

# Higher Education Policy

Europeanisation/German Politics

# Outline

Intro

Recap

Intro

Europeanisation of Higher  
Education

HEP as a policy domain in  
Germany

Europeanisation of HEP in  
Germany

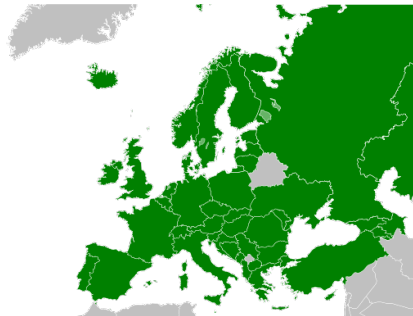
Research question/theory

Three hypotheses on  
HEP/Europeanisation

Summary

Summary

Your turn



## The Media & Europe

- ▶ Received wisdom: Traditional media ignore Europe or are eurosceptic
- ▶ Koopmans/Pfetsch look at claims made by or reported in print media in Germany, ca 2000
- ▶ Media
  - ▶ Do not ignore Europe, are focused on European integration
  - ▶ Are (in this sense) more Europeanised than parties and *civil society actors*
- ▶ We assume that media have become even more Europeanised in the meantime
- ▶ Electronic media (TV, Internet)?

## Today: Higher Education Policy (HEP)

- ▶ EU about 'low policies'
- ▶ But not about education
- ▶ ((Higher) education in Germany 'special')
- ▶ Text for today a bit unusual

## Some features of HEP in Germany

- ▶ German HEP highly respected in the past, still leading in sciences/engineering
- ▶ Highly path-dependent
  - ▶ 19th century alliance between professors/politics
  - ▶ Traditional elitist system (Gymnasium)
- ▶ Expansion of Abitur-level education since WW II, accelerating since 1960s
- ▶ Expansion of student numbers since 1970s
- ▶ But no real expansion of funding

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- ▶ Expansion of Abitur-level education since WW II, accelerating since 1960s
- ▶ Expansion of student numbers since 1970s
- ▶ But no real expansion of funding
- ▶ *Highly politicised, yet largely ignored by the public for a long time*
- ▶ *Debate dominated by values*

## Relevant actors

- ▶ Right: tradition, quality, 'Bildung'
- ▶ Left, (student) unions: equality, fairness, emancipation, 'Bildung'
- ▶ Industries: employability
- ▶ State governments
- ▶ Federal government
- ▶ Gridlock, partially ended by controversial Red/Green reforms and Bologna process

## HEP and federalism

- ▶ 'Culture' one of only a few core competences of states
- ▶ Horizontal co-operation
- ▶ HEP too expensive → vertical co-operation
  - ▶ 'Gemeinschaftsaufgaben' / HBFG
    - ▶ Funding for university buildings
    - ▶ Large machines
  - ▶ Framework legislation
    - ▶ Organisation of universities (HRG)
    - ▶ Access to universities
    - ▶ Guidelines for exams etc.
- ▶ Made obsolete by federalism reform
- ▶ Legal limbo, federation still involved



## What is the Bologna process?

- ▶ Sorbonne declaration 1998 (GE, UK, FR, IT):
  - ▶ 'An open European area for higher learning'
  - ▶ 'Common frame of reference', ECTS
- ▶ Bologna declaration 1999 (29 signatories):
  - ▶ 'Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees'
  - ▶ 'Adoption of a system essentially based on two main cycles, undergraduate and graduate'
  - ▶ Two-tier system, 1st qualification at least 3 years, relevant in its own right & requirement for second
- ▶ Subsequent declarations, now 47 signatories
- ▶ Impact in many countries
- ▶ In Germany: single most important change since reforms/expansion of the 1970s

## The Bologna process is not ...

- ▶ An EU project: initially sponsored by Council of Europe/UNESCO
- ▶ A international regime
  - ▶ No proper secretariat
  - ▶ No sanctions
  - ▶ No ratification
  - ▶ No clear rules
- ▶ Just a joint declaration, yet perceived as binding

## EU dimension(s)

- ▶ Vocational training since 1957
- ▶ Erasmus (funded by MS)
- ▶ Maastricht: 'shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging co-operation between Member States and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action, while fully respecting the responsibility of the Member States'
- ▶ *No Harmonisation*
- ▶ More recently, push for mutual recognition of qualifications (framework for labour market)
- ▶ Formally, little basis for Europeanisation

## Research question



- ▶ Bologna process in Germany almost completed, but why?
- ▶ 30 years of stalemate
- ▶ Coincide with major conflict over reform of federalism
- ▶ 'Bologna' antithesis to German university, so resistance from
  - ▶ Professors
  - ▶ Students
- ▶ 'Reform' the result of strategic choices of state actors
- ▶ Testable?

## Raison d'État and two-level games

- ▶ Proposed by Klaus Dieter Wolf (2000)
- ▶ Executives want to defend/increase their autonomy
- ▶ They join international organisations in order to sideline domestic actors
  - ▶ Interest groups,
  - ▶ Parliaments
  - ▶ Parties
  - ▶ Bureaucracies (?) ...
- ▶ Two-level games
- ▶ HEP a complex case: 3 levels, 17 German executives

# A slightly confusing picture

FIGURE 1  
 GERMAN EDUCATIONAL FEDERALISM AND THE BOLOGNA PROCESS: TWO TYPES OF TWO-LEVEL GAMES

Level of Policy-making	National (Educational federalism)	European (Bologna process)
State autonomy		
<b>external</b>	<p><i>intergovernmental</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- between federal state and the 16 <i>Länder</i> (federal state/Land)</li> <li>- between the 16 <i>Länder</i> (Land/Land)</li> </ul>	<p><i>intergovernmental</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- between nation states (state/state)</li> <li>- between nation states and international organisations (state/IO)</li> </ul>
<b>internal</b>	<p> 1a</p> <p><i>state-civil society</i> 1b</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- between governments (federal and Land-level) and civil society, represented by constituencies and stakeholder groups, such as NGOs and interest groups, private actors, and policy networks (federal and Land-level)</li> </ul>	<p> 2a</p> <p><i>state-civil society</i> 2b</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- between state and civil society, represented by transnational stakeholder groups, such as transnational NGOs, umbrella organisations of national interest groups, transnational private actors and policy-networks</li> </ul>

## State actors protecting their autonomy

- ▶ Federal government caught between Länder and EU
- ▶ 'Bologna' allowed Federal government to influence Länder while sacrificing framework law
- ▶ 'Bologna' allowed state governments to ignore demands from interest groups, parliaments, universities

## Bologna as an example of 'soft governance'

- ▶ No binding commitments
- ▶ Open and ambiguous phrasing and stock-taking process
- ▶ Coincides with Länders' new position on EU
- ▶ Länder can interpret Bologna guidelines, collectively and individually
- ▶ Also suited Fed government's new focus on competition



## Policy fragmentation

- ▶ HEP already a mess, because of
  - ▶ Academics
  - ▶ Länder protecting the residual autonomy
  - ▶ Loony lefties
  - ▶ More media coverage
- ▶ Bologna makes things more complex, because stakeholders sometimes included
- ▶ Fragmented implementation

# Summary

- ▶ Structural similarities between Bologna and educational federalism
- ▶ Bologna both attractive for Länder and Fed government
- ▶ Shift from ideological conflict to competition ('Exzellenzinitiative' etc)
- ▶ Exit (?) from joint decision trap facilitated
- ▶ Increasing fragmentation

## Class questions

In groups of four-five students, discuss the following questions:

1. Do you think the author's account is convincing? Why or why not?
2. Are you in favour of a 'real' Europeanisation of HE? What are the pros and cons?