

CITIES AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

Mechanisms and modes of Europeanization in the city of Turin

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Abstract

This research examines European Union (EU) policy instruments affecting the urban domain throughout the lenses of the Europeanization approach. Instead of looking at EU instruments that are formally/legally consecrated to cities, we use theoretical public policy analysis to explore the arenas and the causal mechanisms that structure the encounter between the EU and urban systems of governance.

We develop the argument that there are four different modes of Europeanization. In consequence, to grasp the essence of a single instrument or a given EU initiative, one has to establish which mode is prevailing in the policy logic of that instrument or initiative. The core variables that explain change concern the status of *actors' preferences* (a) and the *payoffs from Europeanization* (b). The combination of (a) and (b) thus originates a four dimensional space. We can therefore develop a typology for the modes of Europeanization, which chimes with current theorisations on the EU modes of governance. The eventual Europeanization of urban systems depends on the *nature of strategic interaction*, not on the legal 'tools' explicitly designated for cities.

Thus, policy instruments are initially associated with the four modes. We then used process-tracing to verify whether instruments actually perform according to the 'mode' to which they have been initially paired, or if they trigger contingencies that have not been theoretically/deductively foreseen.

This is particularly convenient within a realm – *urban policies* – where the EU does not have a specific formal competence and where interactions between 'cities' and the EU are likely to take place within multiple policy areas and during different stages of the policy process. Mechanisms are explored by considering the city of Turin. The four 'policy instruments' selected as proxies for the assessment of modes of Europeanization are the Covenant of Mayors programme for energy saving, directive 1994/62 (then waste framework directive) for waste management, directive 1993/30 for air quality control and the URBAN II Community Initiative for urban regeneration and development.

The analysis of the four instruments reveals less variation between modes than initially expected. In this connection, theoretical similarity between modes, as emerged from the typological

exercise carried out at the outset of the research, was partially echoed by the empirical analysis of policy instruments. Within cities and urban areas, the Europeanization effect is likely to assume a more blurred fashion and the action of, and reaction to, Europe is greatly interwoven with other dynamics, which in turn shape the perception and the actual impact of European modes and instruments for regulation. In the conclusions we highlight the differences between this approach and the traditional analysis of EU urban policy, and suggest avenues for future empirical research based on typologies of policy instruments.

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