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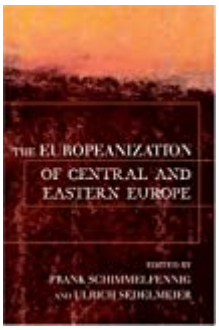


**Frank Schimmelfennig, Ulrich Sedelmeier, eds.** *The Europeanization of Central and Eastern Europe.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005. Cornell Studies in Political Economy. x + 256 pp. $22.50 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8014-8961-7.

**Reviewed by** Catherine Albrecht (Division of Legal, Ethical, and Historical Studies, University of Baltimore)

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## Modeling European Union Accession

This collection of essays examines the Europeanization of east central Europe since 1989, focusing particularly on the period between 1995 and 2004. The essays all address "the degree of formal compliance with rules and norms of European [that is, European Union] economic policy as well as the social acceptance of those roles and norms" (p. 178). They focus on the east central European countries of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, with comparative analysis of experiences in neighboring countries, including Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Slovenia, and the Baltic states. The chapters address particular policy areas, ranging from political norms and social policy writ large to health policy, environmental policy, agricultural policy, central banking, minority rights and nondiscrimination, the movement of workers and travelers across borders, and regional policy.

Ulrich Sedelmeier and Frank Schimmelfennig provide the overarching analytical framework in a dense introductory chapter. The editors present two interpretive models, based on rational choice and constructivist paradigms. The "external incentives model" is based on the idea that east central European policymakers accepted European Union conditions for membership because they had to do so in order to gain membership. The European Union structured the incentive system to ensure that the east central European states made significant progress toward reaching those conditions. To succeed, the European Union had to provide rewards for compliance, threats to withhold rewards had to be credible, and interests that could prevent the adoption of EU norms had to be neutralized. In addition, for the external incentives model to work, the European Union's processes and rules had to seen as legitimate, membership in the European Union had to be attractive to candidate states, and EU policies had to resonate with domestic values and goals. The second model, the "lesson-drawing model," is based on the idea that "nonmember states might also adopt EU rules without inducement from the EU" (p. 20), and exists for domestic reasons such as dissatisfaction with the status quo and a desire to learn from abroad and to incorporate external practices and norms.

The authors of individual chapters analyze specific policy areas and countries to determine empirically which model seems to provide the most compelling explanation for the adoption of (or resistance to) EU norms. Most of the chapters provide qualified support to the external incentives model in which east central European states accepted EU norms because the long-term benefits outweighed the short-term costs. At the same time, all of the authors point out examples when the social learning model seems to provide a better explanation for behavior. In most cases, EU regulations and expectations were adopted because the European Union required nonmember states to adopt them as a condition for accession. But in some cases, European or other world practices were adopted because local policymakers and domestic interest groups were convinced that the external standards were better or more beneficial than domestic practices.

On the surface, the volume may not be of obvious interest to historians of central Europe, especially given its social science approach to modeling and the bare veneer of historical context. Nonetheless, for historians who seek to incorporate twenty-first-century perspectives into their courses, the essays contribute some intriguing insights. The first is the apparent ahistoricity of conditions applied to states that had not been part of the European Union as it developed. Essentially, the former communist states of east central Europe had to adopt EU regulations and norms wholesale over a relatively short period of time, regardless of the fact that many of these norms were at odds with domestic policy. Social and economic policies grounded in longer historical traditions had been dismantled by communist regimes whose policies and practices were themselves discredited by 1989. In reading this volume, one comes away with a sense that, from the EU perspective at least, 1989 was a *Stunde Null*, a state of affairs that provided an opportunity to recreate economic policies and practices. Although EU accession was not put on the table immediately, the broad criteria for membership that emerged from the 1993 Copenhagen summit and the European Commission's 1995 White Paper on creating a single market began to articulate in detail the thresholds that former Soviet bloc states would have to pass over to gain admittance.

Second, a clear temporal dimension to east central European attitudes to EU norms and conditions can be discerned. Several of the essays in this volume make clear that from 1989 to around 1995, east central European policymakers and experts sought to learn about and incorporate European standards as a means of "rejoining Europe" for cultural, technical, political, and professional reasons, not just because attaining those standards was required for EU accession. The publication of the 1995 White Paper fundamentally changed attitudes among east central Europeans, who now accepted EU conditions mainly because those were necessary to gain admittance to the European Union and share in its benefits. In the authors' terms, the east central European actors went from "social learning" to "conditionality," a point made particularly clearly by Liliana B. Adonova in her article on environmental policy in the Czech Republic and Poland.

Finally, it is important to remember that EU accession was not the only possible outcome. Other international actors–international financial institutions, the United States, and important trading partners like Russia–also influenced the policy choices of east central European countries from 1989 until the mid-1990s. In some cases, non-EU models of reform were adopted in the early 1990s only to be changed in the early twenty-first century to meet EU norms. Domestic actors had some influence as well, primarily in questioning the benefits of EU policies for particular sectors (such as agricultural producers in Poland) or interest groups (including political parties). In some cases, negotiations between the European Union and candidate countries led to small but important changes in EU requirements, as for example Romania's refusal to accept collective rights for its Hungarian minority and the decision to accept individual minority rights instead. In other cases, politicians and central government officials were reluctant to accept EU requirements that they cede authority to regional bodies or establish autonomous, professionalized public administration. Euroskepticism remains a force in the region and has led in some cases to formal acceptance of EU regulations without full implementation or compliance.

The case studies are quite interesting and provide depth and color to empirical studies of the complex process of bargaining and negotiation within states as well as between candidate states and the European Union. In the penultimate chapter, Adrienne Heritier examines differences in eastern and western perspectives on Europeanization. The authors distinguish among "discursive," "formal," and "behavioral" adoption of EU practices, referring to whether the new member states merely talk about EU norms, have passed the relevant laws and established the required bodies, or are actually incorporating EU practices. Four years after European Union enlargement, however, discursive adoption may signify a deeper cultural acceptance of EU norms, bringing us back to the social learning model in which adherence to EU practices

is based less on external incentives and more on the acceptance of EU norms by a variety of social, political, and economic actors.

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