

Simon Stross

**Ph.D. Thesis One goal and many paths, The promotion of Policy Coherence for
Development in EU policy formulation**

Review

On the topic and research area

While the issue of coherence and inter-institutional communication in the EU is studied intensively, Simon Stross has chosen a rather under-researched perspective of the problem, focusing on the process elements of building-up a coherence between tasks of the EU development policy and other EU activities. Therefore, in my opinion, the choice of topic and research area are promising and with potential to create a contribution to current academic debate

Detailed report and evaluation

Historical institutionalism fits properly to the problem chosen. The author maps in detail formal and informal procedural tools, their practical application and evaluation that several EU institutions (E.Com., European Council, Council of the EU, EP, EEAS) have at their disposal. In this regard, more attention given also to „negative“ tools, such as attaching the policy outcome before the EU Court, could provide even more balanced picture of the toolbox available to individual institutions, reflecting the institutional elements contra-balancing the pro-coherence tools.

Case studies are well chosen. They fit author's research design and provide sufficiently heterogeneous, albeit still reasonably comparable, set of examples. Simon looks at fisheries, environment and security policy as examples of „exclusive“, „shared“ and „special“ policies. In this regard, it could be mentioned that, technically, fisheries policy is not an „exclusive“ EU policy according to the Lisbon Treaty but divided between exclusive and shared competencies. Here, I cannot fully

agree with argument used at page 99. However, for the purposes of the analysis, the EU role in the fisheries policy is sufficiently dominant – in particular regarding the external treaties – to provide an example of *de facto* exclusive EU policy.

Further, the „security policy“ covers rather broad sphere of the EU’s activities. However, the heterogeneity of the CFSP seem to tackled properly by the author when he focuses on two different „mini“ cases studies (Mali, Niger) within the CSFP .

Thesis reflects the current academic debate and relevant literature in sufficiently detailed while critical manner.

The empirical segment of the thesis is robust and impressive.

Conclusions of the thesis are properly connected both with the theoretical framework and the empirical data. In this regards, it would be interesting to know also author’s opinion how his conclusions fit with other processes of building-up of policy coherence than that researched in this Ph.D. thesis. For instance, how to tackle the element of “securitization“ of EU policies, including the development policy. Therefore, both “export“ and „import“ of priorities between the security and development policies can be expected . The same applies regarding environmental policy, by virtue of article 11 TFEU (ex-art. 6 TEC). Simon Stross mentions this fact – regarding security policy – at page 187. Could he more elaborate on how does methodology used and conclusions of the thesis tackle with this process?

Summarizing, Simon wrote very strong PhD. thesis where he maps, with sufficiently robust theoretical and empirical approach, under-research element of the European integration. In my opinion, his thesis fully complies with requirement for PhD. thesis. I recommend to grade as “excellent”

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