

## Call for Papers

# Does the future of the European Union depend on differentiation? The sources and effects of the logic of differentiation

June 29, 2018

Maison française d'Oxford (MFO) & University of Oxford

Workshop organised by the Research Group on the European Union (GrUE)  
of the French Political Science Association (AFSP)

### Call for papers

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Partners



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This workshop focuses on the ways in which European Union's (EU) differentiation logics are produced and the effects they generate: *Brexit*, Schengen area, Eurozone, “*opt-out*” mechanism, permanent structured cooperation (PESCO), etc. More specifically, it intends to raise the question of how these logics of differentiation relate to the question of the future of the EU. The logics of differentiation may indeed represent a solution for overcoming possible political vetoes, in particular through deep integration in a particular policy area and involving only voluntary Member States (Kelemen, 2014). But, on the other hand, differentiation can also spark new forms of tension, revived by the recent example of *Brexit*, likely to weaken community building. This workshop will examine different varieties of differentiation logics and their effects on the future of the EU.

As a follow-up to the first workshop organised by the GrUE (February 2018, Strasbourg), this one analyses the transformations of the EU through its institutional variations (*polity*). In this perspective, the workshop questions the diversity of political strategies of the EU and its Member States, as well as their appropriation by public opinion (*politics*). We will also reflect on the heterogeneity of the forms taken by European public policies through the study of their development or implementation (*policies*). For twenty-five years, the EU has indeed had to overcome political blockages and even “crises” (Ross, 2011; Boussaguet, Dehousse, 2014; Mégie, Vauchez, 2014) for which differentiation has sometimes been used as a useful

instrument of resolution. To respond to the diversity of Member States' political challenges, interests and strategies and the supposed expectations of European public opinion, the EU has gradually created the conditions for differentiated integration (Stubb, 1996; Kölliker, 2001). The logic of differentiation then refers to political processes, rather than to a *sui generis* political system, concept or even theory (Leruth, Lord, 2015). They reflect all the variations which the institutions, EU policies and the effects they have on the Member States and public opinion are likely to undergo.

In the literature on differentiated European integration, two main types of variations are identified (Leruth, Gänzle, Trondal, 2017). Territorial variations, described as “horizontal” differentiation, refer to those States which take part (“*opt-in*”) or not (“*opt-out*”) in public action developed and implemented by the EU (Adler-Nissen, 2014). The political-institutional variations corresponding to the “vertical” differentiation model characterise the distribution of power between the EU and the Member States between several sectors of public action (Jensen, Slapin, 2012). This research shows that the logic of differentiation is now one of the main drivers of EU's transformations, regardless of which form it takes or which issue it applies to. They are not limited to a succession of “crises”, but correspond rather to an ongoing political phenomenon since the early 1990s which remains largely unknown. The differentiation logics, from their elaboration to their implementation, are the product of a political work inscribed in various “institutional configurations” (Crespy, Ravinet, 2014) and likely to undergo significant changes according to the sectors considered. This political work mobilises actors whose practices, representations, resources and positioning in the Community political system we will seek to highlight.

Consequently, this workshop calls for papers that can inform us on these unexpected political developments that are shaking up and transforming the making of the EU. Does the future of the EU depend on differentiation? Is differentiation the future of the EU? Beyond the political consensus to which it is subject (Barroso, 2012; Van Rompuy, 2012), we will try to question the dividing lines – between States, between territories, between individuals, etc. – that drive the making of differentiation logics. Proposals that develop original theoretical approaches from European studies, the sociology of public action, comparative politics, political economy, international relations or political theory, among others, are welcome. Proposals that examine different levels of analysis, shed light on under-research cases and mobilise first-hand data are encouraged.

The differentiation logics are questioned through two axes: i) their elaboration by the political work of the actors, ii) their effects on the EU, the Member States and European citizens.

## **1. THE SOURCES OF DIFFERENTIATION**

The first line of research aims to identify the actors who support the logics of differentiation and the conditions of their making.

Who are the actors undertaking to differentiate the EU? Are they from the Commission or other EU institutional bodies, such as the Parliament or the ECB? Which Member States are actively involved in shaping a differentiated EU political organisation: the “Franco-German couple” (Cole, 2010) or the association between Germany and the UK (Mayer, Stehling, 2005)? The identification of “entrepreneurs of differentiation” can take the form of comparative analysis, across different historical contexts (Bartolini, 2005), or across several public policies (Dyson, Sepos, 2010; Vilpisaukas, 2014). Are areas of public policy more conducive to the introduction of a differentiated logic, for example by Member States in the framework of structural reforms initiated by EU institutions in Brussels (Hamm, 2016)? The actors who support or oppose the making of differentiation logics can be analysed at *macro* (Leuffen, Rittberger, Schimmelfennig, 2012), *meso* (Dehousse, Thompson, 2012) or *micro* (Joana, Smith, 2002; Georgakakis, 2017) levels of analysis. Beyond the institutional bodies of the EU and the

Member States, are the “entrepreneurs of differentiation” forming transnational configurations of actors (Kauppi, 2013)? Do these configurations of actors include interest groups, or does the separation between EU institutions and private actors shape the making of differentiation logics? These questions raise the issue of the institutional “dividing lines” across national divides, between the “insiders” and the “outsiders” of the EU, and the work of definition to which they are subject within and outside EU institutions. Beyond European governance, this axis will also focus on papers that will present analyses of the behaviour of public opinion (Van Ingelgom, 2012) towards the making of differentiation.

Once the actors are mapped in a given context, explanatory variables must be identified. Beyond political discourse aimed at “solving a public problem” in order to make the EU “more effective” or “more democratic” (Stubb, 2014; Commission, 2017; Macron, 2017), why do some actors play the game of differentiation, and others simultaneously try to block it? What are the interests, norms or practices of the actors at the origin of an EU differentiation process? In a “logic of consequences”, we need to the preferences that lead an actor to support or oppose the making of a logic of differentiation. The degree of interdependence between actors and the level of politicization of issues can be explanatory variables (Schimmelfennig, Leufen, Rittberger, 2015). Particular attention may also be paid to the social properties and the more or less central position within the “field of Eurocracy” (Georgakakis, Rowell, 2013) of the actors involved in defining these processes. In a “logic of appropriateness”, it will be necessary to start looking for institutional dynamics that favour political transformations (strengthening of differentiation) or their inertia (containment of differentiation) (Börzel, Risse, 2017). The implementation of “*opt-out*” or “*opt-in*” mechanisms could constitute privileged examples (Adler-Nissen, 2009, 2014; Duttler, Holzinger, Malang, 2017), in the same way as the analyses on Brexit (Chopin, Lequesne, 2016; Evans, Menon, 2017; Nicolaïdis, 2017a, 2018) In this regard, one may wonder about the specificity of the process of “disintegration” (Webber, 2014): a form of differentiation “like any other” or a specific political phenomenon?

## **2. THE EFFECTS OF DIFFERENTIATION**

The second research axis is devoted to the study of the effects of differentiation logics on the EU.

On what scale of elaboration and implementation of public action do differentiation processes generate political-institutional effects? Are the consequences of these logics felt exclusively at the institutional level between the Member States and/or with the EU? This workshop also aims to analyze the variety of effects that these differentiation logics are likely to produce. The analysis of European, national and sub-national scales - as well as their articulation - could thus be explored. At sub-national level, for example, proposals could focus, within the framework of the CAP (Mesnel, 2015) or the redistribution of structural funds (Büttner, Leopold, 2016), on the competitive effects induced by instruments such as benchmarking, project financing or financial control. The instruments of community public action, based on competitiveness (Bruno, 2010) or managerial efficiency (Bachtler, Mendez, 2011), have significant and hitherto little explored differentiation effects. Differentiation can be nested in the mobilisation of EU public action instruments and distinguish between those who are entitled to participate in the EU political game and those who are invited to remain at the confines of the EU.

More broadly, the gaps in the adaptation of political-institutional actors to the political-institutional effects produced by differentiation logics could be questioned: do they adapt, benefit or sustain from it? How does the “differentiated” structuring of the EU (Georgakakis, 2012) lead to adaptation pressures in Member States? The aim is to understand the “dynamics of differentiated Europeanisation” (Rayroux, 2017), taking into account the complex relationships between actors and scales of public action (Caune, 2013; Graziano, 2011). This could result in useful contributions to the literature on Europeanisation using, for example, the

concepts of adaptation, diffusion, circulation or convergence (Irondele, 2003; Saurugger, 2005; Börzel, Risse, 2013; Vauchez, 2013). Papers may also provide elements for reflection on the differentiation at work of European or non-European populations within the framework of EU public action. The establishment of the Schengen area has been accompanied, for example, by the creation of instruments to control the movement of specific categories of population (Bigo, 2016) or the establishment of buffer zones (El Qadim, 2010).

The challenge is to explore new avenues of research by no longer considering only the effects of differentiation in terms of relations between Member States and the strategies they develop towards the EU. We will ask ourselves here to what extent the consequences of policies that distinguish individuals according to their social profiles or political and administrative organizations according to their performance are felt. Thus, papers should enable us to understand whether differentiation is a solution (Bickerton, 2016) – and if so, in what forms? – for building a “sustainable” European integration (Nicolaidis, 2017b).

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### **Proposal submission**

Please send all paper proposals to [samuel.bh.faure@alumni.harvard.edu](mailto:samuel.bh.faure@alumni.harvard.edu), [vincent.lebrou@misha.fr](mailto:vincent.lebrou@misha.fr) and [francisco.roabastos@unistra.fr](mailto:francisco.roabastos@unistra.fr).

It should include:

- 1) The title of the proposed paper,
- 2) The name of the contributor(s), her/his/their affiliation(s),
- 3) The axis of research to which they wish to be attached as a priority and
- 4) An abstract of no more than 400 words.

### **Deadlines**

Deadline for sending paper proposals	<u>20 April 2018</u>
Decision on selected papers	30 April 2018
Deadline for sending papers	<u>22 June 2018</u>
Workshop	29 June 2018

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