

The Influence of EU Agencies

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Propositions
belonging to the PhD dissertation

The Influence of EU Agencies
Real but guided influence in the policy-making process

by Jinhee Kim

1. EU agencies do influence the development of policies in the EU. Although expert advice of EU agencies does not have binding effects, it is reflected in or even directly copied into policy proposals drafted by the European Commission.
2. Crucial conditions for influence are secured access to the Commission – as opposed to voluntary consultation by the Commission – as well as the ability to offer high-quality expert advice while using stylistic elements (e.g., the format and writing style) that enable a relatively quick review of the content of that advice.
3. The European Commission fully exercises its formal power to decide on the content of proposals. Only under willing guidance by the Commission, do EU agencies increase influence.
4. Lack of human and financial resources is a common challenge for EU agencies, but they overcome this obstacle by effectively mobilising in-house experts from various units as well as by actively networking with external experts.
5. The location of EU agencies sometimes causes difficulties in recruiting and retaining specialised experts.
6. Investigating influence by policy actors is an extremely challenging task. Methodological innovation in systematically tracing and analysing hard evidence of influence enhances the reliability and validity of research.
7. Informal interactions between policy-makers and other policy actors are in large part not documented. Scholars should therefore develop appropriate proxies to assess the informal aspect of influence in the policy-making process.
8. The antonym of democracy is not technocracy. European governance inevitably involves technocratic characteristics, but this should not be interpreted as a deficit of democracy or legitimacy.
9. Certain types of expert advice from EU agencies to the Commission are not publicly accessible. To increase transparency of the EU, effective ways to archive and ensure access to documents should be discussed.
10. Combining motherhood and a PhD is definitely demanding but incredibly satisfying. Courage, family, friends, supportive supervisors, and lots of coffee and wine make it possible.