

European Pillars in the Greek Temple: Greece's Experience with the European Employment Strategy

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I. Employment policy in the Greek context

Employment policies are designed to influence inflows and outflows to the labour market; in other words, employment policies aim to influence the numbers of individuals taking or giving up employment. Policies used to influence labour markets are described as either passive measures—such as income maintenance programmes, early retirement, reductions in working time, regulatory interventions such as those to set rules for the hiring and firing of workers, and wage policies—or active labour market policies (ALMPs)—such as job brokering and placement services, worker training, subsidised employment schemes, direct job creation in the public sector, and the targeting of employment policies towards specific groups, such as youth, women, or the long-term unemployed (Calmfors and Skedinger 1995, p. 91; de Koning, Mosely et al. 2001, pp. 1-2). Each EU Member State has its own unique mix of passive and active labour market policies and labour market institutions.

The labour market in Greece is characterised by a concentration of employment in the agricultural sector (17%) and self-employment (32.5%), and high rates of employment in the sheltered economy of the civil service. Female participation rates are also low (41.3%), due in part to the large reliance on non-paid female work in providing child care and care to the elderly in the family home. Low wages and low productivity rates are accompanied by huge discrepancies between occupational schemes that provide benefits such as unemployment insurance, disability, pensions, and additional health care

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on the basis of profession. The provision of state-financed social assistance is “rudimentary” (Gough 1996, p. 12) and among the lowest in Europe, alongside the UK and Portugal (Symeonidou 1996, p. 77). There is no minimum income provision in the Greek system. There is also a large informal employment and consumer sector (Katseli 1990, pp. 270- 274; Gough 1996, p. 15).

Unions, notably the peak blue-collar workers’ union (GSEE), are characterised by a lack of autonomy from the state, especially in the 1974-1989 period before reforms were made to the state financing of unions in 1990. Union density is stable in Greece at about 30% of the working population. The peak association of Greece is the union of Greek workers and employees (GSEE). The Confederation of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises of Greece (GSEVEE), established in 1919, represents small businesspersons and artisans. The civil servants union (ADEDY), which includes teachers and civil servants, is the most powerful white-collar union. Internally, however, GSEE and ADEDY are notable for their fragmentation; there is a strong sense of division between workers in various sectors of the economy, and in different parts of the public sector, such as between teachers and government officials (Lecher and Reinhard 1994, p. 42).

The paradox of this situation is that despite high levels of centralisation there is little concertation among business (SEV) and unions (GSEE, ADEDY), especially in the pre-1990 period; the central relationship for social partners—employers and employees—is with the state, rather than each other. Employer groups were especially vulnerable to state control due to their financing which came largely from the state rather than membership dues or share ownership. Parties, rather than organised interest groups, are the “main aggregators of social interests” (Gough 1996, p. 16). The high percentage of self-employed persons (32.5% in 1998), and the small number of large firms, also undercuts bargaining by the social partners (Ioannou 1999, p. 4).²

Key institutional and labour market differences exist between Greece and the continental welfare states, most notably weak social partners and political interference in unions, a predominance of small enterprises, a universal health care system, and lower workplace safety standards. Clientelistic state-society relations and a highly inefficient public administration further compound these differences.

² 968 firms with more than 100 employees out of a total number of firms of over 450,000 in 1994.

In labour market policies to promote employment, PASOK governments of the 1990s attempted to reverse Greece's weak policy history. The Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED), under the authority of the Ministry of Labour, designs and implements labour market policies and vocational training, and distributes unemployment benefits. OAED operates more than 100 local offices in addition to its central office in Athens (Kottis and Kottis 1996, p. 51). OAED administers both passive and active labour market policies.

Greece does not have any "home-grown programmes for ALMPs" (Interview 1) and has one of the lowest levels of spending on vocational training in the EU, along with Italy, Portugal and Luxembourg (Symeonidou 1996, p. 73). Table 1 illustrates the comparative underdevelopment of Greek spending on employment policies.

Table 1. Allocation of Labour Market Expenditures: 1990, 1996

Member State and Welfare State regime	Total Expenditure on active and passive labour market policies as % of GDP		Active Expenditure (ALMPs†) as % of GDP	
	1990	1996	1990	1996
Denmark	5.66	5.93	1.26	1.78
Netherlands	3.22	5.49	1.04	1.51
Finland	2.16	5.31	1.01	1.69
Sweden	2.57*	4.62^^	1.69*	2.36^^
Belgium	3.89	4.24	1.23	1.47
Ireland	4.39	4.07	1.54	1.66
Germany ^	3.13	3.92	1.35	1.43
France	2.67**	3.13	0.80**	1.34
Spain	3.18	2.69	0.76	0.66
Italy	1.53	1.94	0.69	1.07
Austria	1.28*	1.78	0.31*	0.36
Portugal	1.14	1.74	0.72	0.85
UK	1.57*	1.70^^	0.62*	0.45 ^^
Luxembourg	1.09	0.95	0.36	0.28
Greece	1.05	0.89	0.55	0.45
EU –15 Average	2.57	3.23	0.93	1.16

The double line in the third column showing spending on employment policies in 1996 denotes the countries that are above the EU average (above the line), and those below the EU average.

† ALMPS defined as: public employment services and administration, labour market training, youth measures, subsidised employment, measures for the disabled. Passive labour market measures are defined as unemployment compensation and early retirement for labour market reasons.

*1990-91; **1991; ^1991, for united Germany; ^^ 1995-96

Sources: (OECD 1995; OECD 2000)

Table 2 illustrates that even in a broader comparative picture, looking at various forms of social policy spending, Greece allocates a much smaller percentage of its total social policy spending on policies for the unemployed, including direct transfers such and unemployment insurance payments.

Table 2 *Spending on social policy in EU Member States, 1998*

	Spending on social policy as % of GDP	Spending on old age and survivors benefits as % of total	Spending on sickness, health care and disability as % of total	Spending on unemployment as % of total	Spending on policies for family and children as % of total	Spending on housing and social exclusion as % of total
EU-15 Average	28	46	35	7	8	4
Sweden	33	39	35	9	11	5
Denmark	30	42	36	9	10	3
Finland	27	34	37	12	13	4
France	30	25	41	15	13	5
Germany	29	42	36	9	10	3
Neth'lands	29	41	40	7	5	7
Belgium	28	43	33	13	9	3
Austria	28	48	35	5	10	1
Lux'bourg	24	44	37	4	14	1
Italy	25	64	30	3	4	0
Greece	25	53	30	5	8	4
Portugal	23	43	46	5	5	2
Spain	22	46	37	13	2	1
UK	27	44	37	4	9	7
Ireland	16	25	41	15	13	5

(Eurostat 2002, p. 111, 122)

The meagre spending on employment policy in Greece indicates that “social policy for tackling unemployment is not very much developed” (Petmesidou 2000, p. 315). Expenditure on ALMPs has increased in the 1990s but it continues to be the lowest among OECD countries (Kottis and Kottis 1996, p. 69). Financing for ALMPs is mostly from the European Social Fund (ESF) (75%), with 25% from OAED (Kottis and Kottis 1996, p. 79). ALMPs under the Second Framework Programme were a "disaster" in terms of effectiveness. The first wave of training policies "were simply to justify the spending" (Interview 2) as "aspects of old-style Greek politics reproduced themselves" inside the framework of the ESF (Interview 3). EU funds in the 1980s were dispersed in "an ineffective way" (Interview 4). A major goal of the OAED since the late 1990s has thus been to improve accountability and to target spending

This paper will explore the impact of the European Employment Strategy (EES) in adding new dimensions to Greek employment policy. In particular, the EES has the effect of focussing national policy attention on groups formerly absent in Greek employment policy, namely women, minorities, and the disabled, and of cementing the importance of the social partners in more participatory forms of policy making.

II. The development of the European Employment Strategy (EES)

In the Treaty of Amsterdam, the Employment Title was inserted after the Title on EMU and not as part of the Social Title (the integrated Social Protocol from Maastricht), which appears later in the revised TEU (Title XI). The linkage between employment and economic policy was thus emphasised by the Treaty placement. The Title states that the promotion of employment is "a matter of common concern" and commits the Member States to "coordinate their action in this respect within the Council" on the basis of Commission proposed guidelines, the production of national reports, and a joint annual report by the Commission and Council. All decisions, including the issuing of recommendations to Member States, are by QMV. An Employment and Labour Market Committee was also created, replacing the redundant Employment Committee of the 1970s (EC 1999).

Interestingly, during the negotiations over the Employment Title, the support of the relatively poorer Member States for the Title was not tied to any financial provisions. "We were very realistic in thinking that we would not get additional funds," one Greek treaty negotiator has stated. Further, "the Germans were adamant that this [the inclusion of an Employment Title] should not lead to new appropriations to the Community budget" (Interview 5). Approval of the Employment Title was not linked to approval of additional funds despite the fact that the Employment Title might signal a shift in emphasis from structural development to unemployment, and from underdeveloped Member States to areas of unemployment in the Union more broadly.

The policy-making procedure embodied in the Employment Title borrows several aspects of traditional Community policy-making, notably the proposal of guidelines and recommendations by the Commission with approval by the Council based on QMV. The weight of institutional tradition—whereby the Commission has the right of proposal—and the informal practice of employment reporting that had been on-going since 1995

were of great influence in the final result. Policy learning over time also indicated to Member States that should unanimity be used for the proposal of guidelines, resistant Member States could hold the Title in stasis. However, competency is explicitly retained at the national level, and harmonised policies are not to result (Art. 129). No legislation is to be produced, and there are no enforcement procedures as in the case of the traditional Community Method of regulation. Rather, there are incentive measures.

The Employment Title was quickly transferred into a detailed working process by a combination of Commission activism and the support of the Luxembourg Presidency at the second-half of 1997. The "very close synergy of Member State [from Luxembourg] and Commission activity" came from two sources: first, the DG V team under Allan Larsson developed a draft Joint Employment report and proposals for employment policy guidelines by mid-September, only three months after the Amsterdam Council; second, Jean-Claude Juncker, the Prime Minister of Luxembourg, was also the Minister of Finance and the Minister for Labour and Employment. This unique portfolio of positions provided him with the opportunity to combine the two main policy areas associated with employment, labour markets, and economics, with his capacity as Prime Minister in order to put forward proposals as the President of the European Council (Interview 6).

Luxembourg thus took the agenda-setting initiative of putting employment policy at the forefront of Council meetings in the second-half of 1997, while the Commission took the leadership in providing content for the agenda. A good example of this was the Presidency request that the Commission present the first set of employment guidelines to the Luxembourg "Jobs Summit" in November 1997 (Flynn 1997). The guidelines cover a wide range of themes including taxation, training, ALMPs, adaptability, life-long learning, and long-term employment. These guidelines can be traced back to the Commission White Paper of 1993 that was given substance at the Essen Council meeting of 1994. Policy practice, when it did emerge in the EES, "was found to be shaped by the prevailing institutional structure"—in this case the Essen process and national reporting (Bulmer 1998, p. 380).

In the Commission-developed 1998 guidelines for Member States' Employment Policies, four themes were presented: entrepreneurship, employability, adaptability and equal opportunities, under which twelve specific guidelines were suggested (Commission

1997; Flynn 1997). Although the thesis cannot delve into the pillars and guidelines in any detail, a brief explanation of each of the main pillars is warranted. Entrepreneurship is the "capacity to create jobs" by reducing non-wage labour costs and other forms of taxation on employment, and reducing red tape for business start-up. Employability concerns "enhancing people's capacity to be employed" through targeting youth and the long-term unemployed, and addressing the skills gap. Adaptability refers to both enterprises and individuals through tax incentives, especially for training. The equal opportunities pillar targets female participation in the labour market (Flynn 1997; Commission 1997b; Commission 1998b).

The conclusions of the Luxembourg Job Summit only slightly modified the Commission proposals on guidelines. All four themes, now referred to as "pillars" were kept (Council 1997). Only the guideline for the creation of a pan-European secondary capital market by the year 2000 was taken out, and a guideline concerning exploiting the opportunities for job creation at the local level was put in its stead. A guideline on promoting the integration of people with disabilities into working life was also added to under the equal opportunities theme (Council 1997). Each of these guidelines were to be addressed in follow-up National Action Plans (NAPs), written at the national level.

A timetable of approving guidelines (December/January), presenting national action plans (May/June), presenting implementation reports (summer), and the creation of a summary Joint Employment Report (Fall) followed by the issuing of revised guidelines was created at Luxembourg. By 1998 the term "European Employment Strategy" (EES) had been created to describe the process as a whole (Commission 1998). What was missing from the EES in its first year, however, was the issuing of recommendations provided for in Article 128 (4) of the revised TEU, although comments on NAPs are scattered throughout the 1998 Joint Employment Report (Commission 1998).

Recommendations, proposed by the Commission and approved by QMV in the Council, have been "the most contentious aspect of the EES" (Interview 6). Recommendations were first issued by the Commission at the end of 1999 for approval in Council. Member states "were caught off guard" as "they thought the recommendations might be like the economic and finance recommendations of the Stability and Growth Pact that have only been used once, in the case of Ireland" (Interview 6).

Recommendations have proved to be the most political part of the process as they are bargained over and adjusted in Council meetings, although due to earlier consultation the 2000 recommendations proved far less contentious (Goetschy 2001, p. 411). Perhaps the greatest sign of political commitment to the EES is that recommendations have gone forward at all. However, without any punitive damages attached, the issuing of recommendations has far less immediate and tangible effects for Member States than sanctions and fines under the Growth and Stability Pact or under governance by law.

Successive European Councils have all stamped their unique mark on the EES. At Cardiff in 1998, the emphasis was on structural reform of the larger economy, and a reform strategy for making the Single Market a motor for new jobs was presented (Council 1998, para. 17-26). At Cologne in 1999 the emphasis was on macroeconomic coordination and the idea of macroeconomic dialogue involving the social partners.³

The combination of a highly dynamic Presidency at the start of 2000 and an activist European Commission was to have a deep impact on European governance. At the Lisbon Summit (March 2000), the method of national coordination and inter-institutional cooperation developed by the EES was “baptised” the open method of coordination (OMC) (Larsson 2002). The OMC takes the specific features of the EES—Commission proposed and Council approved guidelines, national reporting, a Joint Commission-Council report, and Commission proposed recommendations—and identifies them as a mode of governance that may be used in other areas. The Lisbon summit conclusions of 23-24 March 2000 endorsed the OMC as the key method to guide various policies on employment, social exclusion, and including such issues as poverty, long-term unemployment, social protection, and pensions (Council 2000).

The OMC thus elevates the governance regime developed by EES to a general method of cooperation that may be adopted in other areas, but does not add anything new to it. However, the EES is only one example of how the new OMC may work. The OMC as applied to other areas may not replicate all aspects of the EES, such as recommendations. The Treaty of Nice, agreed under the French Presidency in late 2000, incorporated the OMC into Article 137 for the areas of social exclusion and the

³ It should be noted that the German Presidency agenda was overwhelmed by the events in Kosovo, which took up valuable meeting time in Council.

modernisation of social protection systems (EU 2000, Article 137 (1) (j & K) and Article 137 (2) (a)). Revised Article 137 is almost an exact replication of Article 129 of the Employment Title of 1997 adding only the phrase "improving knowledge" to the description of the process of information exchange and the identification of best practice. Thus, soft law, involving information sharing, the setting of common objectives and guidelines, the diffusion of best practice, and the naming of good and bad policy performers has been elevated to a formal regulatory system in social policy by the inclusion of the OMC in the Treaty of Nice (Bruun 2001).

Under the heading "modernising the European Social Model by investing in people and creating an active welfare state" the Lisbon European Council also endorsed targets for the overall employment rate⁴, 70% by 2010, and the female participation rate, 60% by 2010 (Council 2000). Annual spring summits, already held in Stockholm in 2001, Barcelona in 2002, and Athens in 2003, are to review progress towards the diverse set of targets and goals set at Lisbon, and are to update priorities.

The 2001 Employment Guidelines reflect the increasing complexity of the EES combined with the goals and targets set out in Lisbon to achieve a "knowledge-based society" (Council 2000). Five "horizontal" objectives have been added, including the 2010 goals of 70% employment and 60% female participation, as well as improving life-long learning, common statistics, and the focus of NAPs on all four pillars (Council 2001). The role of the social partners has also been strengthened, giving them responsibility for the implementation of adaptability guidelines concerning work organisation and lifelong learning, and allowing them to propose new guidelines (Council 2000, para. 34). This corrects for the weak role for social partners in the Employment Title.

III. The Greek experience with the EES

The experience of Greece may be an example of what Goetschy has described as the catalytic nature of the EES, which boosts the efficiency of national employment policies "by establishing external constraints and targets" and through "tough monitoring and a real evaluation culture" (Goetschy 2001, p. 403). The Greek experience is more

⁴ The overall employment rate represents the number of working age persons in employment, a much more positive target to focus on than *unemployment*

mixed, however, than first appears. Officials react negatively to being ranked lowly in the benchmarking aspect of the EES, and politicians have not taken an active interest in the NAPs. Still, now that the Greek government has signed on to the process, the EES locks-in employment policies across time, and focuses attention on groups in the labour market that were previously ignored.

Greece was almost totally passive in the creation of the EES, although it supported both the Employment Title and the Luxembourg Process. This was because political resources and expertise in 1995-2000 were devoted almost exclusively to entering EMU. This explains to a large extent why Greece was willing to accept a policy design that included many measures that are not a traditional focus of Greek policy, such as the disabled and women. In addition, there was a feeling amongst Greek officials that they wanted to use their objections in ECOFIN to concentrate on monetary policy and not waste their time objecting to employment policies where, to paraphrase several interviewees, Greek officials would probably have been ignored anyway given Greece's poor employment record and limited experience in ALMPs (Interviews 4, 7).

The 1997-2000 NAPs "lacked strategy" and were not positively reviewed by the Commission. One reason for the low quality of Greek NAPs has already been suggested, namely the concentration on EMU. In addition, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security is very low in the hierarchy of ministries and has not attracted high-level government Ministers in the past. The Ministry of Labour and Social Security employed no economists in 1997, and has low-skilled personnel that have been described as "extremely weak and poor", in the words of one official.⁵ Both political parties exhibit little interest in the NAPs. Parliamentary review of the NAPs has produced a low quality of debate, and MPs argue not for or against the broad strategy of the NAP, but rather for more money to narrow segments of the population that are usually constituents (Interview 4).

⁵ One Greek official also noted that the Commission has a "bad effect" of crowding out work that should be done by national governments and outbidding the government for capable staff. In the case of the NAPs, it may pay more (literally!) to be part of the national review teams of the European Commission than to take part in national working groups that create the NAPs in the first place. There have been cases of experts refusing work on creating NAPs only to show up writing the Commission critiques of the NAPs (Interview: 2).

The Commission has become "much more demanding in its accounting and we [Greek officials] have becoming more careful in the administration of funds for training" (Interview 2). However, national monitoring of the NAP is its weakest element in the Greek case. Its programmes tend to fall into various Community Framework programmes and are monitored by administrators of these individual programmes and not as a whole. Further, poor collection of statistics by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security has compounded the difficulties of developing and monitoring policies. Data provision is improving, however, which will help adapt future NAPs.

The appointment of a reform-minded General Secretary, Evi Christopolou, to the Ministry of Labour and Society Security in 2001 has led to the cleaning up of OEAD (The Greek Manpower and Employment Organisation) policies, notably the training programmes. OAED is being radically restructured over the 2000-2002 period, a reform that has attracted cross-party protests as it is staffed by appointees of the political parties in numbers equivalent to their representation in Parliament. Unless this reform is successful, however, "there will always be a black hole in the implementation of Greek NAPs" (Interview 4). The challenge is to transform OAED from an informal benefit agency to a public employment office, services which it has performed in the past but very inefficiently (Interview 1).

The main benefit of the NAP process in the Greek case is that it creates continuity and accountability in the provision of policies to combat unemployment, countering the "short-termism" that typified government thinking in this area (Interview 4).⁶ The NAP clarifies priority areas, helps with planning efforts, and to some extent depoliticises debate,⁷ locking in goals over time rather than leaving them open to change on a clientelistic basis. The EES has also had an impact on the attitudes of civil servants who are coming to believe that the goals of the NAPs, and ALMPs more specifically, can and should be implemented efficiently (Interview 4). Membership in the EU, bringing both

⁶ The attitude of the government, and of national officials and those participating in the labour market programmes, was described by one official as a "take the money and run mentality" inspired by the instability of the previous decades (Interview 1).

⁷ Anyone familiar with Greek politics may question the use of the word depoliticise in any context. The term is employed here in a relative fashion to indicate that as much as politicians may bluster on about policies, the guidelines to be followed in the NAPs are set in Brussels and cannot be changed.

access to the ESF and participation in the EES, has been "the cornerstone of implementing ALMPs in Greece" (Interview 1).

The EES has also had the effect of creating policies in areas where the Greek government was previously inactive. Greek NAPs clearly focus on pillar I—employability—and few resources are allocated to pillar IV—equal opportunities for men and women. Despite the uneven spread of resources across the pillars, without EU initiatives the unilateral development of policies for women, minorities, and the disabled was unlikely. Because of the additionality principle (where the ESF contributes to policies once national budgets are approved) national spending is generated in areas that would not normally receive national funding in order to qualify for EU funds. Further, as the pillar on equal opportunities is part of the EES the Greek government "must be seen to be doing something" in these areas and so is forced to develop policies, however weak (Interview 4). Even low-budget policies have the effect of building constituencies that are now mobilised and encouraged to lobby the government for additional funds.

There is also an unfulfilled side to the EES process, however. Despite the projected benefits of information sharing and the identification of best practice, "policy emulation has been the neglected part of the process" in Greece (Interview 4). The fact that Greece does not have "even one policy for emulation" means that the process of exchange of best practice excludes Greek officials who must listen do not often contribute to the process. As a result, Greek officials view the sharing of best practice "rather negatively". There is a feeling of frustration at being at the bottom of measurement tables, and a feeling that benchmarking may be "unfair" and "biased against Greece's social system" as EU benchmarking uses the European Household Panel data as the basis for indicators which do not capture many of the more informal aspects of the Southern welfare state model, such as unofficial employment, family care of the elderly, and home ownership (Interview 2).

Notably, Greek negotiators at Amsterdam expected that the "related surveillance mechanism would not be too intrusive" (Papadopoulos 2002 (forthcoming)). However, Commission recommendations for Greece delve much deeper than general employment issues, and concern equality issues, and youth and long-term unemployment; the Commission has also recommended regulatory and fiscal change, an examination of the

interrelationship of the tax and benefit system in discouraging labour market participation, and a greater role for the social partners. Statistical services should be improved. Greece was also criticised for lacking an overall strategy for the implementation of the guidelines across all four pillars (Council 2000; Council 2001).

It is not surprising that constantly sitting at the bottom of various ranking systems creates a negative viewpoint among Greek officials. As OMC evolves to other policy areas it is important to note the uneven participation of Member States; if OMC consistently cites the need for policy adjustment in the less developed Member States, a backlash to its extension may be the result. Certainly the intrusiveness of the surveillance mechanism should be cited as one of the unanticipated consequences of the Employment Title as far as Greek negotiators are concerned. In addition, the possible negative side effects of OMC may prove to be an unanticipated consequence of the process more generally.

There has also been "resistance to outcome measurement by politicians of all political parties," none of who are eager to be benchmarked across time "on objective criteria". In the words of one official, "no one [ie. politicians] believes the EES can have an impact. They just see it as a means of distributing funds....if the money came from another policy they would take it as well" (Interview 4). As the EES guidelines are very broad, there is room to distribute funds to many social groups that may also be clients of the government. However, Greek governments have talked for so long about the need for common social policies and cohesion spending the Greek government "finds itself in a trap" and "cannot but agree to concrete steps" to measure the application and effect of policies (Interview 2), again highlighting the lock-in effects of the EES.

Finally, there is some sense of being over-burdened by EMU and the EES. As employment policies are traditionally absent from the Greek policy-making spectrum, and as intellectual and political resources have been channelled into the EMU project, it cannot be expected that the EES will help to generate new thinking over a short period of three years (1997-2000). There has been improvement, however, as the 2001 NAP garnered a much more positive response from the Commission.

There are thus positive results—learning effects, policy lock-in to counter clientelism, and access to EU funding to develop ALMPs—and negative side-effects—

disappointment leading to disinterest at always been ranked lowly in comparative tables, and a lack of best practice to share—from the EES. Only an assessment over time can demonstrate which results will dominate, but it is clear that even in the short-term the EES has led to a reorientation of Greek employment policy.

IV. A European pillar in the Greek Temple? The transformative effects of European employment policy in the Greek case

The EES, and the OMC more generally, permit diverse Member States to interact on an issue where harmonisation and hard law are simply not possible. Given the extension of OMC to new areas in the Nice Treaty, it is possible to speculate that the experience of the EES may have shifted Member State positions with regard to regional cooperation in a number of sub-issue areas of social policy (EU 2000a).

The EES has also had effects in the national systems in the Member States. It is clear from research conducted for this paper, and from a broader study of EU social policy conducted by the author (Johnson 2002), that supranational governance has the greatest impact on states where national policy histories are underdeveloped. Careful process tracing reveals that in the case of Greece, supranational governance has been the primary influence in setting new minimum standards for health and safety, re-establishing social dialogue as a form of governance at the national level, and has led to the introduction of ALMPs.

Specifically in the case of employment policy, the EES has been an impetus for the modernisation of some of the institutional structures surrounding and supporting employment policy, such as the OAED and aspects of the statistical services. The EES has also brought about policy emulation in Greece, in particular in the case of policies designed to increase the participation of women in the labour market. The role of the social partners in the EES, particularly in the adaptability objectives, also contributes to the normalisation of corporatist relations in Greece.

These observations suggest that for Member States with underdeveloped welfare states, the EU may in fact act to transform the welfare state. The case should not be overstated, for benefit levels still remain relatively low in Greece, and many services, especially for women and the unemployed, are absent from the Greek welfare model. However, given that research often fails to focus on Southern Member States, such as

Greece and Portugal in particular, the transformative effects of EU policy are underrated in present literature. As one Greek politician noted: "Greece is modernizing and this [impetus] is coming from outside" (Interview 8).

Marks and others are therefore incorrect when they state:

collective decision-making among states involves a significant loss of control for individual state executives....Decisions concerning rules to be enforced across the EU (e.g. harmonizing regulation of product standards, labour conditions, etc.) have a zero-sum character, and necessarily involve gains or losses for individual states (Marks and Hooghe 1996, p. 346).

In fact, in the case of social regulation, collective decision-making may empower the Greek government to modernise its welfare state while also permitting high standard welfare states to export their preferences to the rest of the Union.

There are also dangers of overstating the transformative effects of EU policy, especially over such a short period (1997-2002) as this paper covers. As researchers of Greek social and economic policy well know, there are deep structural rigidities in the labour market that cannot be solved simply by the process of the EES and Social Dialogue. Issues as diverse as pension funding, a national minimum wage, and tackling youth unemployment rates will require adjustment and reorganization that, politically, no government has yet seemed willing to tackle. As we can see, Table 1 contains a puzzle: why is there a reported decline in spending on passive and active employment policies in Greece from 1990 to 1996? One possible explanation is that the dependence of Greece on the EU for funding has increased and that this is not reflected in national spending.

Still, it can be suggested that without the EES even those nascent ALMPs that are in place may not exist, and that the identification of a framework in which to objectively analyse and adapt employment policy would have been too contentious to develop. In many cases, EU policy in Greece cuts through political divides and allows constructive policy dialogue to at least begin. EU policy may only prove truly transformative if it helps to achieve structural change, and if policies are truly embedded in the "policy consciousness" of decision makers over time. Research on the transformative effects of

EU social policy in the Southern Member States, and in Central Europe after Eastern enlargement⁸, would bolster the tentative claims of this paper.

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List of Interviews

1. Professor Manos Matsaganis, Former Special Advisor to the Prime Minister on Social Policy and Professor at the University of Crete
2. Dr. Platon Tinios, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister of Greece on Social Policy
3. Dr. Calliope Spanou, Professor, Athens School of Economics and Business (expert on the Greek public administration)
4. An Advisor to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security
5. Mr. Constantinos Papadopoulos, Advisor for European Affairs, EFG Eurobank, Athens, and member of the Greek delegation to the Reflection Group and the 1996-97 Intergovernmental Conference (IGC)
6. A Commission official
7. A former member of the Economic Policy Committee (EPC) of the EU and the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the EU
8. Ms. Marietta Giannakou-Koutsikou, Member of the Greek Parliament, New Democracy Party, and former Minister

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⁸ Research on Albania indicates the transformative effects of EU trade, defence, and justice and home affairs policies as transmitted through EU aid policies and the Stabilisation and Association Agreements (Johnson 2001). Weak states, of which there is no better example in Europe than Albania, may build entire sections of national administrative and legal regimes, such as in banking, trade law, and investment, around EU practices. If this is the case in an Associate country, the effects are presumed to be even greater, or at least wider in scope, in Candidate countries.

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THE EU AND REGIONAL REFORM IN GREECE

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Introduction

Greece is considered a centralized state with some regional structures developing at the moment. The structures developing at the moment are not ones of a lower level of governance as in other European states but such that facilitate decentralisation of central government activities. Only now there are discussions of reforms leading to directly elected regional authorities. These reform initiatives have been attributed to three basic factors. First the EU and its regional policy, second the positive attitude of the governing party in Greece and third demands for decentralisation by some parts of the civil service and local communities. This chapter will focus on the EU and how it has influenced regional reform in Greece.

The main argument put forward is that the EU has played a crucial role in encouraging change in public administration and policy in Greece. It has promoted decentralisation as against centralization in Greece through its regional policy. The EU and particularly the Commission can assist change because it can provide both learning and steering, which are two necessary components for change (Dimitrakopoulos 2001). Learning can be attributed to an agent who, either from within or outside an organisation, deliberately seeks to improve performance (Dimitrakopoulos, 2001). In this case, Greece is the agent, which seeks to improve performance but significantly in the context of EU membership and integration. It seeks to improve performance through drawing observations and inferences from another source, namely the EU with its policies, directives, expertise, bureaucracy, norms, traditions etc. In addition the Commission has the role of gate keeping legality in the EU and this role puts it in the position of a “fixer” (Bardach, 1977:31). According to Bardach the fixer is an actor that can intervene at critical moments in the implementation process so as to steer change in the desired direction (Dimitrakopoulos 2001:608). In the case of Greece, the Commission through its guidelines for implementing Structural Funds has channeled change to its own direction. An example of this can be considered the requirement of the Commission through Council Regulation EEC 2088/85 (Article 5 Title 2) for regional structures for the implementation of the Integrated Mediterranean Programmes (IMP's). Soon after the Commission's guideline the Greek state initiated law 1622/86ⁱ establishing

13 regions in the country. Therefore the EU by being both a source of learning and having the capacity to steer has the potential to be a catalyst for change in Greece.

The reform towards decentralisation in Greece can be seen as a dual process. On the one hand the EU has set and developed a regional policy, which is implemented according to a number of rules and directives. The essence of the rules is that for Member States to benefit from the policy they should have or develop regional structures. On the other side Greece, since it became a member of the EU is obliged to follow the norms and standards of the EU. Also it had to modernize so as to reach EU standards. Moreover it has to adopt and implement EU policies. For this it has to have the capacity and bureaucratic structures to do so. Unfortunately Greece before joining the EU it did not have adequate structures. As a result the country had to adapt, it had to modernize, it had to Europeanize, through learning and steering (Dimitrakopoulos, 2001). During this process of learning and steering the EU and particularly the Commission, proved critical actors as explained above. Thus, one can claim the regionalisation process in Greece has been part of the europeanisation process of Greece, in which the EU and the Commission have been prominent actors.

The paper will develop in the following way. The first part will provide a brief description of regional structures in Greece and the main steps towards decentralisation in Greece. The second part will study the process of europeanisation in Greece and will suggest that Greece is a case of intended europeanisation. The third part will show how Greek regional authorities have europeanised and the influence the EU had in this process. The fourth part will bring the main points together and conclude on Greek regionalism and the role the EU in the process.

The Greek region as a policy unit

This section will examine the greek region as a policy unit. A short account of the administration system of Greece is given first.

According to the 1975/1986 constitutions and article 101 the Greek state is organized along a decentralized administrative system. Regions have general competence over issues within their territories while central government coordinates and controls the

regions activities. Local government issues are managed by local authorities (OTA), which are divided into two degrees of local governance. The first degree concerns the local communities and municipalities and the second concerns the 52 prefectures of the country. The two degrees of local governance have administrative autonomy from the state while their councils are elected by secret and total vote. Central government is responsible for overseeing the actions of local governance –but cannot intervene– and for allocating funds (budget) to local governance (Athanasopoulos 2000:25-26).

By law 1622/86 for “Local governance, regional development and democratic programming”ⁱⁱⁱ Greece was divided into 13 regions. Eastern Macedonia and Trace, Attiki, North Aegean, Western Greece, Western Macedonia, Epirus, Thessaly, Ionian Islands, Central Macedonia, Crete, South Aegean, Peloponnisos and Central Greece. Each region was responsible for the planning, programming and coordination of regional development (FEK A 92, 14/07/1986). The regions in Greece served as parts of central government on a decentralised basis and part of the modernization of public administration process. They were not a level of government as in other countries. Regions also served as a meeting point of central and local government to promote regional and social development. This law although it established the regions and set their role it was not implemented to its full capacity. As a result regions during the second CSF did not operate as expected under the structural funds regulations. This situation was prolonged until 1997.

In 1997 law 2503/97 for the “Organization and management of the regions” was voted as further modernization of public administration and support for regional development. This law concerns the present legal framework that governs the regions today. According to this law and article 1 “the region is a decentralised administrative unit of the state” (FEK A 107, 30/05/97).

Role of the region: its objective is to plan, programme and implement policies for its economic, social and cultural development within its territory and within the wider national framework for development (FEK A 107, Athanasopoulos 2000:44). This is to be achieved through development plans as stated in law 1622/86. The development plans are drawn at regional level and distinguished into short term and annual regional development plans. There is an extra category of short term and annual regional

development plans for the region of Attiki as it contains the city of Athens. The short-term regional development plan is drawn by the regional council after proposals and consultation with the second degree of local governance and has to be approved by the Ministry of National Economy. The annual regional development plan is again drawn by the regional council and does not need to be approved by any other body unless one third of the Regional council makes an appeal. In this instance the Ministry of National Economy decides. The development plans concerning Attiki are proposed by “the Organisation for Athens”ⁱⁱⁱ and approved by the regional council of Attiki. The above regional development plans are funded by the Public Spending Programme and the Ministry of National Economy (Athanasopoulos 2000:92-93).

In order for the region to fulfill its objective certain competences from the ministries are transferred to the region by law 2647/98. Those competences concern the regional affairs of the ministries and serve to take workload off from the ministries (ibid: 78).

Institutions of the region

The Secretary of the Region

The region is administered by the General Secretary of the Region and the Regional Council. The Secretary is appointed, dismissed and transferred after a Cabinet Office decision. The Secretary is a representative of the central government and responsible for the implementation of government policies related to the region. Also the secretary is the head of all policy division of the region and coordinates, oversees and checks their actions while heads all the police, firebrigade and port services of the region. All competences transferred to the region belong to the Secretary while he has the right to transfer some competences to the heads of some policy divisions of the region. Finally the Secretary is an employee of the Ministry of Interior, Decentralisation and Public Administration. From the above it can be seen that the Secretary is the most powerful actor in the region but without significant decision-making power to as what direction should policies take. Moreover, since the Secretary is appointed (and immediately dismissed) this can constrain his/her and the councils ability to press for certain actions.

Regional Council

Each Region is governed by a Regional Council, which consists of:

- I. The Secretary as the president of the Council.
- II. The Prefect within the territory of the region.
- III. A representative from all local authorities within the region.
- IV. A representative from the business interests of the region, the technical institute, the geotechnical and economic institutes respectively.
- V. One representative from each of the three biggest trade unions.

Some regions like Attiki, Central Macedonia, Western Greece, and North Aegean have extra members in their Regional Councils. Specifically the Regional Council of Attiki also includes:

- I. The elected mayors of the cities of Athens and Piraeus.
- II. The president of the “Athens Organisation”.
- III. One representative from the following: the Commercial and industrial Chambers of Athens, the Crafts Chamber (small industry), the association of industrialists of Athens and Piraeus, the association of professionals and craftsmen of Greece.
- IV. Three representatives of the association of local authorities of the prefectures of Attiki.
- V. The president of the Prefecture of Athens –Piraeus.

The Secretary and Council do not have competence over certain projects i.e. national projects and projects with a budget of more than 300.000 Euros, projects under the trans-european networks, projects funded by national or EU funds and are under the CSF, Cohesion Fund or Community Initiatives.

The areas of competence for the region and have so named divisions are: planning and development, health, public works, control of construction of public works, environmental and spatial planning, forests and agricultural development, local governance and decentralization.

Council of the Regions

The Council of the Regions was set up to support the work of the 13 Regional Councils and to serve as a forum for communication between the central state and the regions. Its role is to discuss the short term and annual regional development plans and check upon their progress. The Council of the Regions consists of the Minister of the Interior, Public Administration and Decentralisation as the president, the head of the same Ministry, and the 13 Secretaries of Region. According to the issue of discussion a relevant minister can attend the meeting (FEK A 107 art. 4).

Funding for the Region

The funds for each region are allocated by the national budget. The budget for each region is drawn by the respective Secretary. Other source of funding is the Programme for Public Investments. The funds of the region are managed by the Regional Development Fund for each region (Law 2218/94 Article 53). The secretary of the region is also the president of the regional development fund for the region and responsible for making all payments and revenues the region is engaged. The regional development fund manages all the money from the budget, the Programme for Public Investments, the EU and concerns the short term and annual development plan of each region.

From the above a few things can be suggested about the greek regions as policy units and part of the policy process. First, greek regions are decentralised administrative units of the state, thus their work is to manage the regional affairs of the ministries. They are taking workload off from the state and provide a better access to the citizens to the state mechanism. In this sense greek regions are different from the other European regions. They are administrative regions and not so much of a level of governance, which partly limits their ability to play a role in the policy process and promote their regional interests as other European regions do in their context.

Secondly, despite the commitment to decentralisation and regionalisation through a number of laws the actual implementation shows poor results.. The fragmentation of decision-making and implementation processes impede the process of further development of regional structures. A reason for this is the immaturity of the greek state and political culture to give out power and competence as interview 2 pointed

out. Moreover, clientistic relations still have a dominant position in the political process and combined with a weak civil society result in not fully exploiting the opportunity presented for viable regionalisation in Greece.

Thirdly, the decentralisation process can be described as a two-step ahead and one back. On one hand the regions are given enough competences especially in the preparation and implementation of regional policy and on the other the Secretary who is the most powerful actor is state appointed. This is a drawback since the region can suffer intervention from the state as to what to do and what not to (interviews 1,2,3). Particularly the case of Attiki is quite susceptible to pressure because it is the prime region of the country and the one closest to the center. As the majority of the interviews pointed out regions suffer intervention from the state on a number of issues i.e. which project to include in the development plans or to be funded by the CSF and which not to. The resolution of the issue depends on how far each Secretary wants to go as they can be dismissed any minute. Also in this way the Secretaries are answerable to the center and not to the citizens, had they been directly elected. Moreover even if the Secretary has the right to draw the budget for its region, it has to be approved by the state, go through the national budget or the programme for public investment which again it is controlled by the state. In conclusion the steps towards decentralisation and viable regionalisation are two ahead and one back. Regions lack political and financial autonomy, which is essential for the viability of regional structures.

However regions are more important policy units and have a more significant role to play in the implementation of EU Cohesion policy. As a result of Commission guidelines the Greek state with law 2860/2000 vested the regions with a role in the preparation and implementation and monitoring of the Community Support Framework (CSF). At this point the role of the region is quite crucial because it carries out the bulk of the work and implements policy on the ground. In the same time monitors the process and makes the necessary controls and corrections. In a way the region is almost responsible for efficiently and effectively implementing the CSF. The role of the Ministry in this case is to oversee and make the controls it has to make. Thus in the CSF policy process the region is important in preparing and

implementing policy. It does not have the power to decide on policies but can influence them through the consultation during the preparation period.

The europeanisation of Greece

Europeanisation is experienced differently by Member States depending on various factors like the domestic structures of the state, the patterns of policy making, the balance of power between state and society on one hand and national and sub-national governance on the other. It also depends on the expectations and the role they have assigned to the EU and the integration process. The case of Greece is as follows.

Greece has considered EU membership as a means towards economic and political modernisation and the establishment of a stable democratic political system in the country (Ioakimidis 1998:48, 2000:74). It also constitutes a means for redefining the relations between state, society and economy. Furthermore, for Greece the europeanisation process does not only entail the incorporation of laws and procedures into the domestic system, but also desires the spillover effect of the integration process and its impact on organizational behaviour, functional and structural operation of society at both political and economic levels (Ioakimidis 1998:48).

Ioakimidis (2000) distinguishes europeanisation process in two basic types: 1) responsive europeanisation and 2) intended europeanisation (Ioakimidis 2000:74). Responsive europeanisation refers to the cases where there is little conscious effort is being made by the political actors to transfer to logic, norms or dynamics of the EU into the political system. Europeanisation occurs spontaneously as a result to the pressures and the penetrative impact of European integration upon the political system. Furthermore, in this case europeanisation does not equal modernization and change and it is not portrayed as such by the political actors (Ioakimidis 2000:74). In this case europeanisation is the result of the interactive osmosis between the national political system, institutions and administrative and political elites on one hand and the EU system and process on the other (ibid).

Intended europeanisation is totally different in the sense that here europeanisation equals modernization and change (ibid). Thus there is a conscious effort by the political actors to transfer into the political system the logic, norms, and dynamics of European integration. Intended europeanisation has a much broader scope of implications in terms of territorial and thematic penetration (ibid: 75).

EU membership is considered to have had the following implications for Greece. First, a redefinition of state society relations according to European integration model at a functional, institutional, regulatory and territorial level (Ioakimidis 1998:50, 2000). Second, the before mentioned redefinition of state – society relations, ultimately strengthens civil society in Greece in four basic ways: a) by creating new institutions and strengthening the autonomy of social institutions b) giving more opportunity for pressure groups and interests to participate in the policy formulation process (ibid: 50) c) weakening party control over society and the growth of clientelism and d) weakening the “Athens” control over the regions through a process of regional decentralisation, largely spurred by EU membership (Ioakimidis 1998:50, 2000:79). Third implication is considered the intensification of the conflict/dispute between the modernisers (pro Europeanists) and the traditionalists (Ioakimidis 1998: 51).

To analyze the impact of EU membership on Greece the following paragraphs will study the impact of membership in redefining state society relations at a regulatory, functional, territorial and institutional level.

Redefining the regulatory regime

The impact of EU membership upon the economic life of the country has manifested in two basic developments: firstly, it has fostered a considerable reduction of the states economic activities and it’s gigantic state apparatus. Secondly, it has altered radically the regulatory pattern of the Greek economy from a tightly controlled state into one conforming to EU’s regulatory regime (Ioakimidis 2000:80). The most drastic EU intervention on the Greek economy was the adoption of the Maastrichtic Treaty and the obligation to fulfill the “convergence criteria”. In order to reach the convergence criteria the economy was subjected to tight macroeconomic discipline

through the implementation of the convergence programmes prescribed and supervised by the European Commission. EU membership gradually led to the liberalization of the banking sector, previously tightly controlled by the state. Also legislation was passed securing transparency in transaction between the state and public enterprises. This was matched with numerous directives underpinning the internal single market, the banking sector liberalization, the reduction of the economic role of the state and the establishment of a more competitive regulatory regime for the whole of Europe. This resulted in establishing a new competitive regulatory regime for the Greek economy equivalent with that of the wider European economy and the single market (ibid 82).

Redefining state functions and competences

Most European integration literature suggests that EU membership primarily involves a transfer of competences and functions from the national level to the European level and consequently the EU erodes the state's powers and functions (Andersen and Eliassen, 1996). The Greek case though suggests that there is also a case of down-flow of competence from EU level to national level (Ioakimidis 1998,86-87). This occurs as follows. The EU acquires new competence in policy areas or establishes new policy areas through the Intergovernmental Conferences on the revision and expansion of Treaties. This does not necessarily mean that competence is taken away from all member states because some states may not have developed at all a certain policy or competence. Environmental policy is a characteristic example. The EU assumed competence in environmental policy in 1987 through the SEA as a concurrent power shared between the EU and the member states. At that time Greece had not developed an environmental policy and as a result there was nothing to be transferred to the EU level (Ioakimidis 2000, 83). On the contrary Greece was obliged to develop such a policy and consequently the Greek state was given competences to this direction.

Environmental policy was not the only case for Greece. Empirical research shows (Ioakimidis 1998,85-128) that the Greek state because of EU membership had to adopt new initiatives in at least six policy areas as a direct response to the need to adjust its performance to the EU's policy aquis. These policy areas were: structural

policy, environmental policy, research and technology policy, vocational training policy, consumer protection policy and a policy for cross boarder cooperation. Before entry to the EU Greece either had no policy at all e.g. environmental or if it did it was fragment and incoherent e.g. structural policy. This indicates that the Greek state was led by EU's impact and dynamic to assume competence and functions that otherwise it might not have developed at all. Further without the EU pressure the Greek state may not have gone so far to shape and develop the above policy areas (Ioakimidis 2000, 83-84). The Greek experience indicates a donwflow of policy competence and functions from the EU level to the national level. In this case the EU gave competence to the state to form and implement policies and not only assume competence from the Member State as is usually argued. Lastly, even if the member state refuses to develop a policy in the above context it really cannot do so. This is because a) decisions are taken by Qualified Majority Voting (QMV) and b) because EU law is above national law (Ioakimidis 1998,87). Thus, the member state even if it refuses to adopt a policy it has no other option but to adopt it as a consequence of the manner that the EU operates. In conclusion EU integration redefines state functions and competences not only by assuming competence at EU level but it also by allocating new competences and functions to the member states as a result of it dynamics. As a result of these new competences in cohesion policy the greek state was obliged to establish a cohesion policy according to EU requirements, which in turn had considerable consequences for the organisation, administration and institutions of the state (Ioakimidis, 1998:100). These consequences were mainly reforms towards establishing regional structures in the country and a territorial redefinition of powers as will be seen in the following section.

Territorial redefinition of powers

When Greece entered the EU it was considered one of the most highly centralized states of the EU. Twenty-two years of participation in the European integration process and the territorial impact of the europeanisation process is evident. EU membership has contributed to the altering of territorial distribution of power, political activities and resources (Verney and Papageorgiou 1993, Ioakimidis 1996). The EU has redefined the relation between the central state and the periphery mainly through the implementation of its cohesion policy starting from 1984-1988 and the

implementation of the Integrated Mediterranean Programmes (IMP's). The IMP's were designed to spur development in the Mediterranean regions of Greece, Italy and France with a budget of 6.6 billion ECU for seven years (Maraveyas 1995:422). The IMP's were embodied in EEC Regulation 2088/85 along with the rules for their implementation. The rules included the submission of Regional Development Plans (RDP's) within the context of EEC and CAP. The RDP's would have to be implemented by the relevant regions mobilizing all endogenous resources and the implementation of the RDP's would have to be coordinated with all the Structural Funds to achieve results in more than one policy area (Maraveyas 1995:423, EEC 2088/85). Greece submitted 6 RDP's covering the wider regions of the country and one sectoral programme for the development of information technology. The total cost for all Greek IMP's was 3.2 billion ECU of which the 1.8 was from Community Funds for 1985-1992 (Maraveyas 1995:424). The implementation of the IMP's can be considered the first attempt to implement EU regional policy in Greece.

The IMP's has proved to be a pivotal point in the further development of decentralised policies and a key source of pressure by the EU on the Greek state. The implementation of the IMP's proved to be extremely difficult due to the centralization of the Greek state and the non existence of regional structures adequate enough to materialise (RDP's). This exposed the weakness of the Greek system due to centralization and the necessity of reform towards establishing 13 regions in Greece (Papageorgiou and Verney 1993:345-347). Partly the negative experience of the IMP's provoked the establishment of the 13 regions with Law 1622/1986 (Papageorgiou and Verney 1993:345-347, interviews 1,3 and 5).

At this point it should be noted that the EU influence on the territorial redefinition of powers and the pressure towards decentralisation became more evident in the 1990's as EU cohesion policy itself experienced a boost in development. From the 1990's and onward EU cohesion policy was used to legitimise the introduction of reforms concerning the regions organization and their role in the policy process. Such reforms were embodied in Law 2503/97¹ for the regions organization and transfer of competences, Law 2218/94 for the second degree of local governance (prefectural

¹ This numbering refers to Greek laws and not EC law, e.g. Law 2503/97 is law number 2503 of the year 1997. European Laws are clearly marked with EEC....

level). During the 1980's any reforms (mainly Law 1235/1982²) towards redefining the territorial relation between the state and the regions was inspired by domestic party political factors. Entrance to the EU coincided with the accession of the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) to power in 1981. The new government had campaigned on a radical reform including regional decentralisation and it initiated a process of local government reform aimed at decentralizing the state and its functions. In general terms the PASOK government had (and continues to be) been in favor of decentralisation. Any reform during the 1980's did not seem to be influenced by the EU, which at that time it did not have a coherent regional policy as it did in the early 1990's (Ioakimidis 1996:348).

The 1996 round implementation of EU cohesion policy, as in other European states, generated the dynamics, presented the opportunities and conditions for introducing a systematic policy of regional decentralisation and reinforcing the powers and autonomy of the regions but most importantly has provided the regions with a role in the policy process. Greek regional structures are the result of the above opportunities.

As most interviews suggest the implementation of EU cohesion policy through the programming and partnership principles which stipulated the active involvement of regions in the policy making process, forced the Greek state to cede considerable powers, resources and discretion to the region so that implementation of EU cohesion policy is achieved to a high as possible degree (interviews:1,2,3,4,5, 2002). More specifically the regions gained significant financial resources as a result of implementing EU Cohesion policy. The Greek state having to implement 13 RDP's within the CSF allocated funds to the Greek regions that it had not done before. Between 1989-1993 the 1,454 million ECUs out of the total 2,380 million ECUs was a Community contribution (Ioakimidis 1998:195, interview 2: 2002). Next, the preparation and implementation of the RDP's gave real meaning to the regions day to day policy agenda and the opportunity to deal with issues of wider developmental and social interest (Ioakimidis 1998: 196, interview 1: 2002, interview 5: 2002). Also, through the implementation of Cohesion policy the regions gained access to policy making at national and supranational level, established communication channels with

² This Law concerned the establishment of the prefectures and their councils as a first effort towards decentralisation.

the institutions of the EU and other counterparts regions in other states (Ioakimidis 1998: 197).

Redefinition of the institutions

Until now literature suggests that europeanisation tends to strengthen the executive and bureaucracy of a political system and weaken the parliamentary institutions and legislative process and that challenge the democratic bases of the political process (Andersen and Eliassen 1996). The Greek case though can suggest that the europeanisation process can play a decisive role in strengthening democratic institutions and widening the scope of democratic process by bringing into it new actors. It also strengthens the autonomy of public and social institutions. For example the Bank of Greece which used to be controlled by the state gained almost full institutional independence in shaping monetary policy by being forced to comply with EU rules in the context of convergence programme to join EMU (Ioakimidis 2000). Another institution influenced by EU membership is that of public administration and civil service, which now it is more directly, involved with EU policy vis-a-vis the government and the political parties. By having to manage EU policy agenda the recruited workforce had to be highly skilled, have technocratic knowledge and expertise. This meant that the recruitment of these officials has to become more transparent and based on objective criteria rather than patron-client system and party control (Tsinisizelis 1996).

From the above study of the four key areas one can understand the influence of the EU and the integration process on the Greek state and its relation to Greek society. Thus a general conclusion can be that EU membership has triggered a significant europeanisation process redefining state society relations, strengthening civil society and weakening the tight control of the Athens centered state against the highly centralized background of the country. As result of europeanisation, enough space has been allowed for the regions to participate in the policy process and other social actors and institutions to reach policy-making arenas. It should be recognized that the balanced of power between the center and the periphery has not altered. However now

there is a compromise from the side of the center and new dynamics towards decentralisation have developed (interviews 1,2: 2002). The most important tool for this dynamic towards decentralisation has been the europeanisation of activities of the greek regional authorities and the implementation of the EU's Cohesion policy. This will be analysed in the following paragraphs.

The europeanisation of Regional policy

During the period between the 1950's and 1985 regional policy in Greece was fragmented into small projects with no coherence or aspect of productivity, quality or sustainability and the provision of financial incentives. Also there does not seem to be any control and management system of the projects or any significant involvement of the EU through Community guidelines. The regional structures of the period were either non-existent or did not seem to play any role in the policy process (Konsolas et al: 2002). The turning point for Greek regional policy has been the implementation of the IMP's in 1985. From that point and on Greek regional policy gradually coincides with EU Cohesion policy with the Commission and the CSFs as planning instruments eventually replacing all other forms of development plans (Getimis and Paraskevopoulos 2002). Further more, the austerity policy of the 1990's coupled with the implementation of the convergence programme for EMU prevented any other development policy outside the CSF and the EU policy (ibid). As a result Greek regional policy became totally dependent upon Community funds and guidance as well as exposed to a europeanisation process.

John (1994) and Getimis and Paraskevopoulos (2002) identify four stages of europeanisation of regional authorities. The first is characterized as minimal europeanisation and refers to information related activities. Specifically, information involving the implementation of EU directives and regulations, managing information about developments and opportunities for the regions in Brussels and communicating this information to a number of local actors (John, 1994:12). In the case of Greece, this sort of europeanisation of Greek regional policy has occurred but not to the same degree as in other European states. Only one region out of the thirteen -that of Epirus- has established an office in Brussels. The rest of the Greek regions depend for

information on the latest developments either on the Ministry of national economy or the technocratic abilities and skills of the person responsible for information update within each region (interview 6: 2002).

The second stage is referred to as financial europeanisation and concerns the regional authorities ability to gain access to EU funding and use those funds to promote local economic regeneration (John, 1994:12). At this stage the greek regions have made some progress since funds for their economic regeneration have increased significantly as a result of the CSF's and the structural funds. The regions may not have the ability to directly lobby for funding at an EU level but they do so through the national government by preparing policy and the RDP's which later turn into Community co-funded projects. Thus their search for funding is Europe oriented.

The third stage is that of the development of network linkages with other local organizations through their joint involvement in EU programmes or initiatives (John 1994:12). The structural funds programmes constitute a strong incentive for private sector involvement in development projects jointly with public agencies. Such network linkages within Greece are sporadic with some evidence of such in the South Aegean Islands (Getimis and Paraskevopoulos, 2002). The reason for not such activity in network linkages is the low quality of social capital, which sometimes sees things on a narrow local basis, the unskilled people involved, the culture of center dependency and not of collaboration and cooperation at the nearest level.

The fourth stage is that of full europeanisation, which involves the shift from the reactive to the proactive policy approach towards the EU. It is substantiated by the participation of subnational institutions in trans european collaborative networks and the creation of advisory channels to the Commission to influence the policy making process and the launching of European style initiatives at the local level (John 1994:12, Getimis and Paraskevopoulos 2002:3). At this stage, only a minority of greek regions is participating in trans-european networks. Also there aren't any greek advisory channels to the Commission and if there are they are working for the national representation and not for the regions per se.

In conclusion it can be suggested that the level of europeanisation of regional authorities plays a significant role in their economic regeneration and local development. A high degree of europeanisation can result in increased funds and promote the creation and establishment of inter, intra and transnational networks and cooperation with other European counterparts (Getimis and Paraskevopoulos 2002:3).

By comparing the progress of the greek regions with the above four stages of europeanisation of regional authorities one can suggest that greek regions have taken incremental steps towards europeanisation of their role and activities. The regions have been exposed to minimal europeanisation and a very significant increase in their resources as a result of the CSF. On the other side though they have not managed to create and participate actively in intra-national or transnational European networks, let alone to influence policy and lobby for funding at a European level. The opportunities and funds have been provided by the EU but the lack of adequate social capital, commitment by the executive, involvement by the ordinary people and not substantial regionalisation have impeded the potential created by european integration.

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to examine the role of the EU in promoting regional reform towards decentralisation in Greece. By regional reform was meant moving away from the centralized state organisation of Athens towards a more decentralized organization where the regions have more scope in the policy process. Also it has meant some institutional building in this direction e.g. establishment of regional structures.

The main argument put forward is as follows. Yes, the EU has been a significant actor in the decentralisation process in Greece. It has influenced the process through the europeanisation process EU membership initiated for Greece and the implementation of its Cohesion policy. This is not to suggest that a total change in the balance of power between the state and the regions has occurred.

The europeanisation process has influenced state society relations at a regulatory, functional, territorial and institutional level. It has strengthened the weak civil society

of Greece and intensified the debate between pro Europeanists and traditionalists. The most profound influence has been articulated at the territorial level of state society relations and particularly at the balance of power between state center and the regions/periphery.

Greece is a case of intended europeanisation for which the EU meant modernization and stable democratic regime. During the twenty-two years of membership a process of regional decentralization has been initiated and still continues. In the early 1980's until 1985, the introduction of the relevant laws promoting decentralisation through the strengthening of the prefecture councils were the result of the Socialists party commitment to decentralisation, while there was no sign of influence by the EU or in response to the EU integration process. This holds true for the following two reasons. First the EU itself did not possess in the 1980's such a coherent and dynamic policy to influence member states arrangements as it did in the early 1990's. Second the Socialist and governing party (PASOK) at that time was opposed to EU membership on ideological grounds. Thus until the mid 1980's any decentralisation process or Law was the result of domestic ideological and party politics factors with almost no influence from the European integration process. This situation changes from the mid 1980's with the implementation of the IMP's.

The centralization of the Greek state made the implementation of the IMP's very difficult. This resulted in exposing the country's weakness and the need for reform towards regional decentralisation. Also the Commission's requirements for regional structures so that policy could be implemented correctly resulted in Law 1622/1986 establishing the 13 regions of Greece. During the 1990's more laws strengthening regional decentralisation were passed. These were the result of requirements for the implementation of EU cohesion policy and EU pressures for modernization. At this point it should be noted the positive attitude of PASOK towards regional decentralisation. However the progress towards regional decentralisation has been incremental as literature suggests. The reason for this is the strong embeddedness of centralization on the Greek state and society. Further civil society has not been as strong and coherent as in other state so that it seeks reform, neither has social capital in Greece. Despite the recognition of the political elites to follow the norms of European integration and the recognition of the need to reform, the reforms add up to

being two steps forward and one backward. The central state still has a dominant position in the process but it also has ceded significant powers to the regions.

On the other side of the argument, society has become more comfortable with the idea of decentralisation and there has been more support for the reform process. If this process continues then there could be a dynamic from the bottom upwards aspiring to regional decentralisation. Such a trend has merely started to develop in the last year or two and it is reflected in the discussion for an elected regional secretary and regional council. Again in regard to this process it can be argued that the EU has played a critical role in awakening the periphery to its potential.

ENDNOTES

- ⁱ The first part represents the law number and the second the year in which the particular law was introduced
- ⁱⁱ By democratic programming the citizen has the right to participate in the programming period through the various committees existing at all levels of government (local, prefectural, regional).
- ⁱⁱⁱ Institution which assists the development of the city of Athens through research, projects, reports etc.

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SYMPOSIUM PAPER

**The Changing Role of the EU Factor
in Greek-Turkish Relations**

By Ioannis N. Grigoriadis¹

INTRODUCTION

As the main theme of this symposium suggests, Greece has undergone dramatic changes in numerous fields over the last few years. Few would doubt, however, that the change in the political climate between Greece and Turkey has not been among the most spectacular ones. Despite bitter historical background of uninterrupted conflict and warfare and existing disputes in a wide range of issues, Greece and Turkey showed for the first time their intention to overcome cold-war climate and try to improve working relations. This paper will focus on the changing role of the European Union factor in Greek-Turkish relations. I will argue that Greece's position as regards Turkey's EU membership has been modified due to a new view of Greece's strategic interests. This change is not the result of tactical calculation but rather of a new strategic approach regarding Greek-Turkish relations.

The viability of this rapprochement, however, depends on Turkey's successful democratisation, a process fostered by Turkey's interest in acceding to the European Union. The European Union has thus become a factor whose importance for the normalisation of Greek-Turkish relations can only be characterised as catalytic.

GREECE AND TURKEY-EU RELATIONS

It is commonplace to argue that Greece and Turkey have been in constant military and political competition. Having achieved its independence against the Ottoman Empire in 1830, Greece's diplomatic history in the 19th and early 20th century was mostly tantamount with warfare against the declining empire. The wars in 1897, 1912-1913, 1916-1918, 1919-1922² led to the formation of modern Greece's borders and embedded the view that Greek and Turkish foreign interests could only be antithetical. The establishment of the Turkish republic led to a brief détente period when Venizelos and Atatürk attempted to open a new page in Greek-Turkish relations; however, the pogrom against the Greek minority of Istanbul and the emergence of the Cyprus issue in the 1950s pulled Greek-Turkish relations into a quagmire. While the Greek minority of Istanbul eventually faded away, the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus did not deescalate tension in Greek-Turkish relations. Deteriorating relations among the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities directly affected Greek-Turkish relations. The culmination of this process came about in 1974 with the coup instigated by the Greek junta against the legitimate Cypriot government and the Turkish invasion and occupation of the northern part of the island since then. Greece and Turkey came to the brink of full-scale war in 1974, and this tension had a spill over effect over the Aegean and the rest of Greek-Turkish disputes. Tension and competition at military and political level continued to be the main patterns of Greek-Turkish relations. The introduction of the European

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² The 1974 military operations in Cyprus could arguably be added to that list.

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Economic Community variable into the grid of Greek-Turkish relations would necessarily have to adapt to the existing foreign policy objectives.

Turkey-EU relations have a longer past than one might think. Turkey applied for membership to the European Economic Community as early as July 1959, one month after Greece's application and signed an Association Agreement on 12 September 1963.³ An Additional Protocol was signed in November 1970 where the rules for Turkey's prospective customs union with the European Economic Community were elaborated, which was to be followed on a decision on Turkey's accession to the Community. However, unfavourable political developments in Turkey, and most important, the military coup of 12 September 1980 precluded any possibility of Turkey's EU membership. Turkey's isolation abated with its return to civilian government in 1983. Trade barriers were removed, and on 14 April 1987 an application for full EEC membership was submitted by the government of Turgut Özal.

Nonetheless, Turkey-EEC relations would be impacted by Greece's accession to the Community in 1981. The rule of unanimity in the EEC decision-making process provided Greece with leverage in influencing Turkey-EEC relations. While Turkish-Greek disputes in the Aegean –ranging from the delineation of territorial waters, airspace and continental shelf to that of Flight Information Regions (FIR)– the unresolved Cyprus problem and the rest of bilateral differences remained unsettled, Greece decided to exploit Turkey's interest in improving its relations with the European Union by conditioning its consent to the improvement of Turkey-EU relations on the modification of Turkey's policies on their bilateral disputes. As Turkey did not seem willing to alter its policies, Turkey-EU relations suffered a stalemate as any decisions that could improve Turkey-EU relations were blocked by Greece's veto. The channelling of financial aid provided by the Fourth Financial Protocol of 1981 between Turkey and the European Union was frozen. Moreover, the EEC Commission politely rejected Turkey's application in December 1989. The Commission based its decision on the "substantial economic and developmental gap between the Community and Turkey", which implied that Turkey could not fulfil its obligations deriving from the EEC economic and social policies. Besides, it cited Turkey's disputes with Greece, the Cyprus issue and the fact that its human rights regime and "respect for minorities" had "not yet reached the level required in a democracy".⁴ To appease Turkey's discontent for the polite rejection of its EEC membership application in 1989, the European Commission initiated a renewed effort to accomplish a customs union between Turkey and the European Economic Community, improve cooperation in the industrial and other fields and release the funds provided for in the Fourth Financial Protocol.⁵ Nonetheless, it was Greece again, which blocked the last part of the Commission initiative. However, the EU leaders agreed in the EU Lisbon Summit of June 1992 that "the Turkish role in the present European political situation is of the greatest importance", and negotiations on achieving Turkey-EU customs union were resumed in November 1992. In the EU Copenhagen Summit of June 1993 the EU leaders agreed on a set of conditions to be met by all states aiming to accede to the European Union. The later known as "Copenhagen criteria" included, first, the stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, respect for and protection of minorities; second, the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union, and third, the ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union. Candidate states should also have created the conditions for its integration through the adjustment of its administrative structures, so that European

³ Turkey applied for association with the European Economic Community on 31st July 1959 and signed the Association Agreement on 12d September 1963.

⁴ William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy 1774-2000* (London, Portland OR: Frank Cass, 2000), p. 178-179

⁵ William Hale, *ibid.*, p. 234-235

Community legislation transposed into national legislations implemented effectively through appropriate administrative and judicial structures.⁶

The articulation of the Copenhagen criteria and Turkey's evident failure to meet them due to its bleak human and minority rights record and military-influenced democracy added one more argument to Greece's opposition to improved Turkey-EU relations. Through its consistent veto policy, Greece was effectively depriving Turkey of any closer relations to the European Union; this objective was, however, being achieved at increasing political cost.

Greece's EU partners were dissatisfied by the way Greece undermined EU policies with respect to Turkey. Greece was seen as obstructing any Turkey-EU approach for the sake of its own national interests. Turkey was viewed as a country with a huge domestic market and crucial strategic importance. Greek national interests might require a tough approach on the issue of Turkey-EU relations, so that Turkey would modify its policies on Greek-Turkish disputes. On the other hand, this policy backfired against EU general interests and the national interests of the remaining EU member states. Increasing pressure from EU member states coincided with Greece's decision to set the membership of Cyprus to the European Union as one of its primary foreign policy strategic objectives. After a series of bilateral and UN-brokered negotiations failed to solve the political problem of Cyprus, Greece hoped that Cyprus' accession to the European Union would boost the conflict resolution process. Greece's intention to achieve concrete steps to achieve Cyprus' EU membership facilitated the beginning of a bargaining process whereby Greece would agree on the piecemeal improvement of Turkey-EU relations while it would secure the progress of Cyprus' EU membership application.⁷ So on 6 March 1995 Greece lifted its veto against the Turkey-EU customs union agreement and the release of EU funds for Turkey provided for by the Fourth Additional Protocol on the condition that accession negotiations between Cyprus and the European Union would commence within six months after the end of the EU Intergovernmental Conference –in effect within 1998. The customs union agreement between Turkey and the European Union came into force on 1 January 1996. Greece's decision to concede to that development marked a milestone as regards Greek views of Turkey-EU relations.

Greek-Turkish relations were to sharply deteriorate shortly after the customs union agreement came into force. The Ymia-Kardak crisis of 30 January 1996 and the Öcalan crisis of 15 February 1999 showed that the cold war in Greek-Turkish relations was far from over; on the contrary, Greece and Turkey came twice in two years close to the brink of armed conflict. Greece's willingness for détente in Greek-Turkish relations, lucidly manifested in December 1998 when it supported Cyprus' decision to deploy a controversial S-300 missile detachment not in Cyprus but in Crete, had come to no avail. The fiasco of Greek policy in the Öcalan affair led the Greek Prime Minister Konstantinos Simitis to appoint a new Foreign Minister: In the person of George Papandreou Simitis thought that he had found the politician that could restore the international image of Greece, which was severely damaged during the Öcalan crisis and reshape its foreign policy. George Papandreou would, indeed, leave a very strong personal imprint on the efforts for a Greek-Turkish rapprochement.

A pivotal part of the new Greek foreign policy would necessarily involve policies toward Turkey.⁸ In May 1999 the Greek and Turkish Foreign Ministers George Papandreou

⁶ European Union, European Commission, *EU Enlargement: A Historic Opportunity*, <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/intro/criteria.htm>

⁷ Semin Suvarierol, "The Cyprus Obstacle in Turkey's Road to the European Union" in Ali Çarkoğlu and Barry Rubin (eds), *Turkey and the European Union* (London, Portland OR: Frank Cass, 2003), pp. 62-66

⁸ Dimitris Keridis, "Domestic Developments and Foreign Policy: Greek Policy Toward Turkey" in Dimitris Keridis and Dimitrios Triantafyllou (eds.), *Greek-Turkish Relations in the Era of Globalisation* (Dulles, VA: Brassey's, 2001), pp. 9-18

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and İsmail Cem initiated a dialogue initiative on low-profile bilateral issues, e.g. trade, tourism and environmental protection. The display of mutual goodwill at both the governmental and grassroots levels during the earthquakes that hit Turkey and Greece in August and September 1999 respectively, contributed to a dramatic reversal of hostile attitudes in the public opinion and the press, thereby facilitating détente efforts.

The Greek-Turkish rapprochement would necessarily have a positive influence on Turkey-EU relations. The latter had suffered a severe drawback in the EU Luxembourg Summit of December 1997 when Turkey was omitted from the list of the states awarded the status of EU candidate. Nonetheless, efforts to achieve EU candidate status for Turkey were resumed. Greece was now decreasingly hostile against Turkey's EU membership process, but other EU member states –like Germany or Sweden- would at that time express their reservations. The historic decision was made in the EU Helsinki Summit of December 1999: Turkey was officially recognised as candidate state for accession to the European Union.⁹ On the other hand, important conditions were set as regards Turkish-Greek relations and the Cyprus problem. Before the start of EU accession negotiations Turkey should settle its disputes with Greece –or alternatively, agree to bring the cases in front of the International Court of Justice, while substantial progress was the least to be expected for the Cyprus problem. The EU Accession Partnership Document for Turkey was publicised by the European Commission on 8 November 2000. A decision on the start of Turkey's EU accession negotiations would be made during the EU Copenhagen Summit of December 2002.

Greece's stance toward the prospective accession of Turkey to the European Union marked a second milestone in the history of Greek policies on Turkey-EU relations. In 1995 Greece had abandoned its veto policy against any improvement of Turkey-EU relations and conceded to the customs union between Turkey and the European Union. This did not mean, however, that Greece would take any concrete measures or implement policies, which would favour the prospect of Turkey's membership to the European Union. The latter was to happen only after the EU Helsinki Summit of December 1999, when support of Turkey's orientation toward the European Union was added to the agenda of Greek diplomacy. According to the new policy, which had the personal touch of the new Foreign Minister George Papandreou, Greece should actively support all efforts made to improve Turkey-EU relations. This policy came to its culmination during the EU Copenhagen Summit of December 2002, when Turkey's compliance with the Copenhagen criteria was scrutinised. Although Turkey's failure to fully comply with the Copenhagen criteria was not doubted, Greece -alongside with Italy and Spain- argued that the European Union should reconsider Turkey's progress in the implementation of the Copenhagen criteria within 2003, so that Turkey's EU accession negotiations could start in 2004, provided that compliance with the Copenhagen criteria was achieved. The European Council decided to reconsider Turkey's progress in December 2004. Greece's proposal was not approved by the Council, but the fact that the state that had kept Turkey-EU relations frozen for more than a decade now belonged to the minority of EU member states that opted for higher speed in the progress of Turkey's EU accession process was characteristic of the change in the Greek view of EU-Turkish relations and the role of the European Union in Greek-Turkish relations.

NEO-REALISM AND GREECE'S POSITION IN TURKEY-EU RELATIONS

The switch of Greece's policies as far as Turkey-EU relations are concerned can be explained as an introduction of new theoretical models applied by Greek diplomacy for the better

⁹ Kalypso Nicolaidis, "Europe's Tainted Mirror: Reflections on Turkey's Candidacy Status After Helsinki" in Dimitris Keridis and Dimitrios Triantafyllou (eds.), *ibid.*, pp.247-248

understanding of Greek-Turkish relations and the role of the European Union factor in them. The theory of structural realism (or neorealism) was the analytical tool in the field of international relations that was most often applied to explain the course of Greek-Turkish relations in the 20th century. The three core assumptions of neo-realism, on the nature of actors, state preferences and international structure could be testified in the field of Greek-Turkish relations.¹⁰

According to the first assumption, the existence of “conflict groups”¹¹ is assumed, each organised as a unitary political actor that rationally pursues distinctive goals within an anarchic setting. While conflict groups are sovereign within their territory, at the international level they have to operate in anarchy, namely an environment where no sovereign power prevails. Conflict groups have to “help themselves” in the anarchic environment and, in order to do so, they are also assumed to act rationally¹². The most efficient available means to achieve their ends is chosen, subject to constraints imposed by environmental uncertainties and incomplete information. The second core assumption refers to the fixed and uniformly conflictual character of state preferences. Interstate politics is thus a perpetual interstate bargaining process over the distribution and redistribution of scarce resources.¹³ The assumption of the fixed character of state interests releases international relations thought from the “reductionist” temptation to seek the causes of state behaviour in the complex process of domestic preference formation, from the “moralist” temptation to expect that ideas influence the material structure of world politics, from the “utopian” temptation to believe that any given group of states have naturally harmonious interests and from the “legalist” temptation to believe that states can overcome power politics by submitting rules to common rules and institutions.¹⁴ The last assumption refers to the primacy of material capabilities. Interstate bargaining outcomes reflect the relative cost of threats and inducements, which is directly proportional to the distribution of material resources. Absent a common international sovereign, states are able to coerce or bribe their counterparts, and their ability is proportional to its underlying power, which is defined in terms of its access to exogenously varying material resources, military and other.¹⁵ Therefore, states seek power, namely both the ability to influence others and resources that can be used to exert influence, and also calculate their interests in terms of power, whether as end or as necessary means to a variety of other ends.¹⁶

Testing the relevance of the three core assumptions of neo-realism for Greek-Turkish relations could offer great help in understanding the rationale of Greece’s original position with respect to Turkey-EU relations. The international anarchic environment is easily testified in the field of Greek-Turkish relations. Turkey’s invasion and continued occupation of almost 40% of the territory of the Republic of Cyprus, despite international condemnation (including numerous UN Security Council decisions and General Assembly resolutions), the systematic violation of the Greek FIR and airspace borders by Turkish military aircraft, the statement of the Turkish parliament that the exercise of Greece’s sovereign right to extend its territorial waters in the Aegean to 12 miles would be a *casus belli* for Turkey and its refusal to accept the jurisprudence of the International Court of Justice on Greek-Turkish disputes

¹⁰ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theories of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979), p. 94

¹¹ States are assumed to be the most important “conflict groups” in world politics. The term, however, could under different historical circumstances also refer to tribes, principalities, city-states, domains etc.

¹² Robert O. Keohane (ed.), *Neorealism and its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp. 164-165

¹³ Jeffrey W. Legro and Andrew Moravcsik, “Is Anybody Still a Realist?”, *International Security*, Vol. 24 No. 2 (Fall 1999), p. 13

¹⁴ Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973), p. 2-12

¹⁵ Jeffrey W. Legro and Andrew Moravcsik, *ibid.*, p. 17

¹⁶ Robert O. Keohane (ed.), *ibid.*, p. 165

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are ample manifestations of international anarchy the neo-realist theory refers to.¹⁷ Turkey's persistent violation of Greek sovereign rights and disregard of international law norms has not attracted any significant international support for Greece's positions as other international actors define their positions on the basis of their own interests. In that environment Greece has to "help itself" against Turkey, and its membership to the European Union is one of its primary weapons in that effort. As Turkey's main strategic objective has been its integration into the European political, economic and cultural realm, its campaign to join the European Union becomes critically important, and this increases Greece's leverage in using its EU membership to exert pressure on Turkey¹⁸. As regards the assumption of fixed and uniformly conflictual character of state preferences, Turkey has, indeed, fixed interests in both the Aegean dispute and Cyprus. Effective Turkish control over an increased part of the Aegean disregarding Greek sovereign rights over the Eastern Aegean islands and the legalisation of the current *de facto* partition in Cyprus epitomise Turkish fixed interests in Greek-Turkish relations. These interests can only come into conflict with Greek interests on full exercise of Greek sovereign rights in the Aegean and reunification of Cyprus. Greek-Turkish disputes are thus defined with the rules of a zero-sum game. The fact that Greece's interests are protected under international law does not have any bearing on their realisation. However, the fact that Turkey perceives membership to the European Union as one more of its fixed interests improves Greece's negotiating position. Greece can now better pursue its own fixed interests by fixing its interest on Turkey's EU membership on the base of its stance on Greek-Turkish disputes. Regarding the assumption of the primacy of material capabilities, Turkey has supported the pursuance of its fixed interests through extensive armaments and the maintenance of daunting military force on Turkey's borderline with Greece. Among its other functions, the Turkish military has also served as coercive force against Greece and its interests in Greek-Turkish disputes. Greece's response to the increasing pressure of the Turkish military could only be its own military build-up. The upgraded Greek military forces should –if not threaten- at least deter Turkish expansionism and prevent Greece's coercion to Turkish political demands. Turkey's intention to join the European Union, however, added an unexpected material capability for Greece. Greece's membership to the European Union and the rule of unanimity in EU decision making meant that Greece could use its veto power in the European Union in order to coerce Turkey to adopt more moderate views on Greek-Turkish disputes. The fact that Greece's new material capability was not "hard" –as in the case of military- did not reduce its effectiveness and coercive power.

LIBERALISM AND GREECE'S POSITION IN TURKEY-EU RELATIONS

Novel Greek tactics and strategies as regards Turkey-EU relations were the result of introducing liberal analytical tools into the study of Greek-Turkish relations and the role of the European Union. The liberal theory of international relations challenged the dominant neorealist school of thought paving the way for reform. Listing the three core assumptions of the liberal theory of international relations could provide us with an analytical tool to understand change in Greece's position in Turkey-EU relations.

According to the first liberal international relations theory assumption, the fundamental actors in international politics are individuals and private groups, who are on the average rational and risk-averse and who organise change and collective action to promote differentiated interests under constraints imposed by material scarcity, conflicting values and

¹⁷ Phaedon John Kozyris, "The Legal Dimension of the Current Greek-Turkish Conflict: A Greek Viewpoint" in Dimitris Keridis and Dimitrios Triantafyllou (eds.), *ibid.*, pp. 105-109

¹⁸ William Hale, *ibid.*, pp. 335-336

variations in societal influence.¹⁹ Liberal theory rests on a “bottom-up” view of politics in which the demands of individuals and societal groups are treated as analytically prior to politics. Political action is embedded in domestic and transnational civil society, understood as an aggregation of boundedly different rational individuals with differentiated tastes, social commitments and resource endowment. Socially differentiated individuals define their material and ideational interests independently of politics and then advance those interests through political exchange and collective action. Individuals and groups are assumed to act rationally in pursuit of material and ideal welfare.²⁰ The second assumption refers to representation and state preferences: States or other political institutions represent some subset of domestic society, on the basis of whose interests state officials define state preferences and act purposively in world politics.²¹ In the liberal conception of domestic politics, the state is not an actor but a representative institution constantly subject to capture and recapture, construction and reconstruction by coalitions of social actors. Representative institutions and practices constitute the critical “transmission belt” by which the preferences and social power of individuals and groups are translated into state policy. Individuals turn to the state to achieve goals that private behaviour is unable to achieve efficiently. Government policy is therefore constrained by the underlying identities, interests and power of individuals groups (inside and outside the state apparatus), who constantly pressure the central decision makers to pursue policies consistent with their preferences. According to the third assumption, the configuration of interdependent state preferences determines state behaviour.²² For liberals, state behaviour reflects varying patterns of state preferences. Each state seeks to realise its own distinctive preferences under varying constraints imposed by the preferences of other states. Liberals causally privilege variation in the configuration of state preferences, while treating configurations of capabilities and information as if they were fixed constraints or endogenous to state preferences. The critical theoretical link between state preferences and the behaviour of one or more states is provided by the concept of policy interdependence. Policy interdependence is defined here as the set of costs and benefits created for foreign societies when dominant social groups in a society seek to realise their preferences, that is the pattern of transnational externalities resulting from attempts to pursue national distinctive purposes. Liberal theory assumes that the pattern of interdependent state preferences imposes a binding constraint on state behaviour.

Applying the assumptions of the liberal theory of international relations to Greek policies regarding Turkey-EU relations offers many interesting perspectives in understanding the roots of the recent change. Individuals and private groups have been very influential in improving Greek-Turkish relations. Business groups, non-governmental organisations, intellectuals, journalists and, last but not least, the personality of the Greek Foreign Minister George Papandreou contributed to climate improvement in Greek-Turkish relations. Those activities counterbalanced traditional public opinion approaches, which deemed hostility in Greek-Turkish relations to be inevitable. The establishment of transnational bonds and networks at the academic, business and civil society levels also improved understanding on both sides, thus reducing the role of prejudice and misinformation. Activities of individuals and private groups were instrumental for the re-conceptualisation of Greek strategic interests in terms of Turkey-EU relations and Greece’s active support of Turkey’s accession process to the European Union. As far as representation and state preferences are concerned, the recent improvement of relations between Greek and Turkish business, academic and civil society

¹⁹ Andrew Moravcsik, “Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Relations”, *International Organisation*, Vol. 51, No. 4 (Autumn 1997), p. 516-517

²⁰ Andrew Moravcsik, *ibid.*, 517

²¹ Andrew Moravcsik, *ibid.*, 518-519

²² Andrew Moravcsik, *ibid.*, 520-521

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organisations have overcome the traditionally hostile state-sponsored approach and have had a positive impact on state policies regarding Greek-Turkish relations. Although the nature of the Turkish state makes it less susceptible to civil society influence, it is nevertheless true that the policies of both Greece and Turkey were affected by their societies. Turkey's firm commitment to the European Union and ambivalence on basic tenets of its policy on Greek-Turkish relations as well as Greece's positive role on the issue of Turkey's accession to the European Union are manifestations of that change. As far as the determination of state behaviour through the configuration of interdependent state preferences is concerned, the lack of any significant trade and other economic transactions was cited one of the main reasons for recurring Greek-Turkish disputes. Strengthening interdependence bonds between Greece and Turkey at the economic level was one of the first steps made toward détente and prospective normalisation in Greek-Turkish relations. Increasing the interest of Greece and Turkey in the well-being of the other could have only positive influence on their relations. The recent boom in trade between the two countries fostered cooperation between Greek and Turkish business circles and showed how beneficial a prospective normalisation of Greek-Turkish relations would be for both sides. Increasing interdependence between the Greek and the Turkish economy significantly influenced Greece's decision to alter its policies on Turkey-EU relations.

A TACTICAL MOVE OR STRATEGIC CHOICE?

I would argue in that paper that the changing role of the EU factor in Greek-Turkish relations indicates a shift in Greece's strategic thought as regards Turkey's future position in the world political system. Greece's switch of policies and support for Turkey's EU integration process is not a merely tactical move aiming to accrue political gains for Greece; on the contrary, it should be considered as a strategic move based on a drastic reinterpretation of Greek national interests.

Through its consistent veto policy, Greece had undertaken for many years the political cost of stalling Turkey-EU relations. Greece was viewed both in the Turkish and European public opinion as insurmountable obstacle for Turkey's EU integration. Some analysts argued that the end of Greek veto policy against the improvement of Turkey-EU relations and the subsequent active support of Turkey's EU membership did not necessarily signal a modification of Greek strategic views on Turkey's European future. Greece still held the opinion that Turkey's permanent exclusion from the European Union was beneficial for Greek interests; it understood, however, that it was not wise to undertake the whole cost of blocking Turkey-EU relations by itself. There were quite a few other EU member states, which were actually opposing Turkey's membership to the European Union, but found no reason to publicly declare their position and thus damage their relations with Turkey, because Greece's solid veto policy was guaranteeing a stalemate in Turkey-EU relations. Greece then understood that the prospects of Turkey's accession to the European Union would not be bright even if Greece's veto were lifted. Turkey was still far from complying with the Copenhagen criteria, while there were certain EU member states that would take an active role in obstructing Turkey's EU membership if the latter ever became a realistic task. Greece's veto policy was, therefore, harmful for Greek interests, as it was aiming to achieve something that would in any case happen, i.e. Turkey would remain outside the European Union regardless of Greek policies, while it accumulated discontent against Greece both on the Turkish and European side. Turkey would reasonably consider Greece to be the most determined opponent of its EU membership, while the EU member states and officials would react against the fact that a member state blocked major EU policies and harmed EU interests with respect to Turkey to further its narrowly defined national interests. In view of that situation Greece decided to change its tactics on the issue of Turkey-EU relations by lifting

its veto; its strategy, nonetheless, which opposed Turkey's accession to the European Union, remained identical. While lip service would be paid to Turkey's prospective integration into the European Union, the objectives of Greek foreign policy would now be served by Turkey's inability or unwillingness to comply with the Copenhagen criteria and the firm opposition of other EU member states to Turkey's accession.

The new position of Greece as regards the future of Turkey-EU relations is a product of a strategic reinterpretation of Greek-Turkish relations. Greece's membership to the European Union is no more viewed as a comparative advantage that could deprive Turkey of any close EU relations before the resolution of the Greek-Turkish disputes. On the contrary, Turkey's approach to the European Union is considered to be vital for the improvement of Greek-Turkish relations. Turkey's obligation to comply with the Copenhagen criteria would lead to a programme of political reform, which would in turn lead to a reconsideration of Turkish diplomatic policies towards Greece. The process of Turkey's political liberalisation and democratisation that Turkey should undergo in order to become eligible for EU membership would mean that the way Turkey defined and pursued its national interests would also have to be reformed. The role of unelected established groups like the military and the state bureaucracy, which have a heavy bearing on the formation of a hawkish Turkish foreign policy, would be decreased. Turkey's orientation toward the European Union would increase its need for good relations with Greece, as the latter would facilitate its efforts to join the European Union. It is to Greece's interest to foster the improvement of Turkey-EU relations: The alternative of an Europeanising and eventually European Turkey for Greece would be either a dictatorial military or a reactionary Islamist Turkey. In the first case, Greece would have to face an increasing military threat and implementation of the most intransigent policies as far as Greek-Turkish disputes are concerned. It would necessarily have to engage in an arms race with an even more militarised Turkey, whilst bilateral relations would sharply deteriorate. Regional instability would then affect Greece's economy, while the image of Greece as a state, which is not involved in international disputes but aspires to attain an even greater role in international conflict resolution, would suffer great damages. If the model of reactionary, anti-European Islamist Turkey prevailed, Greece would again have to confront an unstable, undemocratic and politically unpredictable Turkey whose isolation from the West would allow for more uncompromising policies. Greece would clearly become a "frontier land" –in Samuel Huntington's sense²³- against resurgent radical Islam, which would cause permanent instability at a regional level. In view of all those case scenarios it is argued that Greece is much better off if Turkey's strategic orientation remains fixed towards integration in the European Union. The prospect of closer relations between Turkey and the European Union has already facilitated political reform, liberalisation and improvements in human rights protection in the 1990s. This process could only be completed under the condition of ever-closer relations between Turkey and the European Union, which could eventually lead to Turkey's full EU membership. Turkey's full and complete democratisation, which would be achieved through Turkey's integration into the European political system, would guarantee normalisation in Greek-Turkish relations and set the foundations of Greek-Turkish cooperation. It is, therefore, to the strategic interest of Greece to champion Turkey's full membership in the European Union.

The redefinition of Greek strategic interests as regards Turkey's EU accession could happen neither immediately nor automatically. The switch from firm rejection to active advocacy of Turkey's accession to the European Union was in fact facilitated by a temporary divergence in Greek strategies and tactics with respect to Turkey-EU relations. When it became clear that it was politically too costly for Greece to block alone any improvement of

²³ Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilisations?", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, 3, p.22 ff.

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EU-Turkey relations, the Greek veto was lifted. Most of the Greek diplomats and opinion makers supported, though, that decision, because they believed that other EU member states would effectively block Turkey's integration in the European Union. Greece would be relieved from an unnecessary burden in its foreign policy, while Turkey's accession to the European Union would not in practice become more probable. Greece thus adopted a new tactical but not strategic policy as regards Turkey-EU relations. While Turkey's prospective EU membership would be verbally supported, Greece's strategic planning still aimed at keeping Turkey outside the European Union. This divergence in Greek tactics and strategies turned out to be only temporary, a transitory stage between two convergent, but antithetical strategies on Turkey-EU relations. The active advocacy of Turkey's EU membership as initiated by George Papandreou signalled the change of Greek strategic considerations. Greece now perceived Turkey's integration into the European Union to be of vital importance for its strategic interests. Turkey's accession to the European Union would mean democratisation, liberalisation and abolition of military and bureaucratic establishments. A fully democratised and liberalised Turkey would be a better neighbour for Greece, and the resolution of pending Greek-Turkish disputes and the Cyprus issue would be facilitated. Greek strategies and tactics converged again, but this time on the view that Turkey's EU membership was beneficial and pursuable for Greece.

THE EUROPEAN UNION: A CATALYST FOR A GREEK-TURKISH RAPPROCHEMENT?

The switch in the theoretical models applied by Greece to conceptualise its interests with respect to Turkey-EU relations and its impact on relevant Greek policies does not answer the question of what role the European Union can play in bilateral Greek-Turkish relations. I would argue –in conclusion of my paper– that the European Union now offers the most concrete perspective for the normalisation of Greek-Turkish relations. Turkey's effort to achieve membership to the European Union by fulfilling the Copenhagen criteria is at the same time Turkey's democratisation effort. The success of Turkey's democratisation process will have beneficial influence on Greek-Turkish relations. The democratic peace thesis epitomises the reasons why Turkey's democratisation could lead to a complete Greek-Turkish rapprochement.

The democratic peace proposition is perhaps the most widely accepted thesis in the field of international relations.²⁴ Its primary claim is that democratic states do not wage war against each other. One of the secondary claims is that democratic states locked in disputes with each other choose more peaceful means of resolution than other pairings of states. Explanations of the democratic peace thesis usually fall into three main categories. According to the first, *democratic institutions place constraints on the ability of leaders to fight other democracies, or simply make them reluctant to choose war.* Besides, *norms shared by democratic states cause them to view each other as pacific and unthreatening.* According to the third explanation, *group democracy tends to foster economic interdependence, which reduces the likelihood of war.*

The applicability of the democratic peace thesis in Greek-Turkish relations is highly indicative of the positive influence that the European Union could have on improving Greek-Turkish relations. In a democratic Turkey the overwhelmingly influential role of the military and bureaucracy in Greek-Turkish relations would contract to the benefit of elected government. Political leaders would then be more reluctant to wage a belligerent policy whose main victims would be their voters. The existence of two democratic political systems in Greece and Turkey would also mean that mutual trust and understanding would be easier

²⁴ RAND Publications, *The Democratic Peace Idea*,
<http://www.rand.org/publications/MR/MR1346/MR1346.appc.pdf>, pp.147-160

to achieve. Turkey's full democratisation would even further increase economic relations between Greece and Turkey. By supporting Turkey's democratisation process, the European Union can thus become a catalyst for the full normalisation of Greek-Turkish relations. Zero-sum game mentality would no more be considered to be applicable on the full range of Greek-Turkish relations. There might still be issues where Greek and Turkish interests may not coincide; on the other hand, there would be many other issues where Greece and Turkey could join forces and pursue common interests, while the stakes of cooperation would always be higher than those of conflict. The European Union project has already helped overcome nationalist conflict and historic rivalries in Western Europe –the primary example being Germany and France. It could help once more by providing an environment where perennial Greek-Turkish disputes could be mitigated and eventually resolved, and an era of Greek-Turkish cooperation would emerge.

Centralising Government Structure and Culture Impeding Regional Development: an Interim Evaluation of the CSF II Regional Operational Programme (ROP) for Central Macedonia

Summary

The aim of this research work is to survey the relationship between the variables “centralised government structure” and “centralised government culture” with the concept of (regional) development. The Rokkan-Urwin centre-periphery model is used, coupled with the development concepts suggested by Gunnar Myrdal and R.D. Putnam, to survey the impact of a development effort in the three fields of activity of a nation, region or locality: politics, economics and culture. The case study is the E.U. Community Support Framework II development package for Greece and its application to the regions of Central Macedonia and Epirus. Fieldwork in Central Macedonia comprised interviews with prefects, mayors and prefecture programming directors who were involved in programme monitoring and management, analysis of project reports and budget/balance sheets of programme elements per prefecture and for the region as a whole. An interim evaluation of the data offers substantive feedback on future regional policy. It also suggests further study of the centralised culture of the Hellenic public administration/political system, the results of which may point towards the direction for further regionalisation in Greece as well as elsewhere, as this may prove catalytic towards the full release of human capacity in the regions of the newly enlarged Europe.

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1. Theoretical Framework

The word *perifereia* in ancient and modern Hellenic has the meaning of circumference (Pring, 1986). This defines any such locus as located within the area around and at a distance from a focal point, the *kentron* (the centre). Evident from this simple geometric/topological definition are both a conceptual dependency (one cannot define the latter without referring to the former and vice-versa) and a relationship of a comparative nature between the two notions whence some key features are brought forth to describe them. Historically, peripheral areas lie within the territory owned or controlled by the centre and are to a certain degree subordinate to its authority. Whereas the centre represents the seat of authority, the main centre of affairs, decision-making and power, the periphery is secondary in importance, inward-oriented, often subordinate, relatively weak in capability and largely depleted of talented human resource. Central areas are principally defined as places where major administrative, political, economic and military institutions have been established, officiate there from and facilitate political, economic, cultural or other discourse and decision-making. Holders of key state posts frequently convene in such organs in set times throughout the year to participate in ceremonies and memorials that emphasise elements of the nation's identity and affirm the integral character of the state and territory.

In modern economic geography terms centres are defined as principal hubs of economic activity where opportunities for human and wealth capital are abundant and where there is a high density of interaction between physical persons or institutions towards mutual benefit within the community, supported by an array of technological

and institutional instruments. In contrast, a peripheral area is usually a secondary socio-economic entity with a fragmented and parochial culture, not fully integrated with the main systems of interaction and exchange and thus doomed to marginality, influence or even resource absorption by central or core territories. It often has either a mere subsistence economy which stands outside the main networks of economic exchange and is dependent upon single tradable goods, thus being vulnerable to fluctuations of external demand. Production is mainly agrarian and uncoordinated compared to central areas where economic activity is based on a dense web of formal and informal networks and mainly located in the tertiary (services) or quaternary (as defined by Rokkan and Urwin, that is specific to registration and diffusion of decisions, orders, instructions and relevant information) sectors of the economy (Rokkan and Urwin, 1983).

There can hence be three main aspects that differentiate core from peripheral areas; these are (i) distance, (ii) difference in identity, which comes about by experiencing the afore-mentioned elements in daily life coupled with long-standing elements of retention of such individuality (a distinct cultural background relating to social norms, practices, customs and habits), and (iii) differences in the nature and structure of production and relative economic dependence. Viewed as a set, these three characteristics can generate disturbance, confusion and strife within a peripheral community; the interests of such a society or community are part of a greater state/system of affairs, yet they are less significant compared to the concerns of the centre. Moreover, when a periphery is examined in geographical terms only, as a piece of land within a wider territory controlled by a centre, then the *horizontal* dimension of peripherality is merely considered. If one then moves from a simple

topological comparison between areas and their populations and look at the territory under study through a population set and associated capacity for change (institutional or otherwise) perspective, one will identify sets of key decision-makers, which can be termed “central”, as opposed to “peripheral” sets of actors who possess little decision-making capacity and least influence upon central groups, all within the territorial space that is now defined as a system of interaction among such sets. This alternative outlook on territory is known as *vertical* peripherality (Rokkan and Urwin, 1983); Rokkan and Urwin maintain that both horizontal and vertical peripherality must be included in any analysis of centre-periphery relations or structures. Furthermore, what is important is the correlation between the two dimensions of peripherality for a particular area. When one area is described as peripheral to another, the description cannot only be geographical; it will rather comprise all or some of the comparative characteristics presented above. Territorial issues cannot be studied without considering differences within the population of each area, nor can the behaviour of decision-makers be studied without taking into account their regional ties.

The above relate to the contextual factors which shape the centre-periphery relationship in every case and which can be outlined as being (i) the political economy of territorial integration, (ii) the political sociology of identity maintenance and local mobilisation and (iii) the historical and political context of centre-building and boundary delimitation. Peripherality can hence be observed in three distinct domains of social life: the economy, culture and politics. Furthermore, the degree with which the boundaries of the economic, cultural and political life of a peripheral society can be penetrated bears considerable influence to the internal configuration of such a society. The centre-periphery relationship encompasses a set of activities of bi-

directional discourse and action between the centre and the locality that can be positioned as taking place in the political-administrative, economic, social and cultural field of nation's daily life. Specifically, the figure below, adapted from Rokkan and Urwin (1983), attempts to pictorially put together a model of centre-periphery relations and interaction processes within a nation state. In particular it is shown how a local community interfaces with the state apparatus and is affected by processes of "system-building", defined as the composition of new socio-economic concepts (e.g. value system) and/or units in the afore-mentioned fields, where the main issue in the balance is dependence to country-wide standardisation or redistribution policies operated by the centre, or integration with the national *corpus* whilst maintaining a distinct identity and self-reliance.

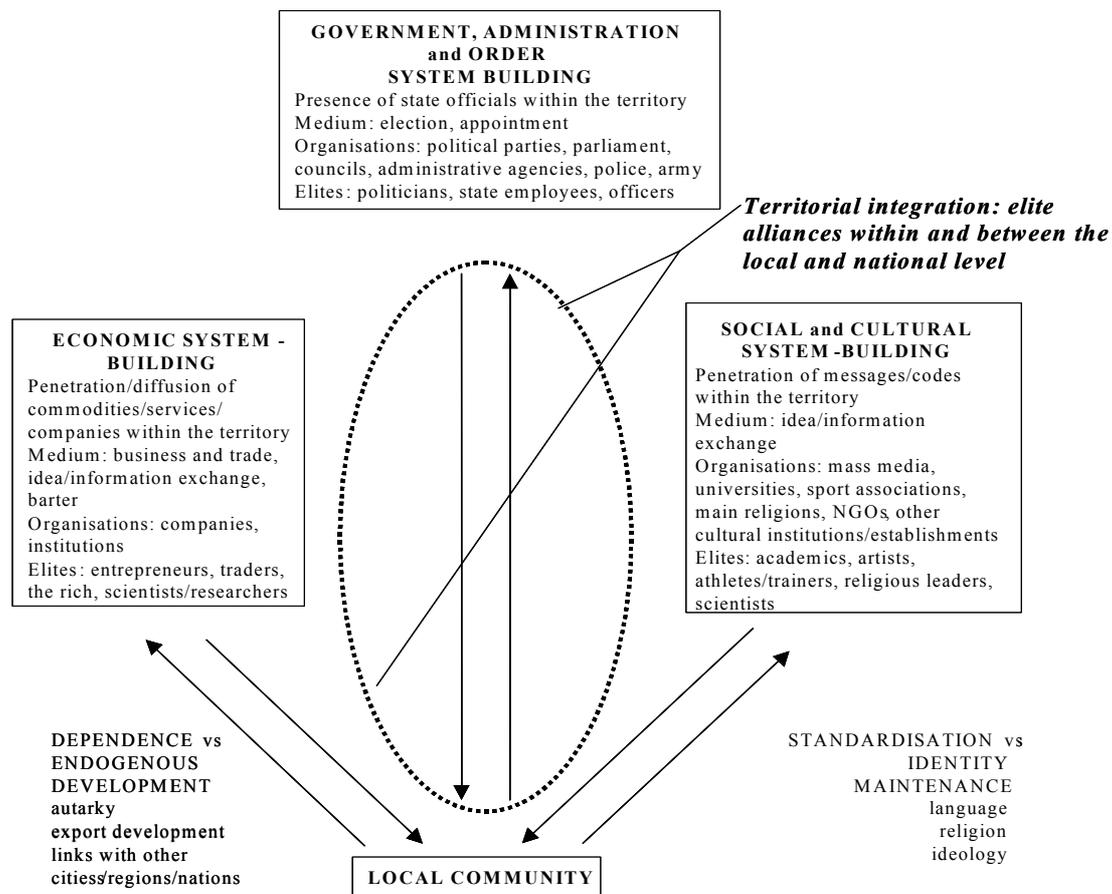


Figure 1: Centre-Periphery Interaction Model

Rokkan and Urwin point out that the centre-periphery relationship in each case is usually reciprocal; for each process of centralisation there is a corresponding effort to preserve peripheral distinctiveness. This can however hold only in cases of a conquered periphery or a periphery within a state constituting a distinct cultural entity. It cannot be strictly true in ethnically homogeneous states, as there may be processes that are perceived by any peripheral community as centralising yet necessary for nation-wide standardisation on a particular aspect relating to that process, as well as being in general to the interest of the nation's integrity. Moreover, there may be such processes that actually originate from the periphery, expand along state territory and achieve influence on the centre itself. Equally, a periphery can be dependent on or linked to more than one centre, which may be located in the same state or in neighbouring countries.

The case and attributes of Central Macedonia, a region at the north of the Hellenic Republic comprising the seven prefectures of *Emathia*, *Halkidiki*, *Kilkis*, *Pella*, *Pieria* (where Mt. Olympus is situated), *Serres* and *Thessaloniki*, fit as a (commodious) subset to the above model of the C-P relationship. The region lies at approximately 500km from the capital Athens, however it has no distinct cultural endowment in terms of alternate ethnic origin of the population, different main or minor religion(s), or any native political self-assertion movement or establishment noted through the history of the Hellenic nation. Its current political bearing on the Hellenic political processes and system is depicted by the number of 47 MPs of a total of 300 members

of the Hellenic Parliament (*Vouli*) and 9 cabinet members, 4 head ministers and 5 under-ministers (*ifipourgi*) of a total of 49 in the government¹t today.

The conception and the aims of the regional operational programme for the period 1994-1999 (through to 2002) for Central Macedonia aimed at alleviating the difficulties faced by Greece in the years following the earlier crisis of Fordism and, specifically for Greece, a decade of disinvestment, de-industrialisation and quiescent observation of international progress towards new modes and determinants for development. It also aimed to start preparing the region for its role as a junction (central) region, with the main urban centre - Thessalonika - as the epicentre, among the Balkan² States, southern Greece, Italy and Turkey. A rudimentary set of data shown in table 1 shows that in 1989 both the agricultural and industrial sectors still enjoyed a high proportion of the employment structure of the region compared to the EU national average of the same year (European Union 1995).

	1971	1981	1989	EC-12 (1989)
Agriculture	48%	30%	28%	7.1%
Industry	25%	34%	31%	34.4%
Services	27%	36%	41%	58.6%

Table 1 : Central Macedonia: Employment Structure Shift 1971-1989

¹ These data have been obtained from the world wide web sites www.parliament.gr and www.government.gr.

² A collateral point to this study is the departure from the characterisation of a “Balkan” state or country for the Hellenic Republic. The argument of the author is that the countries to the north of Greece and to the south of Austria and Hungary all share a Slavonic heritage and a totalitarian/planned economy regime post 1945 and are thus today very different socio-economically to the Hellenic Republic. The common element of Ottoman occupation is also shared with countries of the near East

The 1989-1993 CSF I development effort had an arguably modest impact for the whole of the country (2% GDP growth, creation of 50,000 jobs, a contribution of 20% towards gross formation of total fixed capital in the Hellenic economy). It aimed to improve basic infrastructure, to awaken entrepreneurialism, to support agriculture and to reduce regional disparities, thus contributing to an overall increase in competitiveness for the Hellenic economy. The large delays incurred in most large infrastructure projects and the inexperience³ of the Hellenic public sector of managing large and multi-dimensional projects lead to a shift of emphasis of the whole Hellenic CSF I towards regional infrastructure projects and improvements. Hence the long-term development challenges for the country and its regions remained. In 1993 the region's industrial base was still relatively modern (having been a post-war development), the link of agricultural production with packaging and distribution had been extensive and Thessaloniki's urban life focused on education (3 universities, 4 schools of higher education, numerous private schools, language schools, etc), trade and culture.

Infrastructure works towards the development of the metropolitan role of Thessaloniki
Basic urban infrastructure works (outside Thessaloniki)
Continuous vocational training towards the re-orientation of workforce
Linking the economy of C. Macedonia with neighbouring economies in Greece and the Balkans
Strengthening of entrepreneurial competitiveness through the promotion of networking and the link of production with research
Modernisation of the agricultural productive fabric towards increases in productivity

Table 2 : Aims of the ROP for Central Macedonia, CSF II 1994-1999

and hence cannot hold for the justification of Hellenic "Balkanism", a term which within the Hellenic national conscience could only a decade ago be connected to a Slavonic country under communism.

Table 2 depicts the aims of the CSF II Regional Operational Programme (ROP) for Central Macedonia (European Commission 1993).

It can be observed from the above that in the first instance the treatment of these development challenges by the European Commission and the Hellenic government has been in line with Gunnar Myrdal's main propositions with regard to development. Myrdal claims that, "...there are no exclusively 'economic' problems; there are simply problems, so that the distinctions between 'economic' and 'non-economic' factors are, at best, artificial. The only worthwhile demarcation – and the only one which is tenable logically – is between relevant and less relevant factors." Hence, he further argues that is erroneous to link the concept of development solely to the growth of the gross national product (GNP) and further connect this to the factor of capital investment. An increase in production, as measured by GNP, does not suffice to outline the level of development of a society since the concept implies wider improvement of the living standards of the community in question. Myrdal further defines six variables as the determinants of development, namely production and income, conditions of production, levels of consumption, attitudes towards life and work, institutions, and public policy. In his "cumulative circular causation" model, each of these variables bears the same weight and any upward or downward movement of one pulls the others towards the same direction. Any development process or plan may thus enter into either a virtuous or vicious circle. He further suggests that with the free flow of factors of production and competition there can be an initial positive response and that in a peripheral economy this is usually located and identified in the agricultural (primary) sector. However due to the overall

³ The Integrated Mediterranean Programmes, clearly not as big in financial magnitude and ambition than CSF I had been the first attempt at development for the Hellenic public sector in recent years. The

underdeveloped character of the economy this initial response cannot be properly managed so that further positive effects are induced. Indeed his “backwash effect” argument suggests that once an initial positive action is taken, such as the linking of a region with a major network node (be it infrastructural or institutional) then the region’s skilled labour and capital will be absorbed, through this linkage, in a core area where better opportunities and returns are presented for them.

Where the lines of argument of Myrdal and the earlier great development economist, Francois Perroux, meet is that this can be avoided if there is some kind of agreement between economic and institutional agents, which guarantees the integrity of the productive potential in the peripheral region. Indeed Myrdal explicitly declares that state intervention is unconditionally required in order that political, economic and social barriers are overcome, spread effects are mobilised and hence inequalities of any nature are reduced (Chossudovsky, 1992).

2. Interim Evaluation of the Data

The questionnaire titled “**Regional Operational Programme for Central Macedonia**” (version 1.7EN/EL) aimed at measuring the main parameters of the administrative context and the problematic issues relevant to the management of the programme, as well as at capturing the main social and political outcomes of the implementation process. The responses, as well as the associated analysis of them, of the first eleven interviewees are presented henceforth.

Secondly, the implemented project list tables, CDPP2 and CDRP2 (CDPP2: Collective Decisions on Prefectural Projects CSF2 -*SANA2*-, CDRP2: Collective Decisions on Regional Projects CSF2 -*SAEP2*-) have been evaluated in terms of the implemented projects cited therein. The results are also presented below.

2.1 Background

All interviewees, be it the prefecturers (former and current), the directors of prefectural planning, the representatives of socio-economic groups or the secretary of the monitoring committee, have a higher education degree (either a first degree only, or a first degree and a master’s degree). The majority of their degrees are in the social sciences (law in particular), the rest are in engineering and science. Nearly all of them practiced the profession or subject of their taught degree(s) and three of them were working in the wider Hellenic public sector before assuming their local government appointments. Also, nearly all quote as their permanent residence the capital city of their prefecture and only one (former) prefecturer has his permanent residence in

Athens. Moreover, 5 of them have had experience with local government and its involvement in the administration of European programmes before 1994, 2 of them since 1995/96, 3 of them since 1998 and only one since the year 2000.

2.2 Questionnaire Responses

The most frequently mentioned problem associated with the execution of the programme was that of delays in implementation of individual programme actions (8 out of 11 respondents). The next most important (5 out of 11) issue cited was that of equal opportunities as perceived by the respondents, i.e. taken to mean not issues of opportunity between men and women but the equal weighting of priorities put forward by the municipalities, communities and the prefectures. There were tensions among the prefectures with respect to project inclusion in the programme and the region mainly imposed decisions initially where prefectures were not organised to suggest well-conceived projects. The next two equally important issues (3 out of 11) were (i) the inconsistency between what had been initially planned and what was in the end delivered as a programme result and (ii) the difficulties in the production of documentation (data collection, production of interim reports, etc.). One respondent answered this question stating that, “there were no problems”.

To the question as to what were the source of the above problems, 9 respondents referred to the problems and differences of opinion with reference to project selection/allocation of funds between the central government and the municipalities and communities within the boundaries of their prefecture, quoting the government argument to be that the municipalities and communities could not fully appreciate the

aims of a regional programme within the wider context of the national component of CSF II. The same is also, although far less emphatically, reported between the government and the Region of Central Macedonia and between the Region and the municipalities/communities of prefectures (2 respondents). This concerned the argument of many prefects, articulated at and partly endorsed by the regional level, that some pieces of infrastructure works should not have formed part of the regional programme but of the national sectorial programmes and thus leave room for the inclusion of more projects of a smaller scale. One respondent cited difference of opinion or disagreement on project selection/fund allocation between the European Commission and the Hellenic government. On the question as to which party's opinion prevailed, the answers vary: two respondents state that, "a policy of avoidance of antagonism and discovery of common ground and agreement was exercised", three give no answer, two state that government opinion prevailed, and there is one respondent citing that the view of the Region prevailed over the municipalities/communities and another one citing the contrary.

The next most important source of programme implementation problems is quoted to be the weakness shown by the Hellenic public sector (central administration – ministries and agencies) to respond to or deliver within deadlines set and at a certain level of quality standard (7 out of eleven respondents⁴), within the wider context of programme administration. Other sources of problems are cited to be conflicts arising with Hellenic legislation (5 respondents), inefficiencies relating to the production of

⁴ This study has no direct interest in the political positioning or beliefs of the questionnaire respondents. It is however useful to point out that the majority of the respondents are thought to be positioned within the wider spectrum of the governing party of the period 1994-2002, yet they still point out that the performance or contribution of the public sector relating to the implementation of CSF II has been "powerless".

programme documentation (4 respondents), the underperformance of the programme and the consequential shift of funds to other programmes (4 respondents), unclear programme objectives (3 respondents), absence of programme cohesion (3 respondents), conflicts of interest between the EU, the Hellenic government and the region, conflicts with other EU or Hellenic government policies (1 respondent for each).

When asked to note at least three positive points with regard to programme implementation, the results are the following. The majority of the respondents (7) note the unanimity and agreement/good co-operation between the government and the Region of Central Macedonia. Five respondents found that the co-ordination between the European Commission and/or the European Investment Bank with the Hellenic authorities was of note. An equal number cites the performance of programme implementation being close to or at 100% fund absorption or the clarity of programme objectives (5 respondents for each). The cohesion of programme received 4 responses, communication with the independent programme assessor obtained 3 and the programme principles and actions being in line with either EU or Hellenic government policies collected 2 responses. Finally, there was one respondent that found the production of documentation as problem-free and adequate and one respondent also who noted the ability of the wider Hellenic public sector to respond or deliver within deadlines and at a certain quality standard with regard to programme implementation.

With regard to question no. 4, about whether the programme covered the needs of the region as cited in the programme text or not, the responses were the following. Using

a score of a maximum of 11 (minimum of 0) and the following set of degrees of response granularity, 0: not at all, 0.25: barely, 0.4: some impact noted, 0.7: largely, 1: fully, the following scores were noted:

Infrastructure works towards the development of the metropolitan role of Thessaloniki	9.25
Basic urban infrastructure works (outside Thessaloniki)	6.25
Continuous vocational training towards the re-orientation of workforce	5.95
Linking the economy of C. Macedonia with neighbouring economies in Greece and the Balkans	4.65
Strengthening of entrepreneurial competitiveness through the promotion of networking and the link of production with research	3.95
Modernisation of the agricultural productive fabric towards increases in productivity	1.65

Table 1: Aggregate Results for Question 4 (v1.7EN/EL)

Concerning the next question, on the impact of the programme on centre (central government) – periphery (local government – prefectures and regions), there was considerable of variation in the responses. There were four occurrences of the response “the programme had a proper or positive impact for the region”; the statement that more needs should have been addressed gathered three responses. There were two responses about the need for more money, about the need for more powers to be enjoyed by the regions to avoid the growth of the state at the centre and disallow centre development at the expense of the periphery and a further two responses stating that the implementation of the programme resulted to the centre gaining more power at the expense of the regions and of support for local society⁵. There were also single responses referring to the domination of the metropolitan

⁵ The full extent of this argument has been that, since 75% of the needs of the regions were addressed by the national component of the Hellenic CSF II (covering transport, telecommunications, energy and industry among other sectors), the programme rather created conditions for career progression towards the ministries in Athens than for local professional experience and development.

(Thessaloniki) prefecture at the expense of the other six, to the need of the central government to take regional requests and opinion into account more elaborately, to the harmonious/good co-operation with the government (that we also saw before), to the dependency of the region to the centre fully being exhibited, to the impact of the programme being negative due to the alleged unfair allocation of funds among regions and prefectures and to the central government having no integrated plan for the periphery and only delivered some public works in order to dampen regional concerns.

On the question as to whether the needs of the region and the opinion of the various socio-economic groups were adequately assessed and taken into account during the formulation of the programme, the responses vary in much the same way as those for question 5. Three responses for “yes” or “adequately”, three for “yes, but not adequately”, two for “yes, but metropolitan institutions of the region were privileged” and for “not all of them” (workers in Pella and farmers in Thessaloniki as two examples) respectively and a further of two responses for “no”, primarily due to these groups not being connected to the local government system institutionally. However, the responses on question 7 reveal that there was extensive participation of the economic and social partners during the formulation and implementation of the programme, with the metropolitan (based within Thessaloniki) institutions taking the lead. The Union of Industries of Northern Greece collects 8 responses, thereafter the local chambers of commerce, industry or SME-trade collect 9, 6 and 6, respectively, the Technological Park of Thessaloniki collects three and the (branch offices of headquarters based in Athens) international chambers (Hellenic-German, Hellenic-Italian and Hellenic-American) collect two each. There are also single specific

references to other local institutions in Pella, Kilkis and Pieria, as well as to other Thessalonika-based institutions (the Hellenic Technical Chamber – Macedonia and Thrace office, the Geotechnical Chamber, the Employment Centre and the Union of Exporters of Northern Greece). There is one single reference of an organisation based in Attica (albeit with no name included) and all others referred to are based in Central Macedonia.

With regard to where the companies contracted to implement parts of the programme are based, the majority are quoted to be in Central Macedonia. There has been some presence of Athenian companies mainly connected to the large pieces of infrastructure works as well of companies situated in other regions. On the question as to whether Athenian companies were in any way better prepared for the programme public tenders with regard to the rules and regulations of CSF II than companies from Central Macedonia or other regions the answer was more often a yes than a no (yes: 4 responses, no: 3 responses, no answer: 4 responses).

Finally, when asked to describe the relationship between the regionally based ROP Special Management Service (SMS, established in April 2000) and the Management Organisation Unit (MOU, based in Athens and responsible for managing the whole Hellenic CSF II) and comment on whether the SMS should be independent (as the case is) or organically connected to the MOU, the responses were the following. There were three responses on the relationship being good and workable and further four in favour of the existing arrangement (independent SMS based in the region). There was also one response supporting organic dependency, one stating that there has been no opportunity to acquire experience of the new set-up since April 2000, one

saying that the time lapsed has not been adequate to draw any conclusions, a further one referring to problems noted between the MOU and the Ministry of National Economy and a final one stating that after April 2000 the MOU transferred executives with no adequate experience to the regions to man the SMSs.

2.4 Quantitative Data

Within the framework of the CSF II ROP for Central Macedonia (as indeed the case for all ROPs), there were projects that were implemented at the level of the prefecture and specifically by the Programming Directorates. There were also projects with inter-prefectural or regional character and those were managed by the Region.

The corresponding implemented at prefecture level projects tables CDPP2 (Collective Decisions on Prefectural Projects CSF2 -*SANA2*-) were acquired after communication with the seven Programming Directorates of the respective prefectures (Emathia, Halkidiki, Kilkis, Pella, Pieria, Serres and Thessaloniki). Copies of the CDRP2 (Collective Decisions on Regional Projects CSF2 -*SAEP2*-) aggregate project tables were kindly given to us by the Region of Central Macedonia (Directorate of Planning and Development) since it proved virtually impossible to establish a working relationship with the ROP Special Management Service due their workload on closing the ROP in 2002.

The interim evaluation of the projects lists involved the aggregation of confirmed expenditures per prefecture and the categorisation of every project in terms of (i) being purely of infrastructure, (ii) being of infrastructure leading to new and invariant

(not seasonal) employment generation and (iii) being not one of infrastructure (other determinants of development). These results are presented in section 2.5, complementing the discussion of the questionnaire responses.

2. 5 Analysis

The responses in question 3 suggest a starting point for drawing conclusions out of our first 11 respondents. The two most often referred to problems were the delays noted in individual programme actions and the issue of equal opportunity in terms of consultation or programme input between the communities, municipalities and prefectures. As a main source of such problems the disagreement on project inclusion and programme content between the central government and the municipalities is referred to, as well as the tensions of smaller magnitude between the Region and the municipalities. It is apparent that there was no such tension between municipalities, communities and the prefects; the spirit of the responses does suggest the contrary. It is observed that in the first instance central government has not been authoritative and tried to achieve consensus among differing opinions, however it maintained its direction and lead with regard to programme aims and implementation by mainly fostering good co-operation with the Region that was directly responsible for implementing the ROP actions until April 2000 and the establishment of the regional SMS. However, the most prevalent sign of development retardation for the region is the acknowledged inability of the wider public sector to merely carry out its minimum contribution without posing unnecessary delays and administrative obstacles, let alone play a fully conducive role to the development effort. This was more evident in the statements of the programming directors who have had the experience of co-

operating with the ministries in Athens (mainly the Ministry for the Environment, Space Planning and Public Works) on a daily basis.

The positive features of the programme were found to be the afore-mentioned agreement/good co-operation between the central government and the Region of Central Macedonia, as well as the smooth collaboration between the Hellenic authorities and the European institutions concerned (i.e. the European Commission and the European Investment Bank). Unfortunately, the same opinion is not held for the impact of the programme, as it is evident that the main focus of the ROP remained in improving infrastructure. Indeed, in the aggregate projects/programme reports and balance sheets there are numerous small and medium-size public works on road geometric characteristics improvement, pedestrianisation and street lighting (when travelling in the region one can observe that some communities perhaps did overspend on such projects), sanitation and water supply carried out across the whole region. Clearly, the programme intention was for all six aims to enjoy an equal degree of attention with regard to implementation, but in the end basic needs in infrastructure absorbed a bigger proportion of the funds than initially planned. A “centre-favouring” pattern within the region with regard to the attention being focused on Thessaloniki is also clearly suggested. Despite this differentiated focus in terms of content and location, it is thought that the programme had an overall positive impact for the region but at the same time it is also clear that the respondents feel more needs should have been addressed, either by disposing more funds or by delegating more powers to the regions. The same “yes, but more is needed” stance is also reflected to what the respondents thought about the consultation of the regional socio-economic partners, which, in spite of being objectively and admittedly extensive, was still thought of as

not a adequately exercised process. There are also voices that echo some countervailing effects such as dependency to the centre and the creation of opportunities for career progression towards the capital.

Turning to the data evaluation from the CDPP2 (*SANA2*) and CDRP2 (*SAEP2*) project lists, the relative domination of the metropolitan prefecture (Thessaloniki) in relation to the disposal of funds and the emphasis on infrastructure works is confirmed.

Prefecture	Inhabitants⁶ (1991 census year)	Surface Area⁷ (Km2)	Expenditure (Euro)
Emathia	139,934	1,701	26,727,440
Halkidiki	93,653	3,254	9,497,934
Kilkis	81,710	2,519	22,486,885
Pella	138,761	2,506	[no data]
Pieria	116,763	1,516	10,405,000
Serres	192,828	3,968	29,102,000
Thessaloniki ⁸	946,864	3,683	44,983,130
Totals	1,710,513	19,147	143,202,389 (6 prefectures)

Table 3 : Confirmed CDPP2 Expenditures for the Prefectures of C. Macedonia

⁶ This set of data has been obtained from the databases of www.economics.gr.

⁷ This set of data has been obtained from the databases of www.economics.gr. These data are presented under the assumption that the socio-economic structure and the resulting developmental needs of the seven (excluding the city of Thessaloniki) prefectures are, other things equal, cognate.

⁸ It is noted that the expenditure, as well as the number of projects cited in Table 4, do not include those projects implemented within the city of Thessaloniki. Data on projects that had to do with the Cultural Capital of Europe 1997 and other measures for the city itself have yet to be retrieved by the respective sources.

Even in the case of measures implemented which did not come under aims a, b, d or f, the provision for new buildings, new rooms etc. is noted. At the end of 2001 and shortly before the closure of the ROP the approved and confirmed expenditure for all seven prefectures had been as depicted in table 3.

Moreover, all projects cited in the CDPP2 tables have been categorised according to every project being purely of infrastructure, entailing infrastructure and leading to invariant (not seasonal) employment generation and not involving works of any kind. The results per prefecture are shown in table 4.

Category Prefecture	Infrastructure Works (new/impr.)	Infrastructure (new employment)	Non-infrastructure
Emathia	75	25	1
Halkidiki	27	16	2
Kilkis	27	10	1
Pella	[no data]	[no data]	[no data]
Pieria	50	10	2
Serres	43	5	0
Thessaloniki	18	17	1
Totals (6 prefectures)	240	83	7

Table 4 : CDPP2 Projects per Prefecture and Infrastructure Provision

The author argues here that, of the total of seven projects non-infrastructure, only two have to do purely with aims d and e; these are (i) “Completion of the Industrial Production Organisations Centre of Pieria” and (ii) “Node Management along Inter-European Axis” (Thessaloniki, financed by the INTERREG programme).

It is also noted that both the prefectures and the Region use a different categorisation scheme for the CDPP2 and CDRP2 tables respectively. The projects are not grouped by aim or measure but under the following headings: “agriculture, land use improvement, industry-light industry, transport, water and sanitation, research and technology, various”⁹. Specifically, the CDRP2 tables for the years 1998-2001 (inclusive) reveal the centralised/centralising cultural aspect in that (i) all new regional institutions were to be based in Thessaloniki and (ii) all new institutions at prefectural level were established at the head municipality of each of the seven prefectures¹⁰. Also, again the prefecture of Thessaloniki enjoys the lion’s share of the implemented projects and allocated funds. Positive points include the rather balanced distribution of projects between those purely of infrastructure and those generating invariant employment for Emathia, Kilkis and Pella. Also the regional projects were almost exclusively non-infrastructure and focusing on other determinants for development (agricultural development training, industrial competitiveness strengthening initiatives, alleviation of social exclusion etc). Table 5 overleaf exhibits a geographical distribution of CDRP2 projects and their funding.

[please turn over]

⁹ There is also some variation in these categories from year to year and/or among different prefectures and the Region, with other categories being “forestry, housing, health and prevention, industry-energy” etc.

¹⁰ Notable exceptions were the new snowfall management stations of Halkidiki and Pella which were built near communities distant from the prefectural centre.

Category Prefecture	Infrastructure Works (new/impr.)	Infrastructure (new employment)	Non-infra-structure	Total Expenditure (Euro)
Emathia	3	3	1	7,200,293
Halkidiki	5	1	0	13,250,183
Kilkis	2	2	0	14,482,759
Pella	2	1	0	13,435,070
Pieria	4	0	0	5,602,348
Serres	6	1	0	8,977,256
Thessaloniki	9	2	0	72,851,064
Region-wide	0	1 ¹¹	8	25,844,681
Totals	31	11	9	161,643,654

Table 5 : CDRP Projects by Prefecture, Infrastructure Provision and Aggregate Expenditure

The author has very recently been in communication with the ROP Special Management Service and it is expected that the final report on the programme, along with the expenditures per measure per year tables will be introduced in the analysis so that the final conclusions are derived. However at this stage and for the purposes of completing an interim evaluation the following can be deducted. While the programme did assume a regional character, as suggested by the direct involvement of 3rd level local government in its implementation until April 2000, the participation of 2nd level local government officials in the programme monitoring committee, informal consultation between the 2nd and 1st levels of local government, the involvement of

¹¹ This single project involved the design and operation of a telematics system for public administration agencies in the seven prefectures.

local socio-economic groups and institutions and by the fact that, to a very large extent, its projects and actions were contracted to and executed by agents of the local economy, there were significant delays in its implementation as well as a shift of emphasis towards infrastructure works. It appears rather clearly that the former had to do with the central government and the wider public sector being largely incapable of adequately furnishing the local development process in terms of application processing, licence granting, acting upon legislative issues etc. It can also be argued that, while some prefecture did keep a balance between infrastructure build/improvements and other actions, the noted emphasis on infrastructure works does imply that regional needs of other, equally important, development inducement mechanisms were not thought of as meriting the same degree of attention, either by the MOU, or the Region and the localities. Specifically, there has been no reference in any table on any project serving the measure “linking production with research” and it appears that there has not been any inclusion of other development inducement mechanisms, such as a merger strategy for SMEs, the specific encouragement of innovation and the diffusion of new technology per productive sector.

Finally, there is clear trend of centralisation within the region with resources focusing on Thessaloniki. This is to an extent justifiable due to the socio-economic magnitude of the conurbation, however new region-wide initiatives and institutions founded under the aegis of the programme invariably came to be based in the region’s capital. More importantly, it appears that there was a considerable degree of unequal attention to the implementation of programme aims as shown in table 1, which further exacerbates the emphasis on infrastructure. This deviation from an equally weighted

focus on all programme aims is considered as an important management deficiency on behalf of the centrally based MOU.

3. The Study of Government/Political Culture Influencing Development

The main questions arising from the previous sections are (i) how exactly and why this shift of emphasis towards infrastructure came about, (ii) why the importance of institutional determinants for development did not enjoy the attention deserved and (iii) how exactly is this centralising mentality on behalf of the Hellenic public administration/government structure to be described and what is its bearing to the previous two issues, if any.

In an attempt to provide a rudimentary answer to the last question, it can be said that this mentality appears from our respondents and the projects tables to be composed by (a) the constant reality of locating any important public socio-economic agent to the most important relevant centre: country-wide institutions are based in Athens, regional organisations in the capitals of the regions and those with prefectural scope at the prefectural centres. Concurrently, (b) it appears that any initiative or first step towards new and to be introduced socio-economic processes must invariably come from the centre, coupled with the displacement of or reference to responsibility primarily to or at the centre.

There has been a very important study in the 1993 by R.D.Putnam attempting to shed light to the relationship between culture/norms and institutional performance. Specifically, the role and importance of the “social capital” of the region in question has been emphasised. The density and activity of horizontal social networks, where the life of a community of entrepreneurs, regional officials, academics is organised by and centres on collective social norms respected by all, has been proven to lead to

demands for public policy oriented towards the co-ordinated production of public goods, which further leads to better forms of social interaction and social well-being. Robert D. Putnam's pioneering work (Putnam, with Leonardi and Nanetti, 1993) focused on the effectiveness of political institutions of Italian regions and went as far as claiming that a region's development has depended more on a region's civic endowments than its initial socio-economic endowment. Moreover, Putnam has shown how the same seeds of institutional innovation grow in different ways in different socio-economic and cultural climates and produce different kinds of working institutional practices. The central question he asks is why some democratic governments succeed while others fail; taking that success is essentially synonymous to an electorate engaging in public life and being satisfied by the policies introduced and executed, he aims to find out how traditions of association and civic engagement affect political behaviour and institutional performance. He first examines how the regional governments created in each of 19 Italian regions from 1970 onwards compare to one another against indices of twelve distinct policy areas. He signifies that there is a clear-cut pattern of dramatic differences in terms of institutional performance between Northern and Southern regions, which is verified by his field data and which he attributes to the different levels of involvement in the commons on behalf of their citizens. He then turns to briefly review the history of these regions from 1100 till the present and, while not keeping to a coherent historical trajectory, concludes that these differences are attributed to the existence of a long tradition entailing association and public responsibility in the North, whereas in the South a typical administrative model of centre-periphery conquest and enforcement ensued over these centuries. In the end, he interprets the results with the aid of the "social capital" concept that implies high levels of social co-ordination against set aims and

around core values and beliefs, a property that, according to his observations, is lacking in Southern Italy but is abounding in the North.

Turning to the continuation of this research effort, we would first need to see which regional socio-economic agents were contacted for the purposes of putting forward the local developmental needs, what exactly was this input and how it got to be accommodated in the design and the implementation of the programme. The wish is that from this starting point the full extent of this centralising mentality will start to be revealed, which will then turn to most important question. Whilst embracing state intervention towards keeping the productive balance in check for any development effort and for the (re)distribution of employment and income, by which government structure level(s) and with what capacities, powers and abilities should those be facilitated?

Kyriakos Hatzaras

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The Impact of EU Environmental Policies on Patterns of Social Mobilization in Southern Europe

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Abstract

The paper seeks to evaluate the impact of EU environmental policies on patterns of social mobilization in Italy and Greece. The conventional view is that the level of social mobilization in southern societies is considerably lower than in the northern parts of Europe reflecting socio-historical factors such as the absence of a “civic culture” and the prevalence of clientelistic patterns of societal integration into the political system. Others have contended that social mobilization simply takes different forms, i.e. is more localized in the South than in the North. This paper seeks to add a new dimension to the study of environmental mobilisation in southern Europe. It argues that both approaches fail to account for the actual impact of EU environmental policies on the patterns of environmental mobilizations and their capacity to influence actual policy outcomes, in terms of policies pursued at the domestic level. It will suggest a number of empirical indicators that allow such an assessment in comparative perspective.

Introduction¹

The paper seeks to evaluate the impact of EU environmental policies on patterns of social mobilisation in Italy and Greece. Literature on environmental policies in southern Europe focuses on social mobilizations as a critical factor that indicates the level of environmental awareness in different EU member states and the capacity of domestic actors to adopt a pro-active approach to environmental problem solving. However, existing literature provides contested evaluations on the degree of social mobilization in southern Europe. The conventional view offered by the literature is that the level of societal mobilization in the four southern member states of the EU (Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal) is considerably lower comparing to their Northern European

¹ The paper draws on an on-going research project hosted at the Institute of Social Science, Humboldt University of Berlin that seeks to explain non-compliance with EU Law in Greece and Italy (see <http://www2.hu-berlin.de/compliance> and <http://www.iue.it/RSCAS/Research/Tools/>). The author wishes to thank Tanja Boerzel, Carina Sprunk and Mieke Duzniak for their comments and suggestions.

counterparts. This profound weakness reflects a number of socio-historical factors and endemic characteristics of the socio-political institutions in these countries such as the absence of “civic culture” and the prevalence clientelistic patterns of societal integration into the political system. These characteristics summarised under the well-known label *Mediterranean Syndrome* hinder effective implementation and enforcement of environmental policies in southern member states (La Spina *et al.* 1993). Other authors contest this view by arguing social mobilization simply takes different forms, i.e. is more localized in the South than in the North (Eder *et. al.* 2001; Kousis 2001).

Despite these contested evaluations a consensual point between both strands in the literature is that EU environmental policies have a profound impact on domestic politics and policies in southern member states. However, both approaches fail to trace this impact on patterns of environmental mobilizations in a systematic way. The present study seeks to add a new dimension on the study of the domestic impact of EU environmental policies on patterns of environmental mobilization in southern Europe. It seeks to integrate the dynamics of a top-down and bottom-up approach to the domestic impact of EU environmental policies. The analysis seeks to identify not only the effects of new political opportunity structures offered by EU environmental policies but also to assess the impact of domestic actors on actual policy outcomes. EU institutions offer a wide range of opportunities to non-state actors to address environmental problems through the European Commission, the European Parliament and the European Court of Justice. To what extent do these political opportunity structures incorporated in their strategies and action repertoires and shape environmental politics? What is the impact

of domestic environmental mobilizations on actual policy outcomes? In order to approach these questions the paper employs a number of empirical indicators based on data related to member state non-compliance with EU environmental law. Drawing on a dataset of all infringement cases opened by the Commission against member states, the paper will present evidence of the impact of non-state actors in pushing compliance with EU environmental policies.² It will assess the degree of their success as an indicator of the strength of environmental mobilisation in the Italy and Greece.

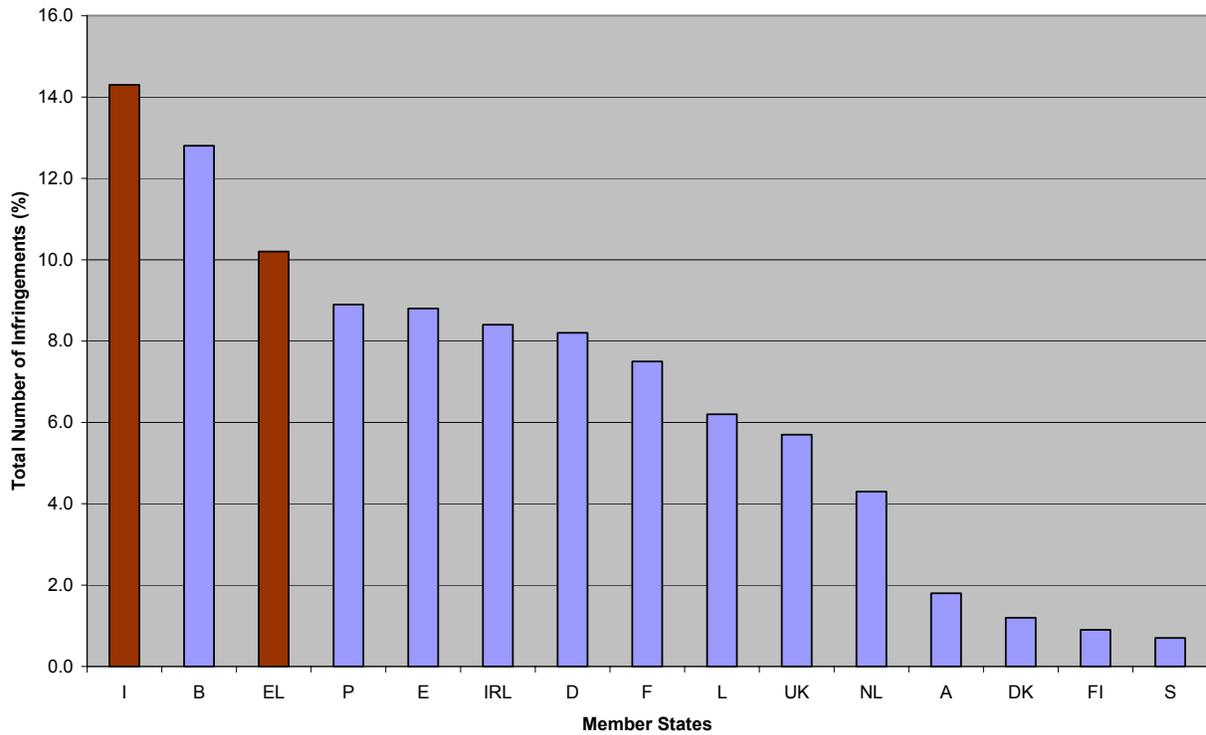
The paper is divided in four parts. Part two explicates the theoretical and methodological approach to the study of societal mobilization. Part three provides an overview of contested evaluations of the level of societal mobilisation found in the literature on southern Europe. Part three seeks to suggest an alternative approach in order to assess the strength of environmental mobilisation. It argues that approaches found in the literature so far fail to account for the impact of environmental mobilisations on actual policy outcomes in terms of their capacity to influence decisions and policies pursued at the EU and domestic levels. In this context, we will present an alternative approach that is capable of capturing the dynamics of societal inputs on environmental policy making at the domestic and EU levels and a set of indicators that allow such an assessment in comparative perspective. Finally, part four will present some preliminary tentative outcomes from our on-going research.

² Aggregate data analysis is publicly available at www.iue.it/RSCAS/Research/Tools/ComplianceDB/Index.shtml

Explaining non-compliance in southern Europe: The role of non-state actors

The paper seeks to develop an alternative explanatory framework that challenges geographically bound conventional explanations inherent in the Mediterranean Syndrome approach. This attempt does not undermine the fact that both Italy and Greece face considerable compliance problems with EU environmental legislation. To a certain extent the rather feeble compliance performance of both countries is an indicator of a 'southern problem' in terms of weak implementation, monitoring and enforcement capacities. Greece, followed by the other three Southern member states has the reputation of being particularly laggard. Chart 1 shows that Italy and Greece alone account for 25% of the infringement proceedings opened against the member states since 1978.

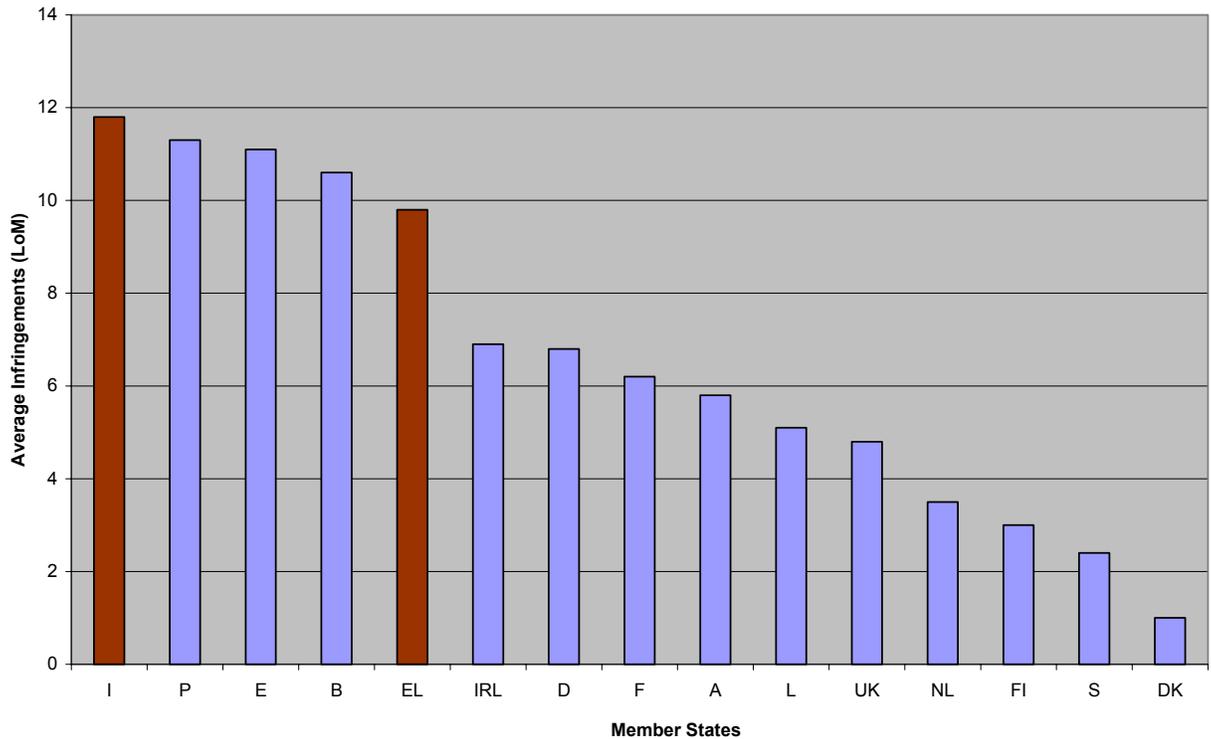
Chart 1. ENVI - All MS - non-compliance (Total Number of Infringements)



Source: Own elaboration

The overall ranking of member states does not change if we control for the length of membership that is clearly a factor that amounts for variations in the number of infringement cases opened by the Commission against member states.

Chart 2 - ENVI- All MS - Average Infringements - length of Membership



Source: Own elaboration

The starting point of our analysis is that non compliance is not a cultural phenomenon but a rational choice of political actors. This conceptualisation is in line with recent work on compliance with EU law that stresses political actors' cost/benefit considerations regarding their compliance performance (Börzel 2003). The fundamental assumption is that domestic actors' compliance performance is contingent upon their perceptions regarding adjustment costs involved in applying the specific requirements incorporated to EU laws. Implementation of EU policies (application and enforcement) depends on domestic institutional and administrative structures. The EU Commission lacks its own enforcement mechanisms. Through the constitutional doctrines of supremacy and direct effect EU law penetrates well established domestic institutional

and administrative arrangements and notions of appropriateness, domestic structures and patterns of interest intermediation.

Adjustment costs imposed by EU policies shape the incentives of domestic actors to undermine effective domestic implementation of EU policies (Duina, 1997; Knill, 1998; Börzel, 2000) These cases are often resolved through a variety of means at the disposal of the European Commission and the Council of Ministers. These include temporary derogations, transitional periods and the use of financial instruments such as the structural funds to compensate domestic costs of adjustment. Moreover, through the adoption of certain policy programs the European Commission can strengthen domestic institutional capacities to mobilise critical resources that secure effective implementation. This is particularly the case of initiatives that seek to strengthen non-state actors' involvement in the policy process such as the LIFE program.

In these cases of voluntary non-compliance domestic actors' cost/benefit considerations are also affected by a number of counter factors such as the effectiveness of EU monitoring and enforcement mechanisms and the impact of non-compliant behaviour on the country's image and reputation as a "good European" or "laggard" in environmental protection. In environmental policies a weak compliance performance can also have direct negative effects on macro-economic indicators since locational preferences of firms and availability of finance by major credit institutions increasingly reflects environmental performance indicators and considerations of corporate responsibility.

Non-state actors' activism is a crucial factor that affects cost/benefit considerations of domestic actors regarding compliance with EU law by increasing the costs of non-compliance (Börzel 2003). This can be achieved not only through the use of pressure activities such as media campaigns, protests and lobbying but also through the use of domestic and EU institutionalised opportunities mechanisms. The EU Commission lacks its own enforcement mechanisms at the domestic level while the Commission's Directorate General Environment (DG-ENVI) has rather weak monitoring and enforcement capacities comparing to other DGs such as Competition Policy (Macrory 1996). The Commission's access to information regarding the actual state of member state compliance with certain legislative acts depends on a rather weak system that involves three main alarm mechanisms:

- a) Complaints by citizens, business, NGOs
- b) Own initiatives of the Commission
- c) Petitions and questions by the EP

Complaints and petitions to the EP by non-state actors such as individual citizens, business and environmental organizations and NGOs are the most important source of information regarding the actual state of member state compliance with EU laws. Non-state actors' activism in using these opportunity structures offered by EU institutions can have a catalytic effect on domestic actors' capacities to comply with EU laws since they alter the distribution of costs and benefits between domestic actors increasing their willingness to comply.

Individuals, citizen groups, environmental organizations, NGOs, firms and business associations have a stake in environmental policies that impose costs or increase their benefits in terms of quality of life, personal income, corporate profits or losses. These cannot be easily portrayed in simple matrix. Individuals and citizen groups may favour compliance with EU rules that ameliorate their living conditions and health standards while opposing environmental measures that directly affect their portfolios. Environmental organizations and NGOs may favour different areas of environmental intervention depending on their organizational orientation and resources. Firms and business associations can strongly oppose initiatives that affect their production costs and at the same time advocate high environmental standards that strengthen their competitiveness in the global markets. Certain industrial sectors can be more exposed to pressures for introducing environmental ethics and responsibility in their corporate image and practices than others.

To what extent are these conflicting interests and strategies of non-state actors expressed through the use of opportunity structured offered by EU institutions? What is their impact on actual policy outcomes in terms of strengthening domestic institutional capacities and willingness of domestic institutional actors to comply EU environmental legislation? Our explanatory framework departs from the territorially bound causal interpretations inherent in the Mediterranean syndrome approach that treat southern European member states as a homogenous geographical entity. These approaches fail to account for cross country variations between southern member states or even variations in the compliance performance between different legislative acts within member states.

Accounting for the strength of non-state actors' activism in pressuring for member state compliance with EU law allows systematic cross-country and cross-sectoral comparisons of member state compliance performance across the EU.

European integration has been studied as a crucial factor affecting the structures, strategies and visibility of non-state actors by opening up new opportunity structures or providing new constraints for collective mobilization (Imig *et al.* 2001; della Porta *et al.* 1999). Literature offers competing accounts on the effect of new opportunity structures offered by European integration on patterns of societal mobilization based on varied interpretations of the end result of Europeanization. To a large extent these differences reflect the well-established debate between scholars of European integration summarized under the labels *strengthening*, *weakening* or the *transformation of the state* theses. Scholars adopting an inter-governmentalist perspective argue that since European integration strengthens the relative powers of national authorities the former favours the advancement of institutional actors such as parties and state authorities that have privileged access to policy developments at the EU level comparing to civil society actors. The latter continue to express their demands predominately through national channels challenging national institutions. On the contrary, scholars that abide to a functionalist perspective argue that European integration offers new opportunity structures to civil society actors to channel their demands. The latter, especially those with limited resources in their own countries, increasingly use the supranational level as their reference point and organization (Smith *et al.* 1994; della Porta *et al.* 1999). Finally, others represent the middle ground arguing that the emergent Euro-polity is

characterized by the emergence of a system of shared competencies between multiple levels of government (European, national, regional and local) that entails both opportunities and challenges to social movements. EU institutions provide additional access points that can be used in a complementary way to pre-existing national ones (Marks *et al.* 1999). However, Europeanization exposes societal movement to challenges regarding their capacities to mobilize resources in a broader and more diverse geographical unit (della Porta *et al.* 1999).

Italy and Greece experience serious non-compliance problems. The high level of non-compliance with EU environmental legislation as an indicator of the severity of environmental conditions in both countries generates similar opportunities to non-state actors to use opportunity structures offered by EU institutions in order to exert pressure to their respective authorities for effective implementation, monitoring and enforcement of these laws. Domestic institutional conditions affect the capacity of non-state actors to incorporate EU political opportunity structures in their action repertoires. Greece and Italy provide a critical setting within which the mobilization model can be empirically tested against the Mediterranean Syndrome. Italy and Greece substantially differ with regard to the explanatory factors specified by the Mediterranean Syndrome literature. Italy is the forth-biggest economy in Europe. Its policy-making structures are highly fragmented, both vertically and horizontally. Executive powers are rather weak due to unstable, frequently changing coalition governments. Greece, by contrast, has one of the weakest economies in the EU. It is also one of the most centralized member states. The executive has considerable powers to unilaterally define the contents of public policies

due to an electoral law that favours one-party stable governments. Using a 'most different systems' design (Przeworski and Teune, 1970) allows to discard most conventional explanations of non-compliance since they differ between the two countries whereas the level of non-compliance is similar. The comparative case study can therefore focus on the degree of societal mobilization as the major explanatory factor and trace its impact on the level of non-compliance in the two countries.

Yet, the capacity of non-state actors to expand their strategies and action repertoires by incorporating new opportunity structures offered by the EU depends on a number of enabling factors and institutional preconditions embedded in their domestic institutional environment. Our hypothesis is straightforward: We expect non-state actors with limited opportunities to intervene and influence environmental policies at the domestic level to benefit the most from alternative political opportunity structures offered by the EU. The former seek to compensate their limited influence in the domestic policy arena by re-directing their demands at the EU level. As it will be analysed in the following section of the article Greek non-state actors facing limited opportunities at the domestic level given the country's centralised politico-administrative system, single party dominated government with no major internal fractions and the lack of multiple veto points are expected to be more active in pursuing their demands at the EU level. On the contrary, Italian non-state actors being embedded in a more dispersed politico-administrative system with multiple veto points, multi-party government coalitions and a party system with numerous internal fractions are expected to address environmental

demands primarily at the domestic level and be more reluctant to alternate their action orientation to alternative structures offered by the EU.

The paper challenges the existing literature on two grounds: First, non-compliance in the EU is not considered as an exclusively “Southern problem”. Second, without denying that southern European member states face significant compliance problems, these problems cannot be simply attributed to endemic characteristics of their socio-political institutions. Instead, the project will demonstrate that social mobilization is crucial in explaining (non-)compliance with EU policies. While the degree of social mobilization is not necessarily lower in the South than in the North, it takes different forms, which tend to be less effective in overcoming the resistance of public and private actors to comply with EU policies.

Environmental Mobilisation in Southern Europe: weak or alternative forms?

Literature of environmental policies in southern Europe offers contested accounts on the degree of mobilization by non-state actors such as environmental organizations, business and citizen groups and its impact on the policy process. The conventional argument found in the literature is that patterns of social mobilization in Southern Europe are indeed weak comparing to those in Northern member states. Green parties have, in all southern EU member states, failed to penetrate the party system (Aguilar Fernandez, 1997; Demertzis, 1995). Clientelism and the relatively recent experiences with authoritarian regimes have weakened fundamental structures of civil society. While some have argue that the level of social mobilization in southern societies is

considerably lower than in the northern parts of Europe (Yearley *et al.*, 1994; Pridham and Cini, 1994; Aguilar Fernandez, 1994), others have contended that social mobilization simply takes different forms, e.g. is more localized in the South than in the North (Eder and Kousis, 2001; Kousis, 2001). Evidence manifests that social mobilization is not necessarily lower but takes different forms which are less effective in bringing about compliance with European policies.

The Italian and Greek experience seems to confirm this view. Most of case studies challenge the assumption that southern member states have weak civil society by presenting evidence of an increasing number of environmental organizations and incidents of grassroots mobilizations (Kousis, 2001). The literature is reach and diverse. In short, it focuses on three fundamental areas of interest:

- a) On the driving forces and conditions that contribute to their emergence (della Porta *et al.* 1999);
- b) On the patterns and structures of resource mobilization and their interactions with other societal and political actors;
- c) On their claims and discourses manifested in their action repertoires (protests, campaigns, legal actions (Koopmans and Statham 1999).

In this context, three different methodological approaches have been employed:

- a) *Protest event analysis* based on data collected from various media sources. This approach seeks to account for the degree of social mobilization by measuring the

instances where social mobilizations occur in the media at the national, regional and local levels (Tilly 1978; Tarrow 1989; Kriesi *et al.* 1995; Rucht *et al.* 1999);

- b) *Discourse analysis* that seeks to reveal their ideological and political commitments;
- c) *Claim-making analysis* that seeks to account for the way in which social mobilizations interact with other social and political actors by focusing not only on protest events and discourses but also on a broader spectrum of claims such as demands, proposals, criticisms and decisions included in instances such as public demonstrations, statements, legal actions etc. (Andretta *et al.* 2003).

Qualitative studies reveal that EU policy initiatives had a catalytic impact in stimulating environmental awareness and assisting the creation of environmental NGOs. However, these developments are far from constituting a clear path break in domestic traditions of weak structures and patterns of social mobilization. Competition for funding between environmental NGOs, due to the lack of own resources, fosters them to adopt cooperative strategies vis-à-vis central governments that control the implementation of such programs. Competitive pressures reduce political opportunity structures available to local environmental groups that lack significant organizational and political resources. Experience from different environmental campaigns demonstrates that success depends on the capacity of both international environmental NGOs and local environmental movements to overcome the tension between professionalism and scientific environmentalism, on the one hand and political activism, on the other, inherent in their relationships and build up effective coalitions (Close, 1998). Forno (2003: 9-11) argues that the prevalence of localized patterns of social

mobilizations based on spontaneous “citizen committees” in Italy reflects organizational weaknesses of civil society to mobilize resources at the national level since their claims predominately address issues of national rather than local interest. Literature offers contested evaluations of their effect on patterns and structures of political representation. While some authors consider their emergence in the 1990s as a new form of grassroots democratic groups that challenge traditional forms of political representation in crisis such as political parties, others argue that their emergence deepens such a crisis to the extent that they represent NIMBY (not in my backyard) parochial demands that seek to paralyze decision making in public good provision by blocking large infrastructure projects (Gould *et al.* 1996; Della Porta and Andretta 2002).

All three approaches seek to identify the role of social movements in constructing a public sphere at the European, national, regional and local levels by focusing on their action repertoires and strategies. In this context, European integration has been conceptualized as a crucial factor affecting their structures, strategies and visibility by opening up new opportunity structures or providing new constraints for collective mobilization (Imig *et al.* 2001; della Porta *et al.* 1999). Literature offers competing accounts on the effect of new opportunity structures offered by European integration on patterns of societal mobilization based on varied interpretations of the end result of Europeanization. To a large extent these differences reflect the well-established debate between scholars of European integration summarized under the labels *strengthening*, *weakening* or the *transformation of the state* theses. Scholars adopting an intergovernmentalist perspective argue that since European integration strengthens the

relative powers of national authorities the former favours the advancement of institutional actors such as parties and state authorities that have privileged access to policy developments at the EU level comparing to civil society actors. The latter continue to express their demands predominately through national channels challenging national institutions. On the contrary, scholars that abide to a functionalist perspective argue that European integration offers new opportunity structures to civil society actors to channel their demands. The latter, especially those with limited resources in their own countries, increasingly use the supranational level as their reference point and organization (Smith *et al.* 1994; della Porta *et al.* 1999). Finally, others represent the middle ground arguing that the emergent Euro-polity is characterized by the emergence of a system of shared competencies between multiple levels of government (European, national, regional and local) that entails both opportunities and challenges to social movements. On the one hand, EU institutions provide additional access points that can be used in a complementary way to pre-existing national ones (Marks *et al.* 1999). On the other hand, Europeanization exposes societal movement to challenges regarding their capacities to mobilize resources in a broader and more diverse geographical unit (della Porta *et al.* 1999).

The extent to which European policies trigger social mobilization in southern societies and whether the observed forms of social mobilization differ from what we find in northern Europe is a matter of in-depth empirical analysis. The following section presents evidence on the extent to which non-state actors in Italy and Greece make use

of opportunity structures offered by EU institutions to press for compliance their respective public authorities.

Approaching the Impact of non-state actors on actual policy outcomes: some alternative indicators

This paper argues that literature on social mobilization in southern Europe fails to account for their actual impact on policy outcomes. Beyond confrontational mobilisations EU institutions offer a wide range of opportunities to non-state actors to address environmental problems through the European Commission, the European Parliament and the European Court of Justice (Marks *et al.* 1999; Imig *et al.* 1999). Europeanization has been conceptualized as a new political opportunity structure for social mobilization by non-state actors. It comprises an additional and/or alternative sphere of social mobilization. A number of scholars argue that fundamental characteristics of the emerging Euro-polity favour rather conventional forms of social mobilization over unconventional ones such as distractive activities such as massive protests. National political arenas remain the dominant points of reference of social mobilization due to weaknesses in organizational capacities of various social groups to stimulate effective mobilizations and the pan-European level but also the weak forms of the emerging common public sphere at the EU level.³ To what extent do these political

³ Recent literature on social movement argues that contentious types of mobilization based on disruptive actions (road blockages, political violence) are in a process of gradual decline due to changes in the structure of mass communications that has significantly broaden their repertoire of protest leading to

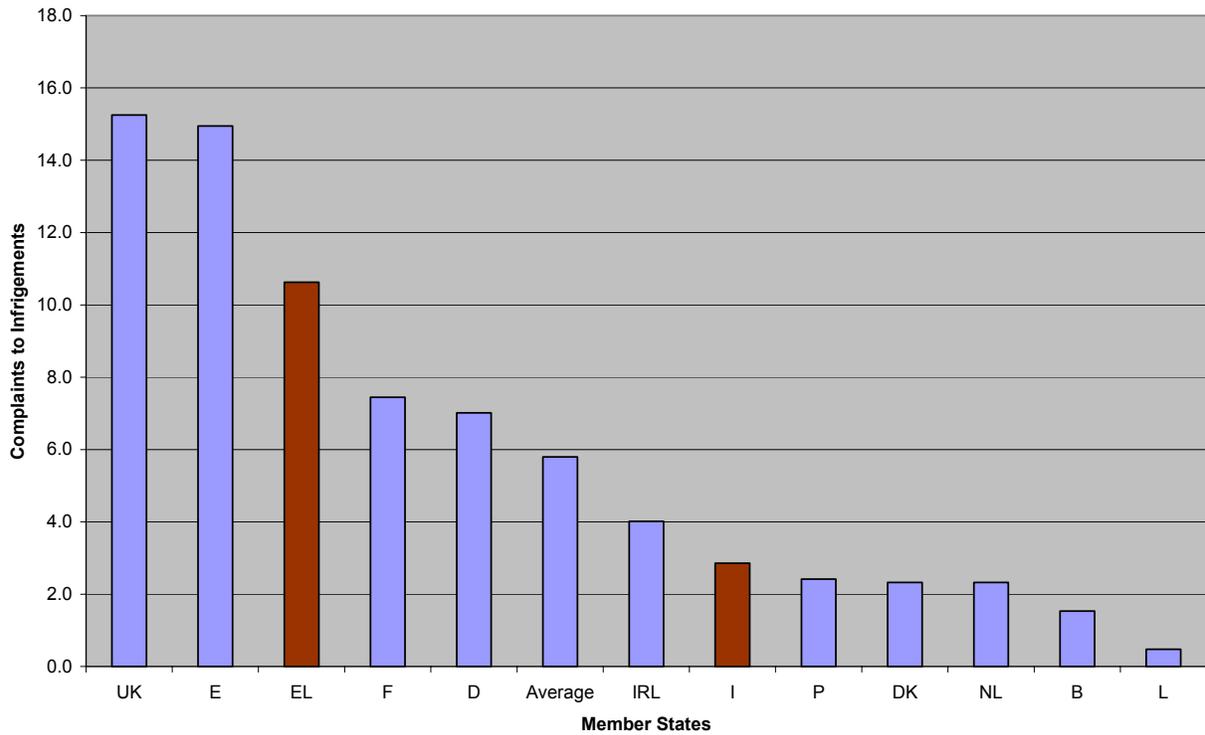
opportunity structures incorporated in their strategies and action repertoires and shape environmental politics? Drawing on a dataset of all infringement cases opened by the Commission against member states, the paper will present evidence of the impact of non-state actors in pushing compliance with EU environmental policies.

a) Non-state actors and the Commission

Complaints by citizens, business and NGOs are the most important opportunity offered to non-state actors to hold member states accountable for non-compliance with EU law. The following chart demonstrates that while overall complaints account for a notable proportion of infringement cases open by the Commission against all member states, there are significant variations between Italy and Greece.

more conventional forms of actions such as lobbying and more soft media oriented actions (della Porta and Diani 1999; Diani 1995; Donati 1995).

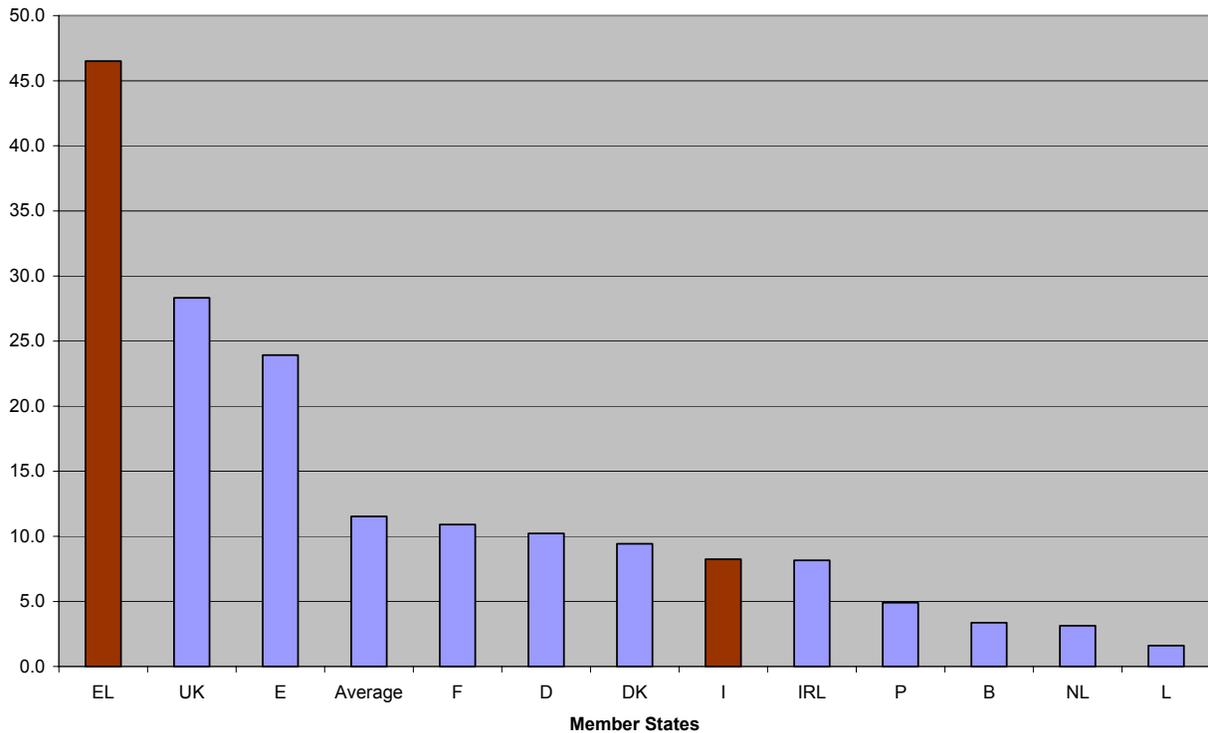
Chart 3 - Complaints to Infringements - All MS ENVI 1982-1997



Source: EUI database on Member State Compliance with EU Law, own elaboration

The same holds even if we exclude the infringements that correspond to cases of non-transposition that are opened by the Commission on its own initiative after the expiration of deadlines for the notification of the transposition by national authorities and they do not include the intervention of non-state actors.

Chart 4- Complaints to Infringements 1982-1997 ENVI (excl. NMN)

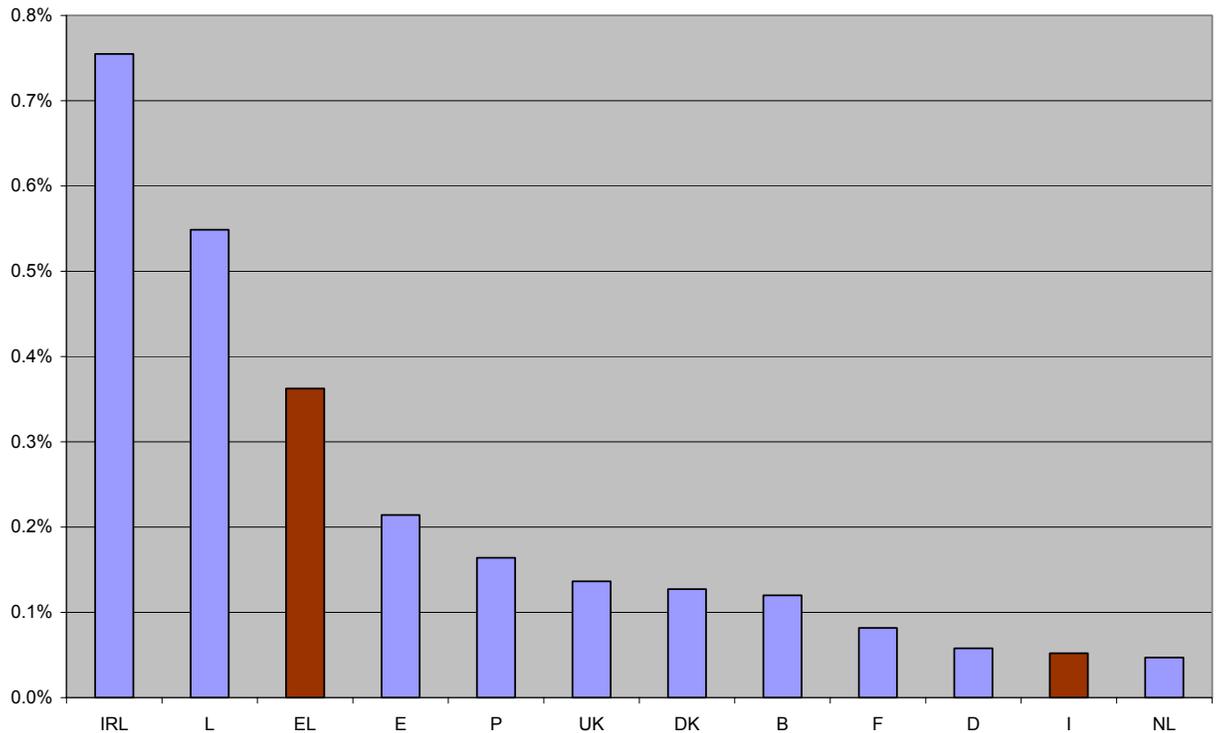


Source: EUI database on Member State Compliance with EU Law, own elaboration

Charts 3 and 4 demonstrate that there is not a clear south – north divide on the degree of non-state mobilization in the area of environmental compliance. 11.5% of infringements opened by the Commission against member states for non-compliance with various environmental legislative acts were triggered by complaints from non-state actors. Complaints by Greek non-state actors score the highest, 46.5% of infringements followed by the UK and Spain, with much lower scores 28.3% and 23.9% respectively. Italy scores much lower, below the average with 8.3%.

The same holds if we account for variations in the population size of member states.

Chart 5 - Complaints ENVI 1982-1997 - per population

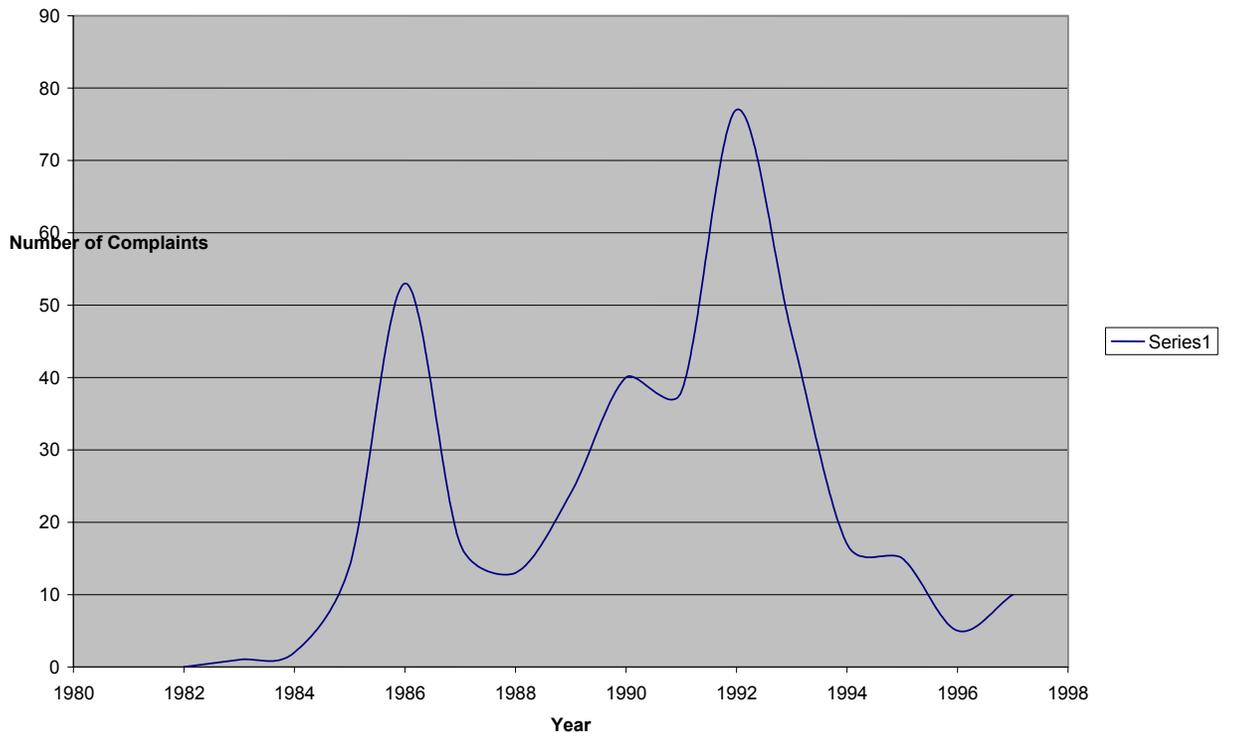


Source: EUI database on Member State Compliance with EU Law, own elaboration

Chart 5 also disconfirms arguments found in the literature that there is a clear south-north divide in the degree of non-state actor's activism in environmental policies. Greece followed by Spain belongs to the leading member states. Yet, the distribution of complaints to population demonstrates that southern member states cannot be perceived as a homogenous geographical entity characterized by low level of civic activism in environmental matters. While Greece, Spain and Portugal are above the average, Italy scores the second lowest category after the Netherlands.

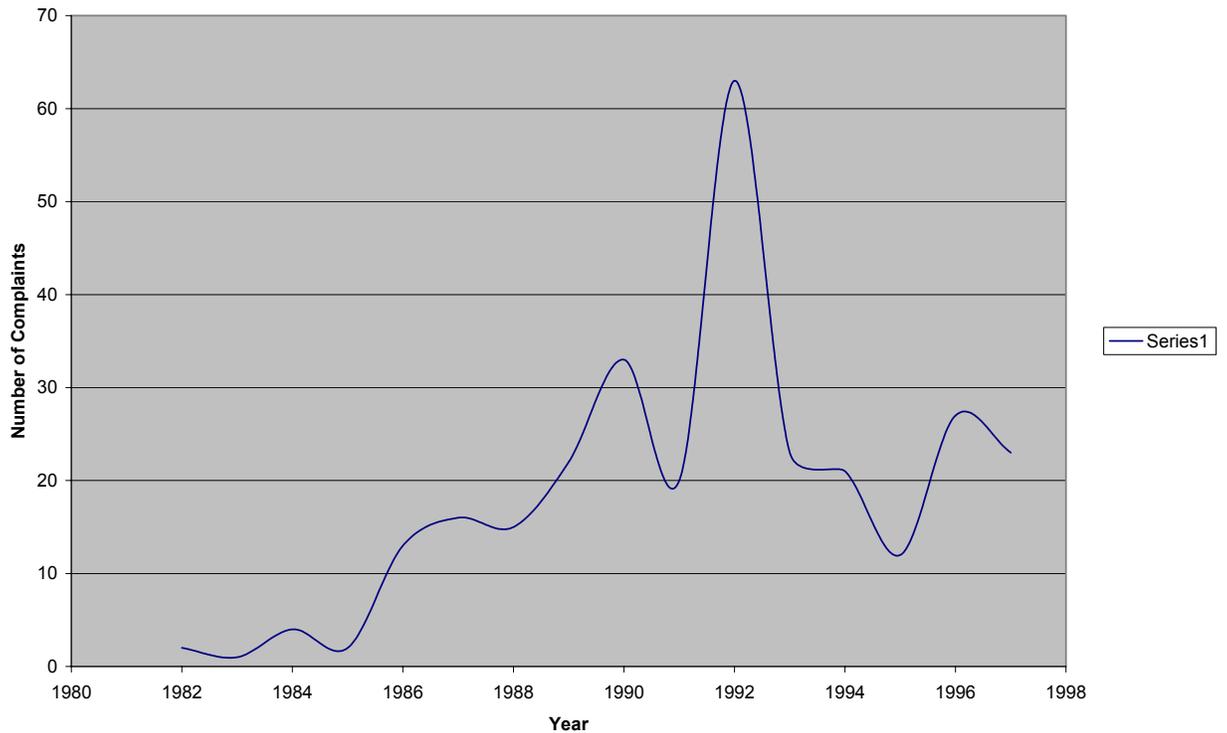
A longitudinal analysis of complaints between Italy and Greece reveals highly homogeneous patterns of non-state actors' activism in triggering the initiation of infringement proceedings by the Commission in the area of environmental legislation.

Chart 6 - EL Complaints 1982-1997 - Environment



Source: EUI database on Member State Compliance with EU Law, own elaboration

Chart 7 - I Complaints 1982-1997 - Environment



Source: EUI database on Member State Compliance with EU Law, own elaboration

Greece's high scores in 1986 can be interpreted as an initial effect of membership. Apart from this variation, both Italy and Greece demonstrate highly homogeneous temporal distribution of complaints with a drastic increase between the years 1992-1993 followed by a notable decrease in the following years until 1997.

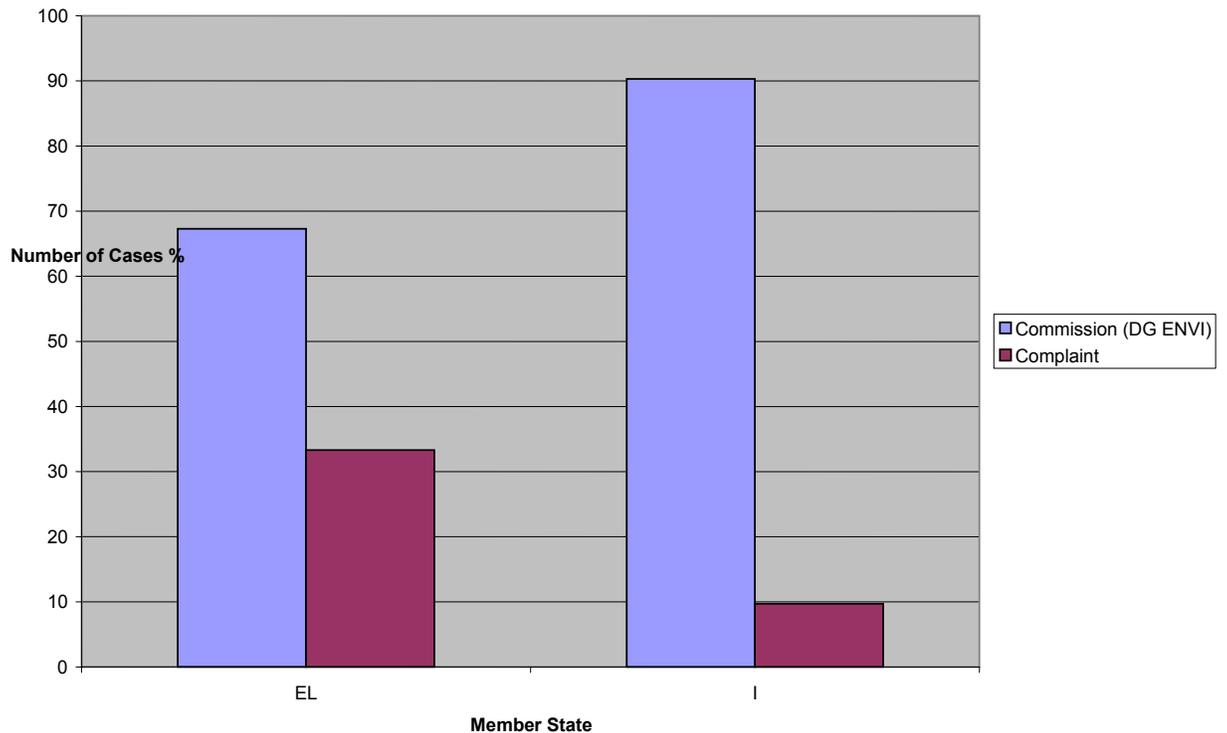
b) Non-state actors and the European Court of Justice

Infringement proceedings opened by the Commission against member states follow four distinguished stages. The proceedings open with a Formal Letter of Notice

were the Commission states its initial points that establish a potential case of non-compliance. Following an unsatisfactory reply by member states the Commission proceeds with a Reasoned Opinion that it's the first communication to the member state of the legal argumentation that establishes an infringement case. In cases where member states fail to demonstrate compliance the process ends in the ECJ (articles 226 and 228 EU Treaty).

The traces of non-state actor's litigation activism can be identified taking into consideration two indicators. The first indicator accounts for the contribution of complaints to ECJ Judgments. In order to identify these cases we referred to the ECJ case law database where each case is analyzed regarding the pre-litigation procedure followed by the defendants. According to our analysis there are significant variations between Italy and Greece regarding the capacity of non-state actors to affect actual policy outcomes in terms of fostering their respective governments to comply by EU environmental policies.

Chart 8 - ECJ Judgements EL, I - Source of Initiative



Source: ECJ Case Law Database, own elaboration

33.3% of cases brought by the Commission to the ECJ against Greece correspond to infringement cases triggered by non-state actors, while the rest 67.3% of cases were opened by the Commission's own initiative. The same indicators for Italy reveal differentiated results with the vast majority of cases brought by the Commission to the ECJ, 90.3% corresponding to proceedings opened by its own initiative, with only 9.7% of cases corresponding to proceedings triggered by complaints by non-state actors. According to our investigation, the court decision's outcome of all cases initiated by complaints was negative for the member states.

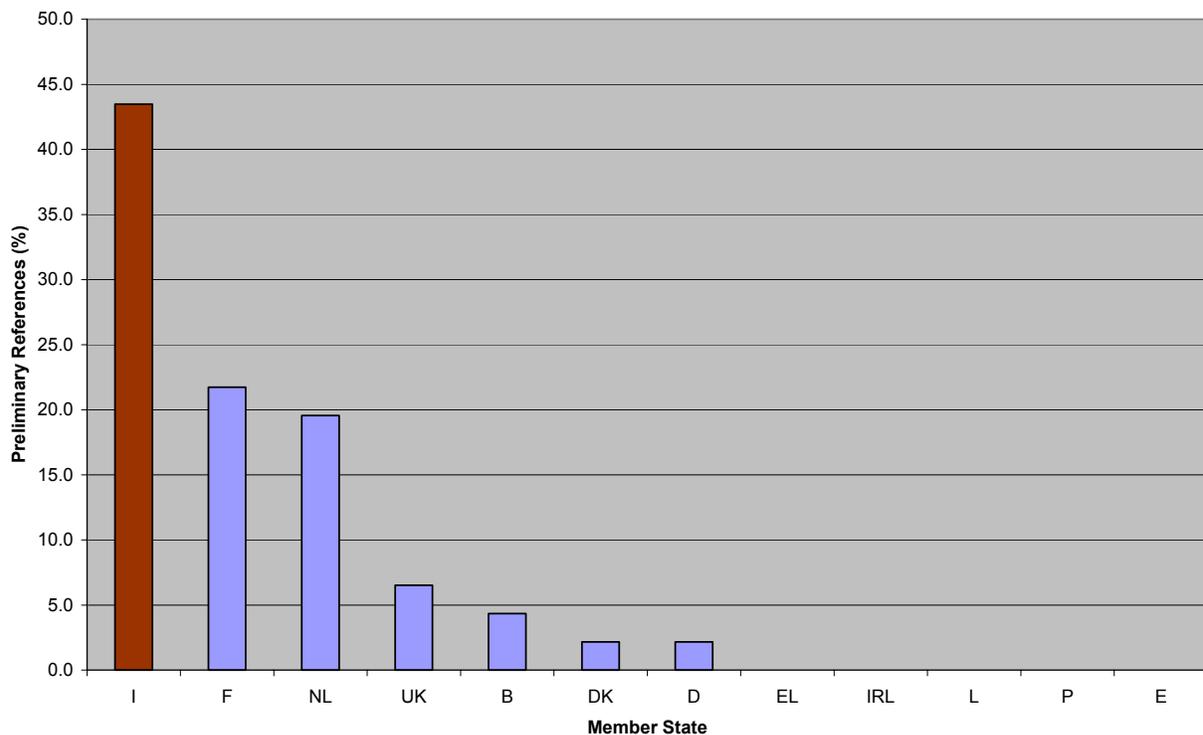
b) Non-state actors' and the national courts

State actor's influence on member state compliance with EU environmental legislation does not necessarily follow EU institutional avenues. National courts to a varied extent offer also opportunities to non-state actors to intervene in the process by litigating against member state improper application and implementation of EU rules. It is difficult to trace data on the level to which non-state actors resort to national courts in order to push member state compliance. Italian and Greek courts' archives are not systematically organized and easily accessible.

Instead we turn to data related to preliminary ruling procedure provided by Article 234 (ex 177) of the EU Treaty. This article provides for national courts to submit queries to the ECJ for a correct interpretation of EU law. This is the case when non-state actors bring cases in front of national courts claiming incorrect implementation or failed transposition of EU legislation. Judicial cooperation under Article 234 is indeed a powerful compliance mechanism, equal to the Commission's enforcement mechanism analyzed in the previous section. Through the constitutional doctrines of supremacy and direct effect judicial cooperation in the framework of Article 234 has served as an integrative mechanism providing opportunities for judicial activism to the ECJ to expand EU law by interpreting fundamental principles but also empower national judges and stimulate non-state actors activism (Cichowski 2001; Conant 2001). State liability for infraction of EU law increases non-state actor's incentives to litigate.

Based on a dataset of preliminary references submitted to ECJ in the period 1961-1995 we elaborated statistics on the extent to which national courts in Italy and Greece resort to Article 234 procedure that is indicative of the degree of non-state actors' activism in pressing member state compliance.⁴ Our analysis reveals significantly divergent patterns of non-state actors' activism regarding environmental legislation in Italy and Greece. Environmental legislation represents only 1.54 percent of the total number of preliminary references raised to the ECJ. The following chart shows the distribution of these references by member state.

Art 234 Preliminary References - ENVI - EL, I 1961-1995



Source: *The Alec Stone Sweet & Tomas L. Brunnel Data Set on Preliminary References in EC Law (1958-1998)*.

⁴ The dataset is publicly available on www.iue.it/RSCAS/Research/Tools/ReferencesECLaw/Index.shtml. Data is also presented in Stone Sweet and Brunell (1998a; 1998b).

Our statistical analysis is very rewarding since it reveals that Italy does not necessarily manifest lower degree of non-state actors' activism in pressing their national authorities for compliance with EU law as data on complaints and ECJ judgments presented in the previous sections suggests. Data on preliminary references to the ECJ suggests that societal activism in Italy simply follows different institutional avenues than in Greece. While Italy scores the lowest in both complaints and ECJ cases with Greece occupying the highest position in the relevant ranking of member states, the reverse results occur considering non-state actors activism in front of national courts. Italian non-state actors seem to compensate their low presence in all indicators accounting for the use of EU institutional opportunities with the highest degree of litigation in front of national courts.

However, one should be cautious to infer secure conclusions using data on Art 234 preliminary references. Existing literature argues that cross country variations in the use of preliminary references can be attributed to the willingness of national judges to surrender autonomy by increasingly cooperating with the ECJ (Stone Sweet 1998a). Another potential factor that could affect cross-country variations is differences in litigation culture across member states and the extent to which non-state actors incorporate litigation in their action repertoires.

Concluding Remarks

The paper seeks to contribute to the existing literature on social mobilization in southern Europe in two major ways. First, it explores the role of non-state actors in pushing compliance with EU environmental policies in Italy and Greece. Second, it adds a new dimension on the study of environmental mobilization by suggesting ways to account for its actual impact on policy outcomes. In this context, we present a number of indicators that reveal the extent to which non-state actors in Italy and Greece incorporate new political opportunity structures offered by EU institutions in their strategies and action repertoires.

Our statistical analysis focuses on three indicators that reveal the extent to which EU institutionalized avenues such as the Commission, the ECJ and national courts acting in the framework of judicial cooperation with the ECJ have been incorporated to the action repertoires of non-state actors in Italy and Greece. The results reveal quite different patterns of societal activism in Italy and Greece. The overall view is that Greek non-state actors are increasingly resorting to EU institutions as a means of promoting high levels of environmental protection. On the contrary, their Italian counterparts predominantly focus on national courts rather than the Commission and the ECJ.

Data presented in this paper does not allow a full appraisal of the strength of social mobilization in Italy and Greece. However, it reveals some tentative trends regarding the extent to which non-state actors in both countries exploit EU opportunity

structures in order to address their environmental concerns and demands. These outcomes challenge conventional explanatory factors found in the literature such as the Mediterranean Syndrome that approaches southern European member states as a homogenous social entity characterised by weak civil societal activism in environmental matters. However, our outcomes call for qualitative research and detailed case studies in order to test the explanatory potential of our hypothesis.

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