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Analysis of Theoretical Approaches to the EU Enlargement

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Abstract

This paper aims at expanding and improving ‘theoretical toolkit’ available for the studies on the EU enlargement by analyzing already existing theoretical and analytical approaches to the EU integration. More precisely, this paper presents an overview of theoretical approaches and an analytical conceptualization, which are connected with the issue of the EU integration. This is done in order to determine their relevance to the studies on the EU enlargement. This paper claims that although theories of the EU integration often do not touch upon the problem of the enlargement process directly and explicitly, nevertheless they remain valid and any analysis on the topic of the EU enlargement could contribute from their theoretical and analytical deliberations. In other words, this study wants to show that a number of theoretical and analytical approaches to the EU integration can be successfully utilized in order to understand the impact of various variables on the way the European enlargement is perceived and explained. Additionally, this analysis makes an implicit assumption that depending on how the EU enlargement is defined and eventually conceptualized, a degree of applicability of particular theoretical and analytical approaches could become greater and more evident.

Introduction

This paper presents an overview of the theoretical approaches to the European integration and attempts to evaluate their usefulness and relevance to the studies on the European enlargement. This paper makes an explicit assumption that as much as European integration needed and needs theoretical explanations, so the process of European enlargements requires theoretical conceptualizations that would go beyond the existing factual and empirical literature on this topic. A necessity of theoretical and analytical deliberations on the EU enlargement was recognized in the special issue of the *Journal of European Public Policy* edited by Frank Schimmelfennig and Ulrich Sedelmeier¹. The authors acknowledged that the study on EU enlargement ‘suffered from a theoretical neglect’ and that there is a need for more comparative-oriented and theoretically generalizable research on the topics of the EU enlargement². This paper wants to make a humble contribution to the call for more theoretically-oriented studies on the EU enlargement by analyzing already existing theoretical approaches to the EU integration from the angle of their applicability to understand and explain the processes of the European enlargement.

This paper does not aim at criticizing integration theories for not being sufficiently focused on the issue of the EU enlargement. Rather than doing this, this paper embarks on a

¹ See *Journal of European Public Policy*, vol.9, no.4 (August 2002).

² Frank Schimmelfennig and Ulrich Sedelmeier, *Theorizing EU Enlargement: Research Focus, Hypotheses and the State of Research*, *Journal of European Public Policy*, vol.9, no.4 (August 2002): 500 - 502.

much more positive exploration of the existing integration theories and other conceptual frameworks in order to determine which conceptualizations and analytical elaborations are relevant enough to be re-employed into theorization about the enlargement of the EU.

The structure of this paper is as follows: this study will start from providing a definition of the enlargement and explain the concepts that constitute essential parts of this definition. Subsequently, this paper will describe major theoretical approaches to the EU integration, beginning from federalism, functionalism, neofunctionalism, going through intergovernmentalism and its liberal modification, multilevel governance and interdependence, then entering the institutionalist studies via the analysis of international regimes and rational institutionalism, focusing afterwards on normative approaches: social constructivism and sociological institutionalism and concluding with a deliberation on the concept of Europeanization.

Understanding the Concept of the EU Enlargement

Before considering the relevance of different theoretical frameworks to the study on the EU enlargement, one needs to specify *how* the process of the EU enlargement advances thus, going beyond the simple inquiry about why the EU enlargement occurs. The *how*-question leads us to consider what exactly the notion of the EU enlargement consists of. This allows us to distinguish basic components of the enlargement concept that are set in different enlargement periods: prior- and post-enlargement situations. The importance of different theoretical frameworks will thus, depend on the extent to which they could provide greater and more plausible explanation of the constituents of the enlargement process that are present in both virtual (prior) and authentic (post) enlargement times.

The enlargement process is seen as being composed of two basic elements:

- 1) *politics* (negotiations and bargaining) that is done a) within the EU institutions, b) between and in the EU member states, c) in the candidate states and finally d) between EU member and candidate states and EU institutions,
- 2) *impact* (influence) that is brought to bear a) on the EU institutions, b) on the EU member states and c) on the candidate states,

where both, politics and influence relate to all issues that raise out of an *imaginary* (virtual) and *authentic* (real) expansion of the European polity.

The notion of *politics* is connected with a context of bargaining, which is set *within* the frameworks of the domestic politics of the candidate and member states and *within* the EU structures (usually involving the European Parliament, the European Commission or the Council of Ministers). Another element of *politics* of enlargement is a context of negotiations that is located *between* the EU member states and candidate countries and the EU institutions. Generally, *politics* is seen as being confined to a specific national and institutional settings. The issue of politics of enlargement raises the questions of why the enlargement starts, continues, ends and why it proceeds in the way it does.

The notion of *impact* is related to a process of enlargement, which generates its own independent influence on and consequences for the parties directly and indirectly involved in enlargement. *Impact* crosscuts the institutional and national boundaries. The issue of the impact of enlargement raises the questions of the extent and quality of the influence of the enlargement processes, e.g. what is the extent of the impact of the EU enlargements and what kind effects the enlargements generate on the EU institutions, the EU member states, candidate countries and other neighboring states (e.g. those countries that are unlikely to join the EU in the foreseeable future).

Such understanding of enlargement that distinguishes a ‘context’ (a condition) and a ‘process’ (an action) serves analytical purposes and does not suggest that this is how the things work in reality. In fact, the state of doing politics cannot be separated from the process of exercising influence. In this study, however, the ideally neat division between politics and impact allows us to see the enlargement process as having a Janus-face; the one which is confined to the boundaries of the EU as well as to the member and candidate states’ institutions (*politics*) and another, which crisscrosses the European, national, regional and subregional space, going far beyond the geographical borders of the EU polity (*impact*). The

concepts of *politics* and *impact* encompass the interactions between various actors (the EU, member and candidate states' representatives, national and European-wide interests groups) on different levels of the state decision-making: national, regional and sub-regional as well as on different levels of the EU decision-making: super-systemic, systemic and sub-systemic³. Thus, the way a bargaining/negotiation proceeds and the kind of influence is exercised, depend on the actors involved and the levels they interact on.

The concepts of *imaginary* and *authentic* enlargements make the research focus on specific time-periods that are associated with the process of enlargement. Thus, the *imaginary* enlargement refers to the period well before the official negotiations between the EU and the candidate states start and when a physical enlargement or the inclusion of the new members is still far from realization. Usually a starting point for the *imaginary* enlargement is when a non-member state makes its desire to join the EU known to the public. The end point of the *imaginary* enlargement is the time when the negotiations with the EU are formally concluded but the actual enlargement still does not occur.

In the context of the EU 'eastern' enlargement these dates range from the beginning of the 1990s (in this period the European Agreements were signed between the EU and the Central and Eastern European Countries and the criteria for the membership in the EU were specified, i.e. Copenhagen summit of 1993), through 1998/1999 when the official negotiations started with 10 candidate states, till December 2002 when the negotiations ended.

The notion of *authentic* enlargement specifies the period from the moment of the official invitation of the candidates to join the EU, which is usually done when the chapters under negotiations are already closed, (that, however, does not imply that bargaining/negotiations stop at that particular moment), through the time of the ratification of the accession agreements and the very date when the candidate states officially become the members of the EU. Additionally, the authentic enlargement will also refer to the period some time after the states join the EU and struggle to meet deadlines connected with the transition periods while, at the same time, the EU faces institutional and policy adjustments brought about by the already completed enlargement. This is a so called time of 'immediate consequences of enlargement'. There is no clear way to specify exactly how long the period of 'immediate consequences' of a given enlargement, will last.

In the context of the EU 'eastern' enlargement, its authentic dimension ranges from December 2002, through June 2004, and covers the period several years after the enlargement when its consequences will still be felt by the new members (because of their attempts to meet transition deadlines) and on the EU (because of forced institutional and policy reforms).

A precise definition of the enlargement is essential because it allows us to focus on these elements of particular integration theories that can be relevant to explain and understand the *politics* and *impact* of the widening of the EU in its *authentic* and *imaginary* contexts. Thus, there is an implicit assumption made that the way the concept of enlargement was defined will help us to establish even greater degree of applicability of particular theoretical and analytical approaches to the study on the EU expansion.

This study will now move to the analysis of particular theoretical approaches to the EU integration and will try to determine their possible relevance in the enlargement studies.

Federalism

Federalism emerged after disastrous events of the Second World War and was influenced by the criticism of the international politics as an arena dominated by selfish nation states. According to federalists the nation-state, in which a nation "became a divine entity"⁴,

³ Super-systemic, systemic and sub-systemic levels of analysis were incorporated into this study from the work by John Peterson, Decision-Making in the European Union: Towards a Framework of Analysis, *Journal of European Public Policy*, vol.2, no.1 (March 1995): 71. See also: John Peterson and Elizabeth Bomberg, *Decision-Making in the European Union*, Macmillan Press (London 1999): 4-30.

⁴ Altiero Spinelli and Ernesto Rossi, The Ventotene Manifesto, in John Pinder ed., *Altiero Spinelli and the British Federalists. Writings by Beveridge, Robbins and Spinelli*, Federalist Trust (London 1998): 74.

led to the emergence of the totalitarian states and eventually “unleashed the world wars”⁵. In consequence, a discredited nation-state stood behind a push for the creation of a federal entity, which would enlarge and include other states based on a popular public dissatisfaction with the national form of political organization. Thus, the enlargement process of an international (federal) polity could be seen from the federalist perspective as being driven by the lack of political arrangements alternative to the European federation, which would be able to generate more peaceful and harmonious cooperation between the nations. Federalist approach, with its focus on the ‘obsolescence’ of the nation-state, can be useful in understanding why enlargement of the European polity aimed to include other states is possible in the first place and why other nations would be interested in joining the polity. Federalism, however, sheds little light on how exactly the enlargement process proceeds, which would require to focus, among others, on the issues such as politics and impact of the EU expansion.

Functionalism

Functionalism concentrated on the notion of ‘spill-over’ (although the term itself was coined, much later, by neofunctionalists), which implied that ‘every function was left to generate others gradually’⁶. Thus, if one wanted to understand the need for enlargement of the functionally-driven polity one would need to look at the functional logic of ‘spill-over’. This, in turn, implied that making an ‘international’ or ‘world’ polity, which is understood both, as deepening (integration) and widening (enlargement), would be a natural process prompted by the “call for the satisfaction of needs”⁷ and based on the organic (‘bottom-up’) development stipulated by the economic or functional (ordinary people’s) rather than political-military (elites’) drive. In this way, functionalism provides us with the understanding of why there is almost a natural push for enlarging the existing functional entity and why enlargement can have its own autonomous force independent from the actors involved. This autonomous force for enlargement (as well as for integration) is driven by the “virtue of technical self-determination”⁸ that is set in the non-political nature of cooperation in economic, social and cultural spheres. Thus, functionalism, similarly to federalism, looks mainly at the why-question (why the enlargement occurs), providing little (if any) explanation to the how-dimension of enlargement (how the enlargement develops) and its elements such as politics and impact.

Neofunctionalism

Neofunctionalism was much more explicit about the spill over of integration going beyond the borders of the existing member-states while referring to “geographical ... dimensions of integration”⁹. The logic of a ‘geographical spill-over’ was, however, determined by the understanding that ‘spill-over’ should not be seen as an automatic process. The notion of automaticity of the integration and indirectly also automaticity of enlargement that functionalism was criticized for, was substituted with voluntarism, which recognized the importance of the actors involved, which could slow down or even reverse the process, hence the notion of ‘spill-back’ or ‘output failure’¹⁰. In other words, the process of ‘geographical spill-over’ was seen less as an autonomous force and more as independent decisions of the countries to move ahead with the enlargement of the EU or with joining it, which were, in turn, based on specific states’ preferences and interests. Thus, neofunctionalism could offer better insights on the variations in the politics of bargaining and negotiations between and inside the member and candidate states over the enlargement issues. Subsequently, in the

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ David Mitrany, A Working Peace System, in Brent F. Nelsen and Alexander C-G. Stubb ed., *The European Union. Readings on the Theory and Practice of European Integration*, Lynne Rienner (London 1998): 100.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid., 107.

⁹ Ernst Haas, *The Uniting of Europe. Political, Social and Economic Forces 1950-1957*, Stevens & Sons Limited (London 1958): 314.

¹⁰ Leon Lindberg and Stuart A. Scheingold, *Europe’s Would-Be Polity. Patterns of Change in the European Community*, Prentice-Hall (New Jersey 1970): 137.

comparative studies of enlargement, neofunctionalism could provide plausible accounts of the different numbers of enlargement processes in given time-intervals.

Intergovernmentalism and Liberal Intergovernmentalism

Intergovernmentalism went even further in neglecting any automaticity in the European integration. It highlighted the role of the governments, whose actions were driven by a particular national interest. In this way, the integration as well as enlargement were determined by the ‘logic of diversity’¹¹ where the states often preferred to refrain from further integration in order to preserve their vital national interests. Intergovernmentalism was refined two decades later by **liberal intergovernmentalism**, which problematized the origin of the national interest through the introduction of the domestic politics approach¹². In general, liberal intergovernmentalism provides a powerful framework of analysis of the EU integration, which has been also validated empirically in a notably well-written book¹³.

Juxtaposing all what was said about intergovernmentalism and liberal intergovernmentalism with the study on the EU enlargement, one can see a strong emphasis on the role of states that are viewed as gatekeepers of the enlargement processes, controlling channels of negotiations and bargaining. The way the negotiations are carried out between the member and candidate states and the kind of outcomes these negotiations lead to, depend on the specific understanding of the national interests, which determine a so called ‘win-set’¹⁴. In turn, this ‘win-set (or more simply, the national interest) is worked out via internal bargaining inside the member and non-member states, which involves government representatives and various interest groups (domestic politics approach). Thus, intergovernmentalism and more specifically liberal intergovernmentalism can be helpful in the analysis of the European enlargement in terms of their explanations of the negotiations and bargaining processes of enlargement that take place between the member and candidate states and within their borders.

Multi-level Governance (MLG)

A different view on the role of the governments takes **MLG**, which underlines that the government institutions are partners, mediators or supervisors rather than entities, which possess the authority to exercise control and issue orders in old hierarchical ways. According to MLG, there is no center with the accumulated authority and the governments are one of many actors that are involved in the process of agenda-setting and decision-making hence, the concept of *governance*¹⁵. Additionally, overlapping competences among different levels of governance and a lack of central authority lead to the establishment of multilayered (multilevel) polity. Thus, MLG, while underlining the limits on the state executive control, at the same time, acknowledges the importance of non-state actors, including domestic and transnational interest groups and the European institutions (particularly the European Commission) in shaping policies in the European Union¹⁶. State and non-state actors are viewed as interacting with one another on different levels of governance, i.e. European,

¹¹ Stanley Hoffmann, *Obstinate or Obsolete? France, European Integration, and the Fate of the Nation State*, in Stanley Hoffmann, *The European Sisyphus. Essays on Europe, 1964-1994*, Westview Press (Oxford 1995):84.

¹² Andrew Moravcsik, *Preferences and Power in the European Community: A Liberal Intergovernmentalist Approach*, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, vol.3, no.4 (December 1993): 473-524. Moravcsik’s theory of liberal intergovernmentalism that introduced domestic politics theorizing relied heavily on the two-level analysis of interactions between the domestic interest actors and the national representatives conducting international negotiations, which was presented by Robert Putnam, *Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: the Logic of Two-Level Games*, *International Organization*, vol.42, no.3, (Summer 1988): 427-460.

¹³ See Andrew Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht*, Cornell University Press, (Ithaca 1998).

¹⁴ The concept of ‘win-set’ is taken from Putnam (Summer 1988). ‘Win-set’ was to account for a higher/lower probability of concluding and later on ratifying an international agreement. More precisely, Putnam defined ‘win-set’ as “the set of all possible... (international) agreements that would win, that is, gain the necessary majority among the (domestic) constituents (...)”. *Ibid.*, 437.

¹⁵ Gary Marks, Liesbet Hooghe and Kermit Blank, *European Integration from the 1980s: State-Centric v. Multi-Level Governance*, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, vol.34, no.3 (September 1996): 359.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 350- 366.

national, regional, subregional, local. Generally, MLG approach can contribute to the study of enlargement by providing greater insights on importance of the non-state actors in the *politics* of enlargement thus, on their role and influence in different bargaining and negotiation settings. The enlargement studies could also benefit from incorporating into their framework a concept of multi-level politics. Thus, on one hand the enlargement process, analyzed from the MLG perspective, could be seen as being driven less by central governments and more by transgovernmental and regional state-representatives as well as by various non-state actors. On the other hand, the enlargement process could be understood less as horizontal (national-level) and more as vertical (multilevel) networking (rather than state bargaining) that affects various channels of communication between the actors involved on different levels of their interactions.

In short, MLG would depict the whole process of enlargement as multifaceted, multi-dimensional and multi-actor and thus, much more complex and sophisticated in its form than it is usually thought of.

Interdependence

A response to the failed attempts to proceed with deeper integration in the 1970s and the 1980s and to the continuing presence and even dominance over the integration processes of the nation-states, was the emergence of theorizing about **interdependence**. Interdependence was understood as a state of economic interactions that could significantly impact political considerations but which, at the same time, might not necessarily lead to a deeper integration and a wider union¹⁷. Thus, interdependence distanced itself from the predictions and indications about the end-goals of the European integration while underlining a necessity of closer coordination of economic policies in order to address the issues of mutual sensitivity, openness and vulnerability¹⁸. In other words, interdependency theorists substituted the studies on integration (thus also on enlargement) with the concern about a proper management, control and supervision of the economic forces within the framework of the European Union. Thus, one can conclude that in the context of the enlargement analysis, interdependence approach would be less preoccupied with why or how the enlargement proceeds and more with what are the implication of the enlargement for the policy coordination and efficiency of the EU system. In consequence, interdependence can be seen as the first approach that can shed more light on the issue of the *impact* of the enlargement on the EU member states and the EU institutions rather than on enlargement *politics*. With the advent of the ‘impact’ considerations, the concepts of *authentic* and *imaginary* enlargements finally come into the picture. Although, interdependence does not address the issue of enlargement directly (hence could not distinguish between different types of enlargements), one may plausible claim that the authentic enlargement when the accession of the new member states is immanent and is about to occur or is happening now or has already taken place and one faces with its ‘immediate consequences’ will be of greater interest for interdependence analysts. This is because the ‘authentic’ enlargement seems to bring more substantial and tangible changes for the current member states and particularly for the EU than the ‘imaginary’ enlargement forcing the latter to introduce specific (often very controversial) measures addressing the issues of policy coordination and efficiency of the system.

International Regimes

Another important theory of integration is **international regime**, which can also find its applicability to theorizing the EU enlargement. A standard definition of the international regimes is a set of “principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which actor expectations converge in a given issue-area”¹⁹. In other words, international regime

¹⁷ See Carole Webb, *Theoretical Perspectives and Problems*, in Hellen Wallace, William Wallace and Carol Webb, *Policy-Making in the European Community*, Second Edition, Wile (Chichester 1983): 32.

¹⁸ Dimitris N. Chrysochoou, *Theorizing European Integration*, SAGE Publications (London 2001): 78-80.

¹⁹ Stephen D. Krasner, *Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables*, *International Organization*, vol.36, no.2 (Spring 1982): 185.

approach emphasizes the importance of more or less formal institutions that enable and constrain certain behavior and strategies of the actors involved. International regime theorists see the European Union as a complex multi-regime structure which encompasses a multiplicity of issue-specific international regimes (e.g. European Monetary System Common Agriculture Policy, Common Fisheries Policy or Common Transportation Policy), which, in turn, have their own principles, norms, rules and established decision-making procedures. International regime approach can serve as an important linchpin linking the studies on the European enlargement with a more institutionally-oriented analyses that concentrate on examining institutional structures of a given entity. Thus, the study of enlargement can benefit from international regime theorizing by focusing on the *impact* of structure (instead of agency) and their composite elements: principles, norms and rules. Due to their existence and internationalization by the agents, these rules and norms lead to the establishment of certain patterns of behavior, which is, in consequence, characterized by a high degree of routinization. In other words, certain outcomes of the enlargement politics, decisions connected with this process as well as the enlargement's impact could be viewed as being determined by the agents' behavior and thinking that is shaped, guided and even routinized by the institutions composed of general principles and explicit norms and rules. More specifically, for example, the advocates of the international regime approach would note that a decision to start negotiations with some of the Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) was actually determined by certain formal institutional criteria (principles and norms) set during the Copenhagen summit of 1993.

Institutionalisms

Although institutionalist studies share some commonalities with international regimes (particularly, the 'old-institutionalism', which was concentrated on administrative, legal and political structures and on written and formal institutional rules and regulations) they present, however, an important, new opening for the European studies, which is connected with the introduction of *three new-institutionalisms*: rational-choice, historical and sociological institutionalisms. Here, we will briefly address only rationalist institutionalism (rational-choice and historical institutionalisms combined), leaving sociological institutionalism for further elaboration in the later section that links transactionalism, social constructivism and sociological institutionalism with one another.

Rationalist Institutionalism

Rationalist institutionalism looks at the institutions from the 'calculus' perspective, which underlines their 'maximization' functions²⁰. Thus, the actors, which are viewed as 'maximizers' and 'satisficers'²¹ who behave according to the logic of consequentiality²², seek to enhance their goals and objectives, based on certain strategic calculations. As a consequence, they treat the institutions instrumentally, as a way to enhance benefits and minimize costs connected with the membership in the organization. Efficiency, which relates to the reduction of transaction costs of concluding and implementing deals, to the dissemination of information about other actors' behavior and to the establishment of the enforcement mechanisms for agreements and penalties for defection, is the key factor that determines importance and relevance of the institutions for the actors involved. In other words, effectiveness of the institutions determines their attractiveness for the members to stay in and for the candidates to join. Therefore, rationalist institutionalism can be helpful in producing specific hypotheses based on 'cost/benefit' calculations about why the countries would want to gain membership in the EU and, at the same time, why the current member

²⁰ Peter A. Hall and Rosemary C.R. Taylor, Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms, *Political Studies*, vol. XLIV (1996): 939.

²¹ A difference between a 'satisficer' and a 'maximizer' is that the former in contrast to the latter will not choose the best interest-enhancing option but rather the first best option, which is currently available.

²² James March and Johan P. Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions. the Organizational Basis of Politics*, Free Press, (New York: 1989):160.

states would want to see these countries joining the union²³. Rationalist institutionalism could also provide certain explanations about the way the *politics* of enlargement develops while accounting for the strategies and interests of the states and for the mediating effects of the institutions.

Transactionalism and Normative Studies (Social Constructivism and Sociological Institutionalism)

Transactionalism underlines the importance of transactions and social communication among nations, which, if sustained for a longer time, create a fertile ground for the emergence of a true “sense of community”²⁴. Intensive interactions between people through different economic, social, cultural and political undertakings would bring about social learning processes that could lead, in turn, to the development of “common identities, shared values and belief systems (and) common perception of ... destiny”²⁵. Such a community would be authentic, genuine and organic. The importance of transactionalism thinking for the enlargement analysis should not be underestimated. The elements of socio-psychological dimension that transactionalists want us to focus on, are also significant in the process of the European enlargement and often determine decisions about why to seek the membership or why to accept new members into the European ‘community’. Today, the EU enlargement can be understood in transactionalists’ socio-psychological terms as a drive to bring together like-minded states and people, who increasingly share with one another a sense of community based on commonly recognized values, norms and joint ‘destiny’, where certain loyalties and identities are being ‘pooled’ across regional, national and European levels.

To a certain extent, transactionalist research was taken up by the scholars of normative studies. A notion of normative studies include **social constructivism** and **sociological institutionalism** writings by the theorists, who further developed the analyses on the impact of norms and socialization processes in the enlarging European Union²⁶. Thus, a new generation of normative literature on the European integration²⁷ and specifically on the European enlargement²⁸ has mushroomed in the recent years. In their ‘cultural approach’ both, social constructivism and sociological institutionalism underline the importance of certain symbols, values, norms, moral beliefs and convictions that can determine not only actors’ behavior but also their preferences and even identities. Thus, the actors are culturally-bound and are seen as norm-followers because they are gradually socialized to act according to the logic of appropriateness (and they behave according to what is socially appropriate)²⁹. The institutions are seen not just as formal rules, procedures or norms but also symbols, values, code of conducts, which constitute a specific organizational culture within an institution³⁰. There is a high degree of interactions and a mutual constitutiveness of relations between institutions and individual action³¹. The normative/cultural approach, by taking into

²³ For a more elaborated work on the specific rationalist hypotheses in the context of the EU enlargement see Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (August 2002): 510-513.

²⁴ Karl W. Deutsch, *et al*, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area*, Princeton University Press (New Jersey 1957): 5.

²⁵ Chrysochoou (2001): 50.

²⁶ For example, Frank Schimmelfennig, *International Socialization in the New Europe: Rational Action in an Institutional Environment*, *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 6, no.1 (2000): 109- 139. For the overview of constructivist studies on the EU see Jeffrey T. Checkel and Andrew Moravcsik, *A Constructivist Research Program in EU Studies? European Union Politics*, vol.2, no.2 (2001): 219-249.

²⁷ Among others, see a compilation of constructivist works on the European integration by Thomas Christiansen, Knud Erik Jørgensen and Antje Wiener that were first published in Special Issue on the Social Construction of Europe, *Journal of European Public Policy*, vol.6 (1999): 527 – 720 and later edited in a book *The Social Construction of Europe* in 2001.

²⁸ Among others: Frank Schimmelfennig, *The Community Trap: Liberal Norms, Rhetorical Action, and the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union*, *International Organization*, vol.55, no.1 (Winter 2001): 47-72 and Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (August 2002): 500 – 528.

²⁹ March and Olsen (1989):160.

³⁰ Hall and Taylor (1996): 947-948.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 948.

consideration the importance of norms, generates important insights for the analysis of the EU enlargement while at the same time addressing the weakness of rational/calculus approach. Rational accounts of the enlargement based on the cost/benefit calculations could not produce convincing explanations of why richer member states, knowing that they would bear the main costs of the enlargement, would want poorer nations to join the club. Social constructivism and sociological institutionalism allow us to go beyond rational understanding of the enlargement processes and focus on the impact of democratic norms and values, which the EU and its member-states adhere to. The research on influence of norms and institutions highlights that the EU opens its doors for the states, even poor ones, which can, however, show that they respect and follow the same values and normative standards that are recognized by the EU members³². Additionally, normative approaches allow us to understand the enlargement process as a way of transmitting certain norms of ‘appropriate behavior’ from the center (the EU) to its peripheries (the candidate and other non-member states). This *impact* of certain norms and practices that demonstrate to other state an appropriate way of doing things can be already generated in the period of an ‘*imaginary*’ enlargement and strengthened even further during the ‘*authentic*’ expansion.

Europeanization and its Applicability to the Enlargement Studies

The notion of **Europeanization**, based on the neoinstitutionalist concepts, provides important insight about the *impact* of different EU processes, including the issue of enlargement. The concept of Europeanization is defined as a process of “construction, diffusion (within and beyond the geographical borders of the EU) and institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures (...), styles, ways of doing things (...)”³³, which constitute characteristic features of the EU policy-making³⁴. In a very definition of Europeanization, which has a strong institutionalist perspective, there are important implications for the study of the EU enlargement. This is because ‘construction, diffusion and institutionalization’ of the EU formal (legal) and informal (normative) frameworks that go beyond the EU borders is carried out by certain ‘enlargement mechanisms’. These mechanisms become particularly important already when an ‘*imaginary*’ enlargement comes into play. The states that express their desire to join the EU, even before opening official negotiations, are asked to fulfill basic membership criteria (e.g. Copenhagen criteria) and thus, willingly or not start incorporating into their legal systems the EU *acquis*, which is one of the enlargement mechanisms. Other possible enlargement mechanisms include the EU financial assistance, the EU ‘whistle-blowing’ or monitoring functions or the EU gate-keeping role to start accession negotiations³⁵, all of which are viewed as *enabling* the EU institutions to exercise significant influence on the accession countries as well as on the states that have not yet started negotiations.

Europeanization is an important notion for the enlargement studies not only because it makes headways in the European studies nowadays. Europeanization deliberately shifts the lenses of the neo-institutionalist approaches towards the issue of the impact of the European integration processes, whose influence is now seen as going beyond the borders of the current member-states and accession states and affecting even countries that are unlikely to join the EU in the foreseeable future (e.g. Ukraine, Moldova, Russia or Belarus). The Europeanization concept helps to understand the impact of ‘*authentic*’ and more importantly of ‘*imaginary*’ enlargements on the countries, which started official negotiations with the EU and on the states that strive to obtain a candidate status (e.g. Ukraine, Moldova) and even on those, which did not explicitly state their desire to seek membership (e.g. Belarus or Russia).

³² For further deliberation on constructivist hypotheses in the context of the EU enlargement see Schimmelfennig (Winter 2001) and Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (August 2002): 513 – 515.

³³ Radaelli quoted by Heather Grabbe, *Europeanisation Goes East: Power and Uncertainty in the EU Accession Process*, ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshop, Turin, 22-27 March 2002: 7.

³⁴ Johan P. Olsen, *The Many Faces of Europeanization*, ARENA Working Papers WP 01/2002.

³⁵ Grabbe (2002): 9 and 11.

Conclusion

This study presented an overview of theoretical approaches, which are connected with the literature on the EU integration. The purpose of making such an outline was, firstly, to find out whether there were some useful concepts and theoretical considerations, which could be applicable to the studies on the EU enlargement. And secondly, this overview wanted to show that, indeed, one cannot disregard the earlier writings on the EU integration by making an outright claim about their irrelevance to the analysis of the EU enlargement. On the contrary. This paper showed that most of the considered approaches could shed more understanding and explanation into the process of the EU enlargement. The analyzed theoretical approaches and analytical concepts (e.g. Europeanization) often ask similar, if not the same, questions in the context of the enlargement but the answers to these questions and thus, also independent variables, vary significantly from one approach to another. This can be perceived as the main contribution that all these theoretical approaches make to the studies of the EU enlargement.

For a more structured overview of the analyzed theoretical and analytical approaches see the tables I, II, III placed under bibliography.

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Overview of major theoretical/analytical approaches to the EU integration in the context of their relevance to the study on the EU enlargement

PART I

	Federalism	Functionalism	Neofunctionalism	Intergovernmentalism	Liberal Intergovernmentalism	Multilevel governance
Focus Politics/Impact	Politics but not problematized further.	Politics	Politics	Politics but not problematized further.	Politics	Politics
Main 'Players' Agents/Structure	Agents: 'populations' and supranational -federal entities	Agents: states and interest groups	Agents: states and interest groups	Agents: governments	Agents: government representatives and interest groups	Agents: national, local, regional governmental actors, domestic and transnational interest groups, supranational actors
Possible Research Questions about Enlargement	Why does the enlargement happen? Why do states want to join a European polity?	Why can the enlargement occur ?	Why can the enlargement happen at all? Why are there differences in the enlargement processes?	Why is the enlargement possible? Why can there be no enlargement?	Why is the enlargement possible? Why can there be no enlargement? How do the enlargement negotiations proceed? What are the outcomes of the enlargement negotiations? What are the outcomes of the inside-the-state bargaining?	How does the process of enlargement look like? What are the characteristics of the process of enlargement? How are the non-state actors involved in the enlargement process? How is this involvement possible?
Variables Determining Enlargement (Variables Used to Answer the Research Questions)	Obsolescence of states Strength of federal institutions	Non-politicized nature of sectoral integration Functional 'spill-over'	Non-politicized nature of sectoral integration Geographical 'spill-over'	'Obstinacy' of the nation-states and governments 'Logic of diversity'	Interests and preferences of the national governments, which seen as gatekeepers Domestic politics bargaining National 'win-set'	Multilevel politics Governance Networking

Overview of major theoretical/analytical approaches to the EU integration in the context of their relevance to the study on the EU enlargement
PART II

	Interdependence	International Regimes	Rationalist Inst.
Focus Politics/Impact	Impact	Politics	Politics
Main 'Players' Agents/Structure	Agents: governmental and transnational actors	Structure: more or less formal institutions in the form of rules, procedures, decision-making procedures	Agents and Structure
Possible Research Questions about Enlargement	What are the implications of the enlargement for the coordination and management efficiency of the EU system?	What are the outcomes of enlargement politics (bargaining and negotiations), which is mediated by the formal structures of domestic institutions of member and candidate states ? What is the impact of formal EU institutional structures on the actors involved in the process of EU enlargement?	Why is enlargement possible? Why are the states interested in joining the EU? What is the impact of actors on institutions and institutions on actors in the context of the EU enlargement?
Variables Determining Enlargement (Variables Used to Answer the Research Questions)	Economic vulnerability Openness of the system Thickness of economic interactions	Existence and functioning of certain principles, norms, formal rules and decision-making procedures	Efficiency achieved via a reduction of transaction costs Cost/benefit calculations of actors Formal rules and procedures
Providing Explanation to the Types of Enlargement Authentic/Imaginary	Authentic over Imaginary	Not problematized	Not problematized

Overview of major theoretical/analytical approaches to the EU integration in the context of their relevance to the study on the EU enlargement
PART III

	Transactionalism	Normative Approaches: Sociological Institutionalism and Social Constructivism	Europeanization: institutionalist perspective
Focus Politics/Impact	Not problematized	Impact	Impact
Main ‘Players’ Agents/Structure	Structure: transactions and communication	Structure: institutions, social process Agents: social groups	Structure: institutions
Possible Research Questions about Enlargement	Why do enlargements occur?	Why does the EU enlarge and why does it enlarge to poorer states? How does the EU enlargement affect the national identities?	What is the impact of the EU enlargement on the EU member-states? What is the impact of the EU enlargement on accession and non-accession countries? How is the impact of the EU on member, candidate and non-candidate states exercised?
Variables Determining Enlargement (Variables Used to Answer the Research Questions)	Thickness of transactions and communication, which stipulates social learning and eventually lead to the emergence of ‘common identity’ and a feeling of ‘common destiny’.	Norms and values Institutional culture Socialization	Mechanisms of Europeanization: EU <i>acquis</i> , EU financial assistance, EU as a gatekeeper
Providing Explanation to the Types of Enlargement Authentic/Imaginary	Not problematized	Authentic and Imaginary	Imaginary and Authentic