

Governance and Public Policy Instruments

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Title:

"The EU's approach to democracy and the rule of law "

Abstract

This project examines the EU's approach to the rule of law in the Enlargement and Neighborhood Policy. Each European public policy has its own instruments and mechanisms of compliance. They include norms, incentives, rhetoric, rules, tools, finances, sanctions and so on (Papadimitriou and Phinnemore 2004; Hill and Knill 2006; Ravinet 2011). They can be differentiated among many lines: there are "strong" and "weak" instruments; instruments that "respect sovereignty" and "intrusive instruments"; binding and non-binding rules). Instruments of public policy and mechanisms of compliance matter: it is a combination of such mechanisms – rather than any single policy tool – that enables the Union to be effective in reshaping domestic public policies and realities. They are an indicator of the ability of the EU to promote change, to increase compliance and to prevent instances of under compliance at the domestic level. Today these instruments deserve more political and scholarly attention. The current state of the EU shows that policy-makers and high-level officials are confronted with major dilemmas: How to find the middle way between effective and legitimate instruments of compliance? How to maximize impact and to minimize inconsistency? How to conciliate diversity and flexibility beyond the risks of collapse of the Union? This project examines how, when and under which conditions EU institutions reform/replace instruments of public policy and mechanisms of compliance.