

*The Europeanization of National Policies and Politics of Immigration: Between Autonomy and the European Union*, edited by T. Faist and A. Ette (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, ISBN 9781403987136); xv + 273pp., £58 hb.

EU migration and asylum policy is of very recent provenance. This timely and topical edited volume sketches recent developments in this domain and charts the influence EU policy, norms and concepts have played in national policy-making processes. Presenting evidence from eight somewhat eclectically chosen European countries, not all of which are EU Member States or have accepted EU policy in this domain, the picture that emerges is one of uneven top-down Europeanization, where national debates, actors and idiosyncrasies still play important contributory roles. There are also significant differences between active policy setters, such as the German government, 'cherry-pickers', such as the British, and national arenas where EU interference is perceived as an unwelcome dilution of national policy as in Sweden. Unsurprisingly, the EU's impact is particularly pronounced in countries with nascent and skeletal immigration control regimes, notably in central and southern Europe. It is no exaggeration to state that for countries like Greece or Poland the EU role in shaping migration policy has been pivotal. But despite the powerful role European rhetoric, directives and concepts may play, national particularities such as the ambitious Spanish legalization programmes still proliferate, demonstrating that Europe is ultimately a very powerful, albeit not the only, factor in the design of national migration policy.

The quality of the individual national case studies is mixed, perhaps inevitably so. The strongest contributions draw on fresh interview data and primary documents, some of the weaker ones are too sketchy, somewhat confusingly presented and at times generalize too broadly. Additional contributions of compelling quality map the EU's extraterritorial influence in prodding and cajoling neighbouring countries in north Africa and eastern Europe into undertaking migration management functions and chronicle the ascending role of Commission policy entrepreneurship, especially since the 1999 Tampere European Council meeting. The book limits itself self-consciously to exploring top-down Europeanization, thus excluding an analysis of the role of national governments in shaping policy in the Council of Ministers. Perhaps one of the most striking limitations is an overly mechanical application of concepts from the Europeanization literature, which does not spawn a modification or much needed amelioration of categories such as 'goodness of fit' or Radaelli's typology. Several authors note the limitations of these descriptive categories. Given that they were developed with very different policy domains in mind, these shortcomings are to be expected. Exploring the role of ideas in agenda-setting may well have inspired a more fruitful analytical framework. Despite this limitation, this book presents an important contribution to the rapidly expanding body of literature on European migration, while being among the first to consider seriously the top-down influence of the European Union.

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