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# Europeanisation, stateness, and professions: What role do economic expertise and economic experts play in European political integration?

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## ABSTRACT


The article explores Europeanisation as an effect of European political integration, a process driven by struggles over the legitimate political and social order that is to prevail in Europe. Firstly, an analytic framework is constructed, drawing on insights from Pierre Bourdieu's work on similar struggles over nation-stateness. Secondly, the mechanisms identified are used to assess the role played by economic experts and expertise in the process of European political integration. It is argued that concepts arising from economic disciplines, agents educated in economics, and practising economic professionals influence European political integration and have benefited from Europeanisation initiated by this process. Special emphasis is placed on strategies of integrating Europe by law or by market, on governing Europe using economic expertise, on the role played by economic academia in researching and objectifying Europe, and on staffing European institutions with economists.

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## Introduction

Right in the middle of Brexit, and with the possibility of Grexit and other exits re-emerging on the horizon whenever we enter into a new round of struggles over appropriate reactions to the sovereign debt crisis, it seems as if European integration has been put on hold or is even reversing. At the same time, many of the policies implemented and institutional arrangements created in reaction to the current economic crisis are not national but European by nature. The development of a European banking union,

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European rescue-packages, and accompanying austerity policies, as well as tightened budgetary supervision of member states, are only possible because Europe exists as a politically integrated entity. Today's struggles over the future of Europe are fought out in a specifically European political space that has been created alongside, and from time to time in stark demarcation from, national political fields. In order to make sense of the prevailing tendencies of integration, as well as disintegration, we need to understand how this transnational political space was created, how it has developed, and how it is structured.

As I shall argue in this paper, economic expertise and economic experts have played and are currently playing a decisive role in constructing this transnational European political space. In order to trace the influence of economics, we need to refrain from portraying Europeanisation as a merely political phenomenon and start to understand it as a societal form. Such an approach differs from prominent understandings of Europe as a combination of intergovernmental and supranational institutions, and of European integration as predominately an intentional process, furthered by rational societal and state actors in pursuit of their nationally founded interests (Moravcsik, 1993), supplemented from time to time by the neo-functionalist insight that all intentional political decisions have unintended and structural consequences which will feed back into the process of political integration (Sandholtz & Stone Sweet, 1998). Instead we need to study how these actors are socially embedded and how they and their expertise are produced as either national or European (Kauppi & Madsen, 2014). As a plethora of research in recent years has shown, such limitations can be overcome using a field-analytical approach inspired by the work of Pierre Bourdieu (Adler-Nissen & Kropp, 2016; Georgakakis & Rowell, 2013; Kauppi, 2013; Michel & Robert, 2010; Vauchez & Witte, 2013). Europe and the process of Europeanisation need to be understood as field effects, and in order to explain how these effects come about, the respective fields, the relations between agents in these fields, their capabilities, their open and tacit knowledge, and their history need to be reconstructed (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

Such a shift of perspective provides four fundamental insights. Firstly, political integration is closely connected to non-political developments and, consequently, Europeanisation must be viewed as a society-wide process that is not only restricted to politics in the strict sense of the term (Münch, 2010). Secondly, Europeanisation is only one form of political integration, another very prominent one being nationalisation. Both forms of political integration are objects of struggle in the fields under

research (and researchers themselves tend to become enmeshed in these struggles), making different views of what constitutes Europe pivotal in these struggles: at the extremes, either an interlinkage of nation states and congruent national societies or one polity with one congruent society (Kauppi, 2010). Thirdly, the establishment of a European political and social order depends on the existence of a practical field of politics in which agents are engaged in fighting over what Europe is and use Europe as a political resource: this can be termed the field of Eurocracy (Georgakakis, 2013a). Fourthly, when Europeanisation is put into a historical perspective, we should not ignore the major role played by professions and academic disciplines in processes of and struggles over political integration (Bourdieu, 2014).

Starting from these premises, I shall argue that we should take professions and their relationships to political, bureaucratic, academic, and other social fields more seriously when analysing Europeanisation (Kauppi & Madsen, 2013). Professionals model and populate bureaucracies, and they are sought-after experts in political fields (Burrage, Jarausch, & Siegrist, 1990). Academic disciplines create scientifically authorised knowledge about what is to be governed according to what logics and by what means, and thus influence the political discourse on the state (Foucault, 2007, 2009). Hence, professions such as law, political and administrative sciences, as well as economics and management studies are deeply involved in establishing a European field of politics and, at the same time, encounter a Europeanisation of their professional and disciplinary fields (Mudge & Vauchez, 2012). In order to clarify the role professionals have played to date and continue to play in these processes of Europeanisation and political European integration, this paper starts with a brief outline of the methodological implications of using field analysis to research processes of political integration. Thereafter, the role of one profession – economics – is analysed in more detail. Finally, the findings will be evaluated in a short conclusion.

### **Struggles over political integration: basic mechanisms**

Aside from nation-state formation, the European Union (EU) is one of the most successful projects of political integration in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries as far as durability and societal pervasion are concerned. As will be argued here, both processes have much in common, making it possible to extend the methodological tools underlying Pierre Bourdieu's historical analysis of the rise and functioning of nation states (Bourdieu, 1994, 2014) to make sense of the creation and legitimation of the EU.

According to Bourdieu, struggles are a fundamental feature of any form of social relations and action (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 78). When these struggles move from 'how much' to 'who is entitled to what according to which logic', they become political. Political struggles are symbolic struggles over perceptions of the world and always encompass a universalist element, since the settlements sought claim validity beyond the initial incident (Bourdieu, 1989). Processes of political integration aim at constituting a certain practice of conducting these struggles among a group of agents and turning them into legitimate routines. Following Elias (1982), Bourdieu stresses that such processes involve building monopolies of power and knowledge. Following Weber (1978), he argues that two basic forms of monopolisation lie at the heart of political integration, creating a 'monopoly of the legitimate use of physical and symbolic violence over a definite territory and over the totality of the corresponding population' (Bourdieu, Wacquant, & Farage, 1994, p. 3). As with any relational process, attempts at monopolising certain forms of coercion, resources, or world views never fully succeed; always trigger resistance; and ultimately lead to different types and degrees of stateness that can be compared in terms of their historical development and their practical everyday production (Migdal & Schlichte, 2005). From such a perspective, the EU can be viewed 'as one in a long line of emergent political entities, as an innovative governance form in and of itself' (McNamara, 2010, p. 130). At the same time, it becomes obvious that, right from the outset, political integration is linked not only to the order and predictability of a world one can reckon with, but also to a closure of social relationships and effects of exclusion and alienation that accompany these, with corresponding attempts at changing the persisting form of political integration (Bourdieu, 1991). It is clear that political integration is by no means a one-way street.

### ***Monopolising means of physical and symbolic violence***

In the case of modern nation states as well as the EU, political integration relies on monopolising two aspects of physical violence: firstly, the capacity to inflict bodily harm on others, be it by brute force or restriction of movement exercised by police or military institutions, and, secondly, the appropriation and redistribution of resources used for production, consumption, or transactions institutionalised in forms of taxation and central money-creation (Giddens, 1984, p. 33). Both processes of monopolisation have the effect that the use of these basic powers is barred from everyday politics and restricted to certain agents as well as linked to

furthering the common good. This produces relationships of obedience that are used to disseminate and enforce political decisions, policies, and politically authorised world views and perceptions. After a certain degree of enforcement, they become the solid base not only of political integration, but also of relationships of domination between those integrated. These processes of monopolisation are the effect of agents attempting to shape their political environment and their stakes in disputes over the basic definitions of political struggles. They should not be mistaken for evolutionary prerequisites or the like in a society's striving towards civilisation.

In the case of the political integration of Europe, NATO can be seen as an instrument to achieve such a pooling of the means of physical violence under the leadership of the USA, encompassing most of the EU's member states today (Berling, 2015; Mérand & Barrette, 2013). Only in 1998 did the monopolisation of 'outward'-oriented violence become a more exclusively EU matter, with the launching of the Common Security and Defence Policy (Mérand, 2011, p. 185). Yet the degree of monopolisation is by no means as high as the 'inward'-oriented monopoly of violence that is evident in policing, safeguarding EU borders, and law enforcement taken care of by the European Police Office, European Judicial Cooperation Unit, the European Anti-Fraud Office, and Frontex (Bigo, 2013, p. 164). Although it has become more advanced over time, monopolising coercive means is by far the least developed dimension in the project of European integration, leaving national police and military fields strong sources of authority.

Since attempts at monopolising the means of creating and regulating markets, money, and taxes will be analysed in detail later on, it must suffice here to mention the Single Market Programme (SMP) and the Single European Act (SEA), which led up to the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). Harmonising and abolishing taxes because they are seen as non-tariff barriers (Fligstein, 2010, p. 70), the autonomy of the European Central Bank's (ECB) monetary policy from national contexts, the coordination of European economic policy by broad policy guidelines, and the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP) (recently geared towards even 'greater centralized monitoring of national budgets, stricter punishments for non-compliance and domestic structural reforms') have led to 'a much closer fiscal union' (Tosun, Wetzel, & Zapryanova, 2014, p. 203).

In addition to monopolising the means of physical violence, political integration also relies on a fair amount of centralisation and homogenisation of the means of symbolic violence used to produce, disseminate, and

socialise a doxical view of the world. The concept of symbolic violence emphasises how the practical structuring of cognition helps to reproduce domination in everyday practice by rendering the arbitrariness of world views invisible. Here, legitimacy does not take the form of openly organised support, but is much more subtle: accepting the world and what is presented as part of a natural order, as logical and rational, hence apprehending certain phenomena as problems amenable to solutions and others not (Bourdieu, 1977). The means of symbolic violence are monopolised in educational and academic institutions such as schools, universities, research institutes, and other scientific agencies that survey, objectify, and naturalise the world. The emergence of compulsory school education in nation states, unified curricula, and spelling rules, as well as state funding of scientific research and tertiary education, are attempts at monopolising the means of exerting symbolic violence (Bourdieu et al., 1994). In the case of the EU, the funding of various Jean Monnet activities aimed at researching EU issues and educating about the EU as well as other activities of the Lifelong Learning Programme or more recently Erasmus+, the Research Framework Programmes, and Horizon 2000 and the creation of the European Research Council (ERC) in 2007 are attempts at monopolising the means of symbolic violence. The unitary statistical service that today is Eurostat, a Directorate-General (DG) of the European Commission (EC), produces official data on myriad aspects of European society and has the same effect. It objectifies a European society that European politics is able to govern, using standards that follow the requirements of economic research and, nowadays, evidence-based policy-making (Penissat & Rowell, 2015, p. 292). How these initiatives aim to achieve a European academic field and ‘to consolidate the European area of higher education’ (Bologna Declaration, 19 June 1999) will be discussed with reference to economics in more detail below.

### ***Field of politics and bureaucracy***

When monopolising the means of exerting physical and symbolic violence has advanced to a certain degree, there is a move from attempts to affect what is monopolised by whom to a form of secondary competition over who gets to use these powers according to what logics. The field of politics is constituted by all the agents who engage in these struggles and try to gain access to monopolised powers by using their capabilities, knowledge, and different forms of capital deriving from either their own involvement in politics and other social fields or from delegation by others (Bourdieu,



2000). As there are various other social fields besides politics, political struggles are always also struggles over which principles should prevail throughout society. The state of the field of politics is thus linked to the state of the relationships between dominant fractions of society; it is linked to the state of the field of power (Bourdieu, 2014, pp. 198 f., 311; Schmitz, Witte, & Gengnagel, 2017; Swartz, 2013, p. 62). At the same time, these struggles become autonomous to the degree that political agents become specialists and share a distinct belief in the political *enjeu* that sets them apart from other agents: the belief in the possibility of deciding what is in the common interest and of following through with what has been decided – underpinned by the basic power monopolies.

Bureaucracy develops in as far as governing the key monopolies and those subject to them is delegated and a specialised area made up of those more actively involved in optimising and legitimising power relationships is constructed. Bureaucrats engage in competition over access to positions and promotion as well as in competition over expertise in how to and what to govern. Various professions mobilise their expertise and ideas of governing and, at the same time as they shape bureaucracies and the political field, they shape their own discipline and their relationships towards other professions. Over the centuries, lawyers have been highly successful in these efforts and have become the main profession to staff state bureaucracies and to handle the state's symbolic monopoly. The practice of law is based on the symbolic power of the state, while the functioning of the state relies on lawyers practising (Bourdieu, 2014, p. 301). Over time, law has been challenged by economics as the prime state profession. In addition to judicial expertise, economic expertise is needed to create money, raise taxes, hand out licences, initiate tariffs, and erect or lower trade barriers. Professional economists are involved on all sides when economic fields encompassing markets and firms are actively created and shaped by private and public agents (Bourdieu, 2014, p. 225; Polanyi, 2010). Economic expertise is pivotal in order to imagine an economy that is amenable to being governed (Rose & Miller, 1992), whether along the lines of mercantilism, liberalism, or Keynesianism. Today, politics and most policies are highly informed by economic ideas and reasoning, and economics has become an important professional background in the realm of state bureaucracy.

Due to bureaucratisation and an increased autonomy of the political field – either nation-state politics or EU politics – today's politics is twofold. On the one hand, it is centred on expertise in using the key monopolies described above to coordinate and regulate the various social fields:

it is bureaucratic. On the other hand, politics revolves around the idea of turning self-interest into general interests through representation, a principle based on the mobilisation of authority and recognition in seminal fields of practice: it is democratic. The EU as a political field leans towards the bureaucratic pole, compared to national political fields (Georgakakis, 2013a), and it evinces a democratic deficit when compared to these or when evaluated by normative standards (Beck & Grande, 2007, p. 230 ff.; Habermas, 2011). This is due to its rather recent construction by elite political actors, a process directed simultaneously against nationalism rooted in national political elites and towards a smooth economic integration favoured by economic elites (Fligstein, 2010, p. 33 ff.). Unsurprisingly, many political agents rooted in national political fields were not at all eager to diminish the base of their political power by handing over democratic control to a political context in which they had no part. Hence, seeking solutions that worked around political interests which were vested in national political fields and did not challenge their primary source of authority was for a long time the most promising political strategy for European political agents, as will be argued in the next section.

### **European integration, economic professionals, and their expertise**

Europeanisation is the effect of a process of political integration that detaches social fields from their close links to political institutions identified with the nation state and its key monopolies and realigns these fields' practical and social sense towards a new European entity and its political institutions – situated in a different form of political field. This will not happen without struggle. In addition to those who see and seek their opportunities in 'going European', there are many others who have invested in the existing linkages. Hence, European fields start out as weak ones; they may remain rather weak, due to their high dependency on classical national political authority and stateness (Mudge & Vauchez, 2012). They gain autonomy from national settings when political agents predominantly engaged in national contexts hope to profit from new transnational sources of authority: 'doing politics' that becomes structured by relations outside national bureaucracy and political fields (Lasalle, 2010). Once national political actors no longer view Europe as a temporary excursion but perceive it as an option for making a career, European institutions become producers of political capital. The same can be said about the way political issues are addressed. When rationales,

problem-solving grids, resources, and channels for agenda-setting primarily rooted within European politics are used, the autonomy of this transnational field is augmented. In addition to political agents, economic agents may also hope to gain from transnational engagements, especially at times when their influence on economic and regulatory policies seems to be blocked in the national context. This happened, for example, in the 1980s, when the European Round Table of Industrialists invested their positions and political abilities in fostering a bureaucratic field able to initiate, regulate, and legitimise liberal European markets; together with the Delors Commission they helped to launch the SMP, SEA, and EMU (Cowles, 1995). The European political field thus gains autonomy to the degree that agents' trajectories and habitus as well as policy struggles become shaped by European experiences (Georgakakis, 2013b).

Why should professions and especially economics matter at all in the processes of political integration analysed here? Political integration is not only a political process but also depends on prerequisites and developments in academic and other social fields. Professions link these fields and function as transmission belts for ideas, strategic projects, and agents. On the one hand, they socialise agents capable of holding multiple positions (simultaneously as well as over time) in these different societal realms, which distinguishes them from other agents in each of the fields. Having been educated and trained and having worked in certain academic occupations increase the likelihood of engaging simultaneously in political, academic, and social fields, as compared to non-academics; and depending on the profession, it also increases the likelihood of being involved in processes of political integration such as Europeanisation, as opposed to those in other professions. On the other hand, certain professional associations as well as individual professionals can play the role of institutionalised intermediaries between fields, mobilising and linking different authoritative resources in order to promote certain ideas and projects in either of the fields, much like an 'avatar' (Mudge & Vauchez, 2012). These relations work both ways. Political agents are able to find measures to counteract aggravating political problems, thanks to their knowledge of ideas produced by academic agents in a certain discipline. Academic agents hope to increase the importance of their research area by linking it to the general public's interest in the field of politics, while, at the same time, relying on practitioners for access to everyday experience and data. Practising professionals have access to universally accepted scientific knowledge from their anchoring in the academic field and they gain practical credibility because they are

able to address agency problems on the parts of modern agents that have been politically accepted as being of a fundamental nature and hence of general interest (Schmidt-Wellenburg, 2016).

The following sections will outline four exemplary instances in which economic knowledge and professionals are tightly knitted into the process of European political integration. The focus will be on economists and economic expertise, while law as well as political and administrative sciences will only be taken into consideration for comparisons. Unless otherwise indicated, economics is to be understood in a broad sense, as encompassing not only micro- and macroeconomics, econometrics, and statistics, but also management science, finance, and accounting.

### ***Integrating Europe by law and by market***

The first decades of European integration from the Rome Treaties onwards can be described as forming Europe as a ‘Community of Law’ (Mudge & Vauchez, 2012). The European Court of Justice (ECJ) established by the Treaties has been extending European jurisdiction by producing law through litigation and adjudication (Cohen, 2013). Creating what was later to be called the doctrine of supremacy and direct effect, it established the dominant position of European law over national law (Münch, 2008, p. 533). This is based on the *acquis communautaire*, which in its core aspects functions much like a constitution and guides the perception of what Europe is about, and where the limits of legitimate agency lie in Eurocratic fields (Vauchez, 2008, p. 134). It is centred on ‘the rigorous application of the mutually linked ideas of free movement of goods, services, capital and persons and non-discrimination in any regard’ (Münch, 2008, p. 528). This conception of control is the cognitive underpinning allowing a European form of adversarial legalism to be used successfully:

EU law makers enact detailed, transparent, judicially enforceable rules – often framed as ‘rights’ – and back these with a combination of public enforcement and enhanced opportunities for private litigation by individuals, interest groups, and firms (Kelemen, 2011, p. 240).

The effect is one of ‘governing at a distance’ (Rose & Miller, 1992, p. 173). European government counts on nation states as well as individuals to litigate before the ECJ for clear answers to specific regulatory questions. The ECJ produces and ‘normalises’ European rule and downgrades each system of national law to one among many under the guardianship of the European symbolic monopoly. Even national governments that appeal to the ECJ to influence the development of Community case law

accept the EU's rationale and are transformed from sovereign states into members of a supranational unit (Münch, 2008, p. 535). Professionals of law play an important role in this because they advise and empower the parties before the ECJ and, at the same time, remove themselves from the equation, making liberal governance work.

Beside the initial success of Europe as a 'community of law', Europe as a 'single market and currency' took much longer to form. It came into effect with the 1985 SMP, the 1987 SEA, and the 1992 Treaty of Maastricht (TEU). Although the idea of creating a common market was central to the treaties right from the outset, at least three important ingredients were missing for an earlier launch. Firstly, although the treaties did include the Monetary Committee (MC), it was by no means as autonomous as the ECJ and unable to function in the same way as a hinge between political and academic agents (Mudge & Vauchez, 2012). Secondly, economic agents had no great incentive for building Europe; economics as a discipline was indifferent to the benefits of either common market or currency union, judging both to be protectionist and, if anything, harmful (Taugourdeau & Vincensini, 2009, pp. 59–61). Thirdly, the treaties did not mention monetary unification at all (Grin, 2003, p. 39). The initial impetus for a project that was to flourish twenty years later can be seen in a small group of political agents consisting of, on the one side, economists mainly situated in the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs (DG ECFIN) and the DG for Competition, who were eager to push monetary union forward, and, on the other side, professors of economics, central bankers, and ministers of finance in the MC. This group shared links to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and interest in Mundell's ideas on optimal currency areas, international macroeconomics, and Europe as a focal case; this led to Mundell's 1969 report, *A Plan for a European Currency* (Mundell, 1969), submitted to the MC. Mundell and later Krugman provided the academic arguments and their scientific bolstering, claiming that further political-economic integration would yield benefits; these were crucial ingredients later used to restart European integration through the market (Mudge & Vauchez, 2012, p. 475).

So, by the mid-1970s, both monetary union and further market integration had been established as policy options that promised positive returns for Europe and had to be considered in the general interest. In addition, this community of like-minded agents had reached positions where they could exert influence. These were the preconditions that allowed European agents to envisage 'playing the market' (Jabko, 2006)

as a promising political strategy in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s. The most compelling argument for this strategy was couched in the terms of ‘Costs of Non-Europe’, pointed out in a 1983 report to the European Parliament (EP) by Michel Albert and James Ball; they stated that ‘in not giving itself a big internal market the Community is depriving itself of the best means it could have to cure its economy and lay the foundations for a lasting revival’ (Commission of the European Communities, 1982, p. 3). DG ECFIN provided statistics together with the OECD and thus helped to build a new concept of Europe with an accompanying set of policies (Mudge & Vauchez, 2012, p. 479). After the relaunch of the single market, other commission reports, such as the Delors Report (Commission of the European Communities, 1987), which was written by some of the authors who had been promoting the project since the 1970s (McNamara, 1998, p. 162), mobilised the same economic arguments to push for monetary union in order to elicit the high benefits of market liberalisation.

### ***Governing Europe by economic expertise***

Overall, the SMP, SEA, and TEU established much more than a single market. They firmly anchored the idea in European policy cognition that competition in unregulated markets creates pareto-optimal solutions to most social problems. This not only changed core economic policies, but also restructured the thinking about many other issues by including the ontological assumption that open competition is the natural form of life in which all the various agents and agencies flourish best (Bernhard & Münch, 2011, p. 181). At the heart of many attempts by European political agents to influence behaviour are market mechanisms and techniques to position citizens as market subjects (Schmidt-Wellenburg, 2017). Two more recent examples where new European governing competences have been developed along these lines are European austerity politics since the 2008 crisis and the concept of macroprudentiality as part of the European System of Financial Supervision (ESFS) that came into effect in 2013.

Apart from a short spell of neo-Keynesianism in 2009, European economic policy after the crisis has been dominated by expansionary austerity and structural reforms. The packages tailored by the EC, the ECB, and the IMF comprised the familiar solutions: deregulate the labour market, restructure social welfare, enact austerity measures, and privatise state enterprises and assets. Following the 2011 European ‘Six-Pack’ reforms to the SGP and the 2012 Treaty on Stability, Coordination, and Governance in the European Monetary Union, member states now coordinate their

budgets as well as their structural reforms with the Economic and Financial Affairs Council (Ecofin) and the EC. According to the ‘Six-Pack’ measures, each national government must set a medium-term budgetary objective, a corresponding implementation plan, and a plan for deficit reductions that outlines intended structural reforms. Ecofin assesses the plans annually and national governments can be called upon to make adjustments. An alert-mechanism for identifying macroeconomic imbalances was also established (Chalmers, 2012). If alerted, member states are required to devise a detailed plan for counteracting imbalances.

The measures described here advance the argument made earlier in two directions. Firstly, political powers formerly working in national politics have been relocated to the European political field. Secondly, all solutions use the basic notion of markets being the ideal coordination devices that lead to optimal outcomes. European nation states are pictured as market subjects competing to sell their government bonds in a capital market that had been ‘distorted’ when the EMU led to the aligning of EU member states’ interests on bonds, tempting governments (particularly of Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Greece and Spain – PIIGS) into unbalanced budgets, overspending, and sluggishness when it comes to reforms. This makes way for the tale of governments being exposed to moral hazard and prone to shirking; the solutions promoted are revitalising competition and using it to pressure for structural reforms and their implementation (Fourcade et al., 2013).

This line of argument can be traced back to Luigi Einaudi, a mid-twentieth-century liberal Italian economist at Bocconi University. He hoped that European co-operation might be a means to constrain statist policies and fiscal expansion. This idea began to have a wider impact when Alberto Alesina, a Bocconi graduate and Harvard professor, fused it with formalised neo-classics and embedded it in a European political-academic network reinforced by linkages to US-centred international economics (Helgadóttir, 2015, p. 399). The main line of argument for expansionary austerity starts from the presupposition that democratic political systems naturally build up debt in order to expand welfare benefits. Hence, austerity should focus on cutting welfare spending, which makes not only economic but also political sense, since non-tax-raising and economically successful governments tend to be re-elected. Ultimately, on this account, governments profit from competition and pressure made possible in the European context because it helps them enforce austerity and allows them to make structural adjustments (reduction of state involvement) in order to survive. This concept not only influenced most solutions



implemented after 2009, but it also structured the *doxa* that prevails in the field of European economic policy, ruling out alternatives such as Eurobonds on a cognitive level (Matthijs & McNamara, 2015, p. 236).

The current economic crisis has led not only to an upswing in austerity politics and structural reform in Europe, but also to the creation of new institutions of financial supervision and regulation in the form of the ESFS (Mayntz, 2012). The EFSF comprises two tiers: one aimed at the microprudential supervision of institutional agents such as public companies, banks, pension funds, hedge funds, and their products; and the other aimed at macroprudential supervision of the systemic risk inherent in markets. Microprudential supervision was shifted to the European level by the creation of the European Supervisory Authorities (ESAs) that comprise the European Banking Authority (EBA), the European Securities and Markets Authority and the European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority. The underlying idea is harmonisation, which, in the case of banking, leads to a single rulebook serving as a unified regulatory framework combined with a Single Supervisory Mechanism and a Single Resolution Mechanism. These were developed by the EBA and the ECB, with the latter also adopting the direct monitoring of 123 significant banks responsible for 82% of total banking assets in the EU. ESAs are

concerned with promoting convergence and coordinating the work of national supervisors ... (They) make use of 'soft' oversight mechanisms such as monitoring and peer review [...] (but also) have powers to impose binding supervisory decisions in certain situations (Ferran, 2014, p. 30).

The new European finance regulation can be seen as positive integration aimed at actively monitoring and shaping at the European level markets that have been initiated by negative integration since Maastricht.

Macropudentiality, on the other hand, involves a shift in the overall cognitive framework. Whereas, previously, financial markets were understood to function as ideal allocation devices hampered only by individual misconduct (hence the focus on individual norm compliance), they are now perceived as also subject to corruption by interactional effects (Baker, 2014, p. 173). Due to this cognitive shift, it becomes necessary to monitor the development of markets, to pin down possible systemic risks, and to counteract them by moderating the supply of credit. The opportunity to alter the concept of control arose because the regulative crisis coincided with the rise of a network of

technocrats from BIS [Bank for International Settlements], well networked private sector and academic economists [...] and officials from national



central banks (NCBs), who together exercised an ‘insiders’ coup d’état’ [*sic*] to depose the simplified efficient markets orthodoxy (Baker, 2014, p. 175).

The recently established European Systemic Risk Board (ESRB) uses the new mindset. Its tasks are data collection, analysis, consulting other ESAs, and working together with them, for instance in conducting banking stress tests. This form of regulation can again be described as one of ‘governing at a distance’: financial institutions as well as national governments are objectified by the ESRB’s gaze, take advice from, and ‘report their actions to address the identified risk or explain their reason for inaction’ (Baker, 2014, p. 182) to the ESRB. The ESFS institutions, the shift to macroprudential supervision, and the increase in supervision and coordination of fiscal policies have augmented the importance of economic expertise and experts at the bureaucratic pole of the European political field.

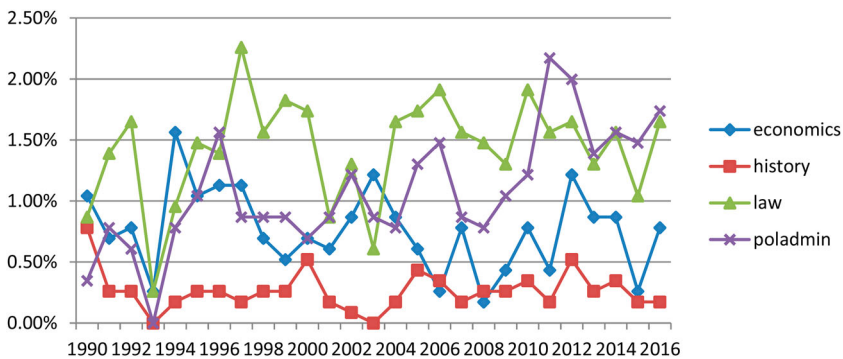
### ***European research and the discipline of economics***

There is a close link between European political integration and the Europeanisation of academia. Developing a European academic field has been one of the major integration projects for several decades. This involves the material concentration of resources and the interlinking of agents on a European scale, for instance by facilitating student and lecturer exchanges through ERASMUS and SOCRATES, aligning European tertiary education through the Bologna Process, creating European MA programmes, establishing European disciplinary and status associations, or creating a powerful ERC (Büttner & Mau, 2014; Gengnagel, Massih-Tehrani, & Baier, 2016). It also includes a symbolic reorientation of research programmes in different disciplines towards Europe as an object of research. The question as to how one should reasonably govern Europe became a credible research agenda on which scientists could build careers – particularly in law, economics, and political science.

This development was actively fostered by the EU through directly funding research and teaching in EU institutions and integration, for example, through Jean Monnet activities. Probably the most well-known aspect is the Jean Monnet Chairs that have been awarded since 1990. When looking back over the last 26 years, it becomes obvious that law is the prime state profession, just as it was in the political integration of the nation state. Law accounts for 38.49% of the chairs, followed by political and administrative studies at 29.19%, economic studies at 20.59%, and historical studies trailing behind at 7.12%. Examination of the appointment of chairs over time shows some fluctuations, particularly

with political and administrative studies winning out over law since 2011 and economics dropping to and remaining in the third place from 2003 onwards. By funding 1151 chairs since the 1990s and investing in many other activities, the EC has become a key player in institutionalising European Community research as a field of interest in certain disciplines and it has done so with hindsight, building an academic field of research sympathetic to European Institutions (Robert & Vauchez, 2010, p. 26) (Figure 1).

Economics is one of three disciplines particularly promoted by the EC, not only in the case of Jean Monnet activities, but also by institutionalising it as one of the three major disciplines in the higher education institutions directly funded by the EU: Collège d'Europe in Bruges and Natolin and the European University Institute in Florence, which have become well-known breeding grounds for future EU staff and EU-studies academics alike. But economics is by no means as central to European research as law, which does not really come as a surprise. Right from the outset, the ECJ was at the heart of carving out a specific European research programme distinct from national as well as international law; from 1962



**Figure 1.** Jean Monnet Chairs 1990–2016 distribution in overall per cent in year awarded.

Notes: The data were gathered from <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/jeanmonnet/directory/New/Version/2008/V1/ajmrepertoire/distrib.Asp> for 1990–2013, from <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/JeanMonnetDirectory/#/search-screen/> for 2014 and 2015, and from [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/selection-results/jean-monnet-activities-2016\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/selection-results/jean-monnet-activities-2016_en) for 2016. Up until 2003, only four disciplinary affiliations existed (EU History Studies, EU Economic Studies, EU political and Administrative Studies, and EU Law Studies). From 2004 onwards, the label EU Interdisciplinary Studies was merged and increased sharply over the years to 41.5 per cent in 2013. In order to make affiliations over time comparable and since it has no disciplinary equivalent in the academic field, the label was dissolved and chairs redistributed according to the affiliations of the academics that had been awarded chairs. In 2007, EU International Relations and Diplomacy Studies was also introduced. Chairs labelled as such were merged with EU Political and Administrative Studies for comparison over time. In the same year, EU Comparative Regionalism Studies, EU and Comparative Regionalism Studies, and EU Intercultural Dialogue Studies were also introduced. These only account for 3.02 per cent of all chairs awarded since 1990 and are not presented here.

onwards, it was readily supported by the *Fédération Internationale pour le Droit Européen* established by Commissioner Walter Hallstein and the head of DG joint legal services, Michel Gaudet (Mudge & Vauchez, 2012, p. 467). In economics this type of hinge between disciplines, politics, and professionals that allows certain fractions to pool resources and use them to promote strategies of transnationalisation was lacking in the 1960s; moreover, the ‘internationalisation’ of the discipline that prevailed at the time worked against such a development: the neo-classical consensus that is based on an ahistorical and abstract view of economics and society, the use of mathematics as a universal language for econometrics and modelling, and orientation towards US economics as a source of global authority were not in favour of establishing a branch of European in addition to national and global US-centred economics (Fourcade, 2006, p. 152). Only from the 1980s onwards did European economists slightly loosen their tight links with the US prototype; economics became a regionally more integrated, albeit universally structured, discipline, with increasing numbers of European research centres and think tanks (Fourcade, 2006, p. 175). The interlinking of economics and the European political field intensified, but academic research centres that existed or were founded with a distinct orientation towards researching European community issues, such as the Centre for European Policy Research (CEPR) in London in 1983 or the European Economic Association, still exercised only limited influence in the internationalised world of economics (Mudge & Vauchez, 2012, p. 477).

This certainly changed once the European monetary union and, with it, the ECB were established. The ECB was modelled not only on the Bundesbank (de Grauwe, 2016, p. 157), but also on the Federal Reserve (FED) by its first president Wim Duisenberg, which led to a strong research orientation – anchored not only in the ECB’s DG International and DG Economics, but also in its own DG Research (Mudge & Vauchez, 2016). This was partly due to the ECB being a newly designed institution that was free to orient itself towards the prevailing templates and ideas on central banks that had favoured scientisation at the time (and still do) (Marcussen, 2009). On the other hand, this effort towards engagement in academic economics, an engagement that often lacks any added value for the daily business of central banks, offers an opportunity to gain autonomy from other European (and particularly national) political as well as NCB agents. Approximately 50 full-time researchers are currently employed by DG Research, and an average of ten PhD students per year from the ECB’s PhD programme and ten senior researchers funded by the

Duisenberg and the Lamfalussy research fellow programmes join each year. In addition, there are now permanent visiting staff from NCBs and other international organisations such as the IMF or World Bank, their numbers having increased from around 100 in 2002 to over 200 in 2013 and 2015.<sup>1</sup>

The strategy of scientisation has also led the ECB to attempt to establish itself in the higher ranks of the field of academic economics, and it has certainly succeeded. Having been employed by the ECB, in particular DG Research, or having spent a finite period of time as an intern, researcher, or research collaborator at the ECB, is seen as a valuable steppingstone in European and international economists' careers. The number of research papers produced by the ECB is by now as high as the FED's and the quality (measured by the average h-index or by RePEc rankings) has reached almost the same level as that of the IMF, which has consistently been in the first place (Mudge & Vauchez, 2016, p. 159). Today, the ECB has become one of the biggest economic research institutions in Europe, hosting, for example, more full-time researchers than the London School of Economics (Mudge, 2015, p. 81). Hence, the EC's main form of funding academic economics is through the ECB.

### ***Staffing Europe with economists***

Professions not only shape the way a government works by providing concepts, ideas, and world views with academic legitimacy, but they also staff state bureaucracies in the political field. Since the connection between academic professions and the political field is strongest at its bureaucratic pole, the primary focus here will be on the EC, followed by a brief examination of the ECB as a new and, in recent crisis governance, highly influential institution closely interlinked with the discipline of economics.

Since the 1960s, EU permanent staff have been recruited in competitions referred to as *concours* that underwent radical changes in recent years as part of the Kinnock reforms, initiated in the aftermath of the resignation of the Santer Commission and in advance of the enlargement rounds of 2004 and 2007, with the new influx of permanent staff they brought with them. Previously, the *concours* had consisted of a written exam taken by all candidates simultaneously after months of preparation, often in special classes (Georgakakis, 2010, p. 14 f.). Those who passed the written exam were then invited for oral exams carried out by permanent staff and used to test the candidates' abilities to fit into the transnational working environments at EU institutions. In the reforms, the staffing

process was centralised and has since been conducted by the European Personnel Selection Office (Ban, 2013, p. 73). The first stage now consists of a computer-administered exam with a reduced emphasis on special EU knowledge and an increased focus on general skills. This is followed by an assessment-centre exercise based on a competency framework organised by human resource firms.

The changes can be understood as having in a sense demystified EU administration and its special emphasis on EU dedication and cosmopolitanism in favour of other skills closely associated with management, economics, and business-school students (Georgakakis, 2010, p. 15). As one of the officials interviewed by Carolyn Ban put it: 'It will facilitate the recruitment of smooth managerial type people as if we were a bank or a consulting company' (Ban, 2010, p. 17). This is in tune with other aspects of the Kinnock reforms, such as the implementation of New Public Management techniques that place emphasis on financial accountability, gear up the levers of financial controlling and auditing, and bring the administration closer to the Anglo-American management standards that are devoid of context (Ban, 2013, p. 83). The emphasis on generalists is also evident when taking into account in which fields of expertise, described in the competition notice, the different *concours* have been held since the 1960s (Christensen, 2015, p. 18 f.). Between 1972 and 1978, law predominated at 25%, closely followed by economics at 23%, and the related area of financial management and audit and accounting at thirteen per cent. By the 2010–2013 period, law was reduced to nine per cent, economics to thirteen per cent, and financial management and audit accounting to eight per cent. This downturn seems to be in favour of a constant increase in General and Public Administration *concours* that went up from 4 to 27 per cent. Figures vary considerably over time, but overall it seems that law loses out over economics including management, and both over public administration with increasing European integration.

The overall development seen in this recruiting practice can also be found when focusing on the higher tiers of administration since 1958, such as Director-Generals (DGs) and Deputy Director-Generals (DDGs), and their backgrounds in tertiary education. DGs and DDGs with a main degree in law account for 45.7% in the first period, subsequently dropping to around 31.5% and remaining constant over time, whereas those with a main degree in economics were slightly stronger from 1986 to 2008 at around 42%, then dropping again to 31.5% in the 2014–2016 period. The frequency of staff who have

studied only law declined steadily from 1986 to 2008 and then rose again to 22.5% during the Juncker Commission. Those having studied only economics showed a different pattern, dropping back to 22.5% after an initial high of 28.1%. The lower numbers of economics graduates in the last period seems to be due to political and administrative science backgrounds gaining in importance – up to 18.0% compared to an earlier average of 13.8% – and, to a lesser extent, the natural sciences too (Table 1).

Overall, it can be seen that economics alongside law is the background that most readily translates into bureaucratic capital and, most interestingly, that political and administrative sciences have gained an overall importance in recent years. This distribution also holds true for the EP, a highly politicised institution at the other end of the European political field. EP members' background in law seems to be constant over the 6th, 7th, and 8th legislative periods at around 21%, economics has slightly increased from fourteen per cent to eighteen per cent, and political science has shown a sharp increase from seven to sixteen per cent (Beauvallet-Haddad, Michon, Lepaux, & Monicolle, 2016, p. 115). Here we might perceive the initial effects of the decade-long investment by the EC into EU political and administrative science study programmes and research.

When we look at how professions are engaged in staffing European institutions with a focus on the economic profession and related disciplines, one institution is of special interest: the ECB.<sup>2</sup> Still called the European Monetary Institute in 1997, the institution had an average of 370 full-time positions. Before the bulk of new tasks associated with the ESFS came into effect in 2013, the average number of full-time positions had increased to 1615, followed by a steep increase to 2722 in 2015; more are to be expected. In addition, there were an average of around 120 trainees per year between 2001 and 2014, with an increase to 273 in 2015. These are economics graduates working on short-term contracts, this being one of the ways the ECB recruits new staff. Taken together, the ECB is by no means as impressive an institution as the EC in terms of numbers, since it only has a total of around 3200 permanent and non-permanent full-time positions. But since it is dominated by economics and holds a top position in the EU institutions-hierarchy, its development in recent years has certainly contributed to shifting Europe's centre of gravity towards economics, making economic education, certificates, knowledge, ideas, and concepts a hard currency that can be even more readily turned into bureaucratic and hence political power.

**Table 1.** Degrees (main and secondary) held by DGs and DDGs by period (in per cent).

	Law	Law + Eco	Law + other	Total Law	Eco	Eco + Law	Eco + other	Total Eco	Other	Science (incl. in other)	Poladm (incl. in other)
1958–1973	31.4	2.9	11.4	45.7	20.0	0.0	8.6	38.6	25.8	–	–
1973–1985	21.4	7.1	3.6	32.1	14.3	7.1	10.7	32.1	35.7	Avg.	Avg.
1986–1995	14.3	11.4	5.7	31.4	20.0	8.6	14.3	42.9	25.7	11.2	13.8
1995–2008	12.3	3.5	15.8	31.6	28.1	0.0	15.8	43.9	24.6	–	–
2010–2014	21.7	3.5	4.3	29.6	33.0	0.0	1.7	34.8	32.2	14.8	16.5
2014–2016	22.5	3.4	5.6	31.5	22.5	1.1	7.9	31.5	37.1	13.5	18.0

Notes: Figures for the periods from 1958 to 2008 were taken from Georgakakis and Lasalle (2013, p. 144). Data for the Barroso II Commission were collected from the Secretariat General and for the 2014–2016 Juncker Commission from [http://ec.europa.eu/civil\\_service/about/who/dg\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/civil_service/about/who/dg_en.htm), own calculations.

## Conclusion

Europeanisation must be understood as an effect of a process of political integration originating in but not restricted to politics. The process of European integration is an attempt at creating a European political field; this entails building physical and symbolic power monopolies to bolster it, and changing political practices in order to circumvent resistance from nationally anchored political agents. Its course depends not only on the state of national political fields, their relationships to each other, and the structure of the emergent political entity, but also on the professions engaged, and hence on the linkages mediated by professionals between the political, academic, and other social fields. Political agents engaged in projects of political integration search for individual interests that they can represent, as well as scientific legitimation. Here, professional expertise and staff help to create political capital that can be used for advancing or slowing down integration. As professionals are sucked into such a project, the academic discipline associated with the profession and professionals' relations to other professionals change. Attempts at political integration become part of strategies in academic struggles and turn into stakes fought over in other social fields, such as the economy.

In the case of European political integration, law, economics, and, to a lesser extent, political science have played a particular role. As I have shown, the importance of economics has increased in the process of integration over the past 30 years. Firstly, this can be seen in the relevance basic economic ontologies and major academics have in creating more specific EU policies such as austerity politics in the economic crisis or in anchoring macroprudentiality in the ESFS. Here, heightened influence has led to a further neo-liberalisation of EU governance and a changed *doxa* of European politics. Secondly, this shows in the amount of EU funding for economic research and in the EU's relevance as a research object in economics. Here, the EC has succeeded in putting European issues and economics on the academic map by creating powerful research facilities at the ECB and maintaining close links to CEPR, IMF, and top economic departments such as at Bocconi University. Thirdly, this shows in the staffing of Eurocracy, for instance, in the increased number of DGs and DDGs holding economics degrees, but even more in the Kinnock and *concoures* reforms: becoming a 'normal' organisation and recruiting generalists fit well with economics and management science graduates' universal employability. Owing to these changes, the conditions have changed under which bureaucratic capital as a special form of political capital is produced.



In recent times, these shifts have had two major outcomes: on the one hand, a heightened monopoly of physical power at the European level in the form of budgetary controls and supervision of financial activities, and increased competences in money-creation and the pooling of vast amounts of economic capital in, for example, the Single Resolution Fund. On the other hand, this devalues political capital and dismantles the positions of political agents who are firmly rooted in national politics, who at the same time possess a vast populist potential due to the hardship and losses many have endured and still endure as a consequence of the 2008 economic crisis. This creates a situation in which political agents engaged in curtailing Europeanisation and strengthening national political integration flourish because European politics is perceived as deficient by many, since it is judged from a standpoint rooted in a nation-state political *doxa*. An increased 'democratic imbalance' in Eurocracy is detected, indicating that the heightened efforts of EU institutions and political scientists in recent years to redefine democracy at the EU level have not been particularly successful. Monopolising means of symbolic violence seems to be much more difficult than monopolising means of physical violence (which can be implemented quickly in times of crisis), presumably because it involves changing forms of perception.

## Notes

1. Figures were collected from the ECB's annual reports at <https://www.ecb.europa.eu/pub/annual/html/index.en.html>.
2. Figures were collected from the ECB's annual reports.

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No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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