



Datar



COESIONET

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CONFERENCE ORGANISED IN PARTNERHIP WITH CIFE-IE-EI

Europeanisation after EU accession: Transformation, reform and compliance in recent EU member states

March 23-24 March

Synthesis

The presentations of those two days were to analyse the normative approach of Europeanisation and its impacts in the new Member States.

Europeanisation refers to the transfer of norms, values and standards to candidate countries and the adaptation of the countries concerned to the European conditionalities. It therefore refers to the compliance of the countries and the supervision of such a compliance by the European institutions.

The Europeanisation process brings important changes in the countries concerned:

- it leads to a learning process at actors' level to carry out institutional changes
- the benefits of compliance are linked to the financial support expected by the countries and lead to the required adaptation
- the benefits of compliance expected can also be linked with the reputation and credibility seeking of the elites
- a socialisation of the elites
- the strong dependence on legacies
- the transposition of directives enables to analyse the degree of compliance: this seems to be easier in some fields but more difficult in the social or environment sectors: market pressures need to be analysed.
- Transposition can also sometimes be signalled by notifying early measure as a tool to delay real measure thus meaning that a country shows the efforts made and guarantee its credibility but at the same time gaining time to carry out the real changes

This process shows the limits of the transformative power of the European Union and present some shortcomings that need to be addressed



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- economic regulation: elements of business environment and economic governance need to be strengthened
- the political situation at national level is to be considered to understand the failure of the process in Greece
- The lack of civil society to exert pressure
- The high costs of the changes required
- The weak administrative capacities: both at national level and at regional level especially in countries where the regional level has been introduced to respect the EU conditions that results in enforcement problems
- There is a risk of formal and informal veto players switched after accession
- There is a risk in the capacity of absorption linked to the level of politicization of public administration
- Compliance sometimes means only formal implementation meeting the legal requirements but resulting in empty shells
- Adaptation process results in tensions between top-down pressure and bottom up initiatives raising the question of cross-cutting both approaches
- The link between europeanisation and globalisation needs to be analysed especially in the process of liberalising markets
- Even if directives are transposed it does not automatically result in improvement of the governance
- The europeanisation process is questioned as far as its power to transform the behaviour of the actors is concerned, particularly referring to situations of corruption.

This process may be questioned in the future accession process: one question raised at the seminar concerned the “enlargement fatigue” and the need for more transparency in the process especially in the Balkan states.



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