophie Meunier have put it, 'that every policy issue is nowadays the subject of multiple transborder agreements' resulting in a high degree of 'density and complexity of international governance';⁵ or in what Kal Raustiala and David G. Victor in their study of the international regulatory conflict over plant genetic resources first termed international 'regime complexity'.⁶

Based on fresh archival research, this special issue adopts a historical approach to exploring co-operation and competition among IOs in Europe. The articles seek to understand overlapping IO activities, the development of new policy ideas and practices in such forums, and, most importantly, their transfer among IOs. Together, they will create a strong conceptual and empirical basis for developing the historiography of IOs with a particular focus on exploring the exchange relations among them and the role of multiple actors in such processes – ranging from IO secretariats to experts, international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), and, of course, member-state governments and agencies. The resulting research on the history of the EU and a set of IOs with a (not necessarily exclusive) focus on Europe is not just relevant to analysing IOs and their history, or European co-operation and integration. Instead, it is also crucially important for understanding their larger impact on the history of Europe in the twentieth century and beyond, as states have been more and more penetrated by international rules and working practices even when they have formally retained exclusive competence over a particular issue or policy area.

The special issue's geographical focus is on Western Europe. With its peculiar combination of supranational institutional features, wide-ranging competences, legal integration and financial resources the EU has become increasingly hegemonic among IOs active in governing Europe since the end of the Cold War. The articles in this special issue seek to contribute to 'provincializing'⁷ or 'de-centring'⁸ the EU's role in post-war European co-operation, however. They aim to contextualize the EU's predecessors, especially the European Economic Community (EEC) created in 1957–8 and usually referred to as the European Communities (EC) after the 1967 institutional merger, in their exchange relations with other IOs like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the OECD and the Council of Europe, for example.

This contextualization is not just relevant for historians of the EU and its predecessors who for a long time focused too exclusively on this organization as the apparent focal point of all co-operation or integration efforts in post-war (Western) Europe. It is also crucially important for contemporary historians of Europe more generally who sometimes still narrate national histories without systematic reference to the international interdependence of societies and the role of IOs including the EC. Finally, it carries broad implications for the interdisciplinary field of European Studies, particularly for the work of political scientists who normally also only examine one IO at a time and mostly concentrate on today's European Union.

The history of IOs in Eastern Europe and in East–West relations is of course an equally relevant topic, but distinct from this special issue's core concern. Given our focus on transfers of ideas, concepts and policy solutions among IOs, it seems legitimate to concentrate on Western Europe, where the overlap of membership and the similarity of institutional set-up and political orientation made such exchange relations much more likely. Moreover, it is interesting to explore to what extent the Western post-war 'script' about Western Europe as a laboratory of international policy ideas from human rights to the environment is corroborated or needs to be revised by historical research – the more so as the more recent Cold War historiography in an attempt to develop a more global perspective has de-centred Western Europe to the extent of neglecting such questions.⁹

In other words, this special issue aims at understanding the present-day EU in its post-war development as part of a web of international organizations in the Western world. In fact, the EC was often a latecomer to new policy fields like culture and the environment precisely because its initial focus was the creation of a common market.¹⁰ The EC frequently adopted and assimilated institutional rules and practices from member-states. However, it also imported them from other IOs with an interest in governing Europe, adjusting them to its political and institutional setting, even where their spatial scope extended beyond Europe, as in the case of the OECD after its reform in 1961–2. Actually, it is perhaps surprising quite how many ideas and policy solutions the EC more or less copy-pasted from other IOs to adjust them to its own institutional framework and political objectives.

Eventually, we hope that the new research agenda of co-operation and competition among IOs in dealing with transnational issues will allow a more fine-grained analysis of how, when and why the present-day EU has indeed become hegemonic in governing Europe. We contend that the dominant literature that highlights intra-organizational dynamics – most importantly the bargaining processes among member-states – misses an important dimension. This also holds true for the research – less developed in history, and more prominent in political science – that focuses on inter-institutional dynamics or the interplay between the various institutions *within* the EU, such as the European Parliament, the Commission and so on.¹¹ Instead, inter-organizational links need more attention, since important developments in the history of the EU can only be explained through this lens.

The agenda of this special issue thus transcends disciplinary boundaries and particularly speaks to debates in political science about today's European Union and the role of other IOs. To foster this kind of interdisciplinary dialogue, the editors have invited Thomas Risse, one of the most distinguished political scientists in his field, to comment on the findings of this special issue from his perspective. His contribution underlines the interdisciplinary basis that this special issue builds on as well as the fruitfulness of such a conversation across disciplinary divides.

For the purpose of this special issue we concentrate on the period from 1967, when the EC's institutional merger took place, new social movements advanced new policy agendas, globalization took off and the economic crisis after 1973 troubled Western Europe, through to 1992, when the end of the Cold War and the Maastricht Treaty transformed the role of the EC/EU quite fundamentally.

Introducing the special issue, this article will develop the new historical research agenda of co-operation and competition among IOs and their role in European co-operation. The first section will situate the special issue within the limited existing work on such questions among historians and in adjacent disciplines, especially International Relations. The second

section will then introduce the five articles and their main arguments. The third section will go on to elaborate common findings from the empirical research, especially concerning the nature of and motives for co-operation and competition among IOs and what we call the vectors for the development of policy ideas and practices and their transfer across different institutional platforms. In conclusion, we will develop some ideas for future research on the role of IOs in governing Europe.

Understanding co-operation and competition among International Organizations

Co-operation and competition among IOs (and among transnational business organizations for setting technical standards or dividing up markets in cartels, for example) has been widespread since their origins around the middle of the nineteenth century. At the start of the First World War, 37 IOs and 466 transnational organizations already existed in Europe.¹² One particularly pertinent example of co-operation and competition is the case of rail transport.¹³ This sector, like others using new technologies with transnational scope, was already characterized by inter-organizational dynamics in the nineteenth century and in inter-war Europe.

Co-operation and competition among IOs and transnational voluntary organizations continued unabated in post-war Western Europe, when the region turned into the world's most crowded space for IOs. In fact, the growing number of IOs with horizontal functions across a number of different policy areas created even more overlap than between the League of Nations and the technical organizations of the 1920s. Some, like the Council of Europe, were set up in the first instance because of competing visions for European co-operation and integration which European states had failed to resolve in other organizations – in the case of the Council of Europe this was the virulent conflict between France and the United Kingdom over whether to limit the Organization for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC), the predecessor of the OECD created in 1948, to trade liberalization, as the British government preferred, or to use it as a platform for more far-reaching economic and, ultimately, political integration.¹⁴ The Western European Union (WEU) is another example: evolving from the 1948 Treaty of Brussels originally signed by Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, this IO with a strong focus on military co-operation soon had to coordinate with and delimit itself from NATO, created one year later. But the WEU also rubbed shoulders with other IOs. As early as the 1950s, it delegated some of its tasks in the field of cultural policy to the Council of Europe, and the meetings in these IOs were full of talk about the need to rationalize their work in order to avoid overlap and duplication.¹⁵

Researchers of Western European co-operation and integration after 1945 will intuitively recognize the importance of such co-operation and competition. Thus, when the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was founded in 1951–2, its High Authority under the leadership of Jean Monnet immediately set out to establish formal relations with existing IOs not least to buttress its own role in coordinating the member-states and shaping the new organization's external relations. Similarly, the setting up of the EEC impacted strongly on existing IOs and new ones created shortly afterwards. National administrations carefully reassessed the scope and limits of the Council of Europe, for instance, rethinking its future role on the ever more crowded stage of IOs in Western Europe.¹⁶

The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) is another example. Founded by seven states in 1959–60, it sought to provide an alternative focus and to build bridges with the EEC after French President Charles de Gaulle's 1958 veto against a larger Western European free-trade zone in line with the 1956 British initiative in the OEEC.¹⁷ After de Gaulle's 1963 veto against British EEC membership, the EEC and EFTA competed over accelerating their timetables for tariff reductions. Moreover, the Danish government leveraged de Gaulle's offer of separate EEC membership to demand (albeit without success) a kind of EFTA common agricultural policy to replicate the evolving EEC policy. Finally, in response to the 1964 surcharge crisis, when the new British Labour government illegally increased tariffs by 15% across the board to reduce its balance-of-payments deficit, EFTA instituted an Economic Policy Committee to deal with similar disputes in the future, which was based on the OECD template and largely duplicated its activities.¹⁸

Nonetheless, despite sometimes touching upon the theme in passing, contemporary historians of Western Europe so far have not systematically explored co-operation and competition among IOs and their impact on ideas, practices and the transfer of policy solutions in European co-operation. Two conceptual and two more practical reasons appear to account for this. The first conceptual reason seems to lie in the character of European 'integration' history as a research field which, from its inception in the late 1970s, remained a rather small, tightly organized field, largely focused on the history of the present-day EU.¹⁹ Moreover, much of the early research on integration history was characterized by federalist undercurrents and teleological notions (also influenced by neo-functionalist political-science literature) of integration as a continuous 'process' towards ever-greater 'deepening' and 'widening', ultimately resulting in the present-day EU.²⁰ This literature normally assumed that their alleged 'supranationality' made the ECSC and the EEC creatures *sui generis*, and, as a result, they were not placed in relation to other IOs or compared to them. The allegedly 'advanced' character of ECSC/EEC integration seemed to make it unnecessary to identify, let alone explore, exchange relations with other IOs except perhaps for the ECSC/EEC's seemingly unilateral impact on them. Paradoxically, trying to counteract this trend in the historiography, even the economic historian Alan S. Milward, while advancing his notion of European integration as the result of the intergovernmental bargaining of 'national interests' by member-states, still focused largely on the origins of the ECSC and the EEC.²¹

The second conceptual reason why inter-organizational relations among IOs in post-war Western European co-operation are understudied is the dominant if often implicit realist epistemological perspective of much of the European 'integration' literature. Whether interested in national governments and their bargaining or the new 'supranational' institutions and their activism, much of this literature was for a long time predominantly focused on decision-making moments: the creation of new organizations, the revision of existing treaties and, more recently, the trajectory of major policy domains such as the Common Agricultural Policy, for example.²² In contrast, the articles in this special issue are also interested in the intellectual roots of governance practices. Our approach owes a lot to cultural and transnational history in a broad sense and to their sensitivity to a history of knowledge, representations and perceptions as well as to connections, transfers and entanglements. This research also focuses on other phases of policy-making such as agenda-setting and policy review and implementation.

The first of two more practical reasons for the lack of more systematic exploration of the exchange relations among IOs lies in the dominant focus of the literature not just on the

ECSC/EEC/EC, but also on other IOs, on the history of a *single* IO – a focus that has often been fostered by the IOs in question in an attempt to cultivate their own historical legacy. Thus, the European Commission has sponsored research based largely on oral-history interviews, into its own institutional history.²³ Similarly, the first, and so far only, edited volume on the first years of the OEEC resulted from its decision to open its archives and apply a more liberal 15-year rule (as opposed to the customary 30) for access to its sources.²⁴ Although the OEEC, unlike the European Commission, did not interfere in the research and publication process, it was nevertheless keenly interested in counteracting the strong pull of the EU in the early 1990s. Other IOs, including the Council of Europe, have displayed a similar interest in safeguarding their institutional memory and historical legacy.²⁵

The major resources needed to study co-operation and competition among IOs more systematically constitutes the second practical reason for why the theme has largely been neglected by contemporary historians of Western Europe. Studying one IO and its activities already constitutes a challenge, especially if such organizations are treated, as in this special issue, as more than a forum for bargaining among member-states. In fact, IOs have agency of their own.²⁶ Secretariats seek to carve out a role for themselves and to develop new policy initiatives, experts are heavily involved in debating issues and setting agendas, and INGOs try to propagate their ideas and interests by lobbying IO secretariats as well as member-state governments and agencies. Reconstructing the interaction of multiple actors, including the governments of member-states, applicant countries and the United States as Western Europe's benign hegemon, is challenging enough for one IO alone. Tracing their networks and exchange relations across a variety of institutional venues is even more demanding. Moreover, many policy issues are interconnected, adding to the complexity of transnational governance – something that historians can perhaps only reconstruct in teamwork, which is not easily funded or compatible with the discipline's rather traditional individual mode of research and writing.

More surprisingly perhaps, research in International Relations, too, has only recently started to study inter-organizational links among IOs. Earlier research in the neo-functionalist tradition was primarily concerned with understanding incentives for IOs, especially the EC, to expand from one policy area into other, functionally connected areas.²⁷ It also developed the notion of geographical 'spill-over', which sought to explain why the EC began to attract new members soon after it was set up, with repercussions for other IOs like EFTA. This research was very much preoccupied with explaining 'core Europe' integration, however. It was not open towards researching imports by the EC of policy ideas, practices and solutions from other IOs.

Similarly, the so-called sociological-institutionalist Stanford School developed the notion of 'diffusion'.²⁸ It started from the assumption that hegemonic centres (such as the EC) could develop norms and policy ideas, and then spread them to other countries, regions and IOs, but did not actually analyse the (negotiated) transfer processes. While interested in 'diffusion' via different forms of connections, its conceptualization as a unidirectional process buttressed the notion of movement of ideas and policy solutions from one self-contained space to another, much as in the early literature on cultural transfers in the historiography of early-modern and modern Europe in the 1980s and early 1990s.²⁹ The unidirectional conceptualization of 'diffusion' actually impedes research on exchange relations as multi-directional processes of debate, negotiation and selective adoption, which result in new, hybrid institutional and policy outcomes.

The more recent International Relations literature tries to overcome these limitations. It seeks to conceptualize and trace the origins of the complexity of competition and co-operation among IOs either (in the neo-functional tradition) in spill-over from negotiations in one policy field to another, within or across IOs,³⁰ or alternatively, in the multiplication of international agreements,³¹ sub-groups of member-states in IOs interested in deepening co-operation and integration,³² packages combining different agreements that link issues or policy areas across different IOs,³³ or the deliberate creation of strategic ambiguity to allow governments and other actors space for interpretation drawing on different and competing sets of international commitments.³⁴

Other International Relations research is more interested in how the resulting complexity impacts on the strategies of actors and the implementation of international agreements. Thus, Alter and Meunier have emphasized the importance of 'forum-shopping' by actors for implementing agreements in different IOs which best serve their interests.³⁵ Ultimately, such strategies can effect shifting an existing set of rules from one IO to another. This literature has highlighted what it calls the bounded rationality that characterizes the strategies of different actors who operate across a variety of IOs. In other words, in an assumption that most historians will likely endorse, the complexity of international co-operation and competition is so pronounced that most actors find it difficult to assess what may be in their best interest, or to formulate rational choices in line with these interests – something that makes the development of ideas and agendas as well as the identification of and the agreement on policy solutions 'more permeable', allowing for a much greater role of IO secretariats, experts and INGOs, not just national governments.³⁶ Thus, the role of INGOs in linking IOs and advancing policy ideas across different institutional venues is definitely one of several promising routes for future contemporary historical research in this field.

Some International Relations research has begun to utilize concepts and methods developed in other social-science disciplines to explore co-operation and competition among IOs and the resulting outcomes.³⁷ This research frequently draws on organization studies in economics and social-network analysis originally developed by sociologists. The analysis of networks of actors in transnational and international politics has of course also been used by historians including in the field of European integration history,³⁸ although they have usually employed a less formal methodology. As Rafael Biermann has found in studying European and Atlantic security institutions, inter-organizational networking is often a response to transnational challenges that 'single organizations (and states) cannot master on their own'. Biermann has also highlighted, however, that such networking faces many obstacles, which in turn could also help historians explain competition among IOs and inefficiencies of policy-making instead of synergies. He argues that such obstacles include *inter alia* a history of institutional rivalry, interest in guarding one's autonomy and fear of compromise and its potential effect on the respective IO's identity.³⁹

Other disciplines have started to join the conversation. Most notably, legal scholars Bruno de Witte and Anne Thies have recently assessed the place of the EU in the architecture of international legal co-operation, stressing particularly the legal nature of the choices that nation-states make when choosing a specific IO to co-operate internationally.⁴⁰ Legal history research has also highlighted the importance of private actors, especially firms, in mobilizing EC law and fostering the organization's further legal integration through the European Court of Justice's case law – just as individuals can appeal to the European Court of Human Rights established in 1959 to protect their rights against member-state institutions.⁴¹ In contrast,

IOs like the OECD, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT, today WTO) and NATO have formal and informal mechanisms for dispute resolution among member-state governments only.⁴² Such legal differences, as well as the interconnections between legal orders, are often ignored by historians and other scholars. They help to explain why a certain group of actors might prefer one IO over the other; why disputes often play out simultaneously in several organizations with partly overlapping or competing competences; and why the ways they solve these issues differ markedly. For all these reasons, venue choice, overlap and dependency are so crucial.

In sum, therefore, there seems to be an increasing awareness of the need to stop analysing the history of the EU in isolation, and to stress the multiple links among IOs that have competed, co-operated, interacted with each other in a variety of other ways, all in an attempt to 'build Europe'.

Human rights, environment, security, culture and regions

This brief survey of the limited historiography and social-science research has already highlighted several key motives and reasons for co-operation and competition among IOs which the authors discuss in their articles. Their combination in this form does not just reflect the merely incipient research on this key aspect of post-war European co-operation. Rather, the articles address five distinct policy challenges that loomed large on the agenda of various European IOs between the late 1960s and the early 1990s: human-rights violations (Fernández Soriano); environmental degradation (Meyer); security threats and détente opportunities (Romano); co-operation in the cultural field (Calligaro and Patel); and the role of regions in European co-operation (Wassenberg). At the same time, the authors explore the collaboration between the EC and a variety of other IOs: the Council of Europe (Fernández Soriano, Calligaro and Patel, Wassenberg); the OECD (Meyer); and NATO (Romano). Finally, the articles also address the roles of different sets of actors who played an especially influential role in linking IOs in their particular case study: national governments (Calligaro and Patel, Romano); elected and delegated parliamentarians (Fernández Soriano, Calligaro and Patel); experts (Meyer); interest groups (Wassenberg); and policy entrepreneurs (Calligaro and Patel), thus creating a fascinating kaleidoscope of forms of co-operation and competition among IOs.

Víctor Fernández Soriano investigates how European IOs developed their policies on human rights. In the early 1960s, the issue of the possible accession of Franco's Spain already helped the EEC to debate and to clarify its conditions for membership which henceforth de facto included a democratic constitution. Greece concluded the first association agreement with the EEC in 1961, which provided for a privileged economic relationship and the prospect of eventual membership. In April 1967, however, a group of colonels seized power. Greece was a member of the Council of Europe, alongside its association with the EEC. Parliamentarians from both IOs' assemblies pushed for a strong response to human-rights violations by the colonels' regime, with the aim of imposing sanctions on the new military dictatorship.

Fernández Soriano demonstrates that the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe was the driving force in this process. Examining the inter-organizational dynamics between the two European IOs, he argues that the EC imported policy positions and normative ideas from the Council of Europe. This transfer was greatly facilitated by individual

parliamentarians. It prepared the ground in the EC/EU for an emerging human-rights agenda, so-called conditionality for formalized membership conditions and its policy of foreign aid for developing countries. All the while, the protagonists in this battle were able to draw on the normative framework of the well-established United Nations Declaration on Human Rights already proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in Paris on 10 December 1948.

Environmental degradation constituted another new policy challenge for IOs.⁴³ By the late 1960s, specialized IOs had been dealing with environmental-protection issues for some time. Concerns about the consequences of the growing use of chemicals in agriculture, the short-term risks and long-term impact of nuclear power, and other environmental threats motivated the environmental protest movements and stirred IOs into activity. With most environmental issues like air and water pollution being transnational in character, the United Nations organized the Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972.⁴⁴ Other IOs ranging from the Council of Europe and NATO to the OECD and the EC also became active in the new policy field.

Jan-Henrik Meyer focuses on the discussion and definition of the Polluter Pays Principle (PPP), which became enshrined into environmental policy almost simultaneously in the OECD and the EC in the early 1970s. Meyer explores the multiple avenues for the transfer of underlying policy ideas and for the definition of the PPP. He shows how experts and expertise played a key role in the selection of particular policy concepts. At the same time, the respective IO's institutional set-up and political context largely determined how the PPP was adapted. In fact, the OECD, despite its focus on economic liberalization, ended up with a more environment-oriented definition of the PPP. In contrast, the interests of businesses concerned with the possible costs of a stricter PPP definition and implementation prevailed in the EC, which initially adopted a more loosely defined approach.

While in the fields of human rights and environmental protection the EC initially received new policy ideas more than shaping and exporting them, in security of all policy areas, paradoxically, it sometimes succeeded in developing new ideas and inserting them into other IOs, as Angela Romano demonstrates. After all, within the Western world defence and security constituted core competences of NATO created in 1949. EC countries including the United Kingdom, which joined in 1973, and not just France, shared a keen interest in developing a common approach to foreign-policy challenges. Already in the process leading up to the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, this induced the EC member-states strongly to coordinate their positions.⁴⁵

In the early 1980s, the EC expanded its co-operation to encompass disarmament issues. Romano explores how the EC's foray into disarmament provoked competition and co-operation with NATO. She reveals the EC origins of the proposal for a Conference on Disarmament in Europe and how EC member-state governments and leading politicians like the French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and the German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt succeeded in implanting it in NATO. In an era of new East–West confrontation following the Soviet Union's 1979 invasion of Afghanistan, and of growing transatlantic tensions in the wake of Ronald Reagan's election to the US presidency, the EC collectively sought to avoid further escalation between NATO and the Soviet bloc to protect as best as possible the notion and practices of 1970s détente.

With its strong focus on economic integration from its inception in the 1950s the EC had no formal competences in the field of culture. In contrast, cultural co-operation had

been a core activity of the Council of Europe since its creation in 1949. Together with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Council of Europe therefore initially dominated multilateral co-operation, alongside bilateral agreements on cultural exchange as contained in the 1963 Elysée Treaty between France and Germany.⁴⁶

In their article, Oriane Calligaro and Kiran Klaus Patel explore the incremental process through which the EC eventually became the key IO in fostering cultural co-operation by the end of the Cold War.⁴⁷ They explore two case studies: for the 1970s, the debates about cultural heritage and the European Architectural Heritage Year; and, for the 1980s, the development of a European audio-visual policy. In both cases, the Council of Europe took the lead as a laboratory for developing ideas and policies later adapted by the EC for its purposes. As Calligaro and Patel argue, its governance structure, financial resources, market integration and generally increasing competences allowed the EC to become a much more significant player in the field of culture.

Similarly, the Council of Europe also preceded the EC in promoting co-operation among local and regional authorities. It established a regular conference forum as early as 1957, where local actors and associations were represented and tried to influence emerging European regional policies.⁴⁸ Birte Wassenberg analyses the links between the Council of Europe and the EC in the development of regional policy from the 1970s through to the early 1990s. She focuses on three vectors for the transmission of ideas and policy solutions: institutional co-operation between the two IOs; competitive bargaining among a variety of local and regional groups; and intensive lobbying of the EC.

Wassenberg shows how the EC sought to buttress its strong position in inter-IO relations by strategically limiting direct dialogue with the Council of Europe. Thus, formalized co-operation between the two IOs, their committees and involved experts was not the most important transmission belt for the transfer of ideas and policy solutions. Rather, local and regional authorities worked closely together across regional and national borders. Their networking was geared towards ensuring that they would be closely associated with, and able to shape, the evolving European regional policy. From 1988 onwards, these networks shifted their attention more and more from the Council of Europe to the EC, not least because of the prospect of receiving direct funding from the European Commission.

Co-operation and competition: vectors of transfers

The five articles together with Thomas Risse's comment in this special issue provide fascinating insights into the vectors of co-operation, competition and transfer among European IOs. Three vectors are of particular importance: ideas; actors; and institutions.

The authors do not conceptualize ideas as intellectual discoveries or discourses of a general nature. Instead, they are keenly interested how ideas are connected to social, economic and political developments in Europe. More concretely, the authors inquire into how IOs have contributed to developing ideas to inform policy solutions to shared problems, and how such policy solutions have been negotiated, stabilized and implemented.

Several authors stress the importance of public debate and pressures for how IOs have identified policy issues and sought to address them. Thus, despite the fact that the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms dated from 1950, the Cold War rationale often overrode human-rights concerns in the treatment of Western authoritarian regimes. The colonels' establishment in 1967 of a new dictatorship

in Greece, the apparent cradle of European democracy, however, was sharply criticized in Western Europe. As Fernández Soriano demonstrates, the resulting public pressure for counter-measures against the new regime drove and buttressed the strongly critical response by elected parliamentarians in the assemblies of the Council of Europe and the EC in the following years. Similarly, as Meyer demonstrates, the new environmental movement forcefully demanded stronger protection measures. Apocalyptic visions of the future of mankind as in the Club of Rome's 1972 report created pressures on IOs as well as their member-states to take up this new policy challenge effectively if they wanted to remain relevant.⁴⁹

Other pressures were of a more institutional nature. Thus, the strengthening of the role of regions in the Maastricht Treaty that created the EU was at least in part induced by the lobbying of local and regional authorities, as Wassenberg shows. At the time, their preferences reflected far more widespread concerns about the future of the regions in a more integrated Europe. Based on strong identities, existing constitutional rights and public support, local and regional authorities pushed for the EU to buttress on-going decentralization processes in highly centralized member-states like France and to protect their competences in federal states like Germany. The new notion of a Europe of the regions complemented their interest in access to funding for regional development. Ultimately, this also provoked the shift in the primary focus of local and regional authorities from the Council of Europe to the EC.

In this broader societal context, politicians and experts formulated policy responses and concrete proposals for action by IOs and their member-states. In the case of the Greek human-rights violations the options were clear enough: suspension of membership in the Council of Europe, which the colonels pre-empted by leaving the organization, and the suspension of the EC's association agreement. Parliamentary fact-finding missions to Greece prepared the decisions on these issues. Other authors study the formation of broader policy principles like the Polluter Pays Principle in the case of Meyer and the proposal for a Conference on Disarmament in the case of Romano, or of concrete policy initiatives like the EC's expansion into audio-visual policy in the case of Calligaro and Patel. While these policy ideas were politically contested, IO and member-state officials and diplomats as well as external expert advisors nevertheless played an important role in developing and transferring them among IOs.

These and other actors themselves constituted a second vector for co-operation and competition among IOs and the transfer of policy ideas and solutions. Despite their limited focus on particular policy issues, the articles in this special issue underline the extraordinary diversity of actors capable of initiating such transfers. Their findings clearly contradict simplistic notions in realist International Relations theory and traditional diplomatic historiography of states and governments as the only relevant actors in international politics.

States and governments matter, of course, especially in foreign policy, as Romano shows in her article on co-operation and competition between the EC and NATO. Following the 1970 Davignon Report the EC member-states sought to enhance their foreign policy co-operation through the creation of the European Political Co-operation (EPC) mechanism,⁵⁰ which they used effectively to co-ordinate their policies in the Helsinki process during the first half of the 1970s. In the 1980s, as Romano demonstrates, the governments drew on the EPC as a vehicle for protecting the notion and practice of *détente*. After the opening of the Soviet Union from 1985 onwards, they finally succeeded in getting the US administration to align itself with the EC preference for a Conference on Disarmament in 1987. In the case of *détente* leading politicians fostered co-operation among IOs to facilitate the

transfer from the EPC to the NATO context. Below the level of political decision-making, officials and experts may have played a role in advancing and transferring policy ideas between the EPC and NATO, but they are not the focus of Romano's article, which concentrates on understanding interaction among governments. Calligaro and Patel also show how member-state governments had very different priorities for developing audio-visual policies through the Council of Europe and the EC, something that impacted strongly on the institutional and policy choices.

Regarding other issues, however, multiple other actors were influential. In the case of regional policy, Wassenberg demonstrates the great importance of local and regional state actors, not national governments. Fernández Soriano shows how elected parliamentarians without a government role strongly influenced government responses in the Council of Europe and the EC to Greek human-rights violations. In environmental policy, economists and natural scientists sought to shape the definition of the PPP drawing on their expertise and public pressure for tighter environmental regulation emanating from grassroots movements and INGOs – pressure that they often generated themselves through close co-operation with these organizations to foster their vision of environmental protection. As in the case of the OECD and the EC, experts were frequently active across a variety of IO venues, which made it comparatively easy for them to pick up ideas and policy solutions in one context and transfer them to another that appeared more promising for a particular form of implementation.

It becomes clear across the articles in this special issue, moreover, that individuals with a high level of commitment to a certain cause were often important for developing a particular agenda and linking IOs. This is a finding of fine-grained historical research that is often lost on International Relations scholars who tend to prioritize structure over the agency of individuals, as they would put it. Where this literature has addressed the role of individuals it has called them 'policy' or 'norm' entrepreneurs with particular forms of social capital, to use Bourdieu's language.⁵¹

The authors give multiple examples of such individual entrepreneurship. Thus, Calligaro and Patel analyse the role of Duncan Sandys among others, the co-founder of the United Europe movement in Britain after the Second World War. He helped link the Council of Europe and the EC in his attempt to protect Europe's architectural heritage and to develop greater EC activism in the field of culture. As Fernández Soriano shows, parliamentarians were sometimes able to advance and implement their initiatives when they acquired executive roles, as in the case of Edoardo Martino who entered the EC Commission in 1967 or Max van der Stoep who became Dutch foreign minister in 1973.

The IOs themselves, their institutional set-up, competences and working practices constitute a third vector for co-operation, competition and transfers. Thus, their limited financial resources and formal competences induced the Council of Europe and the OECD to develop into laboratories for the discussion of new policy ideas and solutions. In the case of the OECD in particular, exporting such new ideas to other IOs and member-states was, and still is, a crucial source of its own institutional legitimacy. The Council of Europe, too, has often acted as a forum for policy deliberation. It had a more competitive relationship with the EC, however, not least because it was also a European IO without non-European membership.

To secure space for themselves in the European and global co-operation and competition, IOs normally crafted specific institutional mechanisms for establishing themselves in a new policy field. Thus, as Meyer explains, the OECD, despite its primary mission of economic

liberalization, was the first IO to establish a separate environmental committee, although this choice also entailed the danger of segregating and marginalizing rather than 'mainstreaming' environmental concerns within the organization.⁵² IOs frequently expanded into new policy areas without possessing a formal competence. This is true of the EC, which developed the 1973 Environmental Action Programme but only acquired formal competence for environmental policy with the 1987 Single European Act. In the peculiar case of the OECD, the collective representation of the EC by the European Commission from 1962 onwards, alongside the member-states, created another institutional vector for debate and transfer from one IO context to another. In the meantime, the Lisbon Treaty has given the EU a legal personality of its own under international law. This actually makes it more like a state (which can operate inside IOs) rather than just being an IO, with its own member-states.

Three key characteristics contributed to the EC's particular strength in its relations with other IOs during the period from 1967 to 1992: its focus on market integration; its legal integration; and its financial resources. To begin with, the EC's original focus on creating a customs union and a broad internal market created functional connections with other policy areas, or at least allowed actors to claim such connections and use them as an instrument for expanding the EC's policy remit and developing new initiatives. The European Commission pro-actively sought to identify new policy fields to strengthen the EC, but also its own institutional role within it. This was the case for the environment, for example, as Meyer shows. Here, the European Commission could claim to be in the vanguard of policy-making to protect citizens from environmental hazards like pollution. As Calligaro and Patel highlight, however, market integration also provided an opportunity for the European Commission to expand into the field of culture. With the support of the Court of Justice it claimed that cultural products could not enjoy a blanket exception from the rules of the internal market.⁵³

The EC's greater legal integration enhanced the effects of its market integration. The EC had to rely on the member-state governments and administrations to implement EC law. Moreover, lacking policing powers it also depended, and largely continues to depend, on the voluntary compliance of member-states with EC/EU law and decisions by the Court of Justice. Nevertheless, the slow emergence of an EC constitutional culture with legally binding commitments and control of their implementation by an independent judiciary gave the EC a major advantage over other IOs that had to rely entirely on the willingness of member-states to transpose more general recommendations and targets into national law.⁵⁴ Moreover, individuals could appeal to the EC's court, whereas this was not the case in organizations such as the OECD and NATO. This direct connection to companies and individuals in the member-states also helps to explain why the EC sometimes managed to develop a position of hegemony. Another factor came on top: through its generally pro-integration jurisdiction until the 1990s, the Court of Justice was able to support the European Commission in expanding the EC's policy remit, especially through an extensive interpretation of the scope of economic integration. As Calligaro and Patel show, this impacted strongly on the field of culture.

At the same time, the EC's legal integration could also act as a deterrent against agreeing more binding commitments in the first instance. Thus, as Meyer demonstrates, organized industry in the EC was keen to avoid the higher costs resulting from environmental legislation. As a result, the EC ended up with a definition of the Producer Pays Principle that

was less stringent than that of the OECD, conventionally seen as one of the most pro-liberalization and business-friendly IOs.

The third characteristic was the EC's much greater financial resources. Some IOs like the OECD and the equally global Food and Agriculture Organization only had funding for their own secretariats, for statistical research, fact-finding missions and expert committee work. The Council of Europe, too, had limited funds at its disposal. As Wassenberg shows, it could offer local and regional authorities a platform for the exchange of ideas, develop policy solutions and encourage their implementation. When the EC created its own regional policy, which distributed funds for the development of poorer EC regions, however, it quickly became the focal point of lobbying. When it started to foster the notion of a Europe of the regions, moreover, the EC also promised to strengthen the institutional and constitutional role and rights of localities and regions within the member-states, which made it even more attractive as an institutional site for their interests and agendas.

Conclusion

The articles in this special issue cover different IOs alongside the EC, as well as a variety of policy challenges. As a result, their findings are necessarily incomplete. Nonetheless, they have allowed the identification of three vectors – policy ideas, actors and institutional settings – as key explanatory factors for co-operation, competition and transfers among European IOs during the period from 1967 to 1992. Moreover, three characteristics help explain why and how the EC succeeded in playing a stronger role in the battle among IOs for a more prominent role in addressing common challenges, developing policy ideas and agendas and identifying and transferring policy solutions. These are: the EC's focus on market integration; its greater legal integration; and its much larger financial resources to attract multiple state and non-state actors into its orbit as the most suitable site for articulating their concerns, making demands and negotiating policy. In this way, a division of labour appears to have developed over time between the EC and other European IOs, whereby the latter mainly function as laboratories for policy ideas relevant to Europe (and other world regions) and the EC focuses on their detailed formulation, implementation and funding.

This division of labour has created a variable geometry of European integration and cooperation, where European non-EC/EU states, depending on their precise status, are more or less marginal to EC/EU policy-making and need to utilize other IOs like the Council of Europe more to have any kind of voice. The impact of this variable geometry has been relativized by the EU's expansion to 28 member-states (2016) since 1992, which has significantly increased its overlap with Europe as a geographical space. Nonetheless, it is still highly relevant to countries like Norway, which accesses the internal market through the European Economic Area, to some Balkan countries without the immediate prospect of EU membership, for example, but probably also to the United Kingdom if and when it leaves the EU after the 'Brexit' vote in the 2016 referendum.

Despite the still limited research to date on inter-organizational relations among IOs in historical perspective, Kiran Klaus Patel has developed a tentative typology of EC/EU relations with other European IOs.⁵⁵ The findings from the articles in this special issue are not systematically comparative enough to allow its testing fully. Combined with other incipient research in a similar vein, however, they facilitate some general conclusions and support his claims. Thus, in policy fields with no alternative forums and strong EC competences, like

agriculture, little interaction between the EC and other IOs appears to have taken place. The EC developed the Common Agricultural Policy with strong redistributive effects, which initially made up 80% of its budget. Other IOs with a more global scope like the OECD and the Food and Agriculture Organization in turn limited themselves in this policy area to policy deliberation and statistical work. Crucially, its regulatory and fiscal powers combined helped transform the EC into an emerging polity and primary site for non-state actors, too, who increasingly sought to influence the EC's policy-making to protect their own interests. In policy areas, where it dominated policy-making, the EC could nevertheless serve as a template for third countries and other settings, as when the Danish government advocated a similar 'supranational' agricultural policy for EFTA during the 1960s.

In other areas the present-day EU overlapped heavily with existing forums. This was the case for infrastructures including the transport sector, for example, where several existing organizations were founded in inter-war Europe and often carried over practices from the nineteenth century.⁵⁶ In such fields, the EC was often ineffectual despite having competences. The mode of interaction was characterized by crowding out of other IOs over time. Especially from the 1970s onwards the EC tried to bring the existing effective organizations within its remit in some way or another, and to develop a hegemonic role in regulatory matters.

In new policy issues, and fields, other IOs frequently developed and advocated ideas and policy solutions earlier than the EC. Examples of this would be the Council of Europe in the field of culture and the UN in the field of environmental policy. These IOs' pro-active roles sometimes led to partial convergence or co-operation as modes of interaction, and inward transfers into the EC from them. Finally, the present-day EU and its member-states have become embedded in IOs like the OECD and the GATT, for example, where transfer processes take place mainly within the IO. In these cases, the EC has been able to contribute in a pan-European or global setting, rather than interacting with other IOs as a separate entity. In these cases, it has profited from its peculiar constitutional character as an IO with many state-like features with, since the Lisbon Treaty, its own legal personality under international law.

Our findings thus confirm and substantiate the claims of the first attempt to systematize the forms of interaction among IOs in post-war Western Europe. They also demonstrate that much more work remains to be done to understand fully the past and present role of organizations such as the EC/EU, the Council of Europe, the OECD and NATO and particularly the factors and forces that drive them. In his comment, Thomas Risse underscores the significance of historical work to arrive at fine-grained answers for such issues, and how much history and political science can learn from each other in pursuing this research agenda further.

Beyond the role of IOs and their work this collection of articles also sheds new light on the history of the Cold War. They demonstrate that the Cold War – often seen as the defining feature for this period of European history, and for the role of IOs particularly – impacted to a very different extent on the various forums and issues discussed here. While détente and East–West relations stood front and centre in the interaction between NATO and the EC in the debate about military security (Romano), human-rights concerns explicitly clashed with Cold War priorities in the case of the debate about the Greek junta (Fernández Soriano). Interestingly, inter-organizational dynamics were particularly strong where actors in the Council of Europe and the EC challenged the Cold War lens. In culture (Calligaro and

Patel), actors actively strove to overcome the East–West divide. Cold War concerns were largely absent from the debates about regions (Wassenberg) and the environment (Meyer). Having said this, Cold War institutions, particularly NATO, mattered for the transatlantic transfers in environmental policy.

The articles in this special issue do not support Akira Iriye's recent claim that the Cold War was but a footnote to human-rights history, and that IOs and transnational forces may serve more broadly as the core of an alternative narrative of European and global developments since 1945.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, given that for a long time the Cold War has been seen as an all-pervading reality, impacting on security and foreign-policy debates, but also on issues as diverse as sexuality, technology, popular culture, urban planning and economic policies, the articles' findings are remarkable. They help to challenge the Cold War lens that has dominated much of the historiography on post-war European history and IOs, and to confirm the idea that at least during some phases since 1945, European IOs have been able to insulate and even to de-couple some of their concerns from the East–West conflict.⁵⁸ Since several of the articles also cover the period of the 1980s, when East–West tensions reached a new climax, the findings are all the more astonishing. This special issue cannot give conclusive answers in this regard either, but it helps to break new ground and refocus the debate on the history of co-operation and integration in post-war Western Europe, the role of IOs and the Cold War in Europe.

Notes

1. Kaiser and Storeide, 'From Europe to the World'.
2. See, for example, Martens and Jacobi, eds., *Mechanisms of OECD Governance*; Jacobi and Martens, 'Diffusion durch internationale Organisationen'.
3. Stobart, 'Fifty Years of European Co-operation on History Textbooks'; Stradling, *Teaching 20th-Century European History*.
4. Cf. Feyen and Krzaklewska, *The ERASMUS Phenomenon*.
5. Alter and Meunier, 'Politics of International Regime Complexity', 13.
6. Raustiala and Victor, 'The Regime Complex for Plant Genetic Resources'.
7. Patel, 'Provincialising European Union'.
8. Kaiser and Johan Schot, *Writing the Rules for Europe*, 4.
9. Westad, *The Global Cold War*.
10. Patel, 'Provincialising European Union', 653.
11. See, e.g., Bulmer, 'The Governance of the European Union'; Kassim 'Policy Networks, Networks and European Union Policy Making'.
12. Lyons, *Internationalism in Europe 1815–1914*, 13–14.
13. Kaiser and Johan Schot, *Writing the Rules for Europe*, chapter 4.
14. Hitchcock, *France Restored*.
15. See, e.g., HAEU, CEAB 4, 114, ECSC, High Authority, Note pour les membres de la Haute Autorité, 1959; Paul Reuter, *Organisations européennes* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1965), 152–4.
16. PAAA, B 20–200/95B, Vertretung der Bundesrepublik beim Europarat an Auswärtiges Amt, 'Gedanken über den Europarat', 15 May 1957.
17. Malmborg and Olesen, 'The Creation of EFTA'.
18. For this see Kaiser, 'The Successes and Limits of Industrial Market Integration'.
19. For an introduction to the historiography of the present-day EU see Kaiser and Varsori, *European Union History*.
20. See the criticism in Gilbert, 'Process'.
21. See, in particular, Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State*.

22. Knudsen, *Farmers on Welfare*; as attempts to transcend such a realist perspective, see, for example, Patel, *Europäisierung wider Willen*; Patel, *Fertile Ground for Europe?*
23. See, for example, Dumoulin, *The European Commission*; Bussière, *The European Commission*.
24. Griffiths, *Explorations in OEEC History*.
25. Wassenberg, *Histoire du Conseil de l'Europe*.
26. For introduction to IOs and their agency see Mackenzie, *A World Beyond Borders*.
27. Haas, *The Uniting of Europe*.
28. Didem Buhari-Gulmez, 'Stanford School'.
29. Werner and Zimmermann, 'Beyond Comparison'; Middell, 'Kulturtransfer und Historische Komparatistik'.
30. As in Haas, *Beyond the Nation-State*.
31. See e.g. Young, 'Institutional Linkages in International Society'.
32. As in Mansfield and Reinhardt, 'Multilateral Determinants of Regionalism'.
33. Aggarwal and Fogarty, 'The Limits of Interregionalism'.
34. As in Raustiala and Victor, 'The Regime Complex for Plant Genetic Resources'.
35. Alter and Meunier, 'Politics of International Regime Complexity', 16.
36. Alter and Meunier, 'Politics of International Regime Complexity', 16–19.
37. Biermann, 'Towards a Theory of Inter-Organizational Networking'.
38. For networks among political parties see Salm, *Transnational Socialist Networks in the 1970s*; Kaiser, *Christian Democracy and the Origins of European Union*; for an example from the field of culture see Faure, *Netzwerke der Kulturdiplomatie*.
39. Biermann, 'Towards a Theory of Inter-Organizational Networking', 173.
40. Witte and Thies, 'Why Choose Europe'.
41. Rasmussen and Davies, 'Towards a New History of European Law'.
42. See, for example, Weiler, ed., *The EU, the WTO, and the NAFTA*.
43. Kaiser and Meyer, *International Organizations and Environmental Protection*.
44. See Meyer, 'From Nature to Environment'.
45. Cf. Romano, 'Untying Cold War Knots'.
46. See e.g. Defrance, 'The Élysée Treaty in the Context of Franco-German Socio-cultural Relations'.
47. See also Calligaro, *Negotiating Europe*.
48. Wassenberg, *Histoire du Conseil de l'Europe*.
49. Meadows, *Limits to Growth*.
50. Cf. Smith, *Europe's Foreign and Security Policy: The Institutionalization of Cooperation*.
51. Sunstein, 'Social Norms and Social Roles'; Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*.
52. Borowy, '(Re-) Thinking Environment and Economy'; Kaiser, 'Sometimes it's the Economy, Stupid'.
53. See Littoz-Monnet, *The European Union and Culture*.
54. For the EU's legal integration in historical perspective see Vauchez, *Brokering Europe*; Davies and Rasmussen, 'Towards a New History of European Law'; Witte and Thies, 'Why Choose Europe'.
55. Patel, 'Provincialising European Union', 653.
56. Cf. Högselius, Kaijser and van der Vleuten, *Europe's Infrastructure Transition*; Patel and Schot, 'Twisted Paths to European Integration'; Badenoch and Fickers, *Materializing Europe*.
57. Iriye, 'Historicizing the Cold War'; also see, for example, Connelly, 'Taking Off the Cold War Lens'.
58. Ludlow, *European Integration and the Cold War*.

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