

Title: Beyond the Welfare State: the Europeanization of Swedish Civil Society Organizations

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Research program webpage: <http://eurociv.blogg.lu.se/>

The background of this research program (hereafter 'the program') is the growing interest of the European Union (EU) to involve Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in deliberation, discussion and decision-making to revitalize democracy, and even to create a 'European civil society', also in the area of social and welfare policies. The aim of the program is to provide a comprehensive analysis of *how processes of Europeanization affect Swedish CSOs working with welfare policy and how they, strategically, make use of the EU as a new political opportunity structure*. The program analyses in particular organizations that represent groups such as 'poor', 'homeless', 'irregular migrants', 'immigrant women' and 'disabled people'.

The program was initially designed in five thematic studies (TS1-5) addressing institutional conditions and openings at EU level (TS1), the mobilization and operation of EU based umbrella CSOs (TS2); a comparison of Europeanization activities and affects among different sectors of Swedish civil society (TS3); a historical investigation into processes of Europeanization 'before the EU' (TS4); in-depth case studies of domestic CSOs as agents and objects in Europeanization processes (TS5). Due to budget limitations (received approx. 60 percent of the applied sum) TS1 and TS4 have been downsized in relation to original plans. Additional funding has been allocated for TS3 (Craafoord foundation).

The program is based on the joint efforts from scholars in social work, sociology and political science and from Lund University, Gothenburg University and Södertörn University College. Regular joint workshops have been held (approx. 3-4 times a year) combined with informal meetings. A webpage is launched and working reports developed. International and national scholars have been invited to workshops and we have participated in arranging panels at international conferences (e.g. European Sociological Association (2012), Council for European Studies (2013), Danish European Community Studies Association (2013) and participated in bids for EU FP7 funding. We have involved master students in research, of whom some have been accepted for PHD programs in political science and social work.

Present research status: TS2 includes a series of case studies of EU based CSOs (e.g. EAPN; EWL, PICUM, ENAR, FEANTSA, ICRSE) representing marginal groups and welfare beneficiaries. Novel forms of participatory governance (the European Citizens Initiative) have also been analysed as well as families of EU based CSOs (e.g. the European Social Platform). Initial results indicate: i) The field of CSOs representing marginal groups is well established at EU-level; ii) The Commission has been pivotal in setting up and sustaining some of these CSOs, but in some cases we find 'bottom-up' mobilization; iii) The field is diversified as a minor group of CSOs are better equipped (resources and capacities) and positioned (invited/embedded in Commission activities) than others; iv) Internally, EU based CSOs rest on weak chains of political representation, illustrating the difficulty to say whom they represent; v) Participation is limited to a few devoted members, who also express extensive barriers for participation; vi) Besides cooperation, we also find competition among and within these EU based CSOs regarding resources, identity formation and organizational goals etcetera. Analyses in TS2 are based on theories on Europeanization, political opportunity structures, organizational theory and interest group theory. To further nurture comparisons network theories/theories on organizational/institutional fields will be explored. Palgrave Macmillan has expressed interest to publish a book with such a relational approach.

TS3 is comprised of a large survey of Europeanization activities among Swedish CSOs (survey closed in April 2013). The sample was intentionally extended from our original interest in marginal groups/welfare policies to also cover religious groups, unions, environmental groups. This allows us to compare both policy areas as well as organizational composition. The survey is one of the largest conducted investigations of Swedish CSOs (N=approx. 6,000 SWE CSOs, response rate 51,3 %) and our initial result indicate that very few Swedish CSOs Europeanize (e.g. in terms of being member in EU network, trying to lobby at EU level or retrieving funding from EU sources). The following factors explain why some domestic CSOs Europeanize more than others: organizational size (high no of members) organizational

capacities (professional staff); organizational form (peak organization/umbrella organization); already retrieving funding from national and local governments); and policy salience, i.e. they deem the EU level important for their activities. We are currently analyzing differences between CSOs operating in different policy fields, i.e. disability organizations, unions, women's' rights organizations, temperance movement and we are also conducting analyses of those CSOs that seem to Europeanize the most.

TS5 starts in autumn 2013. We have carried out a series of literature review exercises (e.g. on Europeanization and organizational theory) and pilot studies on domestic CSOs EU activities (e.g. on their usage of the VAT directive and a survey among a broader selection of domestic CSOs in the field of social and welfare policies). Based on these efforts and results from TS2 and 3, our aim is to develop a theoretical and analytical framework addressing CSOs as both subjects and objects in Europeanization processes.

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