

Impact case study (REF3b)

<p>Institution: Aston University</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 27 Area Studies</p>
<p>Title of case study: A New Way to Build Alliances in the EU</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words) Increased understanding of how a member state can influence the EU created two kinds of impacts: changing thinking, understanding and awareness (e.g. HM Treasury); and changing strategy and policy (e.g. EU Committee of Regions). Impacts were generated between 2008 and 2012 on the Polish Government, the Swedish International Development Agency, the US Depository Trust and Clearing Corporation, civil servants in Ukraine, Russia and the UK, the European think tank community, the Labour Party and the EU’s Committee of the Regions. Impact was generated through consultancies to public bodies and by providing advice to governments, international organisations and the private sector.</p> <p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words) The research that has underpinned the impact was based on three research awards between 2008 and 2012 (ESRC 000-2202723, a British Academy grant and a Polish government grant) carried out at Aston University by one member of the Aston Centre for Europe (ACE), Dr Nathaniel Copsey, Reader in Politics. The projects formed part of Dr. Copsey’s ongoing research into the nature of power and influence within the European Union.</p> <p>The aim of the research was to investigate the influence of Poland on the European Union’s policy towards its eastern neighbours. In doing so, the research offered an improved understanding both of how EU policy towards Russia, Ukraine and Belarus is made (s3.1, s3.2, s3.4, s3.5), as well as how the relationship between the European Union and its member states is evolving (s3.1, s3.2, s3.4). Poland was found to have been significant in shaping the EU’s policy towards these neighbouring states (s3.1). The research findings drove analysis of the impact of EU membership forwards, moving beyond traditional investigation of the concept of “Europeanisation”, the downward impact of the EU on its members, offering insights through the study of the “inside-out” relationship, that is, the influence of any member state on the EU (s3.1, s3.2, s3.4). This perspective had largely been missing from previous research on the governance of the European Union.</p> <p>Addressing this deficiency in analysis of the EU, this research developed a new understanding of the impact of a recent member country, Poland, on the development of European Union policy. In doing so, it adopted an innovative, intergovernmental approach, assessing the capacity of the Polish national government to exercise political leadership within the European Union. This analysis shed light on the neglected research area of what determines a Member State’s capacity to exercise power and influence in the European Union.</p> <p>The research determined (s3.1, s3.2, s3.4, s3.5,) that the ability of a given country to exercise influence in the EU is shaped by both fixed factors, primarily economic strength and population size, and by a range of variable factors. In more detail, these include: the intensity with which a member state holds a given policy preference (s3.1, s3.4); skill at alliance building, at political and senior administrative levels (s3.1, s3.4); administrative capacity to engage with the European policy-making machinery (s3.1, s3.4); persuasive advocacy (s3.1, s3.4); the receptiveness of other member states to policy proposals (s3.1, s3.4); and the domestic political strength of an incumbent national government (s3.1, s3.4)</p>

Impact case study (REF3b)

These findings illustrated that whilst individual governments have little capacity to change fixed factors, they can improve influence by addressing these variable factors. Further research on Polish EU membership with regard to other policy fields, found that two factors in particular could be addressed as a means to advance national influence within the EU's governance framework, namely: administrative capacity: this includes institutional design, co-ordination between line ministries, quality of personnel, professionalism (s3.1); and skills in strategic, long-term alliance building (s3.4).

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

Key academic publications:

- (1) Copsey, N. and Pomorska, P. (2013) 'The Influence of Newer Member States in the European Union: the Case of Poland and the Eastern Partnership'. *Europe-Asia Studies*. (36pp.).
- (2) Copsey, N. (2012) 'Poland'. In Bulmer, S. and Lequesne, C. *The Member States of the European Union* (Oxford: Oxford University Press). (26pp.)
- (3) Copsey, N. (2012) 'The Polish Left and the European Constitutional Treaty'. In Holmes, M. (ed.) *The Left and the Lisbon Treaty* (Manchester: MUP).
- (4) Copsey, N. and Pomorska, P. (2010) 'Poland's Power and Influence in the European Union: the Case of its Eastern Policy'. *Comparative European Politics*. Vol. 8, No. 3 (pp. 304–326). doi:10.1057/cep.2009.3
- (5) Copsey, N. and Haughton, T. (2009) 'The Choices for Europe? National Preference Formation in Old and New Member States'. *JCMS*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (pp. 263–286) DOI: 10.1111/j.1468-5965.2009.00804.x.

1, 4 and 5 are all published in international peer-reviewed journals. 2 and 3 are recognised quality academic presses. The research was carried out using grants to Dr Copsey as PI from the ESRC ('Poland's Influence in the EU: the Case of its Eastern Policy', 2008–10, £22,624), the Polish Government ('Grant for Academic Research in Poland', 2008–09, £1500) and the British Academy ('Research Visit to Poland' 2008–09, £3000). These indicators of quality suggest the research is internationally recognised. Copies of all publications are available on request.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

From the research outlined in section 2, two kinds of impacts were generated: changing thinking, understanding and awareness; and, changing strategy and policy. Evidence of all claims is listed in S5, numbered by section.

Changing thinking, understanding and awareness:

(s4.1) During the Polish Presidency of the EU in 2011, Dr Copsey was asked (as the only academic expert) to advise 120 civil servants from across the EU on 'What public administration reforms should be made in the future?' based on his research (S3.4) during an event entitled 'Catalysing Reform' in October 2011. He was invited again to advise a consortium of civil servants engaged in public service reform by the Polish government in 2012. According to an official in the Department for European Social Fund (ESF) Management in the Polish Ministry of Regional Development: 'the work prepared for us by Dr Copsey contributed to our decision to continue using some of the €10 billion ESF interventions to fund public administration reform'.

(s4.2) Between 2008 and 2012, Dr Copsey was consulted regularly by the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) for advice on how best to help Ukraine with its European integration process. According to the Head of Sida in Ukraine 'Dr Copsey's advice highlighted to us the vital importance of building strategic alliances with other donors working in this area, and underlined the

importance of focusing our development assistance on improving the administrative capacity of the Ukrainian state’.

(s4.3) Impact was also generated by training civil servants, diplomats and the development assistance community on the EU policy-making process. Specifically 80 Russian civil servants enrolled at the European Studies Institute in the Moscow State Institute for International Relations (MGIMO) in 2009–12. According to an official in the office of Russian Foreign Minister, ‘the training I received from Dr Copsey on how Member States exercise power and influence, together with the summer school he ran on the EU and third countries have really shaped my understanding of EU politics and questions of power and influence more generally’. Similar projects were run for Sida officials in Kyiv and Stockholm as well as for diplomats from the new Member States and 50 Ukrainian officials from 2008–12. According to an official in the Ukrainian MFA, ‘Dr Copsey’s presentations on understanding the nature of the EU political system and how outsiders like us, Ukraine, can get our message across has really helped me in my day to day duties at the MFA in Kyiv’. A seminar was also given at HM Treasury in London in 2011 on exercising influence in the EU. According to a Treasury official from the EU financial regulation team ‘the thought-provoking content has proved useful for developing our approach in the EU. Thank you’.

(s4.4) In 2011 and 2012, Dr Copsey was consulted by the Depository Trust and Clearing Corporation (DTCC) on how to build alliances for effective financial services reform in the European Union. He gave a talk in US Congress in Washington DC February 2012 on the eurozone crisis and its likely effects on the shifting patterns of alliances in the EU and also spoke on Wall Street a week later on exercising leadership in the EU, at an event organized by the Centre for the Study of Financial Innovation (CFSI). According to the Head of DTCC Brussels and the Head of Government Relations in Washington DC, ‘these presentations have really helped shape our attitude towards, and understanding of, how to be influential in the EU’.

(s4.5) Impacts were also created by presenting the findings directly to the policy community working in think tanks: a) The Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS); b) Polish Institute of International Affairs; c) The Slovak Foreign Policy Centre in 2008, 2009 and 2010; d) The Centre for International Affairs in Warsaw in 2011.

Changing policy and strategy:

(s4.6) According to a researcher from the Slovak Foreign Policy Association in 2012, ‘Dr Copsey’s work has been of enormous value to me ... I am currently drafting a strategy to improve the quality of policy coordination between line ministries and the permanent representation in Brussels, which builds directly on these insights’.

(s4.7) Findings were also presented to the Labour Party’s shadow Europe team in briefings in the House of Commons and at the National Policy Forum. According to the Shadow Europe Minister ‘Dr Copsey’s briefings and advice on EU issues, especially on the theme of alliance building really helped stimulate our thinking and has informed policy development’.

(s4.8) At the EU Committee of the Regions, according to an official from the CORLEAP (Conference of Regional and Local Authorities for the Eastern Partnership) team in CIVEX, ‘Dr Copsey’s work has helped us put together an alliance-building strategy for the work of CORLEAP’.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

Each source is numbered according to the impact to which it relates:

(s4.1) Ministry of Regional Development, Poland, agenda:

http://www.mrr.gov.pl/english/Regional_Development/Presidency/event_schedule/Strony/Catalysing_reforms_ESF_Support_for_Better_Governance_Agenda.aspx?N=T

Impact case study (REF3b)

(s4.2) Head of Sida, Ukraine

<http://www.sida.se/Global/Partners/Public%20sector/Final%20programme%2029%20April.pdf>

(s4.3) Official in the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Official in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs); Policy Adviser, Primary Markets, Securities and Markets Team

(s4.4) Head of DTCC Brussels, Head of DTCC Government Affairs, Washington DC

http://www.csfi.org/files/CSFI_NY_invitation_PDF.pdf

(s4.5) Polish Institute of International Affairs:

<http://www.pism.pl/index/?id=1068c6e4c8051cfd4e9ea8072e3189e2>

Centre for European Policy Studies:

http://www.ceps.be/events_browse?page=10&mini=lrffjoredtgozop

Centre for International Affairs, Warsaw:

http://csm.org.pl/fileadmin/files/csm/SEMINARIA/Copsey_Pomorska_POlands_Influence_in_the_EU_the_Case_of_.pdf

(s4.6) Researcher Slovak Foreign Policy Association

(s4.7) Shadow Minister for Europe

(s4.8) Committee of the Regions CIVEX Programme, agenda:

http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/events/Documents/Agenda_CORLEAP.pdf