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## Europeanization and Policy-making in the National Context: The Work of Policy in Croatia

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### Summary

The author considers the possible consequences of Europeanization on national policy-making context, using the institutional environment of the Croatian case study as an example. With a point of departure embedded in the comparative politics approach to the European studies, the author raises three fundamental questions: What makes the implementation of EU policies effective in the context of national policies? What is the real scope of policies performed at the supra-national vs. the national polity level? What is the basic institutional feature of the Croatian policy process in comparison with the policy processes in developed countries? Based on these methodological questions, the author explores the relevance of the differentiation between vertical and horizontal policy dimensions as an additional tool for understanding the work of policy in Croatia.

*Key words:* European public policies, Europeanization, policy-making process, policy analysis, work of policy, institutional analysis



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*Nobody in Croatia is concerned with monitoring and evaluation of policies. The Parliament should have an instrument for monitoring and evaluation of the achieved goals set by the Government. However, there is no systematic data collection in place, not to mention evaluation of results.*

Sanja Crnković-Pozaić, *Lider*, May 2006

## *Introduction*

Studies approaching the EU through comparative politics and public policy in recent years have gradually replaced international relations as the dominant field elaborating upon the nature of the European Union (Pollack, 2005: 357-58; Pollack, 2006: 15; Kustec Lipicer, 2006: 26). Focusing on the EU's institutional framework as a specific polity, or more directly the political system (Hix, 2005), scholars started to investigate the EU by using the methodology of comparative politics for studying national political systems.<sup>1</sup> Federal or quasi-federal aspects of EU institutions, vertical and horizontal distribution of power, the impact of particular institutions on the EU policy-making process and similar questions from the comparative politics realm decreased the role of international relations scholars in dealing with European studies. The result was an enormous expansion of approaches developed by political scientists specialized in comparative politics and public policy/public administration, ranging from multi-level governance, public choice and new institutionalism, specific EU policy modes, policy networks analysis, to various forms of interpretative analysis and experiments in governance theory.

The paper does not seek to explore the methodological relevance of any of the previously mentioned approaches seeking to explain the policy process on the EU level. Instead of finding a particular theory suitable for exploring 'the pure logic' of the policy process within the EU it is, aimed at giving a broad research framework for understanding the possible EU influences on national policy-making. The starting point in studying such an impact is a clear understanding of the meaning of the notion of Europeanization. Does it function as a dependent variable (covering variables that are presumed to change value in response to changes in the value of other variables)? In trying to correspond to such a question the research objective took the following questions into consideration:

1. What is the basic feature of the EU policy-making process in comparison to policy processes evolving in the member countries?
2. What happens with the effectiveness of the implementation of EU policies in the national policy contexts?
3. What is the basic reason for many policy areas being essentially untouched by direct EU policy-making?

<sup>1</sup> For a systematic review of basic approaches to European studies available in Croatian political science see Damir Grubiša's work (Grubiša, 2006).

### *Europeanization and public policy in EU countries*

The question of Europeanization does not involve the very important question of policy styles. Researchers in the field of policy science developed the concept of ‘policy style’ to help better understand the way in which various stakeholders play their roles in policy processes that can be found in different polities (Colebatch, 2004: 15). The whole approach was originally developed by Jeremy Richardson (Richardson, 1982) and is based on two variables: the first covers the way in which decision-makers try to attain a final decision (imposing decisions by majority/attaining consensus), while the other deals with the way in which policy-makers react to policy problems (anticipation of problems/reaction to problems).

The question of Europeanization in this paper is limited to analyzing the nature of Europeanization of public policy. Following various authors, Andrea Lenschow suggests four starting definitions of the term: “The emergence and development of the European level of distinct structures”; “the top-down impact of the EU on its member states”; “the horizontal transfer of concepts and policies between member states”; “complex interactive top-down and bottom-up process between the EU and its member states” (Lenschow, 2006: 58).

Summing up the four definitions, she concludes that none of them can serve as a dependent variable. Stressing that Europeanization is more of a process than a status, she is simply saying that we have no precise account on the mutual influence between the European and national policy contexts. It is not possible to describe the influence or impact as a one way process, because Europeanization can not be limited to a top-down mechanism representing the implementation of EU rules on national administrative systems. “Europeanization is indeed a broad – even ‘stretched’ – concept interested in domestic adaptations to ‘EU-Europe’ ... The EU represents a set of rules, an arena and a discursive framework for domestic actors, in short a point of departure for impulses that flow top-down, horizontally and ‘round-about’ when impacting on the domestic level” (Lenschow, 2006: 59).

But this does not mean that it is impossible to find some kind of regularity in policy outcomes, as a result of such broadly defined Europeanization. Following the question of the implementation effectiveness of EU policies across policy fields, political scientists found that a substantial difference exists between environmental protection policy, consumer protection policy and social policy on one side, and agrarian or competition policy on the other side of continuum. Comparative empirical data showed that implementation problems are much more pronounced in environmental and social policy in comparison to competition or agrarian policy (Knill, 2006: 358-59).

In contrast to the findings observed across policy areas, differences in the implementation performance across EU member states are a much less important variable than is generally expected. The so-called ‘Mediterranean syndrome’ was a very popular hypothesis in the EU-15 European studies, indicating that southern member states implement European policies in a less effective way than northern member states. But as Tanya Börzel (2000) showed, it is very hard to confirm, this is further supported by further research done by other scholars who found that implementation deficits vary independently of geographical location (Knill, 2000).

This does not mean, however, that the national administrative tradition does not matter, since the transition to EU laws depends mainly on national administrative capacities and resources. The relation between EU laws and national administrative capacities is a fairly complex issue. More precise analysis showed, for example, that the implementation effectiveness of EU policies depends on the “institutional scope” of the European adaptation pressure, which includes not just European regulatory requirements but also the capacity or preparedness of national administrative traditions for initiating reforms (Knill, 1998). Such a finding led political scientists to a conclusion that there is no causal link between the implementation performance and the usage of “command-and-control” policy instruments designed on the EU level. Reliance on hierarchical interaction and command-and-control regulation failed in many cases, pointing out the importance of adaptive behavior. In response to these problems in implementation, the Commission, from the early 1990s onwards, started to promote so-called new instruments, which leave more space for taking into account features connected with domestic content.

The next fundamental question over Europeanization and public policy is connected with the forces shaping the jurisdiction over particular policies between various levels of governance. The fiscal federalism literature provides much strong evidence on how multi-tiered systems are designed in a manner which enables the redistribution of fiscal resources to lower levels. The problem with the EU budget is that it is unable to engage in substantial redistribution through fiscal policy, due to the fact that the budget is limited to a relatively small percentage (1.27%) of the European Union’s GDP.

The above mentioned problem is a crucial reason why the EU has engaged primarily in regulatory activity, earning the label of a “regulatory state” (Majone, 1994). Such a description dominantly refers to the fact that around 75 per cent of lawmaking already comes from Brussels, and only the rest from the legislative process in member states. That means that the EU is limited to indirect influence on substantive public policies, which particularly includes basic policies representing European welfare states. Welfare policy remained predominantly national.

Some particularly active scholars focus on the limited scope of EU policy-making; they advocate intergovernmentalism in their approach to European Studies. One of the most pronounced scholars who took that approach, Andrew Moravcsik, pointed out that “many areas are essentially untouched by direct EU policy-making: taxation, social welfare, health care, pensions, education, cultural matters, defense, most law and order. Moreover, none among the latter policies appears a promising candidate for communitarization” (Moravcsik, 2005: 365). The substantial dimension of the European Constitutional compromise remained therefore the same, without new public goods that should be provided directly by the EU<sup>2</sup>.

An additional problem in the EU policy-making is the specific characteristics or more precisely the institutional burdens stemming from the basic features of the EU as a polity. Due to many actors, vertical and horizontal, trying to impose their issues on the agenda, the number of policy issues entering to the EU agenda is enormous. On the other hand, the capacity of the EU institutions to formulate policy options and to coordinate all these issues are rather limited, as Guy Peters found in his famous contribution on EU policy-making (Peters, 1996: 63-67). The crucial problem is the lack of basic political institutions able to secure effective coordination of various policy issues, namely political parties. Peters concludes that EU-level political parties failed to provide policy coordination for many reasons, but basically because “the executive is (the Commission) is appointed by the national governments and reflects the configuration of forces in these countries more than it does the distribution of partisan allegiance within the EU itself” (Peters, 1996: 67). Policy process at the EU level is hence characterized by a strong tension between the agenda-setting and the policy formulation phase, and is not limited only to the problems of implementation<sup>3</sup>.

Moreover, argues Peters, differences in policy styles embodied in the behavior of individual commissioners and the members of the Directorate General, lead to further problems with policy coordination. That means that the institutional features of the policy process at the national level matter and cannot be omitted from a complete account of the possible influences of Europeanization on public policy at the national level. The work of policy in particular states is, therefore, an indispensable element for a complete insight on how Europeanization can shape and re-shape policy streams at the national level. Research interest for the more precise study of the work of pol-

<sup>2</sup> Constitutional dilemmas on substantial policy areas which should be included into the EU policy-making capacity are systematically reviewed by Damir Grubiša (Grubiša, 2005).

<sup>3</sup> A more recent work on agenda-setting in the EU also identified a number of institutional and political characteristics that are specific to the EU agenda-setting process (Princen, 2007).

icy from the perspective of comparative politics, became an influential topic among scholars dealing with policy sciences.

### *The work of policy in Croatia: institutional limitations*

Since institutional factors matter, the careful research of the work of policy in the Croatian context is a prerequisite for the clear understanding of the possible impact of Europeanization on the policy-making process in Croatia. The first thing to be stressed in reviewing the work of policy in Croatia is that policy analysis is mostly confined to the analysis *of* policy-making, and not the analysis *for* policy-making. Analysis for policy-making, including systematic comparison of options, collecting information for policy or policy advocacy, is much less developed (Petak, 2006: 84)<sup>4</sup>. Policy analysis as the sort of analysis that is grounded in microeconomics could be therefore labeled as an emerging profession in all ex-socialist countries, with Croatia being no exception. More precisely, policy analysis as a systematic approach to public decision-making just started to gradually develop in a project connected to international organizations and activities of non-governmental organizations. Following the notable comparison of policy analysis and other approaches to solving problems in the public sector provided by Weimer and Vining (Weimer, Vining, 1999), it could be said that decision-making in the Croatian public sector is based on the classical public administration approach and some elements of classical political planning.

Starting with discourse analysis is probably the best way to understand the nature of policy-making in Croatia. It is needless to say that the Croatian language makes no difference between the English words *politics* and *policy* – they both translate as *politika*. In difference to politics as a struggle for power, or “irrational maneuvering space” (Manheim, 1978), which is particularly linked with the notion of partisanship, policy refers more to the rational aspect of political life, linked dominantly to the notion of solving social problems. But it is, of course, not a Croatian peculiarity! The situation is very similar in other European languages<sup>5</sup>. The problem was, at least temporarily, solved in a way that the word *politika* is mostly used to cover *politics*,

<sup>4</sup> The first contributions in Croatian political science which elaborated on the importance of policy sciences appeared in the late 1980s. Lasswell’s pioneering contribution to the field, “The Policy Orientation”, appeared in Croatian in 1987, as the first fundamental public policy article translated into Croatian. The essential books appeared even later. The first essential book devoted to public policy appeared in 1995 (Grdešić, 1995), while the first important policy science book was translated into the Croatian even later (Colebatch, 2004).

<sup>5</sup> For a good account of problems connected with making a difference between the words ‘politics’ and ‘policy’ in most continental European languages see Heidenheimer’s (1986) review.

while *policy*, thought of as a part of political life connected with rational measures, programs or projects in particular fields, is translated as *javne politike*.

The first characteristics of the work of policy in Croatia relates to the specific nature of the agenda-setting process<sup>6</sup>. The way of setting an agenda is dominantly determined by ‘the Government’s Rules of procedure’, by which setting a particular policy on the agenda is the job of the so-called ‘Government’s Coordination’. There are several different Coordinations: one that is responsible for setting social services on the agenda, the other responsible for economic matters or coping with foreign and domestic affairs. The key person for the each Coordination is the Minister of Finance, who decides the way of decision-making.

Materials for the Coordination are prepared by particular Departments, including various regulations, ranging from a bill amendment, executive decrees, etc. Regulations included in the work of a particular Coordination are not obliged to pass a specific regulatory assessment review. Policy options are not formulated on the basis of specific policy analysis tools like *RIA (Regulatory Impact Assessment)*, but, on the contrary, by one type of *ad hoc* “haggling” or “bargaining” between the Minister of Finance and the representatives of other Departments. Speaking in more colloquial terms, the Minister serves as a kind of “switchman”, putting particular policy matters on and removing them from the agenda.

Aside from the problem of a lack of policy analysis activities in the early phases of policy process (agenda-setting and formulation) – which is contrary to what the discipline of policy analysis prescribes<sup>7</sup> – the type of policy-making described above creates serious problems with policy-coordination. Let us to give one example. Why should such important policies like development, education and employment policies be integrated? The complexity and interconnectedness of policy problems determine the complexity of the policies intended to be changed. An excellent example for this is unemployment. Since unemployment has multiple causes, the employment policy should necessarily have to combine several areas. The economic sector should pursue an entrepreneurship development policy in order to have a direct impact on the creation of new jobs; education (both formal and life-long) should prepare individuals for new skills required by the market; it

<sup>6</sup> Croatian political scientists did not study the agenda-setting phase of the policy process until recently.

<sup>7</sup> Beryl Radin convincingly showed the logic of development of policy analysis as a profession on the American example. In the formative years of the profession, policy analysts in the United States were predominantly preoccupied with the starting phases of policy process, putting more attention to monitoring and evaluation (Radin, 2000: 46).

should ensure mobility, so that labor supply and demand could be coordinated in terms of space, sectors and professions. At the same time, wage policy should reflect trends in productivity and the institutions active in the labor market should be efficient and at the service of enterprises and job-seekers (Crnković-Pozaić, 2006).

The problem of coordination also affects the problem of goal setting. Except when the political goals on which a consensus is reached within one political option are defined, the departments do not consult each other about what should be the basic goals in implementing particular policies. Therefore, competences often overlap among the departments; this is most obvious in the case of some target groups (e.g. war veterans). It often happens that benefits for such groups accumulate when an overlap of competence occurs among different departments. Thus, it is very hard to attribute the effects to one particular policy, because the results are not applicable to individual policies (Crnković-Pozaić, 2006).

The next problem is that the setting of Croatian institutional policy-making does not allow the making of a clear distinction between objectives and goals.<sup>8</sup> Setting the hierarchy of various aims is an important tool for performing effective policy analysis. Specification of goals and objectives is an important aspect of normative futures, as it is pointed out by William Dunn (Dunn, 1994). Although goals and objectives are both oriented to the future, a clear distinction between them enable to policy-makers a better understanding of possible ways for recommending policy actions in the future. Indeed, forecasting policy futures, is located between structuring policy problems and recommending policy actions, followed by monitoring and evaluation of policies in the “architectonics of methods for policy analysis” developed by Dunn.

By defining goals as broad purposes, and setting forth by objectives specific aims, the policy analyst is able to diagnose the future of a particular policy. “Goals are rarely expressed in the form of operational definitions – while objectives are. Relatedly, goals are not quantifiable, but objectives can be and often are. Statements of goals usually do not specify the time period in which policies are expected to achieve desired consequences, while statements of objectives do. Finally, goals define target populations in broad terms, while objectives define target populations specifically” (Dunn, 1994: 195).

Such a distinction does not exist at the departmental level. The hierarchy of various aims can usually be noticed only indirectly, through their position within the central government budget proposal. The basic consequence of

<sup>8</sup> That is one basic conclusion derived from the research devoted to the implementation of youth policy in Croatia (Petak, Petek, Kekez, 2006).



such decision-making style is a relatively high level of non-transparency – budget funds are not clearly connected with the goals that have to be achieved, which leaves room for avoiding full transparency. Every department usually prepares a working version of a document, which is then submitted to all the institutions connected with its implementation, so that they can give their opinion on the document. In most cases, opinions of individual departments are not included in the goals of the document; they are limited to the segments of the draft which are directly related to their respective competences. What prevails in practice is the policy of noninterference in departmental affairs. After the comments, the department integrates them all and the draft is then forwarded to the Government's Coordination for economy, where everybody comments on the document, as well. If there are major objections to the document, it will be sent back for revision until all the parties are satisfied with it. After repeated coordination, the document can be submitted to the Government, where it is finally adopted or sent back for further revision. Only if it is adopted does it become a public document (Crnković Pozaić, 2006).

The execution and steering of public policies over time, labeled as the implementation of public policy, is in the culminating phase the “policy cycle” model (Colebatch, 2004.: 80). An adopted policy in a particular social or economic field is carried out by the efforts of administrative units which mobilize their human resources and funds to comply with the policy. The concept of implementation defines the action in a particular way. It highlights some things rather than others, defining specific tasks and activities to be fulfilled by particular people in order to realize the policy (Colebatch, 2004: 50).

Implementation effectiveness in European public policies, as shown above, strongly depends on the “institutional scope” of European adaptation pressure, which is not only affected by European requirements, but also by the embeddedness of the specific national traditions in public administration (Knill, 1998.).

The implementation of specific policy measures, not clearly set in a logical hierarchy, as pointed out previously, considerably differs from department to department. In Colebatch's argument, the horizontal dimension of implementation is more problematic. It includes a type of exercise in collective negotiation, recognizing that the participants have their own and often different agendas on a policy issue (Colebatch, 2004: 51). One of the crucial variables in the whole process is the level of information and human resource capacity in a particular department or agency. Those less skillful, less connected and less informed (that is, those who most need government support) generally do not compete successfully. Some policies are conducted through regional offices of government institutions (e.g. Croatian Employ-

ment Bureau, social welfare). Others (e.g. education) aim to decentralize funds for local self-governments. This is why one can get the impression that on a regional level there are more states (ministries), each having its own code of conduct, its own goals, and its own methods of implementation. (Crnković-Pozaić, 2006.)

The most problematic thing is how to conduct the monitoring and evaluation of policies. None of the departments in Croatia has a unit that would be responsible for this task. Monitoring provides the policy-relevant knowledge about the consequences of previously adopted policies, thus assisting policymakers in the *policy implementation* phase (Dunn, 1994: 19). To be able to effectively perform the monitoring of a particular policy, it is necessary to consider various policy indicators in distinctive fields, thus securing compliance with the objectives and goals of a particular policy. Evaluation, however, provides policy-relevant knowledge about discrepancies between expected and actual policy performance (Dunn, 2004: 19).

Such a type of institutional arrangements actually does not exist in the Croatian policy-making context. Admittedly, in the regular chain of responsibility, the Parliament should have an instrument at its disposal for monitoring and evaluation of the achievement of the goals set forth by the Government. Still, there is no systematic data collection, not to mention evaluation of results, because there is still no clear picture within the public administration what should be the work of a policy analyst as a distinct profession. The role of the non-governmental policy experts is an additional problem. The influence of policy experts from universities, research institutes and NGOs is fairly limited. They are rarely included even in proposing policy options and choosing among alternatives, not to mention the evaluation of performed policies. This leads to typical policy failures particularly in complex policy matters which require considerable analytical skills and competence, as well as the involvement of top scientific institutions. However, there is reasonable expectation that this problem should be put on the agenda and gradually solved during the process of Croatia's EU accession.

### *Understanding the work of policy: the role of policy sciences*

As Colebatch warns, the distinction between policy and politics is in a certain way balanced with the distinction between policy and administration. Politics is what leads to policy, and public administration is what arises from it. After making a decision about the goals to be achieved (policy), people implement these decisions (public administration). The said analytical distinction is put on a level with the task assignment among the participants: there are some people who are responsible for choosing goals (policy-mak-

ers) and there are others whose job is to achieve those goals (public administration).

Another important distinction refers to the relation between policy and management. In recent years, the expression ‘public management’ has been used in situations where the expression ‘policy’ would also be appropriate. The wide use of ‘public management’ started in the 1980s, when a reduction of public expenditure and the application problem-solving methods from the private sector on public issues became a major concern. This forced some authors to argue that the traditional distinction between policy and public administration became outdated. Thus, instead of just following instructions, public managers focus their attention to achieving results and taking responsibility for their decisions. Since management and policy share one important characteristic – adoption of a strategy (of setting of goals and making of plans for their achievement) – the two expressions are becoming more and more entwined.

One particular aspect of this book is Colebatch’s distinction between two dimensions of policy – the vertical and horizontal one. The vertical dimension is preoccupied with top-down communication of legitimate decisions. As legitimate decision-makers, politicians make decisions with which they achieve their goals and they communicate them to their subordinates for implementation. This dimension highlights the instrumental action, rational choice and strength of a legitimate government. In the horizontal dimension, politics can be seen as a gradual structuring of activities including a wide circle of participants. In other words, this dimension includes the relationship between policy and participants in various organizations, outside the chain of hierarchical authority.

The two dimensions are not opposed to each other; on the contrary, they are prerequisites for each other. In the vertical dimension, the existence of policy-makers is considered as beyond doubt: since the focus is on the authority, there have to be rulers, too. However, in the horizontal dimension, it is obvious that the hierarchical authority is not sufficient, that there are many participants, that negotiations and consensus are important and that little can be achieved by making a distinction between policy-makers and policy-takers.

This is why it is necessary to inquire about the bases that entitle someone to participate in the policy process. Colebatch found three such bases: authority, expertise, and order. In a certain sense, these three elements serve as gate-keepers, each of them giving different people a basis for participation in the policy process. Authority is the best place to start because possession of legitimate authority is the most obvious requirement for a place in the policy process. Policy is described as the work of authority. Instead of dividing the world of policy into policy-makers (who have power and make decisions) and others (who do not have it and do not make decisions), authority should

be observed as a structure that defines this world in a specific way and provides people with specific views for participation in the policy process.

Of course, policy does not only refer to decision-making based on authority, but also to problem-solving, which creates expertise – the second basis for participating in the policy process. Expertise is not generic or free-floating; it has quite a specific object of analysis. The types of expertise referring to particular areas of public policies differ from each other substantially. Expertise thus becomes an important way of organizing policy activities. The people with interest in particular policy issues develop special knowledge about these issues and they become aware of who disseminates knowledge about it – who are the people they can discuss it with. This is why expressions like ‘problem networks’ or ‘policy communities’ are used for this form of grouping within a particular problem area.<sup>9</sup>

Finally, policy is preoccupied with trying to make organized activities stable and predictable. This leads us to the role of order in the policy process. The creation of order is often seen as a problem of control: how to ensure that the policy created on the top is implemented throughout the organization and how to avoid bureaucratic rigidity and excessive lethargy. But the need for the creation of order is much more obvious when we observe the policy process in the context of different organizations. As we saw in the discussion on expertise, many policy issues extend across organizational borders. One of the consequences of this is the creation of what we could call policy collectives – relatively stable groups of people from various organizations who were brought together on the permanent basis of making policy questions, and who are concentrated on the same source of problems. They may be formally recognized (although they do not have to be), and they have a very important role in the policy process.

### *Conclusion*

Studies devoted to the assessment of the possible impact of particular European public policies on the Croatian policy context are relatively rare in the domestic social sciences. One of the very few accounts on how the Europeanization could influence the Croatian regionalization is provided by economists (Lovrinčević et al., 2005.). The authors examined the eight possible scenarios of statistical regionalization, demonstrating the financial and developmental repercussions for Croatia by analyzing various scenarios according to statistical regionalization involving two, three and four NUTS II regions.

<sup>9</sup> Only more recently has the policy network analysis started to attract the attention of Croatian political scientists (Petek, 2006).

The paper represents only a tentative first step towards the understanding of the work of policy in Croatia from the comparative politics perspective. Due to the fact that the field of public policy in Croatia is in an early phase of development, the work does not rely on extensive findings on how policy works in specific contexts. Since, in Political Science, only a couple of empirical studies are devoted to the agenda-setting, implementation or evaluation aspects of specific public policies, the scholars in the field have to meet a challenge to develop more empirically oriented research. These will try to answer questions that are similar to those indicated in one recent work devoted to the work of policy from the comparative perspective. Further work must give empirical explanation of the nature of policy work in specific contexts; more clearly discern what sort of activities practitioners see as policy work, and what sort of policy workers they recognize. More recognizable ways of matching the academic description of policy process with real policy practice has to be developed in order to diminish the pressure of difference between ‘sacred’ accounts in scholarly texts and ‘profane’ experience drawn from real policy work (Colebatch, Radin, 2006.: 225).

Particular attention has to be devoted to the topic of institutional compatibility of EU requirements and national arrangements in further research. As is shown in recent work on the implementation deficits of EU policies, “the probability of deficient implementation increases with the extent to which EU policies require changes of strongly institutionalized domestic regulatory styles and structures” (Knill, 2006.: 371). Directing academic research to institutional structures and styles of regulation seems to be a very promising way of developing comparative public policy in the Croatian context. Many scholars showed that various forms of institutionalism, both rational and historical, could serve as very good methodological bases for understanding European public policies.<sup>10</sup> A more systematic orientation of Croatian political scientists towards the above mentioned approaches can, therefore, powerfully increase the level of findings on the mutual relationship between policy-making at the EU and the national level.

<sup>10</sup> A path-breaking deployment of historic institutionalism to the European integration processes made by Paul Pierson (Pierson, 1996.), is followed by more recent work in which historical institutionalism is applied on EU budgetary policy (Ackrill, Kay, 2006.).

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