Health Security Agencies
Between Technocracy and Democracy

Liège, November 15th-16th 2007

Daniel Benamouzig, Olivier Borraz (CNRS)
Olgiert Kuty, Frédéric Schoenaers (Université de Liège)

Organizing committee: Paolo Crivellari, David Demortain, Boris Hauray, Frédéric Keck, Audrey Melotte and Magali Robelet

Over the last decade, the creation of agencies related to health products and foodstuffs has become a common and general feature of most European countries along with the European Commission. These institutions are expected to renew traditional policy-making on health issues, by providing sound scientific advice for policy-makers. Health crises and controversies have spurred further interest in the risk assessment and risk management procedures handled by these agencies.

This two-day conference will be organized around four issues: the creation of agencies; agencies as strategic actors; the Europeanization of agencies; agencies and democratisation. It will bring together academics, actors and stakeholders interested in health security agencies.

Registration: audrey.melotte@ulg.ac.be

More information: benamouz@vjf.cnrs.fr; o.borraz@cso.cnrs.fr; F.Schoenaers@ulg.ac.be

http://www.csi.ensmp.fr/ WebCSI/MEDUSE/
The creation of health safety agencies is often captured within a wider set of changes: the move toward a regulatory state, delegation to independent authorities, the rise of non-majoritarian institutions or the success of New Public Management in the reform of public administrations. But this accounts neither for the specific reasons agencies were created in the different European countries, nor for the many organizational variations between agencies from one sector or one country to another. Hence, it is necessary to study the formation of agencies from a political point of view: in terms of the context of their creation (political crisis, governance crisis, reforms, policy changes), the struggles between different institutions that arose around their creation, and their place within regulation regimes and institutional frameworks. These elements can in part be captured by the notion of “constitutional politics”, i.e. how the creation and formation of agencies is motivated or affected by conflicts between institutional interests, and how legal doctrines are instrumentalised. But blame-prevention strategies and the necessity for political authorities to regain policy credibility must also be looked into, along with the influence of social and economic interests.
Health security agencies can be considered as strategic actors, striving to gain a clear recognition of their role and influence, a place in the decision-making process, an impact on the behavior of the different stakeholders. Recognition can arise from the organization of expertise procedures and the capacity to provide “sound” scientific advice; it can also result from a more political behavior, seizing opportunities within complex institutional arrangements or crisis situations to push forward their interests, gain support from organized interests, or mobilize resources. Agencies also act within a wider set of “sister” institutions (similar agencies in other countries, but also within their own country on other issues): competition between them is an important aspect of their behavior, for it determines their capacity to attract firms, gain resources, establish their excellence or impose their own standards on expertise. Lastly, agencies must also deal with institutions at the European, national and even subnational levels: there again, they must strive to establish some form of legitimacy through their capacity to provide advice, information or standards which will be picked up by other protagonists and determine their behavior or preferences.

Programme

November 15th afternoon

2:30 pm  Agencies as strategic actors

Participants

Henry Rothstein – Lecturer in Risk Management at King’s College and Deputy Director of the King’s Centre for Risk Management

Philippe Duneton – Secretary-General of UNITAID International Drug Purchase Facility; former director of the French drug safety agency (to be confirmed)

Gilbert Houins – Director General of the Belgian Federal agency for the safety of the food chain

Pause

Xavier De Cuyper, Director General of the Belgian Federal drug safety agency

Sebastian Krapohl – Assistant Professor for International Relations and European Politics at the Otto-Friedrich-University of Bamberg

Discussant: Christopher Pollitt – Research Professor of Public Management at the Public Management Institute, Catholic University of Louvain

5:30 pm  End of the session

5:30-7:00 pm  Cocktail on the university campus
The existence of agencies both at the national and European levels suggests different questions: in what way do national agencies attempt, and eventually succeed, in influencing the organization, workings and productions of European agencies? How have the latter influenced, in return, the former? Have European agencies helped in the creation of a group of experts or professionals at a supra-national level? Can a convergence in the way agencies are organized and work be observed?

For some authors, Europeanization is the process of coordinating national actors with opposite interests and strategies. For others, as various social actors are embedded in a common space, their identities and strategies evolve and become distinct from those of national actors. Yet others see Europeanization as a process of institutionalization, i.e. the production and sharing of norms and procedures, permeated by values.

Europeanization also suggests looking into the networks that have taken shape between experts, professionals and regulators. These networks develop distinct and common ways of doing things, procedures and norms of their own. They are, in particular, interesting loci to observe how information has an impact on coordination and regulation.

**November 16th morning**

9:00 am  **The Europeanization of agencies**

Participants:
- Boris Hauray – INSERM Research fellow at the Institut de recherche interdisciplinaire sur les enjeux sociaux (IRIS) – CNRS-INSERM-EHESS-Paris XIII
- Jytte Lyngvig – Chief Executive Officer of the Danish Medicines Agency
- Susan Forda – Executive Director of European Regulatory Affairs, Eli Lilly & Co, UK, and Chair of the Scientific, Technical and Regulatory Policy Committee, EFPIA

Pause

Claudio Jommi – Lecturer in Public Management and in Management, Economy and International Healthcare Policy at the business school Bocconi University, Milan, and responsible for the OSFAR, Observatory on Medicines

Karolina Zurek (Researcher, Department of Law, European University Institute, Florence) and Partycia Dabrowska (PhD, Centre for Europe, Warsaw University)

Discussant: Renaud Dehousse – Professor of public law and political science and Director of the Centre for European Studies, Sciences Po Paris

12:00 am  Lunch
Agencies were often created with the intention of opening up decision-making processes accused of being opaque, closed or captured by private interests. Stakeholder participation, consultation with the public, transparency of the regulatory process, illustrate this intention – along with accountability and responsibility. Yet, when assessing the different national and European agencies, little progress seems to have been made along the lines of democratization. This calls for a closer look at some other dimensions. In particular, how do these agencies fit in a more general institutional arrangement organized around a parliamentary or a “non majoritarian” democracy? In other words, do they partake (and if so, how) in the redefinition of national and European polities? Are agencies an extension of public bureaucracies or do they embody a change in the nature of public administration? How are relations with interest groups organized? And how are stakeholders brought into the governance of agencies? Lastly, what type of control is exercised on these agencies: is it political, i.e. through the parliament or the ministries in charge of regulation? social, via interest groups, NGOs or the media? or judicial, through the courts? and if so, based on what principles?

**Programme**

**November 16th afternoon**

1:30 pm  **Agencies and democratisation**

**Participants**

Giandomenico Majone – External Professor at the European University Institute, Florence; Visiting Distinguished Professor EU Centre and Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, Pittsburgh

François Houyez – Health Policy Officer, EURORDIS (European Organisation for Rare Diseases)

Pause

John Abraham – Professor of Sociology at Sussex University, Co-director of the Centre for Research on Health and Medicine

Jose Luis Valverde – Professor of Pharmaceutical Law, University of Granada

Discussant: João Arriscado Nunes – Associate Professor, School of Economics, University of Coimbra

4:30 pm  **Concluding remarks**

Daniel Benamouzig – CNRS research fellow at the CERMES (CNRS-INSERM-EHESS) and Olivier Borraz – CNRS senior research fellow at the Centre de Sociologie des Organisations (CNRS-Sciences Po Paris)

5:00 pm  **End of the meeting**
CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

Please fill in and return by e-mail (Audrey.Melotte@ulg.ac.be) or fax (+32 4 366 47 51) before November 5th 2007

1. Participant information

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2. Conference registration

I SHALL PARTICIPATE IN:

- [ ] THE CONFERENCE ON THURSDAY NOVEMBER 15TH
- [ ] THE CONFERENCE ON FRIDAY NOVEMBER 16TH

Coffee breaks and lunches are offered.

3. Transportation

A free shuttle service will be organized, from the Opéra Royal de Wallonie (bus stop “Opéra”- Rue des Dominicains 1 - 4000 Liège) to the University campus. The bus will be called “TRANSPORT SPECIAL”.

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How to get there?

Address:
Université de Liège
Campus du Sart-Tilman - Bâtiment B31
Amphithéâtre PORTALIS
Boulevard du Rectorat, 7
4000 Liège
Belgium

Map and directions:
To get to Liège:
http://www.ulg.ac.be/acces/plans/autoroutes.html

Campus map:
http://www.ulg.ac.be/acces/plans/zonenord.html

Hotels in Liège:
http://www.liege.be/cadreslg/cadvisit.htm