

Odysseus Summer School 2020 – Ph.D. Seminar

Agencification of the EU's Area of Freedom, Security and Justice. The Role of the European Commission

Thesis Presentation

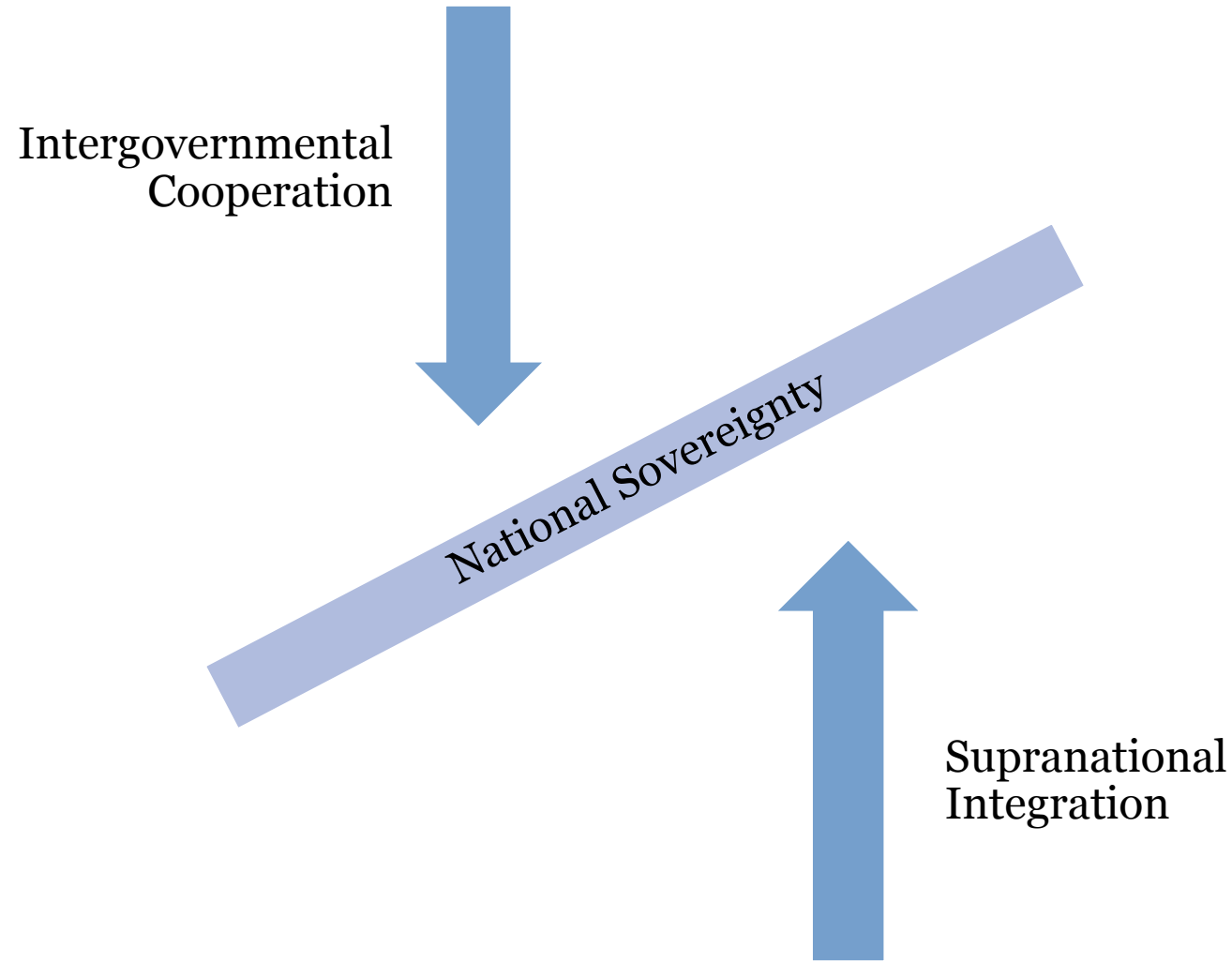
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1) The Research Puzzle



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Research Question:

How does the Commission shape the AFSJ through EU agencies in an era of increased reluctance to transfers of sovereignty to the supranational level?

2) The State of the Art

- Role of main EU institutions:
 - European Council in decline / rise?
 - Empowerment of supranational institutions?
- “Agencification” of the EU
 - Inter-institutional politics and power struggles
 - Theoretical lenses: intergovernmental, transgovernmental supranational?
 - AFSJ agencies (i) as choice of member states to avoid delegation of competences to the Commission, (ii) aimed at the production of expert knowledge and the support of coordination activities in (iii) a narrowly defined mandate?

2) The State of the Art - *shortcomings*

- Tendency of specialising in particular sub-fields of AFSJ → fragmentation
- Dominance of political scientists and legal scholars; relative absence of EU criminal justice from political science
- Relative absence of AFSJ agencies
 - From general EU agency literature
 - From literature in institutional dynamics in AFSJ
- EU Commission as unitary actor; no investigation of internal processes

3) The Research Project

Research Question: How does the Commission shape the AFSJ through EU agencies in an era of increased reluctance to transfers of sovereignty to the supranational level?

→ How are the preferences of the Commission established in this context?

→ To what extent and how does the Commission shape legislative outcomes regarding AFSJ agencies?

3) The Research Project – *Theoretical framework and hypotheses*

Theoretical framework:

- (1) Actor-centered Institutionalism (Hartlapp *et al.* 2014)
- (2) Supranational Policy Entrepreneurship (Kaunert 2010)



Hypotheses:

- (1) The **Commission preferences** as reflected in its legislative proposals can be explained by **internal processes** aimed at either **(i) technocratic problem-solving**, **(ii) ideological policy-seeking** or **(iii) maximisation of policy-competence**.
- (2) The Commission draws on its **formal rights of initiative** in combination with its **informal capacities** to **frame problems** and **shape norms** to act as an **agenda-setter** and **promote closer cooperation** in the form of supranational and binding rules, even in areas characterised by high national opposition.

3) The Research Project – *Case selection*



European Border and
Coast Guard Agency

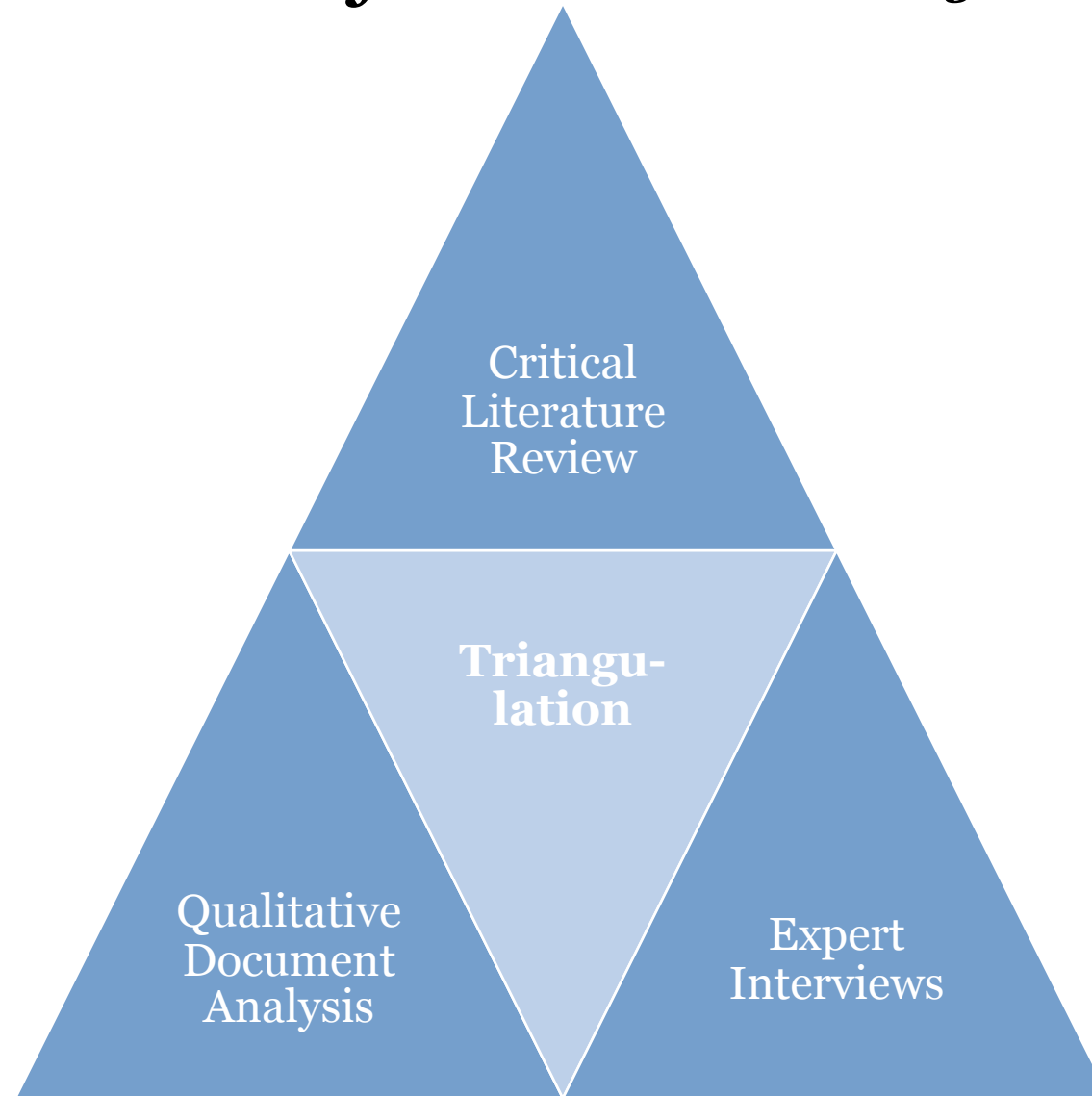


European Asylum
Support Office



European Public
Prosecutor's Office

3) The Research Project – *Methodological Approach*



4) Contribution to the field

- Theoretical debate: AFSJ agencies as cases of “integration without supranationalisation” vs. result of supranational policy entrepreneurship?
- Beyond the analysis of isolated policies
- Decomposition of perception of the Commission as unitary actor