

EUROPE AND THE NATION STATE

# European Integration and Consensus Politics in the Low Countries

Edited by  
Hans Vollaard, Jan Beyers and  
Patrick Dumont

ROUTLEDGE



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# European Integration and Consensus Politics in the Low Countries

The Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg are well-known cases of consensus politics. Decision-making in the Low Countries has been characterized by broad involvement, power sharing and making compromises. These countries were also founding member states of the European Union (EU) and its predecessors. However, the relationship between European integration and the tradition of domestic consensus politics remains unclear.

In order to explore this relationship this book offers in-depth studies of a wide variety of political actors such as governments, parliaments, political parties, courts, ministries and interest groups as well as key policy issues such as the ratification of EU treaties and migration policy. The authors focus not only on Europeanization, but also analyse whether European integration may gradually undermine the fundamental characteristics of consensus politics in the Low Countries. Drawing on consociationalism and Europeanization research, this volume provides a comprehensive overview of Europeanization in these three EU member states as well as a better understanding of the varieties of consensus politics across and within these countries.

This book will be of interest to students and scholars of European studies, European integration, European law, political science, European political economy and comparative politics.

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*Centre for Federal Studies, University of Kent*

and

Lee Miles

*Europe and the World Centre, University of Liverpool*

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# Acknowledgements

This book has a long history of development. It started from the observation that a comprehensive overview of Europeanization in the Low Countries was still missing in the international political science literature. In 2006, Jan Beyers and Peter Bursens published a well-sold book – written in Dutch – on the Europeanization of Belgium. Jan Beyers and his then colleague at Leiden University, Hans Vollaard, believed that the European experience of Belgium, as well as of that of the Netherlands and Luxembourg, would be of significant interest to an international audience. In the winter of 2008, Patrick Dumont gave a presentation on Luxembourg in a series of lectures on European integration and consensus politics in the Low Countries organized by Hans Vollaard at Leiden University. It provided the intellectual starting point for exploring how European integration and consensus politics are related in three classical cases of consensus democracy. Small brainstorming sessions followed in Leiden and Antwerp, in which Peter Bursens, Mendeltje van Keulen and Joop van Holsteyn were also involved.

The idea emerged to present a comprehensive overview of the Europeanization of the Low Countries from the angle of consensus politics, based on sound political science, that would be accessible for academics as well as for students and political practitioners. We came to the conclusion that the edited volume was the most suitable format to use, even though edited volumes ‘do not count’ in how our universities assess academic output. We are also well aware that many multi-authored volumes suffer from having too many authors and too many chapters, and are without coherence or consistency. We therefore took a few years to make this well-integrated volume, in which each individual chapter fits well into the overall structure. We are really grateful to Heidi Bagtazo, senior editor at Routledge, as well as series editors Michael Burgess and Lee Miles for offering us the opportunity to develop the project along these lines and to publish it in the most suitable series, *Europe and the Nation State*.

Fortunately, the Low Countries harbour a sizeable, unique and thriving political science community. Additionally, over the past years, some excellent research has been conducted on various aspects of Europeanization covering multiple branches of government, politics and policies. Instead of relying only on our own (overall restricted) expertise, we decided to mobilize some of the best political scientists with research experience in this field. We were privileged

to have been able to work with a highly diverse and mixed set of excellent scholars, 24 in total! We are aware of the sometimes painstaking and demanding requirements we have placed on all the authors. The challenge for the contributors was immense, as we asked them to analyse two big phenomena – European integration and consensus politics – in three countries. We are really thankful to all the contributors for the gracefully cooperative attitude we experienced during the three years that we intensively worked on this project.

Two workshops we organized were very helpful in getting the writing for this project started. The first workshop was organized at the Montesquieu Institute in The Hague (January 13–14, 2011). We express our gratitude to the Montesquieu Institute and its Director, Arco Timmermans, for their organizational and financial support. The Netherlands Institute for Government (NIG) facilitated the meeting by granting us a generous subsidy. In addition, we owe a considerable debt to Rudy Andeweg and Ruud Koole for the early, helpful and original feedback they provided us with during this first workshop. In late 2011, the Department of Political Science of the University of Luxemburg welcomed us for a second workshop organized by Patrick Dumont. This meeting was funded by the European Governance Research Programme of the University of Luxembourg. One of the most memorable events during that workshop was the cocktails we had at the Dutch Ambassador to Luxembourg's residence and our exchanges with Drs Ed W.V.M. Hoecks, then Dutch Ambassador to Luxembourg (now Dutch Ambassador to the Czech Republic), M. Frits Kemperman, Counsellor at the Dutch Embassy in Luxembourg and M. Arnaud Dusaucy, Counsellor at the Belgian Embassy in Luxembourg.

During the past two years, we were able to present various parts of the project at national and international conferences. Of these, the annual Dutch–Flemish political science conference 'Politicologenetmaal' in Leuven (May 2010), the bi-annual conference of the European Union Studies Association in Boston (March 2011) and the annual work conference of the NIG in Rotterdam (December 2011), were the most important meetings. Paper presenters and discussants at all these occasions provided us with excellent comments. In particular, it is a pleasure for us to acknowledge our debts to Klaus Goetz, Robert Harmsen, Philippe Poirier, Mario Hirsch, Steven Van Hecke and Rik de Ruiter.

It goes without saying that we owe a lot to a group of people and agencies who helped us in producing the volume. Jan Beyers would like to express his gratitude toward the Research Fund-Flanders (FWO-V); in particular the Odysseus grant he achieved in 2008, which enabled him, not only to cover various costs related to this project, but also to establish a lively research team that is a continuous source of inspiration. We also would like to thank Jan-Willem Burgers, who acted as our style editor and did a great job in meticulously sifting all the papers for language, punctuation and referencing errors. Finally, it goes without saying that the project would have been impossible without the continuous support and patience of Alex Quayle, our editorial assistant at Routledge, who placed great confidence in our project and continued to trust that we would, some day, submit the manuscript.

Leiden, Antwerp, Luxembourg, July 11, 2013

# Abbreviations

ADR	Alternativ Demokratesch Reformpartei (Alternative Democratic Reform Party) LUX
AGALEV	Anders Gaan Leven (to start living differently) B
ARP	Anti-Revolutionaire Party (Anti-Revolutionary Party) NL
BEUC	Bureau Européen des Unions de Consommateurs (European Consumers Organisation)
BKV	Belgische Kamer van Vertegenwoordigers (Belgian Chamber of Deputies) B
BNC	Interdepartementale Werkgroep Beoordeling Nieuwe Commissievoorstellen (Inter-ministerial Working Group on New Commission Proposals) NL
CC	Overlegcomité (Concertation Committee) B
CDA	Christen Democratisch Appèl (Christian-Democratic Appeal) NL
CDH	Centre Démocrate Humaniste (Humanist Democratic Centre) B
CEC	Conseil Central de l'Economie (Central Economic Council) B
CHU	Christelijk-Historische Unie (Christian-Historical Union) NL
CICPE	Comité Interministeriel de la Coordination de la Politique Européenne (Inter-ministerial Coordination Committee for European Policy) LUX
CoCo	Coördinatie Commissie voor Europese Integratie- en Associatieproblemen (Inter-ministerial Coordination Committee for European Integration and Association problems) NL
CoCoHAN	Coördinatie-Commissie op Hoog-Ambtelijk Niveau (Inter-ministerial High Level Coordination Committee) NL
COREPER	Committee of Permanent Representatives
CPL	Centrale Paysanne Luxembourgeoise (Agricultural Centre of Luxembourg) LUX
CSV	Chrëschtlech-Sozial Vollekspartei (Christian Social People's Party) LUX
CU	ChristenUnie (Christian Union) NL
D66	Democraten 66 (Democrats 66) NL
DEA	Directoraat-Generaal Europese Zaken (Directorate-General of European Affairs) B

DP	Demokratesch Partei (Democratic Party) LUX
DS'70	Democratisch Socialisten '70 (Democratic Socialists) NL
EC	European Commission
ECHR	European Convention of Human Rights
ECtHR	European Court of Human Rights
ECJ	European Court of Justice
ECOLO	Ecologistes Confédérés pour l'Organisation de Luttes Originales (Confederated Ecologists for the Organisation of Original Struggles) B
EEB	European Environmental Bureau
EI	European integration
EK	Eerste Kamer (First Chamber of the States-General) NL
EMU	Economic and Monetary Union
ERT	European Roundtable of Industrialists
ETUC	European Trade Union Confederation
EU	European Union
FNV	Federatie Nederlandse Vakverenigingen (Federation of Dutch Trade Unions) NL
FDF	Fédéralistes Démocrates Francophones (French-speaking Democratic Federalists) B
FN	Front National (National Front) B
GDP	gross domestic product
GAP	Gréng Alternativ Partei (Green Alternative Party) LUX
GL	GroenLinks (GreenLeft) NL
GLEI	Gréng Lëscht Ekologesch Initiativ (Green List, Ecological Initiative) LUX
HACEU	Hoog Ambtelijke Commissie EU-zaken (High Level Administrative Committee on the EU) NL
HEK	Handelingen Eerste Kamer (Proceedings of the First Chamber) NL
HTK	Handelingen Tweede Kamer (Proceedings of the Second Chamber) NL
ICEP	Interministeriële Conferentie voor Economisch Beleid (Inter- ministerial Conference for Economic Policy) B
ICFP	Interministeriële Conferentie voor het Buitenlands Beleid (Inter- ministerial Conference for Foreign Policy) B
IGC	Intergovernmental Conference
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KPL	Kommunistesch Partei Lëtzebuerg (Communist Party of Luxembourg) LUX
KVP	Katholieke Volkspartij (Catholic People's Party) NL
LDD	Lijst Dedecker (List Dedecker) B
LPF	Lijst Pim Fortuyn (List Pim Fortuyn) NL
LSAP	Lëtzebuerger Sozialistesche Arbechterpartei (Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party) LUX