

# Time and European Governance: An Inventory

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## Introduction

This paper examines conceptual issues in the study of time and European governance. It briefly outlines the main themes in the study of time, temporality and European governance and then turns to an exploration of various conceptual dimensions that are discussed in the literature on the politics of time, the literature on the sociology of time and research on time in organisations and management. The aim is first of all to run an inventory of usages of time and temporality in the social science literature in order to prepare the ground for the identification of key questions and for the conceptualisation of the temporality of European governance, in particular, the temporality of Enlargement and Europeanisation.<sup>1</sup>

The paper suggests that there is relatively little research in the area of European governance that is genuinely interested in the concept of time and how it matters for European governance. Research that explicitly refers to time tends to use it as a methodological device rather than as a variable that affects political outcomes. Yet, there are only few attempts to conceptualise time as a variable for the study of European governance (an important exception is Ekengren 2002). In many respects, this state of affairs is surprising. The work by Schedler and Santiso (1998), Linz (1998), and Schmitter/Santiso (1998) on democratic politics suggests that issues of time, timing and tempo matter a great deal for the quality of democracy and for political outcomes more generally. Moreover, practitioners seem to be often much more concerned with aspects of temporality than

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<sup>1</sup> European governance could be referred to as the study of EU integration and enlargement, the study of political processes and outcomes at the supranational level and the Europeanisation of member states and candidate states. Bearing in mind the title of the conference panel, the paper focuses on enlargement and Europeanisation. Yet, some examples that concern EU-level politics are included. By contrast, the EU integration dimension still receives far too little attention in this paper.

academics, in that they pay particular attention to when things happen, how much time they have, what time horizons prevail, and how aspects of temporality can be intelligently used in the context of their institutions (e.g. Avery 2007, Onestini 2007, Tholoniati 2007).

Most of this paper therefore explores how aspects of time and temporality are used in the areas of sociology, organisations and management in order to get inspiration for the study of time and European governance. The discussion here identifies six areas of distinction including the distinction between time as a variable and time as a methodological device; time as an independent and dependent variable; various dimensions of temporality ranging from the analysis of sequences and cycles to the analysis of synchronisation patterns and time boundaries; levels or forms of temporality such as time rules and time discourses; conceptions of time such as clock time and social time; and theoretical approaches to temporality which provide the toolkit for the development of causal mechanisms for the explanation of the origins and consequences of temporal orders and processes in the area of European governance. The discussion concludes that aspects of temporality play a much more prominent role in European governance than hitherto appreciated. There are therefore many grounds to further develop the concept of time and to investigate in more detail the specifics of the time in the context of European governance.

## **1. Themes in the Study of Time and European Governance**

Time is an under-researched dimension of European governance. This is not to say that time has not at all been examined in relation to European politics and policy. A quick count of publications that are listed in the IBSS (International Bibliography of the Social Sciences) database suggests that the temporal dimension of European integration has been marginal and that the proportion of publications on the issue has hardly increased over the last decade and a half.

Table 1 shows that between 1990 and 2006 approximately 1 in 25 publications (chapters, books, articles) that are listed in the politics category use the term 'time' in the text and that about 1 in 250 publications use the term in the title, which indicates a certain degree of centrality of temporal issues in the publication. The proportion of papers that deals with 'time' is therefore low. We have also checked the overall number of politics publications on 'time' and on 'temporality'. In terms of 'time' as a keyword, the IBSS search for the period from 1990 to 2006 returned 5599 (5338 of which are articles) hits that include the term anywhere in the text, and 1287 hits for publications that have the term 'time' in the title. On temporality, we have checked the IBSS database for the term 'temporal', which returned for the same period 52 publications.

**Table 1 Publications on Europe and Time: 1990 – 2006**

	‘Europe’	‘Europe & Time’	Proportion of publications on ‘Europe & Time’	‘Europe’	‘Europe & Time’	Proportion of publications on ‘Europe & Time’
	Anywhere in the text			In the title		
<b>1990 – 1995</b>	5429	80	1.47	3607	15	0.42
<b>1996 – 2000</b>	6115	192	3.14	3416	11	0.32
<b>2001 – 2006</b>	9786	642	6.56	4418	22	0.50
<b>Total 1990 – 2006</b>	21329	914	4.29	11441	48	0.42

Source: IBSS Database. Last date of access 27 January 2007

The relatively low number of publications on temporality in general and on time and Europe more specifically provided enough of an encouragement to have a look at the titles and some abstracts of the papers. What turns out is that the majority of papers are actually not explicitly interested in the temporal dimension of politics and European governance. Rather, they refer to time as a research design device, in that they refer to the ‘cross-temporal analysis’, ‘developments over time’, ‘periods of time’, and ‘moments in time’.

First, using time as methodological device, Wessels and Maurer (2003), for instance, examine the ‘European Union and member states: analysing two arenas over time’. On temporality, which I also looked up as a general category and not necessarily with reference to Europe, Mitchell et al (2002) examine the ‘temporal dynamics’ of the ‘presidential use of force during the cold war’, Khan (2001) conducts a ‘spatio-temporal analysis of the inter-state river water disputes in India’, and Adams (2001) presents a ‘theory of spatial competition with biased voters: party policies viewed temporally and comparatively’. Most of the papers in this category adopt quantitative techniques and seek to examine cross-time patterns in politics and governance.

Second, research that refers to ‘politics in time’ (Pierson 2004) tends to refer to time as a boundary setting device, whereby the ‘period’ or ‘moment/point’ of time that is made is explicit, delimits the applicability of the theoretical argument. For instance, Earnshaw and Judge (1997) discuss ‘the life and times of the European Union’s cooperation procedure’. Quite similar are papers that seek to indicate the special features of a particular period of time – often in comparison to earlier or later periods of time. Till (2005), for instance, examines ‘troubled times’ during the Cold War, Gronbaek (2003) asks ‘European research council: an idea whose time has come?’, and Helen Wallace (1993) once analysed ‘European governance in turbulent times’. Interestingly, there is a comparatively larger number of publications on the politics in time that deals with foreign and security policy and

with politics in Central and Eastern Europe. Yet, there were no papers that explicitly deal with EU Enlargement and have ‘time’ in the title.

Work on historical time and on time as a methodological device clearly makes up the majority of work on time and Europe. Beyond this, we found several titles that suggest a different perspective on time. First, there is a good number of papers that deals with social policy, especially, labour market policy. These papers look at time as ‘working time’ and thus time as a resource or input in the production process. To be sure, many of the papers deal with the legal implications of European regulations on working time and with the social justice dimensions of European law as can be seen from titles such as ‘regulating working-time transitions in Europe’ (O’Reilly 2003), the ‘protection of part-time workers’ (Traversa (2003), ‘legal and constitutional limitations to working time in the member states’ (Rojot 1998), and ‘from work sharing to temporal flexibility: working time policy in Belgium’ (Bastian 1992).

Second, there are several papers that examine the role of time as something that can be interpreted in different ways and that is thus socially constructed. These papers tend to cluster around themes such as identity, nations and nationalism, ethnicity, and religion. Some of these papers are linked to the role of temporality in the process of EU identity formation as well as the consequences of EU integration for the interpretation of past, present and future in the member states, as can be seen by titles such as ‘paths to the new Europe: from premodern to postmodern times’ (Dukes 2003), ‘the return of the kings: temporality in the construction of EU identity’ (Pettersson/Hellstrom 2003), and ‘modern biotechnology in postmodern times? (Reuter 2003). In particular, Ekengren’s (2002) examination of the ‘control of the future’ of the EU and the member states fits well this category.

Central and Eastern Europe also figures prominently among the papers that examine the social construction of time, bearing in mind the centrality of the future in communist ideology and the tendency of communist regimes to ‘re-create the past’ to make it fit their political ambitions in the present and for the future. Bradatan’s (2005) a ‘time of crisis and (a sense of) a crisis of time’ is an outstanding example here. Other works include Todorova’s (2005) ‘the trap of backwardness: modernity, temporality, and the study of Eastern European nationalism’, and Priban’s (2004) ‘reconstituting paradise lost: temporality, civility, and ethnicity in post-communist constitution-making’.

In addition to these titles, a few singular papers appear that deal with the attempt of governments to ‘gain time’ such as ‘in quest of time, protection, and approval: France and the claims for social

harmonisation in the European Economic Community, 1955-56' (Svartvatn 2002), viewing time as a resource, while others study the 'temporal horizons of justice' (Ackerman 1997).

*In summary*, time as a subject of study is not absent in the literature on European governance but what is striking from this short review of research is that, first, there is hardly any work that explicitly addresses EU Enlargement and temporality and that, with the exception of Ekengren (2002), there are virtually no publications that examine the Europeanisation of national political systems and/or the European administrative space more specifically (see Goetz 2006). Second, among the (few) papers that do not examine time as a methodological device there are hardly any papers that provide a conceptualisation of time as a variable. Only Ekengren (2002) discusses temporality, time and European governance at the conceptual level, while Schedler and Santiso (1998) stand out with a more general conceptual treatment of time and democratic politics. An examination of the temporality of EU Enlargement and Europeanisation should therefore start with an attempt to sort out the conceptual bits of temporality. The next section presents a first attempt based on the reading of papers on the sociology of time, on time and organisations and on time and management.

## **2. Conceptualising Temporality**

The Oxford English Dictionary provides thirteen different notions of time and further distinguishes 'to time' as a verb, which indicates very quickly that time is a concept with many different faces. Among these thirteen notions are first of all time as 'the unlimited progress of existence and events in the past, present, and the future, regarded as a whole'. In addition, time is viewed as a 'point of time', a 'period of time', a 'length of time', 'time as available or used', and 'the rhythmic pattern or tempo of a piece of music'. Academic debate on time is however not much clearer but rather adds a few more dimensions to the discussion of what time is and what not.

In the remainder of the discussion, we broadly follow Gerring's (2001) and Sartori's (1984) advice for concept formation, where they suggest that any attempt to develop a new concept has to start with an inventory of the existing usages of the term. A cursory scan of the literature suggests at least six areas of distinction and contestation. They include

- (1) The distinction between time as a variable and time as a methodological device, as mentioned already above;
- (2) The dimensions of temporality, i.e. the qualities of temporal orders and processes;
- (3) The levels of temporality, i.e. the manifestations and forms of temporality can take;

- (4) The conceptions of time and temporality as something external and absolute versus something internal and socially constructed;
- (5) The role of time in the research design as a dependent or independent variable;
- (6) The causal mechanisms related to the variable time and their foundation in theoretical approaches to the study of politics, which will be discussed here with respect to rationalist versus constructivist conceptions and mechanisms of temporality.

These six dimensions are in many ways connected but they can be analytically distinguished. Research on the temporality of enlargement and Europeanisation does not need to examine all of them but we argue that it must specify for each of the six dimensions what is included in the research and what not.

### **2.1. Time as a Variable versus Time as a Methodological Device**

The first distinction that has to be made is one between time as a variable and time as a methodological device. As already mentioned in the brief survey above, most studies on time and European politics refer to time as a methodological tool in order to make causal and descriptive inferences. Cross-time analysis is a classic tool in comparative small N research and is characteristic of case study research, as it provides the opportunity to assess the relationship between two variables while minimising variation on third variables (Lijphart 1971, Gerring 2004). It should be remembered here that temporality is also among the main defining criteria of causal explanations, in that a causal explanation requires that a cause precedes an effect in time (Gerring 2001).

We consider the use of time in historical institutionalist research also as largely methodological in kind. Pierson (2004) and Mahony/Rueschemeyer (2003) argue in favour of middle range theories that are temporally and spatially bounded. The ‘politics in time’ does therefore essentially mean the development of theories that are applicable for a particular moment or a particular period of time only.

Yet, historical institutionalist research does not refer to time as a methodological device only but does also use time as a variable when examining the impact of temporal processes on institutional and policy developments as conceptualised in mechanisms of ‘increasing returns’ (Pierson 2000) and ‘reactive sequences’ (Mahony 2000).

In short, the research agenda that the panel seeks to advance here differs in that it refers to time as a variable. This does not exclude the use of time as a tool of research design but it directs attention at the quality of temporality as dependent and independent variable (see below again). For this type of investigation, it is necessary to identify the properties and dimensions of temporality that can matter for politics in general and for European governance in particular.

## **2.2. Dimensions of Temporality**

The literature on time and politics is not particularly explicit on the dimensions of temporality, the qualities or properties of temporality that can be empirically identified and that can be chosen or that can have an effect on political processes. Schmitter/Santiso (1998) and Schedler/Santiso (1998) do simply refer to the study of ‘time, timing, and tempo’ as apparently core dimensions of temporality. Yet, the literature on time and organisations, time and sociology, and time and social psychology suggests more dimensions that may be of interest. These dimensions include

- (1) Sequences, sequential structures, sequencing,
  - tell us ‘in what order situations and events take place’. (Lee/Liebenau 2000: 164, Zerubavel 1981, Schriber/Guttek 1987, Moore 1966, Lee 1999, Schmitter/Santiso 1998, Schedler/Santiso 1998);
- (2) Durations,
  - tell us how long situations, activities, or events last, the amount of time devoted to a task or activity (sometimes also labelled ‘allocation’) (Zerubavel 1981, Lee/Liebenau 2000, Lee 1999, Linz 1998). Duration is close to ‘pace’ and ‘tempo’;
- (3) Pace,
  - refers to the rate at which activities can be accomplished. It is similar to the rate of recurrence (Lee/Liebenau 2000, Schmitter/Santiso 1998, Schedler/Santiso 1998);
- (4) Temporal locations,
  - tell us when events or activities take place, at which particular point over the continuum of time (also labelled ‘scheduling’ and ‘time’), (Zerubavel 1981, Lee/Liebenau 2000, Lee 1999, Schedler/Santiso 1998, Schmitter/Santiso 1998);
- (5) Deadlines,
  - refers to the temporal start and stop points or the fixed time by when work is to be done (Lee/Liebenau 2000, Lee 1999);
- (6) Punctuality,
  - refers to the degree of rigidity to which deadlines are adhered. Again, boundaries of the temporal location are specified. (Lee/Liebenau 2000);
- (7) Temporal buffers,

- refers to unspecified amounts of time built into schedules to allow for uncertainty (Lee/Liebenau 2000)
- (8)** Autonomy,
- refers to the amount of freedom the job holder has in setting schedules for the completion of his or her tasks over time (Lee/Liebenau 2000);
- (9)** Rates of recurrence,
- tells us how often situations, activities, etc occur (Zerubavel 1981). It thus refers to the frequency of events during a period of time. It is also labelled ‘cycles’ and refers to the regular recurrence of events and processes (Lee/Liebenau 2000). Moreover, rate is sometimes also labelled ‘tempo’ or ‘pace’. Action may be too slow or too fast (Moore 1966). Also, Schedler/Santiso (1998) mention rates and cycles;
- (10)** Routinisation,
- refers to the repetition of activities, etc at appropriate times;
- (11)** Rhythms,
- refers to the alternation in the intensity of being busy (Lee/Liebenau 2000, Lee 1999);
- (12)** Synchronisation,
- refers to managing the performance of more than one task simultaneously (Lee/Liebenau 2000) or simply when activities require simultaneous action by a number of persons or at least their presence at a particular point in time (Moore 1966);
- (13)** Monochronicity and polychronicity,
- refer to two different ways in which societies organise time in their everyday life (Hall 1966, 1983, Lee 1999). In monochronic societies, people do one thing at a time while in polychronic societies, they do several things at once;
- (14)** Coordination,
- refers to managing the performance of more than one task in sequence (Lee/Liebenau 2000). This term seems somewhat misleading and should be specified as ‘temporal coordination’ to distinguish it from other processes such as core executive coordination (Rhodes/Dunleavy 1990);
- (15)** Time boundaries within organisations,
- refers to group boundaries created by the differences in the uses and meanings of time. (Lee/Liebenau 2000)
- (16)** Time boundaries between work and non-work,
- which is quite obvious (Lee/Liebenau 2000). Zerubavel (1981) also distinguishes ‘public and private time’ and ‘sacred and profane time’, which are similar kinds of distinctions;



Most works cited above do not examine all dimensions of temporality but refer to three, four or six dimensions depending on the subject under study. Schmitter/Santiso (1998), Schedler/Santiso (1998) and Goetz (2006) refer to three dimensions of time, timing and tempo for the study of democracy, democratisation and the European administrative space. Zerubavel (1981) who seeks to develop a new sociology of time, is interested in temporal regularities and the rigidification of temporal structures in society more generally. He examines four dimensions of temporality, sequence, duration, temporal allocation and rate of recurrence. Other sociologists such as Moore (1966) are also interested in the temporal order that underpins social behaviour. He is especially interested in coordination effects and includes 'synchronisation', 'sequence', and 'rates of recurrence' which includes for him tempo and pace.

Both Zerubavel and Moore suggest that a lack of attention to these three/four temporal dimensions makes social behaviour virtually impossible due to a resulting lack of coordination of collective action. Others such as Schriber/Guttek (1987), Lee (1999) and Lee/Liebenau (2000) concentrate on temporal processes within organisations, mainly private sector firms. They include a much larger range of temporal dimensions in their analysis in order to examine for instance how the perception of different dimensions of temporality has changed over time.

Analytically, it is possible to distinguish all dimensions from each other. However, some of the dimensions listed above *overlap* and have been put into one category such as rates, cycles and rates of recurrence. Others are very closely *connected* such as the pace of how fast things occur, the rate of how often they occur, and the duration of how much time they take. Similarly, defining the sequence of events or activities makes little sense without knowing about their temporal allocation and the duration that activities take. The many dimensions of temporality and their connection suggest that it is difficult and not efficient to include all of them for the analysis of Enlargement and Europeanisation. Rather, the decision of which dimensions to include rests with the researcher but it needs to be made explicit!

In fact, most of the dimensions of temporality listed above are quite prominent in studies of EU politics, EU Enlargement and Europeanisation.

- Sequences and durations have received considerable attention in studies of the EU legislative process (Hix 2005) and they are central for the domestic coordination of EU policy as discussed by Ekengren (2002) and in the general literature on the impact of policy coordination at the domestic level (Kassim et al 2000, Laegrid et al 2004).

- Temporal locations as well as the subcategories of deadlines, autonomy over deadlines, etc are especially critical in the enlargement process, for instance, the setting of accession dates, negotiation dates, etc. (Goetz 2006, Schimmelfennig 2001, Schimmelfennig/Sedelmeier 2005, Mayhew 2001).
- Questions of ‘cycles’ and ‘rates of recurrence’ are well placed in the literature on enlargement, let alone the comparison between and across enlargement rounds (Nugent 2004).
- Moreover, issues of synchronicity have gained attention (Eder 2004), in that Enlargement involved the parallel reform of the EU and the new member states as well as the temporal coordination of decision-making processes across levels of government between the EU and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

Studies of temporal aspects of European governance are therefore much more common than suggested by the discussion in the first part of this inventory suggested. In fact, we have to conclude that temporal aspects are quite central to the study of European governance, especially in the areas of enlargement and Europeanisation. Yet, the work quoted above is usually not related to each other and discussed together thanks to its focus on temporality. This might also explain the discrepancy between the usage of time in titles and texts on the one hand and relative prominence of dimensions of temporality in studies of European governance.

### **2.3. Levels (or Forms) of Temporality**

Most of the literature on organisations and in sociology looks relatively vague here and attaches temporal properties to events, situations, activities, social behaviour, organisational structures and processes, etc. Here, Schedler and Santiso (1998) are more explicit in their attempt to distinguish different levels of analysis of temporality in the context of their discussion of time as a resource. Schedler and Santiso (1998) distinguish time rules, time strategies and time discourses. They also add ‘time traces’ or time effects which will be discussed below in the context of research design issues and ‘time horizons’ which we include here under the heading of time perceptions or time orientations. Similarly, Goetz (2006) distinguishes two categories of the ‘time of governing’, which refers largely to time rules and temporal structures, and, second, ‘governing with time’, which refers to temporal choices or the temporality of politicians’ and civil servants’ behaviour.

The distinction between the different levels of temporality largely corresponds to broad distinctions between an *institutional level* of temporality, a *behavioural level* of temporality and a *discursive level* of temporality. To this we should add a fourth level of analysis that refers to perceptions,

values and/or culture. Whether we call this time rules or institutional patterns of temporality is secondary at the moment, but – admittedly – time rules, strategies, etc sounds more elegant.

First, taking Schedler and Santiso (1998) as the starting point, they refer to time rules as ‘the institutional time constraints democratic politics face’. Time rules are mainly formal rules but also informal rules that *regulate* temporal structures and processes – in our case enlargement and Europeanisation processes. Time rules are thus written into constitutions and laws, standing procedures, treaties, etc and regulate the four or more dimensions of temporality outlined above.

Enlargement governance, as Goetz (2006) argues, has been a laboratory for temporal devices, including the use of periodical monitoring, ‘rolling’ schedules, deadlining, calendaring, and the use of ‘roadmaps’. For the member state level, Ekengren (1996, 1997, 2002) stands out for his detailed examination of ‘European governance calendars’ and their impact on national administrations, in particular, the ‘standardisation of a common administrative clock for European governance’ (2002: 79).

Second, Schedler and Santiso (1998) refer to time strategies as ‘the ways political actors handle these time constraints’. More generally, time strategies refer to what political/administrative actors have actually *chosen* to do in terms of temporality, i.e. when have they taken decisions, what sequence did they choose, etc. Here, it matters how much time the coordination of a EU policy at the domestic level actually takes and what sequence of steps is taken in practice. Ekengren (2002) for instance argues that the deadlines set by the EU have led to a ‘squeezed national present’, the need to accelerate policy making processes and perceived lack of time to coordinate policies.

Time rules and time strategies are closely connected. In a way, we would expect some congruence between them. Yet, as we know from the work by Dimitrov et al (2006) on core executive in Central and Eastern Europe, formal rules and actual behaviour in government may differ considerably. Moreover, time rules may be more or less restrictive, providing more or less discretion over the choice of temporal strategies. Yet, discretion over time strategies is only one interesting issue to look at here. The important difference is first of all between rules and regulation on the one hand and actual behaviour and practice on the other.

Third, Schedler and Santiso (1998) refer to time discourses as ‘the arguments [political actors] use in order to justify their strategies’. Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2005) also include this form of ‘discursive Europeanisation’, and interpretive approaches to politics and public administration

resonate very well indeed with discourse forms of temporality (e.g. Bevir/Rhodes 2004). Moreover, the discursive level of temporality is relevant when it comes to the justification and legitimation of temporal rules and temporal strategies, for instance, the discourse over the timing of EU accession (cf. Schimmelfennig 2001).

A fourth and related dimension could refer to time perceptions, values and orientations. Schedler and Santiso (1998) also have a level of analysis that they call ‘time horizons’, which they simply consider to be a reference to conceptions of the past, present and future. This is indeed an important issue but we think that the notion of ‘time orientations’ as discussed in the organisation and management literature is something different. Different types of (long vs. short-term) time orientations may be culturally induced and hence part of the ‘collective programming of the mind which distinguishes one group or category of people from another’ (Hostede 1993). Alternatively, time orientations can adhere to the psychological presupposition of individual managers, political or administrative actors (Das 1991).

Discussions of time horizons are also very prominent in politics and political economy research, for instance, the arguments surrounding political business cycles, varieties of capitalism (Hall/Soskice 2001) and welfare reform (Pierson 2001). Moreover, the level of psychological or cultural time also provides the category for the discussion of different interpretations and constructions of past, present and future (Novotny 1994) as is discussed with respect to the legacy of the past in post-communist Europe (Bradatan 2005, Hanson 1997) and the future of the nation state within the European Union (Ekengren 2002).

**Table 2 Levels (or forms) of temporality**

<b>Level of temporality</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Time rules	Institutional level of temporality, dimensions of temporality (see above) regulated by and based on formal and informal rules
Time strategies	Behavioural level of temporality, dimensions of temporality as they are chosen and as they become manifest in actual behaviour of political and administrative actors
Time discourses	Discursive level of temporality, dimensions of temporality as they are debated by political and administrative actors
Time perceptions (orientations)	Cognitive(?) level of temporality, dimensions of temporality as they are perceived, interpreted and ‘sensed’ by political and administrative actors. Temporality at the cultural (macro/collective) and individual psychological (micro) level.

In summary, analytically, we can distinguish four levels or forms of temporality. Yet, like the dimensions of temporality discussed above, these different levels are also closely related to each other. Time rules, for instance, influence time strategies. Time rules also shape time perceptions, which in turn can shape time strategies. Time discourses can be the result of time rules but they can also shape time rules, making it difficult to identify the direction of the causal arrow.

## **2.4. Conceptions of Temporality**

The previous section did not only introduce different levels of temporality but also hinted at different conceptions of time and temporality. In fact, this is one of the most fundamental distinctions that has to be made in the study of time. It however also overlaps with the distinction between different causal mechanisms and theoretical approaches to the study of time and politics, which will be discussed below.

At the most general level, Lee and Liebenau (1999) distinguish ‘clock-time’ and ‘social time’. Clock time is absolute time, it is external, objective, it is linear, quantifiable and measurable. Clock time is the kind of standard understanding of what time is and what not.

Clock time is the conception of time that is used when referring to time as a methodological device. Clock time applies to basically all the works on social and labour market policy cited above, in that time is seen as a resource or as working time that can be measured in hours, days, weeks, months, etc. Clock time is also the standard usage in studies of EU legislative decision-making, the choice and impact of deadlines in the enlargement process and the choice and impact of sequences and durations in the domestic coordination process in the Europeanisation literature.

Yet, research on the sociology of time argues that most temporal orders are actually socially constructed in one way or another. When the year begins, how long a minute is, and on which day of the week we rest (or not), these are all ‘temporal rigidifications’ (Zerubavel 1981) that have been institutionalised over long periods of time. Our conception of what the past is or what the future brings has often little to do with measurable clock time but is the result of personal and/or collective perceptions. The second conception of time does therefore refer to ‘social time’ (Lee/Liebenau 1999) as something that is internal, perceived, relative, subjective, qualitative, subject to interpretation, and socially constructed.

The study of time as social time is perhaps less prominent in the European politics literature but is has a clear place. The work cited above on nationalism, identity formation, religion, etc tends to adopt a social time perspective, for national identity, for example, largely depends on the interpretation and (re)construction of the past of a community – even if there are very different assumptions over the process of this construction and the length of the past that matters for national identities of the present day (Uzelac et al 2006 ‘when is the nation’). Ekengren (2002) also discusses the perception of past, present and future in the EU.

### **2.5.1. Temporality as Dependent or Independent Variable**

Above, I already referred to time as a research design device. Here, the assumption is that time is a variable, while the distinction refers to time as either a dependent or an independent variable. The literature on time and politics and time and European governance tends to view time and temporality as an independent variable. Schmitter and Santiso (1998) look explicitly at the impact of time, timing and tempo of democratisation. Schedler and Santiso (1998) look at time as a resource (clock time!) and how it affects politicians strategies, etc. Gulick (1987) examines time as a resource in planning and coordination in public administration. Linz (1998) also looks at time as an independent variable, for instance, when examining the impact of time rules in the electoral calendar on governments' ability to implement reforms and the public's ability to assess the government's record in office. Yet, the flipside of Linz's (1998) argument is that time rules written into constitutions should be carefully chosen in order to make elections as accountability mechanisms work. Here, temporality in terms of durations, sequences and especially cycles becomes a dependent variable.

The literature reviewed in the first section above suggests that the European governance literature has seen time as both a dependent and an independent variable. The social policy papers on working time, for instance, tend to consider time as a dependent variable. Similarly, Ekengren (2002) and the work on the construction of the EU's past and future sees time as a dependent variable. By contrast, the debates on the effectiveness of EU conditionality in East Central Europe concentrate on the 'impact of deadlines and time pressures' on policy and political outcomes and thus assume time as an independent variable (Schimmelfennig/Sedelmeier 2005, Goetz 2005).

### **2.5.2. Conceptions *Plus* Designs of Temporality**

Lee and Liebenau (1999) who review the literature on time and organisations pair the research design dimension with the distinction between clock time and social time in order to classify the research. Consequently, they come up with four types of work on time and organisations. Research that considers time

- as clock time and as an independent variable is labelled *deciding time*;
- as clock time and as a dependent variable is labelled *working time*;
- as social time and independent time is labelled *varying time*;
- as social time and dependent variable is labelled *changing time*.

This provides a good starting point for the classification of some of the European governance literature. For instance, the impact of deadlines and time pressures on policy reform in Central and Eastern Europe during the accession process would be classified as ‘clock time and independent variable’ (Schimmelfennig/Sedelmeier 2005). Second, the choice of transition clauses in areas such as free movement of labour would be classified as ‘clock time and dependent variable’. Third, the impact of (culturally, psychologically and institutionally induced) time orientations of political and administrative decision-makers in Central and Eastern Europe on the quality of regulation and on the quality of the transposition of the *acquis* before accession would classify as social time and independent variable’. Finally, the (re)construction of some kind of shared past as part of a common EU identity would classify as ‘social time and dependent variable’.

In some cases, it would be possible to study the same policy from different angles. For instance, when looking at the coordination of EU policy, we can look at the choice of new sequences and durations as measured in clock time as well as perceived by administrative and political actors as a result of EU integration. Conversely, we can examine the impact of objectively shorter time for the coordination of government policy on the centralisation of government operations (e.g. Ekengren 2002, conclusions) and the impact of a perceived lack of time for policy-making and coordination on the quality of officials’ job. Also Goetz’ (2006) two perspectives on temporality and the European administrative space can broadly be accommodated in Table 4.

**Table 3 Types of Questions on Time and EU Enlargement**

<b>Clock time &amp; IV</b>	<b>Social time &amp; IV</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of deadlines and time pressures in the accession process</li> <li>• Impact of objectively (measurable) shorter coordination time spans on the centralisation of government operations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of (culturally, psychologically and institutionally induced) time orientations of political and administrative decision-makers in CEE on the quality of regulation</li> <li>• Impact of a perceived lack of time for policy-making and coordination on the quality of government planning.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choice of transition clauses in areas such as free movement of labour</li> <li>• Choice of new coordination sequences and durations as measured in clock time (as a result of EU integration and other factors as IV).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Re)construction of some kind of shared past as part of a common EU identity</li> <li>• Change in the perception of temporal processes (durations, sequences, etc) as a result of EU integration (cf. impact of ICT on temporal processes in firms).</li> </ul>
<b>Clock time &amp; DV</b>	<b>Social time &amp; DV</b>

This classification also suggests that Schedler/Santiso’s (1998) conceptualisation of time as a resource as well as Goetz’ (2006) concept of ‘governing with time’, which understands time as a resource, fall basically into only one of the four categories of studies on temporality. Similarly, Schmitter/Santiso’s (1998) understanding of time, timing and tempo and their impact on democratisation can be best classified as ‘clock time and independent variable’.

## **2.6. Theorising Temporality: Rationalist versus constructivist approaches to temporality?**

The previous section also suggests the need for a better theoretical grounding of the study of temporality and European governance. Theory-oriented work in the areas of Enlargement governance and Europeanisation primarily seeks to develop, compare and test hypotheses that are based on rationalist and on constructivist approaches to the study of politics. Accordingly, Goetz (2006) distinguishes between two types of rationalist and constructivist approaches to the study of temporality and the European administrative space. He argues that rational choice mechanisms refer to the ‘flexibility of temporality’, ‘changing opportunity structures and actors preferences’, and ‘time as a resource that can be employed so to maximise divergent utilities of the different actors involved in the decisions on enlargement and Europeanisation’. By contrast, constructivist perspectives refer to ‘the embeddedness of temporality in the multi-level institutional setting of EU governance’.

Building on these insights, we can extend the two theoretical perspectives on temporality here. First, a rationalist perspective emphasises actors’ preferences over temporal qualities (dimensions) of rules and behaviour in order to reach and maximise some material outcome. A rationalist perspective emphasises the choice (behaviour) between different temporal qualities. Surely, rationalist perspective should consider time as a resource that can be used and the view on temporality should be instrumental (and potentially based on full information of the consequences of temporal rules and strategies). Rationalist approaches should emphasise that temporal rules act as constraints on the actors’ strategies, both what (not temporality) they do and when (temporality) they do it. Rational approaches also resonate better with the concept of clock time as something external and measurable. Time rules in the enlargement process can therefore indeed be seen as resources and constraints but also as opportunities for domestic political and administrative actors.

Constructivist perspectives on the other hand should indeed emphasise the social embeddedness of temporal structures. They should emphasise how temporal structures provide meaning and sense for individuals and collectivities, they have important symbolic values, and provide orientation for the temporal appropriateness of activities. Constructivist perspectives also resonate well with social time and the social construction and interpretation of time. And, constructivism suggests that actors’ views of temporal orders, choices, perceptions and discourses are not guided by instrumentality but by ideas, principles, deeply embedded values and norms.



Table 4 seeks to provide a starting point for the development of different theoretical perspectives on the temporality of European governance but this will require further development and discussion!

**Table 6. Theorising Temporality**

<b>Level of analysis</b>	<b>Rationalist Perspective</b>	<b>Constructivist Perspective</b>
<b>Time rules as IV</b>	Time rules as formal and informal constraints on the actors' strategies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E.g. impact of deadlines and time pressures on the quality of regulation in CEE before accession.</li> <li>• Impact of roadmaps and concepts such as the 'medium term' to reduce uncertainty over accession in the candidate states (cf Avery 2007)</li> </ul>	Time rules as normative frameworks that provide meaning and orientation for appropriate action. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>Time rules as DV</b>	Time rules as outcomes of rational bargaining processes. Actors have preferences over time rules. Times rules as 'investments'. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E.g. choice of accession date by EU governments to maximise domestic benefits/minimise costs</li> </ul>	Time rules as outcomes of lengthy collective deliberation over what is an appropriate temporal order. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E.g. definition of accession date on the basis of ideas such as European unity, appropriate length of pre-accession period (CEE vs. Turkey)</li> </ul>
<b>Time strategies as IV</b>	Time strategies as actors' temporal choices that serve to maximise utility (costs/ benefits) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E.g. Delay of compliance with EU pressure for adaptation in order to maintain domestic advantage</li> </ul>	Time strategies as appropriate behaviour that serve to match the normative temporal order <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timely compliance with EU pressures for adaptation in order to be seen as a 'good candidate', 'good member', or to 'feel more EU-ish'.</li> </ul>
<b>Time strategies as DV</b>	Temporal choices as outcomes of strategic consideration to maximise utility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E.g. speed/level of delay in the transposition of EU law reflects domestic interests and executive configurations (cf. Zubek 2005)</li> <li>• Impact of new Impact Assessments on the amount of time needed by the Commission for the preparation of legislative proposal (Tholoniati 2007).</li> </ul>	Temporal choices are based on appropriateness of behaviour. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E.g. 'culture of compliance' leads to timely compliance with EU deadlines for transposition (cf. Falkner et al)</li> </ul>
<b>Time orientations as IV</b>	Time orientations of rational actors shape political outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E.g. short time horizons determine policy reforms, e.g. work on welfare state reforms (Pierson), to maximise political benefit/minimise political costs.</li> </ul>	Time orientations are culturally embedded and shape behaviour, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>Time orientations as DV</b>	Time orientations are the result of institutional and strategic incentives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E.g. EU presidency cycles induce different/shorter time horizons than Commission tenure and MEP terms.</li> <li>• Impact of new planning and programming cycle of the Commission on the time horizons of DGs and Commission officials (Tholoniati 2007)</li> </ul>	Time orientations are the result of the cultural embeddedness and collective programming of individuals and collectivities (Hostede) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>Time discourses as IV</b>	Time discourse serves to enhance strategic position of actors in the political game. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E.g. member states advocate</li> </ul>	Time discourse serves to define the appropriateness of temporal rules, choices, etc. Debates and interpretations of past,

	earlier/later accession date for Turkey in order to gain advantage in the domestic electoral game.	present, future. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E.g. debates over the appropriateness of the accession date shapes the public support for EU integration.</li> </ul>
<b>Time discourses as DV</b>	Time discourse reflects strategic usage of temporal categories to reach desired outcomes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E.g. debate over timing of accession reflects material interests of member states</li> </ul>	Time discourse reflects collective attempt to make sense of the temporal dimension of policies, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E.g. prospect of EURO accession of CEE states generates new forms of 'time discourse' at the domestic level (Dyson 2006)</li> </ul>

Both rationalist and constructivist perspectives are relevant for the study of Enlargement and Europeanisation. The setting of time rules, for instance, is central to the Enlargement process (Avery 2007). From the signing of the Europe Agreements in the early 1990s until the accession of CEE states in 2004 and, in the case of Bulgaria and Romania, 2007, basically all of the stages in the Enlargement process were characterised by the definition of temporal locations, durations, sequences, rates of recurrence and the development of more or less sophisticated temporal governing devices. These time rules were often contested both within the EU institutions, the old EU-15, the candidate states, and between the latter and the old EU15. In each of the arenas, actors bargained over the time rules governing Enlargement with a view on the consequences of these time rules for the distribution of power in the political process. Yet, the choice of time rules in the Enlargement process has also been influenced by the experience that EU institutions gathered during previous Enlargement rounds as well as by the appropriate choices that result from the consideration of broader ideas such as the commitment to European continent that is united and no longer separated (see Goetz 2006).

### 3. Conclusions & Outlook

This paper has explored how aspects of temporality are used in the study of European governance. The paper should be read as a starting point for a debate on how to approach questions of time in European governance, how to conceptualise temporality and what contribution the study of temporality can make to our understanding of the enlargement of the European Union, the Europeanisation of member and candidate states and to governance at the EU-level. The discussion suggests that aspects of temporality have a much more prominent place in the study of European governance than is usually acknowledged. Especially, enlargement governance is an area that has paid particular attention to temporal elements. But even if enlargement may be an extreme case, the examples cited above also suggest that temporal aspects are important for our understanding of how the European institutions work, how they relate to each other, and how policies are coordinated across the levels of EU governance. There are therefore good reasons to further invest in the

development of the conceptual and theoretical dimensions and in the investigation of the temporality of European governance.

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