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University of Oslo



# The EU as a segmented political order and the new organizational forms in EU governance

EU3D WP2 Workshop

8 December 2020 | Online

Hosted by Department of Political Science, Comenius University

The EU is neither a state nor an international organization. It is a political system that somehow falls in-between these two conceptual containers and is hence in need of a proper designation *qua* polity. Our point of departure is that the EU that emerged from the crises of the last decade has undergone a mutation; hence, bears clear resemblance to what we would depict as a *segmented political order*. All political systems can contain segments; democratic states however have strong built-in de-segmenting arrangements (notably parliaments and various arrangements to ensure throughput legitimacy); hence, can rein in segments. In contrast, a segmented political order has segments as constitutive features of the political system. Such an order is marked by four core elements. First, there are stable constellations of governmental and non-governmental actors sharing a “cognitive bias” towards a specific understanding of policy problems and solutions, i.e. actors sharing a ‘segmental logic’. Second, this logic is ‘locked in’ by a distinct policy style marked by a limited and biased policy repertoire and a particular institutional configuration of function and territory. Third, this form of segmented political order is marked by significant constraints on own resources and has limited ability to develop own capacities; hence, is internally and externally vulnerable. Fourth, policy- and decision-making is marked by inadequate parliamentary oversight. A segmented political order is thus a lopsided political order in that the role of parliaments as the quintessential de-segmenting mechanisms is characteristically weak.

These features suggest that when confronted with new challenges, the process and pattern of intervention will leave a distinct mark. Intervention will often manifest itself in new organizational forms that will in turn be carriers and platforms of segmental logics. Given resource scarcity and capability constraints, these can be conceptualized as *interstitial*

*organizations* tapping into resources from multiple institutional domains and recombining these with the purpose of delivering policy solutions beyond the reach of established governance bodies and established frameworks of norms and procedures. Such arrangements will be prone to democratic deficits from the type of closure that is an inherent feature of policy-making within segmented political orders.

It follows from the above that whereas segmented political orders as all political orders learn, processes and patterns of learning are prone to bias and may exhibit pathological features (such notions as competency traps and failing forward may be relevant depictions).

This workshop will focus on organizational dynamics, broadly speaking. We are interested in contributions exploring organizational dynamics of how segments are formed and the mechanisms and processes of how they operate; what new organizational forms are emerging and how they operate in the EU's system of governance; and the democratic implications that this type of order will engender for Europe.

**Conveners:** Jozef Bátora, John E. Fossum and Jarle Trondal

## Programme

09.00 – 09.40 Jozef Bátora, John. E. Fossum, Jarle Trondal: **On segmented political orders**

09.40 – 10.20 Sergio Fabbrini: **De-segmentation through Decoupling and Reforming the EU**

10.20 – 11.00 Adrienne Héritier: **The emergence and operation of interstitial organizations: Governing finance in Europe**

11.00 – 11.20 *Break*

11.20 – 12.00 Jonathan Zeitlin: **The Single Supervisory Mechanism in Action: Experimentalist Practices beneath a Hierarchical Veneer?**

12.00 – 12.40 John Erik Fossum: **The European Council – an EU Interstitial Balancer?**

12.40 – 13.20 Sabine Saurugger: **Segmentation and de-segmentation: Hard- and soft-law instruments**

13.20 – 14.20 *Break*

14.20 – 15.00 Chiara Loschi: **Experimental Border Management in the Context of EU Crisis Response in Libya and Ukraine**

15.00 – 15.40 Viliam Ostatnik: **Ukraine Crisis and Organizational Learning in the EU's Foreign Policy Apparatus**

15.40 – 16.20 Jozef Bátora: **States, Interstitial Organizations and the Prospects of Adaptation of Liberal International Institutions**

This event is organised in the framework of **EU3D**, a 4-year research project looking at the future of European integration, in particular differentiated integration. EU3D will specify the conditions under which differentiation is politically acceptable, institutionally sustainable, and democratically legitimate; and provide important knowledge on the conditions under which EU reforms may fail or succeed.

[www.eu3d.uio.no](http://www.eu3d.uio.no)



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