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The Evolution of Governmental Europeanization in two selected countries: a comparative analysis of Italy and Switzerland in the last 30 years after the Maastricht Treaty (1992).

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This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my grandparents Ermenegildo and Rosanna.
This thesis embraces a desire for peace for the European Continent and for the entire world in
those difficult times.

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2. Abstract

This thesis aims to study governmental Europeanization as a process of governmental internationalization, addressed to a progressive approximation to the European Union.

Since this topic has been deeply studied by several scholars, we decided to tackle a comparative case study analysis, choosing Italy (ITA) and Switzerland (CH) as units of analysis.

The logic behind this study relies on the comparison of a European founding State (ITA) with a neutral country with a strong interdependence with the European Union (CH). The object of the analysis is to study how our units of analysis strengthened their relationship with the EU supranational institutions in the last 30 years.

We identified two specific paths of governmental internationalization, focusing on their strategy of governmental Europeanization: Italy through “full membership” in the European institutional framework, and Switzerland through “ad hoc” bilateral agreements, identifiable in the literature as “relative Europeanization”.

Despite partially sharing their borders, Italy and Switzerland seemed to embrace the Mill’s “most different criterion” while discussing socio-political aspects. At the same time, both countries seem to care about economic integration in a very similar way.

The characteristics of their socio-political and economic background let us identify new institutionalism as the most appropriate lenses for studying this topic. New institutionalism allows us to measure the pervasive influence of institutions on the socio/political/economic environments through rules, norms, and other frameworks.

More specifically, the branch of historical institutionalism is expected to let us identify the evolution of Europeanization strategies in a diachronic logic, considering 1992 (a crucial year because of the Maastricht Treaty) as the starting point of our analysis.

Path dependence theory, the flagship of historical institutionalism, guides the overall explanation tracking two parallel ways of Governmental Europeanization: one keener to delegate power to the EU supranational level, the other keener to defend its political autonomy based on neutrality. As we said, those paths are parallel and addressed towards the

same goal: benefitting a wider market, getting opportunities from social exchanges and from a community that shares similar social values.

The originality of this thesis is not only based on the considered cases but especially on how approaching them, to interpret the logic of governmental Europeanization during a crucial arch of time and starting from different countries' constitutional values.

After a pertinent analysis of the academic literature about the abovementioned topics, we will introduce the research design and the selected indicators to present empirical evidence from secondary data coming from international surveys, supporting the overall analysis.

Keywords: Europeanization, New Institutionalism, Historical Institutionalism, Path Dependence, Italy, Switzerland, Institutional Trust, Neutrality.

3. Introduction

This thesis seeks to better understand the main drivers of the historical evolution of governments' position towards the European project. Specifically, questioning why some countries have grown more favorable to further Europeanisation, while others have remained lukewarm or even opposed over the past 30 years.

Are trajectories similar or different across countries? What are the main vectors of these similarities or differences? This research, using a neo-intuitionist framework, notably articulated around the concept of 'path dependence', analyses the comparative importance of historical institutions in this development. The project will explore this question by looking at two countries, a member and a non-member, Italy and Switzerland, and cover the period since the Maastricht treaty of 1992 and focusing on the most salient milestones at the national and at the EU level.

The very first step of this research was to identify the overall research interest, anchored especially in the socio-political literature that we will introduce later.

Starting from the literature review, a research question let us think about the overall approach:

Are positions of governments towards the European project defined mainly on the basis of their historical institutions' features and therefore hard to modify, or have we seen a departure from the 'path dependence' outlined in the theory?

Then, we customized this general research question to embrace our research interest, calibrated on the cases and on the theories (explained more in detail in the next section).

Starting from this point, we elaborated the main research question:

In the last 30 years, are the Italian and Swiss governments maintaining their "path dependence" while dealing with the evolution of their relations with the EU supranational institutions?

As anticipated in the abstract, this main research question focuses on national governments' propensity to internationalize the considered countries in a supranational context, in this case, the European one.

In the literature review, we will go more into details about governmental internationalization, Europeanization, and about the modalities in which a government can choose, adapt or reject the abovementioned paradigms.

This main research question paves the way for another sub-research question, declined on the considered dimension: social, political and economic ones:

How much does the national social/political/economic features and their historical development influence the evolution of governmental Europeanization?

We consider as social, political and economic features all the salient aspects characterizing the overall States' institutional asset. Almost all those features refer to the "physical" institutional framework except the social ones. The social ones refer to the aggregation of individuals perceived as "community", thus, considering themselves as a collective institution.

A blend of the consolidated socio-political and economic features can be identified as the historical background of the characteristics of the considered countries. This historical background strengthened a national tradition on which building specific predictable institutions' behaviour.

In each considered country, each tradition consolidated a "specific path" that can be our point of reference while studying the evolution of governmental Europeanization, looking at its coherence or at its discrepancies.

This sub-research question is the starting point from which we will introduce the consequent sub-hypotheses.

In this introduction, we want also to outline briefly the methodology that we intend to use.

Using a “most different criterion”, the analysis will develop a qualitative historical comparison where the macro-units of analysis are Italy and Switzerland. Since the phenomena under study are complex and it would not be possible to investigate all their aspects, the analysis will focus on those features that appear to be the most relevant for the scope of this thesis from a theoretical point of view: Economic, Social and Political institutions.

This comparative analysis will also have an analytical aim, it will serve to verify empirically the different hypotheses. In particular, it should allow identifying specific causal relationships between the evolution of Europeanization (historical evolution of governments’ position towards the European project) and the evolution of the economic, social and political institutions of two different societies, the Italian and the Swiss one, in the past 30 years.

Talking about the conceptualization at the basis of this thesis, neo-institutionalism defines institutions as a set of practices, formal or informal, that serve as a basis for any development. This project defines and differentiates these institutions as being either economic, political or social.

As we will see later going more into detail, this thesis uses the lenses of historical neo-institutionalism (a branch of neo-institutionalism presented in the next sections) and path dependence theory.

Finally, talking about the section of operationalization, we will explain the logic behind the choice of distinct metrics used in the literature to evaluate the evolution of the government’s position towards the European Project. Each of those metrics, traduced in indicators, will be analyzed at each historical juncture that characterized the last 30 years of contemporaneity. Those indicators will consider the economy, focusing on the evolution of the economic integration with the world and Europe (as percentages of all trade). They will focus also on Politics, dealing with the logic of EU integration (with regards to the presence or pro and anti-European parties in the national political arena). Then, those indicators will be expected to measure the polarization of the social context through the level of trust among citizens towards EU institutions and towards national ones.

All those indicators are expected to allow us in explaining our argumentation about the willingness for ‘for more Europe’, practically embraced by governmental strategies of Europeanization.

Moreover, this multidimensional perspective is asked to find a synthesis to explain which "path" has been eventually followed by the Italian and Swiss institutions, or if there are multiple/unexpected deviances.

4. Literature Review

Governments' attitude towards internationalization.

Talking about countries and their governments, a process of internationalization is a path in which the socio-political and economic scenario shows a tendency towards a wider dimension. A reliable background and a propensity to embrace a more globalized paradigm are well explained by Picciotto (1991)¹: "International coordination of state functions is based on bureaucratic corporatist bargaining through formal and informal structures. The globalization of social relations puts increasing pressure on both national and international state structures and requires a popular internationalist response".

Thus, internationalization depends on the country's institutional predisposition, the level of population commitment, and the overall context in which the government is asked to operate. The more a socio-economical context is inclined to interact internationally, the more it propends to internationalize its government and vice versa (Garret & Lange, 1995)².

Governmental internationalization is a political strategy aiming to foster countries' international relations, join an international organization, share international responsibilities, and boost economic interactions. Governments are expected to achieve contemporary goals that characterize an ever more globalized world. In many cases, it implies structural changes in consolidated policies according to precise logic. This logic comes from the several new factors characterizing contemporary socio-economic contexts (Kumar, 2003)³. Fulfilling the abovementioned expectations (totally or partially), governmental internationalization means tackling contemporary challenges with a precise strategy based on an evolutionary institutional framework. This strategy is expected to lead to benefits from socio-political convergences such as common defense and a wider economic context in which operating (Picciotto, 1990)⁴. All those reasons are additionally based on the evaluation of a mixture of positive and/or negative externalities, opportunities and threats behind governmental internationalization (Veress, 2002⁵, Gartzke & Li, 2003⁶).

A combination of those elements could outline if and how a government shows a positive or negative propensity towards a supranational institutional asset. Those elements are a combination of the abovementioned pros and cons: a well-structured strategy of governmental

internationalization is not enough to guarantee positive externalities to the entire population. Some categories could be damaged, for example, by the opening of the markets to foreign players (Rosenau, 1997)⁷. Governments in office while implementing such strategies are expected to evaluate the overall consequences on the majority of the population's wellbeing but, if necessary, also to protect some specific vulnerable groups. This perspective can be studied independently from the existence of a supranational institution, again, for example, even just considering the opening of markets to international competition (Kendall et Al., 2009)⁸.

In our case, the target is the European scenario mainly considering countries' membership of the European Union as a characterizing feature of a specific internationalizing path (Lengyel, 2011)⁹. An internationalizing path such as the European ones requires an evaluation and a balance among the willingness to delegate competencies or to maintain national sovereignty (Hathaway, 2008)¹⁰. The more a country aims at internationalizing itself, the more its government has to negotiate its sovereignty with other national and supranational institutions (Lucas, 1999)¹¹. This is a source of pros and cons that involves not only governments' competencies but also citizens' sense of representativeness and the cohesion among political/economic institutions. Those externalities regard sociopolitical and economic aspects that could derive from the delegation of power. Generally, national governments delegate powers to supranational ones (as in the cases of the EU countries¹²) or negotiate among themselves new rules of coexistence and collaboration through bi/multi-lateral agreements (Guzman, Landsidle, 2008)¹³. The progressive integration in a supranational institution could cause reluctance and dissatisfaction among people, but governments are in charge of negotiating and deciding about those processes.

Taking into consideration western democracies, the political inclination towards supranational institutions derives from the results of elections and/or from specific referendums. Here emerges the crucial role played by the consensus (or the denial) towards internationalism.

In many cases the arguments in support of governmental internationalization are presented as a consequence of globalization, the necessity to strengthen a commercial network and guarantee peace and stability. Nevertheless, ideologies continue to guide governmental sensibility and political behaviour, even if the same governments are bound into overly stringent rules of the international scenario (Axelrod, 2015)¹⁴.

A mixture of political culture, geopolitical collocation and citizens' response deeply affect governments' attitudes towards internationalization. This combination of past and present factors creates a suitable political landscape in which ideologies are declined into a real political mission.

¹ Picciotto, S. (1991). The Internationalisation of the State. *Capital & Class*, 15(1), 43–63.

² Garrett, G., & Lange, P. (1995). Internationalization, institutions, and political change. *International Organization*, 627-655.

³ Kumar, V. S. (2003). A Critical Methodology of Globalization: Politics of the 21st Century?. *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, 10(2), 87-111.

⁴ Picciotto, S. (1990). The internationalization of the state. *Review of Radical Political Economics*, 22(1), 28-44.

⁵ Veress, J. (2002). Externalities of Globalization. *Periodica Polytechnica Social and Management Sciences*, 10(2), 215-226.

⁶ Gartzke, E., & Li, Q. (2003). War, peace, and the invisible hand: Positive political externalities of economic globalization. *International Studies Quarterly*, 47(4), 561-586.

⁷ Rosenau, J. N. (1997). The complexities and contradictions of globalization. *Current History*, 96(613), 360.

⁸ Kendall, G., Woodward, I., & Skrbis, Z. (2009). *The sociology of cosmopolitanism: Globalization, identity, culture and government*. Springer. Pages 19-27.

⁹ Lengyel, G. (2011). Supranational attachment of European elites and citizens. *Europe-Asia Studies*, 63(6), 1033-1054.

¹⁰ Hathaway, O. A. (2008). International delegation and state sovereignty. *Law & Contemp. Probs.*, 71, 115.

¹¹ Lucas, M. R. (1999). Nationalism, Sovereignty, and Supranational Organizations. Pagg 7-11 ¹² Lindseth, P. L. (2010). *Power and legitimacy: Reconciling Europe and the nation-state*. Oxford University Press. Pagg 251-277.

¹³ Guzman, A. T., & Landside, J. (2008). The myth of international delegation. *Calif. L. Rev.*, 96, 1693.

Europeanization

Talking about the considered geographical area analyzed in this research, the concept of governmental internationalization could be studied from the perspective of governmental Europeanization. Europeanization is a more specific concept than internationalization. More specifically, Europeanization embraces all the previous explanations about internationalization, but it regards a more specific institutional framework: the EU one.

Several features characterize the EU institutional framework, bounding its members into a precise political and ideological perimeter, thus Europeanization denotes a specific direction of countries' institutional development.

Ladrech (1994)¹⁵ tried to define Europeanization as follows: "An incremental process reorienting the direction and shape of politics to the degree that the European Community's political and economic dynamics become part of the organizational logic of national politics and policy-making".

Because of all those aspects, the objective of this analysis aims at explaining the governmental propensity towards the European supranational institutions. Moreover, Europeanization is also defined as an evolutionary process whose products are a well-structured ideological framework and the European supranational institutions themselves, progressively adapted to the contingencies that emerged in the last decades (Best et Al., 2012)¹⁶.

Several scholars wrote about Europeanization; nevertheless, only history and contemporary sociological studies can primarily delve into the European political developments of the last decades.

Primarily, we need to clarify one point: studying the degree of Europeanization of a country do not necessarily imply a prerequisite of "EU-membership". As long as we tackle Europeanization as a more specific process of internationalization, non-member states could strengthen (or deny) their relationship with this specific geopolitical context. According to this, also a neutral state as Switzerland can be studied in this specific logic.

By reviewing the literature on Europeanisation, we can check whether this concept has taken on different meanings. It depends on whether it has been applied to the analysis of a member state such as Italy or a non-member state such as Switzerland. For example, Sciarini et Al.

(2004)¹ claim that the influence of the European Union is not limited to member states. Nevertheless, non-EU countries evaluate a spontaneous adaptation to the EU if it is considered convenient for domestic policies. This is the case of the Helvetic Confederation where we can find several examples of spontaneous adaptation to the EU context. In many cases, this spontaneous adaptation is entirely autonomous, but in other cases, it is bounded by ad hoc bilateral agreements, such as between Switzerland and the EU.

Thus, Switzerland shows a mixture of the autonomous legislative process and of bilateral official negotiation. Again Sciarini et Al. (2004) remark that this process of Europeanization is validated by popular expression through confirmative referenda: this is a clear example of how this process of spontaneous adaptation is well mediated among socio-political and economic actors.

The interest in what Switzerland does in this process is crucial in order to study institutions and actors' strategies to foster Swiss adaptation to the EU, maintaining its neutral connotation and pursuing specific goals. This logic is underlined by Fischer et Al. (2002)² studies. They underline that a non-member state ought to consider domestic power configuration, political actors' strategies and a plan of mediation among domestic institutions when dealing with an autonomous Europeanization Process. According to them, the case of Switzerland perfectly embraces this paradigm in a positive way. First of all, they underline the clear identification of political and economic goals at the basis of a spontaneous adaptation to the EU.

The adaptation change is the result of an adaptation pressure on the existing misfits between the Helvetic context and the EU one to reach the specific purposes. Then, through a proper strategy of political actors' empowerment and through a definition of the so-called "veto points" (un-negotiable aspects), the process of mediation is expected to reach an harmonized and acceptable formal or informal result.

According to the analyzed literature, two of the main fields of discussion are the policies of free movements (of people, goods, services and capitals) and macro-economic aspects/regulations.

¹ Sciarini, P., Fischer, A., & Nicolet, S. (2004). How Europe hits home: evidence from the Swiss case. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 11(3), 353-378.

² Fischer, A., Nicolet, S., & Sciarini, P. (2002). Europeanisation of a non-EU country: The case of Swiss immigration policy. *West European Politics*, 25(4), 143-170.

Here Quaglia (2013) paves the way to the definition of strong and weak Europeanization. The author underlines how the EU's influence can be direct or indirect, depending on if we are dealing with a member state or with a non-member state. Then we have a strong Europeanization when it deeply affects the considered macroeconomic context (especially involving monetary policies). Alternatively, we have a weak Europeanization only when it affects in a minor way only the financial context or the socio-cultural tendencies.

What emerges evidently in our comparison and in further readings, the degree of Europeanization is not homogeneous and depends on each countries' specificities.

A last remark by Quaglia regards the model of "Europeanization": some countries follow a "German-inspired approach (more stability-oriented) or an Anglo-Saxon approach (more addressed to a market-friendly regulation).

Later we will see that Switzerland is more addressed towards a German-inspired model while Italy cannot be identified aligned to any abovementioned model because its capitalistic model is neither identifiable in a coordinated market economy (CME) nor in a liberal market economy (LME) (Kornelakis, 2011)³.

Europe, not only a continent: the aspiration of a "new polis".

Since the prodromic stages of its foundations, the European Union relies not only on common interests but also on an ideological pattern that can be defined as Europeanism. Europeanism is considered as the ideological scheme at the basis of governmental Europeanization.

Since the 9th of May 1950, this political concept was theorized and summed up by Robert Schuman's Declaration¹⁷, to overtake the historical rivalry between France and Germany not only under the economic perspective (especially in the coal industry) but also under a geopolitical framework. Even before Schuman's declaration, the roots of Europeanism were discussed by Jean Monnet. Monnet's declaration was crucial because he dealt with the connection between peace and a federation of European countries.

³ Kornelakis, A. (2011). Dual convergence or hybridization? Institutional change in Italy and Greece from the varieties of capitalism perspective. *CEU Political Science Journal*, (01), 47-82.

He said to the French National Liberation Committee on the 5th of August 1943:

“There will be no peace in Europe if the states are reconstituted based on national sovereignty. (...) The countries of Europe are too small to guarantee their peoples the necessary prosperity and social development. The European states must constitute themselves into a federation”.

Those sentences inspired the prodromes of the idea of integration between European countries and of governmental Europeanization¹⁸.

According to Niedermayer et Al. (1995)¹⁹, the foundation of Europe should be considered a sort of new “polis”. Feelings like membership, involvement, sense of belongingness and idealization of the community’s active role are at the basis of the European integration.

Starting from Neydermayer’s assumption, Europeanization can be considered as a sort of process in which all the actors involved are trying to settle a sort of new community, well-structured and organized on common principles.

The above-mentioned Schuman and Monnet’s principles were the starting point of a more articulated process: a common ground upon which to build a complex institutional framework. Consequently, the process of Europeanization consists both of the remarks of a political framework and practical steps of the institutional constitution. This process can be split into further declination: the political process embraces historical roots, emerging post-war contingencies, foreign relations and so on. According to this, the ideological framework outlines the practical steps to be improved to reach concrete political results. This logic boosted the evolution of the entire institutional framework, formally tracked by treaties and by institutional changes. The blend of ideologies and practical necessities has characterized the very first steps of the process of Europeanization since its beginning, counterpointing selfish national interest to a more cohesive approach (McCormick, 2010)²⁰. It led to a progressive achievement of solutions in which a pluralist approach explained the desire for proactive interactions among countries that, until the previous decades, used to fight each other (Borneman and Fowler, 1997)²¹. This post-war change of mindset led to a step-by-step

approach: first of all, to smooth historical rivalry and harmonize the national institutional framework with a supranational system.

Before moving towards the next session, we remind that EU integration and its practical aspects are the key aspects to be taken into consideration for our study. EU integration is more a piece of practical evidence than a formality. It can result as a measure of the governmental Europeanization process, regardless of a formal membership or a formal constitution. Again, according to Zimmermann & Dür (2021), integration means both concrete aspects of political affairs and philosophical ones, driven by the common sense of belongingness to a commonality of values and social traditions.

¹⁴ Axelrod, R. (Ed.). (2015). *Structure of decision: The cognitive maps of political elites*. Princeton university press. Pagg. 18-55.

¹⁵ Ladrech, R. (1994): 'Europeanization of Domestic Politics and Institutions: The Case of France', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 1, pp. 69-88.

¹⁶ Best, H., Lengyel, G., & Verzichelli, L. (Eds.). (2012). *The Europe of elites: A study into the Europeanness of Europe's political and economic elites*. Oxford University Press. Pagg. 208-234. ¹⁷ Schuman, R. (1950). The Schuman Declaration.

¹⁸ https://europa.eu/european-union/sites/europaeu/files/docs/body/jean_monnet_en.pdf

New institutionalism

Coming back to the logic behind Europeanization, we ought to point out its relationship to the theoretical perspective of new institutionalism. Talking about this relationship, Blumer (2008)²² proposed a synthesis of the main contributions about it, characterizing this perspective with a contextualization devoted to the European scenario.

Citing Hall and Taylor (1996)²³, Blumer outlined the three variants of new institutionalism: rational choice institutionalism (RCI), historical institutionalism (HI) and sociological institutionalism (SI).

Talking about Europeanization, rational choice institutionalism (RCI) identifies the logic behind every political choice made by governments to get the main opportunities deriving from this process. Moreover, RCI denotes the limits that emerged from the new political frontiers, considering each issue deriving from a new idea of sovereignty, power delegation and socio-economical needs. This approach has justified the progressive consolidation of today's EU institutional framework. Blumer claimed: "A further concern of RCI is with the design of institutions in connection with the desired policy objectives". This last quotation remarks how the degree of political satisfaction depends on governmental propensity (or rejection) towards such an internationalized supranational model.

Talking about historical institutionalism (HI), this approach towards Europeanization ought to consider the several adjustments deriving from the occurred changes of governments' political mindset after the Second World War. Many countries changed their internal organization and faced resistance both from the institutional structure and from the ideological background. More specifically, a renewed political mindset, based on international cooperative attitudes, progressively overcame the most widespread nationalistic pre-bellum mentality. The HI approach aims at delving into this mechanism, identifying a progressive institutional path. Later we will define better the evolution of governments' political mindset while talking about "path dependence theory"; we will discuss its role played in the institution-building process and during the main challenges that occurred in the last decades. Here, the political goals and the crucial historical events at the basis of the Europeanization process influence the evolution of the political scenario and identify coherent solutions while tackling current contingencies.

Finally, talking about the last approach, sociological institutionalism (SI) aims at considering the sociological features characterizing the process of Europeanization. A broader analysis could include ideological matters, people's perceptions, identity contrasts and so on. This approach results useful to understanding the social dynamics behind political rhetoric, the logic of consensus and the resistances against some political purposes. To give an example, SI is considered as a key approach while studying the process of Europeanization of candidate countries to the EU membership. Several scholars studied the attitude towards the Europeanization process into former communist countries of Eastern Europe (Goetz, 2001²⁴, Huges at Al., 2005²⁵, Schimmelfennig et Sedelmeie, 2020²⁶), of the Balkans (Anastasakis, 2005²⁷, Suboti, 2011)²⁸ and of Muslim's areas (Ulusoy, 2009)²⁹.

As presented in the above-mentioned three variants, the new institutionalism approach can be a holistic way to study the phenomenon of Europeanization but it could result in a too broad approach if we intend to consider contemporary all those aspects.

Thus, we chose its variant called "historical institutionalism". According to the aim of this thesis, HI is the best lens to interpret the evolution of governmental propensity towards Europeanization. Historical roots and the evolution of the European institutional context are necessary elements to interpret today's scenario and the current tendencies regarding governmental Europeanization.

¹⁹ Niedermayer, O., & Sinnott, R. (Eds.). (1995). *Public opinion and internationalized governance* (Vol.2). OUP Oxford.

²⁰ McCormick, J. (2010). *Europeanism*. Oxford University Press. Pagg. 17-42.

²¹ Borneman, J., & Fowler, N. (1997). Europeanization. *Annual review of anthropology*, 26(1), 487-514.

²² Bulmer, S. (2008). Theorizing Europeanization. In *Europeanization* (pp. 46-58). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

²³ Hall, P. A., & Taylor, R. C. (1996). Political science and the three new institutionalism. *Political Studies*, 44(5), 936-957.

²⁴ Goetz, K. H. (2001). Making sense of post-communist central administration: modernization, Europeanization or Latinization?. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 8(6), 1032-1051.

²⁵ Hughes, J., Sasse, G., & Gordon, C. (2005). *Europeanization and Regionalization in the EU? s Enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe*. Palgrave Macmillan, a division of Macmillan Publishers Limited.

²⁶ Schimmelfennig, F., & Sedelmeier, U. (2020). The Europeanization of Eastern Europe: the external incentives model revisited. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 27(6), 814-833.

Thanks to this explanation of historical institutionalism, we can open this part of the literature review focusing on the following branches of concepts: the Italian path and the Swiss path with their key features and commonalities.

The first branch regards the “Italian path”, the other one regards the “Swiss path” then, we will open the debate about concepts regarding both countries. Those last concepts will be theoretically approached in this section and practically measured in the empirical sections about the indicators.

The Italian path can be identified as characterized by a pro-EU attitude and paves the way to talk about the European identity.

The European identity can be seen as the sense of belongingness to the supranational European context. This is both grounded in the already mentioned pan-Europeanism and in a more functionalist approach, typical of the second post-war period (Shore & Black)⁴. This sense of belongingness is anchored on an institutional framework and on a commonality of values (at the basis of the EU integration). This sense of belongingness is also a matter of self-recognition (at the individual level) and of self-affirmation (at the state level, in International Relations). Italy proceeded in this kind of logic since being a founding state of the European Union, strengthening its relations within EU countries and with the EU supranational framework. This strengthening of relations is mainly characterized by a process of progressive adhesion to a cohesive approach to the EU project. Additionally, the European identity is also a sociological aspect, related to the role of symbols, its flag and its history (Prisacariu, 2020)⁵. All those characteristics are the ideological roots at the basis of most practical aspects of power delegation (Lindseth, 2010)⁶. Moving from the logic of full

²⁷ Anastasakis, O. (2005). The Europeanization of the Balkans. *Brown J. World Aff.*, 12, 77.²⁸ Subotic, J. (2011). Europe is a State of Mind: Identity and Europeanization in the Balkans. *International studies quarterly*, 55(2), 309-330.

²⁹ Ulusoy, K. (2009). The changing challenge of Europeanization to politics and governance in Turkey. *International Political Science Review*, 30(4), 363-384.

⁴ Shore, C., & Black, A. (2021). Citizens’ Europe and the construction of European identity. In *The Anthropology of Europe* (pp. 275-298). Routledge.

⁵ Prisacariu, I. S. (2020). The symbols role in the creation of a European identity.

⁶ Lindseth, P. L. (2010). *Power and legitimacy: Reconciling Europe and the nation-state*. Oxford University Press. Pagg. 266 -283.

sovereignty (at the basis of the nationalistic ideologies of the previous centuries) towards a supranational dimension means re-addressing (or creating new) political and economic competencies. The delegation of those competencies is part of a project of enforcement of the supranational dimension. The relevance of those competencies denotes the willingness to empower the supranational order. At the same time, this process of power delegation corresponds to a partial renounce of competencies by the national state.

If well planned, those renounces ought to be part of a wider process of international empowerment of its supranational reality. The overall balance is expected to strengthen the relevance of citizens' claims of every single country involved in the considered supranational project. Those are the expectations connected also to the European Union for Italy and denotes the Italian path in the process of power delegation for the overall constitution of the European Union: with its prerogatives and its sociological connotation based on the European Identity.

To sum up the Italian path about Europeanization, we can start from an original approach based on a commonality of values that maintained its concreteness in a progressive (but not definitive) process of power delegation towards the EU supranational entities, according to the progressive logic at the basis of the international treaties: fostering the Union both under the institutional and the sociological-identitarian perspective (Mammarella & Cacace, 2014)⁷.

Talking about the Swiss path, we can underline and explain the key role played by neutrality. Morris & White (2011)⁸ claimed: "For centuries, neutrality has been part of the Swiss national identity, and the Swiss fear losing this neutrality or adjusting it to join the EU." Neutrality is both a matter of political attitude, international relations, and national identity. This aspect still characterizes Switzerland and its reluctance to join the European Union. Being neutral means avoiding binding alliances, especially under the military framework, avoiding taking part in conflicts. At the same time, neutrality is a matter of autonomy and independence in the

⁷Cacace, P., & Mammarella, G. (2014). *La politica estera dell'Italia: dallo Stato unitario ai giorni nostri*. Gius. Laterza & Figli Spa.

⁸Morris, K., & White, T. J. (2011). Neutrality and the European Union: The case of Switzerland. *Journal of Law and Conflict Resolution*, 3(7), 104-111.

decision-making process, without being forced towards a specific political decision (Sherman, 1918)⁹.

Neutrality does not necessarily forbid the adhesion to a supranational institution/union (Hauser 2020)¹⁰. For example, neutral countries such as Austria, Finland, Ireland and Sweden are part of the European Union. Switzerland chose to take part in international entities composed by several countries for specific goals, especially for commercial ones, such as EFTA since its origins (Dyllick, 1990)¹¹. It means that being neutral means having the opportunity to choose which supranational institutions/agreements could be coherent with its constitutional assets, with people's consensus and with the consequent opportunities deriving from the considered adhesion (Schwok, 2010)¹².

According to this, we can find the logic of the Helvetic Confederation that denied a formal power delegation towards supranational institutions, but it looks for the opportunities deriving from the supranational context. Here is the logic of the bilateral agreements with the EU, letting scholars talk about Switzerland as a country aiming at "integration without membership" (Vahl, M., & Grolimund, 2006)¹³. Integration without membership could be identified in the already mentioned logic of "relative Europeanization", characterizing in this way the Swiss governmental path.

A last key feature to be taken into consideration for Switzerland is its federal asset. The Swiss institutional framework is again part of the logic of independence and representativeness within the Cantons constituting the country (Mueller & Watter, 2020)¹⁴. The federal asset is crucial for countries with local peculiarities and with a strong local identity because it is an organization that guarantees local representativeness and a stronger autonomy for the local

⁹ Sherman, G. E. (1918). The Neutrality of Switzerland. *American Journal of International Law*, 12(4), 780-795.

¹⁰ Hauser, G. (2020). Neutral and Nonaligned States in the European Union. *Permanent Neutrality. A Model for Peace, Security, and Justice*, Lanham-Boulder-New York-London: Lexington Books, 111-128.

¹¹ Dyllick, T. (1990). Switzerland and 1992. *Atlantic Economic Journal*, 18(3), 27-38.

¹² Schwok, R. (2010). *Specificities of Switzerland's Relations with EFTA and the EEA* (Vol. 1, pp. 99-122). The University of Iceland Press-EFTA.

¹³ Vahl, M., & Grolimund, N. (2006). *Integration without membership: Switzerland's bilateral agreements with the European Union*. CEPS.

¹⁴ Mueller, S., & Vatter, A. (2020). Switzerland (Swiss Federation). In *The Forum of Federations Handbook of Federal Countries 2020* (pp. 341-352). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

government, thus, respecting the local identities according to their specific necessities and claims. The logic behind the Helvetic Confederation can partially blend with some specific features of the EU scenario, fostering the debate about the future of the overall Union (Elazar 1998)¹⁵.

According to the European motto “United in diversity”, Switzerland can be the little benchmark to imitate on a wider scale by the entire European Union. (Cheneval & Ferrin, 2017)¹⁶. Also, this crucial intuition can be a key topic to discuss for the desired future of the EU, making this research interesting also for this aspect.

Going to the last part of this literature review, we open the discussion with the concept of trust, at the basis of the process of governmental Europeanization. This concept is crucial because at the basis of the empirical evidence that we will discuss later.

The debate about trust paves the way for discussing the political consensus, the logic behind Euroscepticism and the willingness to interact politically and economically among EU countries. After a brief philosophical discussion, we will address the discussion towards the field of EU relations.

¹⁵ Elazar, D. J. (1998). The New Europe: a Federal State or a Confederation of States?. *Swiss Political Science Review*, 4(4), 119-139.

¹⁶ Cheneval, F., & Ferrín, M. (2017). Switzerland: A future model for the European Union? Similarities and differences.

Trust, a definition of an evolutionary social construct

Williamson (1993)¹⁷ claimed that “trust is a term with many meanings.” Trust is a wide concept that regards almost every branch of biological and social sciences. It is a key ingredient in disciplining interactions among members of each potential community.

Here follows a brief introduction about the role played by the trust under the perspective of several disciplines: starting from the more general concept, then shifting towards the humans and institutions’ dynamics.

Deutsch (1958)¹⁸ cited several elements characterizing trust. He identified the crucial role played by confidence, predictability and “assured reliance”. The combination of those elements shapes the overall psychology of animals and individuals and their willingness to interact in a cooperative or respectful coexistence. The concept of trust stands at the basis of the concept of community (Clark, 1973)¹⁹. As long as the community embraces the logic of “having something in common”, trust among its members characterizes every sort of collective relationship. This logic is well expressed in the animal world: the survival instinct, the search for food and the instinct to breed, strongly connote animal’s behavior. Thus, trust among members of the same species is expected to predict how is better interacting. At the same time, the interaction within different species could rely on a symbiosis, indifference rather than fear. In the first two cases, trust is at the basis of their relationship because of the absence of a potentially dangerous contrast (Deutsch, 1958).

When talking about humans, this logic works analogously to animals, but with a more sophisticated dimension, typical of a social construct (Gibb, 1978)²⁰. The process of development of trust among humans differs from a culture to another.

Generally, trust is a spontaneous attitude, but specific cultural backgrounds, shocking experiences and educative processes could reshape it in a different way and with a different gradient of confidence. Different times and different contexts demonstrate how human

¹⁷ Williamson, O. E. 1993. Calculativeness, trust, and economic organization. *Journal of Law and Economics*, 34: 453- 502.

¹⁸ Deutsch M. Trust and suspicion. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 1958;2(4):265-279.

¹⁹ Clark, D. B. (1973). The concept of community: A re-examination. *The Sociological Review*, 21(3), 397-416.

²⁰ Gibb, J. R. (1978). *Trust: A new view of personal and organizational development*. Guild of Tutors Pr.

interactions could foster (or not) trust among individuals (Ortmann et Al., 2000)²¹. Moreover, each historic period demonstrated how trust can be strengthened or undermined by external factors such as the presence of wars, plagues, crises or specific religious messages (Hosking, 2014²², Schoenfeld,1978²³).

Consequently, the concept of trust is at the basis of the evolution of society and the institutional framework.

Until now, we have considered the concept of trust only according to a natural and historical framework, but the role played by trust is still evolving in contemporary times. The revolution impressed by globalization and ICT made people extend their idea of trust. Virtual communities, online shopping, new means of communication characterized the evolution of the concept of trust. Interpersonal trust needs the intermediation of a technological device/instrument; thus, people have to rethink the overall concept of relationships with other individuals, communities and technology suppliers (Taddeo, 2010)²⁴.

Contemporary times are part of a broader history that accompanied the evolution of the concept and the perception of trust. According to this explanation, the concept of trust can be referred to several disciplines but, in any case, it is part of a communitarian social construct (Weber & Weber, 2000)²⁵. This analysis aims to deepen this concept with a more specific socio-political connotation. According to this, “institutional trust” aims to be analyzed from multiple perspectives, useful to deal with the aim of the thesis.

Thanks to this theoretical preamble, we will be able to match the analysis of “trust as a social construct” with another crucial social construct: institutions, both at the national and supranational levels.

²¹ Ortmann, A., Fitzgerald, J., & Boeing, C. (2000). Trust, reciprocity, and social history: A re-examination. *Experimental Economics*, 3(1), 81-100.

²² Hosking, G. (2014). *Trust: A history*. OUP Oxford.

²³ Schoenfeld, E. (1978). Image of man: The effect of religion on trust: A research note. *Review of Religious Research*, 61-67.

²⁴ Taddeo, M. (2010). Trust in technology: A distinctive and a problematic relation. *Knowledge, Technology & Policy*, 23(3-4), 283-286.

²⁵ Weber, L., Weber, L. R., & Carter, A. I. (2003). *The social construction of trust*. Springer Science & Business Media.

Institutional trust and trust towards institutions.

Trust towards institutions is a wide concept, well theorized by several philosophers and scholars since the most ancient times. Taking into consideration the literature of the last century, trust is a sort of non-material relation between citizens and institutions. It is a connection conveyed by the micro-level (represented by the individual) towards the macro one (represented by the State). Trust towards institutions is crucial to make people recognize the state authority, respect its laws, participate pro-actively in social life and identify themselves (totally or partially) in a value system. This kind of trust is not only a concept addressed to legitimate a democratic system but also all kinds of institutions, including the authoritative, the economic and the supranational ones.

Trust is more than a generalist sentiment towards institutions because it embraces and implies a process of respect and recognition (Uslaner, 2018)²⁶. Trust towards institutions is more generally identified in trust towards governments, as representatives of the executive power and, consequently, of the most tangible reflections on citizens' life (Easton, 1965²⁷; Gamson, 1968²⁸; Mishler & Rose, 1997²⁹).

According to the aim of this research, a slight difference emerges between the expressions "institutional trust" and "trust towards institutions". The first one embraces a more static view while the second one represents a more dynamic process. This process characterizes the evolution of the citizens' confidence towards institutions, in response to the occurrence of a wide range of impacting factors. This dynamic connotation seems more coherent with the purpose of this research. Nevertheless, the majority of the authors generalize with the expression "institutional trust". For the same reason, this thesis will adopt this concise expression except when this differentiation could result necessary.

²⁶ Uslaner E. (2018). The study of Trust. *The Oxford handbook of social and political trust*, 3-14.

²⁷ Easton, D. (1965). *A systems analysis of political life*. New York: John Wiley

²⁸ Gamson, W. A. (1968). *Power and discontent*. Homewood, IL: Dorsey Press

²⁹ Mishler, W., & Rose, R. (1997). Trust, distrust, and skepticism: Popular evaluations of civil and political institutions in post-communist societies. *Journal of Politics*, 59, 418–451.

Furthermore, as claimed by Hudson (2006)³⁰, institutional trust is an evolutionary dimension also in people's emotional sphere. Institutional trust implies an increase (or decrease) of the perceived level of happiness and well-being. Contextually, several factors affect institutional trust such as the social condition, age and education (Hakhverdian & Mayne, 2012)³¹. In response to this, people increase the perceived institutional trust when institutions seem more affordable and when citizens are aware of how to interact with the institutional framework. Thus, the consequent perception of confidence towards institutions leads to a more widespread sense of security and happiness.

According to this, a circular logic characterizes institutional trust: people's background and experiences originally outline the perception of institutional trust; then, the perceived institutional trust contributes to reshaping people's current confidence through direct experience and so on.

This circular explanation puts in evidence the relationship between the micro and the macro level in a sort of process of mutual legitimation (Nooteboom, 2007)³². The mechanism of this circular logic can lead to an enforced relation if strengthened by positive evidence; on the contrary, negative evidence from society or institutions' behaviour could undermine that relation (Rose-Ackerman, 2001)³³.

A final remark is embedded in the role played by individuals' value assets in shaping institutional trust (Devos et Al, 2002³⁴, Tabellini, 2008³⁵). This crucial aspect ought to be studied to understand the main socio-political phenomena: individuals' value asset deeply affects their relationship with the institutional framework. The value asset includes elements

³⁰ Hudson, J. (2006). Institutional trust and subjective well-being across the EU. *Kyklos*, 59(1), 43-62.

³¹ Hakhverdian, A., & Mayne, Q. (2012). Institutional trust, education, and corruption: A micro-macro interactive approach. *The Journal of Politics*, 74(3), 739-750.

³² Nooteboom, B. (2007). Social capital, institutions and trust. *Review of social economy*, 65(1), 29-53.

³³ Rose-Ackerman, S. (2001). Trust, honesty and corruption: Reflection on the state-building process. *Archives Européennes de Sociologie/European Journal of Sociology/Europäisches Archiv für Soziologie*, 526-570.

³⁴ Devos, T., Spini, D., & Schwartz, S. H. (2002). Conflicts among human values and trust in institutions. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 41(4), 481-494.

³⁵ Tabellini, G. (2008). Institutions and culture. *Journal of the European Economic association*, 6(2-3), 255-294.

of historical collective conscience, religious beliefs, significant past events and individuals' sensibilities.

To sum up, institutional trust is an evolutionary social construct that ought to be studied holistically, taking into consideration all the multitude of elements affecting the relation between citizens and the State/Institutions.

This logic can be also transposed by talking about the European Institutions and the consequent willingness to interact and to delegate power to the supranational level by national governments. At the same time, national governments (in democratic contexts) should care about people's trust. Electoral behaviour is a matter of trust too, so it is part of the process of political legitimization of both national and supranational governments (Waterford, 1992)³⁶.

The lack of trust opens the debate about skepticism and Euroscepticism, in this last case when we talk about the EU context (Hooge & Marks, 2007)³⁷.

The rise of Euroscepticism relies on both a political aversion and in a critical response to the critical junctures of recent times such as the economic and the migration crises (Serricchio et Al., (2013)³⁸, Stockemer et Al, (2020)³⁹).

Especially critical junctures fostered the debate about the pros and the cons of being (or not) in the EU; Eurosceptic parties are keen to underline the obstacles and some paradoxes in crisis response with a nostalgic view of past times, criticizing the communitarian political mechanisms and rules (Kenny, 2017)⁴⁰.

Euroscepticism is part of an evolutionary tendency behind political rhetoric, that led to the rise of populism at a global level (Inglehart & Norris, 2016)⁴¹. The research of simplistic

³⁶ Weatherford, M. S. (1992). Measuring political legitimacy. *American political science review*, 86(1), 149-166.

³⁷ Hooghe, L., & Marks, G. (2007). Sources of euroscepticism. *Acta Politica*, 42(2), 119-127.

³⁸ Serricchio, F., Tsakatika, M., & Quaglia, L. (2013). Euroscepticism and the global financial crisis. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, 51(1), 51-64.

³⁹ Stockemer, D., Niemann, A., Unger, D., & Speyer, J. (2020). The "refugee crisis," immigration attitudes, and euroscepticism. *International Migration Review*, 54(3), 883-912.

⁴⁰ Kenny, M. (2017). Back to the populist future?: Understanding nostalgia in contemporary ideological discourse. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 22(3), 256-273.

⁴¹ Inglehart, R. F., & Norris, P. (2016). Trump, Brexit, and the rise of populism: Economic have-nots and cultural backlash.

solutions to complex problems, the polemic attitude and the crisis of political ideologies paved the way to a phenomenon of electoral volatility and, consequently, to the rise of extremists and populist parties (Moffin, 2020)⁴².

All those con-causes are just part of a wider phenomenon of crisis in institutional trust, that deeply characterizes Europe too (Algan et Al, 2017)⁴³. From the crisis of trust in the EU institution especially during critical junctures, the rise of Euroscepticism is rapid. Nevertheless, this crisis of trust in EU institutions is not the only source of this kind of rhetoric. Paradoxically far-right and far-left movements converged ideologically against a common enemy, identified in the EU supranational framework. On one hand, anti-globalization claims were at the basis of far-left movements; on the other hand, nationalistic claims are at the basis of far-right parties. In the mean-while, we can mention the post-ideological connotation of anti-politics movements, again boosted by populist claims based on political dissatisfaction (Herzinger, 2002)⁴⁴.

Here we introduce the last concept for this literature review: polarization. The crisis of institutional trust and the rise of extremist movements causes polarization of the political system. According to Balčytienė & Juraitė (2015)⁴⁵, this phenomenon is mainly fostered by a new role played by the media that deeply affects the current political rhetoric. A wider and informal source of information boosts in an easier way populist and Eurosceptic claims, eroding the power of influence, historically played by the most reliable sources of information such as institutional channels and well-recognized newspapers/websites.

According to this, the impact of polarized claims (pro-or against the EU) causes social tension that, in some cases, could destabilize the traditional governmental attitude about Europeanization (Schulze et Al., 2020)⁴⁶.

⁴² Moffitt, B. (2020). *The global rise of populism*. Stanford University Press. Pagg 1- 11.

⁴³ Algan, Y., Guriev, S., Papaioannou, E., & Passari, E. (2017). The European trust crisis and the rise of populism. *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, 2017(2), 309-400.

⁴⁴ Herzinger, R. (2002). Power to the Populists. *Foreign Policy*, (133), 78.

⁴⁵ Balčytienė, A., & Juraitė, K. (2015). Systemic media changes and social and political polarization in Europe. *European media in crisis: Values, risks and policies*, 20-42.

⁴⁶ Schulze, H., Mauk, M., & Linde, J. (2020). How Populism and Polarization Affect Europe's Liberal Democracies. *Politics and Governance*, 8(3), 1-5.

To conclude this section about the literature review, here we can do a brief recap: after having outlined the main concepts regarding the aim of this thesis, we opened a wide framework on new institutionalism and its branches. After having chosen historical institutionalism and presented its main characteristics, we concentrated on the several theoretical “paths”, identifiable for Italy and Switzerland.

Those theoretical paths will be at the basis of the next sections; through this literature review, we expect to have outlined the theoretical anchors on which building the empirical chapters.

Finally, we dedicated attention to the logic of institutional trust: a crucial concept at the basis of governmental Europeanization.

5. Research design.

This chapter aims at tracking which was the research design of this thesis.

More specifically, we will present some theoretical anchors, then we will focus on the logic of tripartition of the considered dimensions: the social, economic and political ones.

Thanks to this explanation this chapter is expected to connect the theoretical framework, based on new institutionalism, to the process of operationalization, practically embraced by the choice of the indicators.

In the meanwhile of this explanation, this chapter is the proper place to introduce the research hypotheses: starting from the main research hypothesis, then declining it on the considered dimensions.

According to the research gaps that emerged after an analysis of the recent academic literature about governmental Europeanization, we decided to compare two countries: Italy and Switzerland. The originality of this choice relies on Mill's "Most Different Criterion" (1885)¹, taking into consideration their political collocation in the European context. Being a founding country of the EU (as Italy) or being a neutral country outside the EU (as Switzerland), made those countries develop a different path of governmental Europeanization. Because of the several shared interests, especially in the economic field, Italy and Switzerland chose different modalities to get the same objectives: fostering especially their economic interactions among the European countries.

During the last 30 years, after the Maastricht Treaty, the number of trade volumes and a more intensive legislative action characterized those countries and let the interest grow among scholars (Goldstein, 1991)².

Italy followed a more traditional path, shared with the other EU members, and based on treaties. In the meanwhile, several changes occurred also in Switzerland in the last 30 years. In many cases Switzerland occupied a hybrid position in the European context: several scholars labelled the Swiss Government's behaviour sometimes as rigidly anchored in its neutral history, sometimes as ambiguous, sometimes as a selfish paradigm of approximation to the EU and sometimes as an inspiring model for the entire Union ((Frey & Bohnet, (1995))³, Page (1995)⁴, (Cheneval & Ferrin, (2018)⁵)).

A comparison between Italy and Switzerland, based on social, political and economic indicators allows us to foster this kind of debate, promoting a way to interpret a sort of balance between those alternative paths of governmental Europeanization: based on a full membership or conquered through a succession of bilateral agreements.

Starting from this logic and relying on a theoretical framework based on historical institutionalism (already presented in the literature), here follows the main research Hypotheses that this case study is expected to demonstrate.

Main Research Hp: "In the last 30 years, Italy and Switzerland did not contradict their socio-political traditions about governmental Europeanization. They just moderately adapted practical measures while facing specific economic necessities of stronger integration".

According to the Comparative Historical Sociology by Skocpol (1979)⁶ and by historical institutionalism, we tackled the two cases, studying the evolution of their relations with European Union.

This comparison let us transpose what Lundestad (1986)⁷ defined as "Empire by Invitation" to the European context. With the expression "Empire by invitation", Lundestad was talking about the informal attraction that the US released during the Cold War on the Euro-Atlantic and Anti-Soviet countries, offering them several opportunities for common business and protection.

According to that transposed logic, what we could expect from our study is to consider which attraction could release the European Union on countries with different socio-political backgrounds such as Italy and Switzerland in contemporary times. Especially if this different process of Europeanization could lead to similar concrete output according to specific countries' willingness to integrate themselves into the European system.

¹ Mill, J.S. 1970 (1885). A system of logic. London: Longman.

² Goldstein, W. (1991). Europe after Maastricht. *Foreign Aff.*, 71, 117.

At the end of the overall introduction of the three dimensions, as long as we defined several concepts, we will try to identify which indicators could be the catalyzers of all of them. Thus, they will be contextualized and presented in the indicators' chapter.

Three dimensions to interpret Europeanization: the social, political and economic one.

As long as we are conceptualizing the process of Europeanization, the logic of compromise between ideology and governmental strategies could be a useful blend to study both the historical premises and the contemporary reflections.

To interpret Europeanization under the lenses of historical institutionalism, we can consider three dimensions: the social, the economic and the political ones.

Starting Pollack's study (2007)⁸, the first historical institutionalists contextualized path dependence explaining a rigorous socio-political continuity, even while facing exogenous shocks. After, other more contemporary historical institutionalists recognized path dependence also an endogenous and coherent source of changes. Those were more used to take into consideration the several socio-economic and political forces influencing contemporaneity. According to this more recent approach (well described by Pollack), while tackling path dependence, the study of the three dimensions becomes crucial to deepen this analysis through the theoretical framework of historical institutionalism.

Again, talking about the origins of Europe and its process of Europeanization, Haas (1958)⁹ used those three dimensions (that he renamed as "forces") considering them both as the original sparks for the process of adaptation towards contemporary challenges.

Those dimensions are useful to classify the main premises and consequences connected to governmental Europeanization. We will proceed with contextualizing each one of them.

Thus, defining Europeanization through those three interconnected dimensions helps to address two more levels of analysis: the "State-level" and the "Citizens' Level". The first one regards governments and institutions while the second one regards individuals and socio-economic entities (Klingermann & Fuchs, 1994)¹⁰. Those levels introduce properly who is in charge to do something, what can be done according to its prerogatives and who is the target of destination of such measures. More specifically, while talking about democratic

contexts, the "State-level" can be considered as the institutional/governmental asset with its prerogatives. Democratic institutions embrace well recognizable structures operating in specific ways and dynamics; the political boards in office can address the political strategies, both in internal and foreign policies, only according to the institutional spectrum of action (Mainwaring,1993)¹¹. Thus, the propensity towards Europeanization is not only the expression of the inter-States institutional relations. It is also a consequence of a mass electoral system and the politicians' socio-political-economic culture operating in a specific institutional context (Citizens' level).

³ Frey, B. S., & Bohnet, I. (1995). Switzerland—a paradigm for Europe?. *European Review*, 3(4), 287-294.⁴
Page, H. D. (1995). The Crisis of Switzerland On the Threshold of the European Union. *Swiss American Historical Society Review*, 31(3), 3.

⁵ Cheneval, F., & Ferrín, M. (2018). Switzerland as a Model for the EU. In *Citizenship in Segmented Societies*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

⁶ Skocpol, T., & Theda, S. (1979). *States and social revolutions: A comparative analysis of France, Russia, and China*. Cambridge University Press.

⁷ Lundestad, G. (1986). Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952. *Journal of peace research*, 23(3), 263-277.

⁸ Pollack, M. A. (2007). *The new institutionalisms and European integration* (No. p0031). University of Hamburg, Faculty for Economics and Social Sciences, Department of Social Sciences, Institute of Political Science.

⁹ Haas, Ernst B. 1958. *The Uniting of Europe: Political, Social, and Economic Forces, 1950-1957*. Stanford, Calif.:Stanford Universit

¹⁰ Klingemann, H. D., & Fuchs, D. (Eds.). (1995). *Citizens and the State* (Vol. 1). OUP Oxford.

¹¹ Mainwaring, S. (1993). Presidentialism, multipartism, and democracy: The difficult combination. *Comparative political studies*, 26(2), 198-228.

Social Dimension of Europeanization.

To define the social dimension of Europeanization, we can open the discussion by introducing Delhey et Al (2014)¹². According to them, what mainly matters while talking about people's attitude towards Europeanization are three concepts: interest culture, identity and solidarity. The analytical structure behind those concepts embraces the key role played by people's embedded ideologies, historical reference contexts and current perceptions about the overall geopolitical scenario.

To better describe those concepts, embraced both by the State and by the Citizens' level, we start from the concept of solidarity. According to Stjernø (2011)¹³, solidarity is more than feeling and more than an ideological construction. It overlapped the concept of fraternity and collaboration and, especially in the case of the EU institution-building process, it became a crucial trait of European political identity. According to him, the evolution of this philosophical concept became more crucial after World War II (WWII) because of the several and urgent necessities to rebuild the economy and the social environment. The evolution of the post-bellum scenario paved the way for a consolidation of the concept of solidarity in several branches of the political actions (foreign relations, labour market...) and among European citizens.

According to Paskov & Dewilde (2012)¹⁴, "solidarity is defined as the 'willingness to contribute to the welfare of other people'". This sentence well represents a key feature of the ideological framework of Europeanization: a community is expected to act homogeneously, to solve or mitigate its members' problems. Since the beginning of the European Community, the debate about solidarity opened a wide range of polemics among governments, more precisely because of budgetary issues, unfulfilled expectations and a lack of homogeneous treatment despite the several parameters not always respected by some member states.

¹² Delhey, J., Deutschmann, E., Graf, T., & Richter, K. (2014). Measuring the Europeanization of everyday life: Three new indices and an empirical application. *European Societies*, 16(3), 355-377.

¹³ Stjernø, S. (2011). The idea of solidarity in Europe.

The contemporary challenges, vehicled by the economic crisis and by the pandemic, boosted the debate about this concept, especially letting more selfish (or vice-versa collaborative) governmental attitudes emerge (Leal et Al, 2020)¹⁵.

The concept of solidarity is considered as an ideological pillar of the European social identity, especially because anchored in European history and at the basis of EU countries' relations. Before opening the discussion about the next concept, "interest culture", we have to underline that the literature about such a wide concept (culture) would require further references. Nevertheless, we have to consider "interest culture" according to the purposes of this research. Interest culture embeds a desirable model of society, political organization and intellectual context to be achieved by a country or by an organized group of people. The interest culture embraces several features such as religious, racial, organizational, linguistic and economic aspects; when we talk about governments, those aspects are perceived as a source of inspiration that addresses the political activities at the basis of strategic/programmatic action (Jalali & Lipset, (1992)¹⁶, Hirschman, (1977)¹⁷). According to the aim of our research, again, the end of WWII is the watershed not only for historical reasons. As claimed by Duchêne (1973)¹⁸, after WWII, the post-war mindset paved the way to a culture of interdependence among European countries: originally because of a matter of necessities, after because of the development of a collective cooperative attitude despite the ancient rivalries. More in detail, after WWII the social context deeply changed: Western Democracies won the conflict thus, the American mindset and the American investments helped many European countries to restart both economically and morally (McCormick, 2010)¹⁹. As claimed by the former publisher of the Time, Mr Henry Luce (1941)²⁰, the XX century ought to be called "the American Century" because of the stronger prestige and influence of that modern growing hyperpower. Then, Europe after WWII tried to find its own identity mainly trusting this American model (with some exceptions such as in France and disputed territories with the Soviet Block). In the next decades, Europe would have assumed its own institutional and ideological asset, but sharing the same values mainly based on the concept of freedom, rule of law and the free market (Dalton, 1988)²¹. Thus, we can identify the "culture of interest" as an inspiring model for this socio-political organization composition but, as reported by Smith (2007)²² and Kumar (2008)²³, we do not have to consider Americanization and Europeanization using the same lenses: we have to identify also their key differences among them. Nevertheless, a huge commonality of values and expectations for a better future contributed to

forging a widespread identity mainly aligned to an Occidental culture shared among almost all the countries belonging to the same continent (Smolicz, 1981)²⁴. To conclude this section about the social dimension, we can finally connect the previous concept of “culture of interest” with the concept of “identity”. The fil rouge between those two concepts is anchored on the fact that “culture of interest” and identity are both matters of perceptions and self-recognition, both from the State level and from the Citizens' level. Talking generally, the concept of identity let us identify many authors and many branches of study, but we are looking for a better explanation connected with the concept of Europeanization. Again, Immerfall & Therbon (2010)²⁵ claimed that the logic behind the European identity is mainly a mixture of sense of belongingness, commonality of fundamental values, commonality of interests, matters of geographical proximities and sharing of historical heritage. This is not a homogeneous perception among its member states, but it contributes to identifying the overall attitude widespread among the citizens' level and, consequently, among governments. The concept of European identity is constantly fostering the overall debate because it is a relatively recent concept. Then, the balance between this supranational identity and the national one will be the main challenge to progressively make the EU motto concrete: "United in diversity".

Before moving to the next section, here we can introduce the research hypothesis related to this dimension:

Sub- Hp: “European citizens’ attitude towards governmental Europeanization remained almost stable over the last 30 years”.

¹⁴ Paskov, M., & Dewilde, C. (2012). Income inequality and solidarity in Europe. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, 30(4), 415-432.

¹⁵ Leal Filho, W., Brandli, L. L., Lange Salvia, A., Rayman-Bacchus, L., & Platje, J. (2020). COVID-19 and the UN sustainable development goals: a threat to solidarity or an opportunity?. *Sustainability*, 12(13), 5343.

¹⁶ Jalali, R., & Lipset, S. M. (1992). Racial and ethnic conflicts: A global perspective. In *New Tribalisms* (pp. 317-343). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

¹⁷ Hirschman, A. O. (1997). The passions and the interests: Political arguments for capitalism before its triumph. Greenwood Publishing Group (Pagg. 31- 42).

Political dimension

After having presented the key concepts and logic behind this first dimension, we can introduce the political one, arguing that it partially blends with the social dimension. As previously explained, the political dimension is legitimized by the social one, especially while dealing with a democratic context such as the European one. At the same time, the same political dimension has the tools to influence and reshape the social dimension through the interaction between the "State and the Citizens' levels". The power of institutional decisions influences people's mindset and behaviour (Breakwell, 2004)²⁶.

The political dimension aims at identifying the logic behind governments and institutions' conduct while operating both in an ordinary and extraordinary scenario. The political dimension looks for the historical roots, consolidated schemes/strategies and the evolutive (or digregative) trends while studying political processes such as institution building ones (Gregg & Bansk, 1965)²⁷.

Again, a key theory to interpret the political dimension is "path dependence". This theory has been explained and studied since the late 60s, becoming a crucial intuition while comparing policies, studying Social Sciences and History.

The main logic behind this theory is mainly identifiable in a sort of pre-defined path in which long-run equilibria processes manifest themselves. We can mention some authors digging this theory and applying it to the field of knowledge of our interest such as Lipset and Rokkan's (1967)²⁸, Williams & Williams (1986)²⁹ and Ertman (1996)³⁰ that specifically studied Europe and its political framework. The European Union, as we understand it today, is the product of a long-run process denominated Europeanization, thus, logic and a coherent vision are also at the basis of this political creation.

¹⁸ Duchêne, F. (1973). The European Community and the uncertainties of interdependence. In *A Nation Writ Large?* (pp. 1-21). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

¹⁹ McCormick, J. (2010). *Europeanism*. Oxford University Press. Pagg 46-50.

²⁰ Luce, H. R. (1999). The American century. *Diplomatic History*, 23(2), 159-171.

More specifically, the predominant post-war ideological framework and the semi-homogeneous circumstances boosted this process. According to Merriman (2019)³¹, post-war European countries led to a common paradigm: reconstruction after destruction. The huge damages occurred to the majority of the countries, and increased public debt due to military expenditures and the necessity of further investments incentivized the logic of cooperation among European countries and big players.

To simplify these reconstructions concerning “path dependence” in the European context, we have to consider this sort of shared “baseline”. Then, this sort of path assumed an alternative two-way connotation within the countries of the same continent. During the “Cold War”, a new global asset split also this continent into two spheres of influence.

As claimed by Winston Churchill during a speech in Fulton (Missouri, USA) in 1946, a sort of “iron curtain” divided Europe a Western and Eastern area of political influence: this split our path in a “Euro-Atlantic paradigm” counterposed to the “Soviet one”. Thus, we can mainly identify the origins of the Europeanization path within the Euro-Atlantic countries, despite the existence of artificial divisions set by treaties.

Wright (2009)³² outlined the evolution of this Cold War paradigm and, at least for almost four decades, the scenario seemed partially frozen: on one hand the NATO countries, on the other the Warsaw Pact ones. This kind of divergence differentiated the two different paths from all the points of view: military, economical and organizational. Thus, the political tradition within the countries of Western Europe found a new common ground on which building a commercial alliance and, then, an international organization.

²¹ Dalton, R. J. (1988). *Citizen politics in Western democracies: Public opinion and political parties in the United States, Great Britain, West Germany, and France* (p. 118199). Chatham, NJ: Chatham House.

²² Smith, T. O. (2007). Europe, Americanization and globalization. *European History Quarterly*, 37(2), 301-309.

²³ Kumar, K. (2008). The question of European identity: Europe in the American mirror. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 11(1), 87-105.

²⁴ Smolicz, J. (1981). Core values and cultural identity. *Ethnic and racial studies*, 4(1), 75-90.

²⁵ Immerfall, S., & Therborn, G. (Eds.). (2010). *Handbook of European societies*. Springer Science & Business Media.

²⁶ Breakwell, G. M. (2004). Identity change in the context of the growing influence of European Union institutions. *Transnational identities: Becoming European in the EU*, 25, 39.

According to Haas (1958)³³, the origins of Europe were initially driven by post-bellum structural imperatives at the bases of the reconstruction; then he focused on the role played by a common political ideology aiming at cohesive and cooperative conduct among countries. A combination of those elements structured the ideological and practical framework before sparking what we call the "Europeanization process". Then, a path dependence strategy led to the evolution of the institutional framework towards the desired output of a progressive European Constitution and Integration (Grimm, 2005)³⁴. In the case of the European context, those forces forged the institutional framework and defined its competencies at the basis of its political action.

We must add that, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, many former "Eastern countries" were drawn to the Europeanized path from the Soviet zone. Those countries progressively joined the Europeanized path; moreover, the consolidation of European Institutions gave more independence to an autonomous ideological framework based on the so-called "three pillars"³⁵: European Communities, Common Foreign and Security Policy, Police and Judicial Cooperation in Criminal Matters. Those pillars, originally written in the Maastricht Treaty, follow a cooperative strategy to be implemented progressively according to the ongoing process of EU integration.

²⁷ Gregg, P. M., & Banks, A. S. (1965). Dimensions of political systems: Factor analysis of a cross-polity survey. *The American Political Science Review*, 59(3), 602-614.

²⁸ Lipset, S. M., and Rokkan S. (1967). "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems and Voter Alignments: An Introduction." In *Party Systems and Voter Alignments*, ed. Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan. New York: Free Press. Pp. 1-64

²⁹ Williams, G. L., & Williams, A. L. (1986). The Rise of Europeanism. In *The European Defence Initiative* (pp. 43-58). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

³⁰ Ertman T. (1996). *Birth of the Leviathan: the Building States and Regimes in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

³¹ Merriman, J. (2019). *A History of Modern Europe: Volume 2*. WW Norton & Company. Pp. 1112-1157.

³² Wright, P. (2009). *Iron curtain: From stage to cold war*. Oxford University Press.

³³ Haas, Ernst B. 1958. *The Uniting of Europe: Political, Social, and Economic Forces, 1950-1957*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University

³⁴ Grimm, D. (2005). Integration by constitution. *Int'l J. Const. L.*, 3, 193.

Up to this point, the political logic behind the path dependence brings us back to the new institutionalism's paradigm: more specifically, what was mainly theorized as historical institutionalism (HI) let us interpret the political framework according to a coherent progressive evolution of the EU context.

Another interesting aspect to study is the political dimension, let us introduce the concepts of absolute and relative Europeanization. According to Delhey et Al (2014), relative Europeanization differs from the concept of absolute Europeanization (characterized by full membership). Talking generally, Europeanization is a process characterized by different phases and different ways of approximation to the European socio-institutional framework. We can say that “relative Europeanization” is a specific step of a process of approximation towards the European context. It can be an ideological, economic or political approximation that does not necessarily imply a further adhesion to the European Union. In some cases, some Extra UE countries aimed at joining the EU or becoming its members in a faster/different way during the enlargement process. It was the case of former Eastern countries, of the Balkans’ one³⁶ and of some hybrid cases all around the continent. In other cases, we have to consider also the neutral countries that conduct their policy without being EU member states but having shared a common socio-political background (Gstol, 2002³⁷, Mollet & Bjereld, 2010³⁸). According to the aim of this study, the concept of relative Europeanization, allows us to classify and to interpret the case of Switzerland: the path of Europeanization is the same, but with some specific differences that ought to be studied.

³⁵ Treaty, M. (1992). Maastricht Treaty. *Nice Treaty*.

³⁶ Jano, D. (2008). From ‘Balkanization’ to ‘Europeanization’: The Stages of Western Balkans Complex Transformations. *L’Europe en formation*, (3), 55-69.

³⁷ Gstöhl, S. (2002). Scandinavia and Switzerland: small, successful and stubborn towards the EU. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 9(4), 529-549.

³⁸ Möller, U., & Bjereld, U. (2010). From Nordic neutrals to post-neutral Europeans: Differences in Finnish and Swedish policy transformation. *Cooperation and conflict*, 45(4), 363-386.

Again, even EU countries following the "Europeanized path", showed some minimal discrepancies while underlining their local peculiarities, especially if characterized by a strong identity or by a well-defined geostrategic collocation (Jacobsson et Al, 2004³⁹, Escribano, 2004⁴⁰, Jovanovic & Lynggaard, 2014⁴¹). According to this, we can finally assume that the existence of a main common Europeanized path can be identified since the end of World War II; at the same time, semi-autonomous paths progressively joined (or got closer) to the full Europeanization path, starting from a different historical background. The role played by History in dealing with the political dimension of Europeanization let us interpret the logic behind a diachronic analysis such as this thesis' one.

According to those premises about this dimension, we can introduce the following research sub- hypotheses:

Sub Hp: "Pro, neutral and anti-European dynamics have remained stable across EU members states and non-EU member states in the past 30 years".

Sub HP: "While dealing with a multidimensional phenomenon such as governmental Europeanization, we can recognize a mutual influence of different dimensions on themselves".

³⁹ Jacobsson, B., Læg Reid, P., & Pedersen, O. K. (2004). *Europeanization and transnational states: comparing Nordic central governments* (Vol. 17). Routledge.

⁴⁰ Escribano, G. (2004). The Ups and Downs of Europeanization: Change and Path Dependency in Spanish External Relations. *ponencia presentada en un seminario en la Universidad de Mármara, Estambul, abril*.

⁴¹ Jovanovic, T. H., & Lynggaard, K. (2014). Selective Europeanization: A Path Dependency Perspective on Danish Minority Policy. *JEMIE*, 13, 45.

Economic Dimension

A final step to complete the discussion about the three dimensions ought to consider the economic one. This dimension, again, partially overlaps with the other two, because economic conditions are consequences of the socio-political decision and organizational aspects (such as fiscality, entrepreneurial culture, trade barriers and so on) (Sharkansky & Hofferbert, 1969)⁴². More specifically, the economic dimension reflects the results of the political measures adopted by governments in their original socio-economic context. Economic policies influence the development of the business environment and the degree of openness of the market. Thus, industrial development, welfare measures, financial strategies and commercial policies are originally political decisions affecting the economic dimension. Then, the economic consequences show a direct impact on the social dimension. According to the aim of this thesis, the logic behind the post-war development of the European economy relies on the cooperative idea to share resources rather than competing for taking them away to other countries. This was the logic behind the origin of the ECSC: preventing conflicts among European countries and boosting the economy through mutual synergies (Gillingham, 2004)⁴³. According to Langsdorf (2011)⁴⁴, since the first intuitions about the ECSC, the European countries programmatically adapted their potentialities, without interfering with the predominant logic of the free market. Again, we can identify a sort of path dependence because of the coherence demonstrated by this project even while facing unexpected events.

⁴² Sharkansky, I., & Hofferbert, R. I. (1969). Dimensions of state politics, economics, and public policy. *American political science review*, 63(3), 867-879.

⁴³ Gillingham, J. (2004). *Coal, steel, and the rebirth of Europe, 1945-1955: the Germans and French from Ruhr Conflict to Economic Community*. Cambridge University Press.

⁴⁴ Langsdorf, S. (2011). EU Energy Policy: from the ECSC to the Energy Roadmap 2050. *Brussels: Green European Foundation*.

To contextualize historically this dimension here follows a short discussion about the economic aspect of the European integration process since its origins.

When we talk about the European economic dimension, we can mention some crucial steps planned and realized within the European Economic Community (EEC 1958- 1993) and, up to now, within the European Union (EU). We can identify as a milestone the establishing of the European Single Market (1993), guaranteeing the so-called "four freedoms". Those freedoms are: free movements of goods, labour, capital and services among EU members and a few other countries that signed bilateral agreements. According to Damro (2012)⁴⁵ the common market is not only a matter of common identity within its members. It is also a matter of power and affirmation of European economies in a cooperative logic while facing international trade. This enforced economic power asked for common parameters and renewed supranational economic institutions (such as the European Central Bank) in a logic of coordination among its members in a perspective of ongoing global market integration.

Again, talking about the economic dimension, according to Dyson, (2009)⁴⁶, the adoption of a single currency can be considered as the peak of the Europeanized process of economic integration.

This step was not homogeneous neither talking about the effective adoption of the currency nor talking about the role played by the former Central Banks. Again, the concept of power delegation (now in terms of monetary sovereignty) became a crucial and matter of identitarian claims. The mixture of economic and socio-political claims is revealed by the Euro crisis and by the different responses provided by the ECB (before and after the so-called quantitative easing (Bibow, 2017)⁴⁷) and by the communitarian pronouncements about austerity policies and the maintenance of the Maastricht Parameters (Blundell-Wignall, 2012)⁴⁸.

Thus, talking about the economic dimension, inevitably, we consider the political background behind the macroeconomic evidence; nevertheless, what mainly embraces the process of the economic Europeanization remains the creation of the European Single Market as a sort of act of faith towards the economic supranational institutions (Pelkmans et Al, 2011)⁴⁹.

Nevertheless, the former President of the European Commission, J. Delors, told a sort of prophecy: 'In ten years 80 percent of the legislation related to economics, maybe also to taxes and social affairs, will be of Community origin'⁵⁰. This prophecy is not yet entirely realized in each sphere of interest, but it is mostly true, especially while talking about the overall trend. This is a piece of clear evidence that this process is long-run and still ongoing, especially while the majority in the European Parliament belongs to pro-EU parties (Fligstein & Mara-Drita, 1996)⁵¹. Path dependence from the economic point of view consists mainly in terms of increased integration within EU economies and institutions; the evolution of this process is still an ongoing while, talking about the adhesion to the single currency, there is not a mandatory regulation for every member state. According to this, we take into consideration not only the adhesion to the single currency as a clear signal of absolute adhesion to a Europeanist view. We ought to consider all the economic prescriptions and parameters imposed by the EU regulations or, at least, the impact of the EU directives on countries' political-economic choices. At the same time, the historical analysis let us interpret the logic behind some economic choices and economic answers facing crisis and their reflections on the entire EU society (Gräbner et Al, 2019)⁵².

Then, having explained the logic of the economic dimension, the analysis of the overall economic performances and the overall welfare of our considered countries become crucial for our analysis.

⁴⁵ Damro, C. (2012). Market power Europe. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 19(5), 682-699.

⁴⁶ Dyson, K. (2009). The age of the euro: A structural break? Europeanization, convergence, and power in central banking. *Central banks in the age of the euro: Europeanization, convergence, and power in central banking*, 1-52.

⁴⁷ Bibow, J. (2017). *From anti-growth bias to quantitative easing: The ECB's belated conversion?*. Emerald Publishing Limited.

⁴⁸ Blundell-Wignall, A. (2012). Solving the financial and sovereign debt crisis in Europe. *OECD Journal: Financial Market Trends*, 2011(2), 201-224.

⁴⁹ Pelkmans, J., Goyens, M., Burghof, H. P., & Leibfried, S. (2011). The European single market: How far from completion?. *Intereconomics*, 46(2), 64-81.

As long as Governmental Europeanization is a path conducted also through the logic of the economy, here we propose the following research sub-hypothesis that we expect to confirm through the selected indicators.

Sub Hp: “Because of the occurred changes in the economic reality, economic institutions have departed from their positioning towards the EU project”.

Sub Hp: “Talking about the dynamics of integration driven by Europeanization, economic actors and aspects show a more inclined willingness to be integrated into the European context rather than the political and social ones”.

A last remark about the three dimensions.

To complete this discussion about the three dimensions in which tackling Europeanization, we need to consider also the current political analysis and the legislative responses through national laws and/or supranational normative prescriptions while facing unexpected events or political issues characterizing this age.

After this argumentation, here emerges how the three dimensions (social/political/economic) connote both the rational (practical) and emotional (ideology-based) decision-making process about governmental Europeanization (Checkel, 2001)⁵³. The socio-political culture characterizing governmental strategies and each actor involved in the principal socio-economic contingencies are at the core of this thesis research interests.

⁵⁰ Bulletin No- 2-367/157, 6 July 1988

⁵¹ Fligstein, N., & Mara-Drita, I. (1996). How to make a market: Reflections on the attempt to create a single market in the European Union. *American journal of sociology*, 102(1), 1-33.

⁵² Gräbner, C., Heimberger, P., Kapeller, J., & Schütz, B. (2019). Structural change in times of increasing openness: assessing path dependency in European economic integration. *Journal of Evolutionary Economics*, 1-29.

Again Weiner (2006) claimed: “(...the) analysis of the role of actors, processes and organizational structures has been an important theme in the field, particularly with a view to understanding processes of interest aggregation, identity-formation and the transfer of action potential”. His sentence let us understand the dynamics that effectively inspired the decision-making process while building a supranational apparatus such as the European one. This institution-building process results in a sort of progressive stratification of decisions and influences that occurred within the last seven decades. As claimed by Ford & Jennings (2020)⁵⁴, History and the reactions while facing new cleavages are key tools to interpret the socio-economic-political dimensions. Moreover, further key evidence in the literature was proved by several authors: the result of the interaction between the social, economic and political dimensions forges governmental propensity towards Europeanization (Eder, 2004⁵⁵, Borzel, 2005)⁵⁶.

Despite several decades of debates about Europeanization, Olsen (2002)⁵⁷ claimed: “Efforts to model the dynamics of ‘Europeanization’ are scarce and the empirical evidence uneven and often contested”. Nevertheless, this author considered a clarification of this concept necessary, thus he outlined five variants to describe this process: “Changes in external boundaries”, “Developing institutions at the European level”, “Central penetration of national system governance”, “Exporting forms of political organizations” and “A political unification project”. Europeanization is an evolutionary process for member states but also a concept to be declined on a wider dimension.

⁵³ Checkel, J. T. (2001). The Europeanization of citizenship. *Transforming Europe: Europeanization and domestic change, 180-197*.

⁵⁴ Ford, R., & Jennings, W. (2020). The changing cleavage politics of Western Europe. *Annual review of political science, 23*, 295-314.

⁵⁵ Eder, K. (2004). The two faces of Europeanization: Synchronizing a Europe moving at varying speeds. *Time & Society, 13*(1), 89-107.

⁵⁶ Börzel, T. A. (2005). Mind the gap! European integration between level and scope. *Journal of European Public Policy, 12*(2), 217-236.

⁵⁷ Olsen, J. P. (2002). The many faces of Europeanization. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies, 40*(5), 921-952.

Coming back to the transposition of Lundestad's "Empire by invitation" to the EU scenario, Europeanization is a mixture of push and pull factors while proposing its mindset based on the respect of human rights, rule of law and western civilization (Headley, 2016)⁵⁸. This ideological framework is the starting point for every form of negotiation to get the EU membership and any other agreement.

According to the main interest of this study, another hint regards the role played by Europeanization with non-member states, not explicitly interested in a further process of membership. The role played by Europeanization affects also this kind of relationship because of the projection of the EU value asset. This kind of projection is strongly perceived among closer countries (such as Switzerland) because of the great sphere of influence of a wide single market and an ongoing supranational institutional consolidation. Again, we will see that this relationship between Switzerland and the European Union follows a process of approximation (or distancing) according to several variants such as specific necessities, commonalities of ideas, structural opportunities, electoral results and international negotiations (Trampusch & March 2011)⁵⁹.

As the last remark about the relations within EU member states, we can enrich the previous assumptions presented while talking about new institutionalism adding further hints from Börzel and Risse, (2003)⁶⁰'s model. They claimed that "the higher is the willingness to accept supranational imposition, the higher is the level of countries' transformation". Consequently, the more member states incorporate EU policies/dispositions autonomously in their governmental program, the higher is the degree of harmonization between the national and the supranational level. Also, this theory adds elements of discussion while comparing a member state to a non-member state, underlying the research interest on the Swiss exceptionality.

To sum up, defining the concept of Europeanization is not easy and there is not an unquestionable model to define it. In this thesis, we decided to adopt the interpretative lenses of new institutionalism and, with regards to its three variants, we chose historical institutionalism (HI) as a useful theoretical framework. According to the flagship of HI, we underlined the logic of "path dependence" theory in each considered dimension: it ought to deepen Europeanization in its chronological articulation.

Finally, the choice to contemporary study the three dimensions (political, social and economic) aims to dig further into the concept of Europeanization in the considered countries.

This way to proceed will be applied to the last 30 years. In this arch of time characterized by globalization, the risk of countries' geopolitical marginalization is increasing due to the growth of new big global players (Cibuc, 2019)⁶¹. The role of supranational institutions at the European level ought to work as an embankment while facing complex times and big actors. Thus, the process of Europeanization will continue to animate our debate, not only talking about the origins of the EU institutional framework but also during contemporary times.

Here follows a recap scheme of the Research Question and its sub-research Hypotheses:

Main research Hp: In the last 30 years, Italy and Switzerland did not contradict their socio-political traditions about governmental Europeanization. They just moderately adapted practical measures while facing specific economic necessities of stronger integration.

Sub-hypothesis A: Pro, neutral and anti-European dynamics have remained stable across EU members states and non-EU member states in the past 30 years.

Sub-hypothesis B: Because of the occurred changes in the economic reality, economic institutions have departed from their positioning towards the EU project.

Sub-hypothesis C: European citizens' attitude towards governmental Europeanization remained almost stable over the last 30 years.

Sub-hypothesis D: While dealing with a multidimensional phenomenon such as governmental Europeanization, we can recognize a mutual influence of different dimensions on themselves.

Sub-hypothesis E: Talking about the dynamics of integration driven by Europeanization, economic actors and aspects show a more inclined willingness to be integrated into the European context rather than the political and social ones.

⁵⁸ Headley, J. M. (2016). *The Europeanization of the world: On the origins of human rights and democracy*. Princeton University Press.

⁵⁹ Trampusch, C., & Mach, A. (Eds.). (2011). *Switzerland in Europe: Continuity and change in the Swiss political economy* (Vol. 72). Taylor & Francis. Pagg 43-60.

⁶⁰ Börzel, T. A., & Risse, T. (2003). Conceptualizing the domestic impact of Europe. *The politics of Europeanization*, 57, 80.

⁶¹ Cibuc, L. (2019). The Tendencies of the European Union in the Process of Globalization. *Economy Transdisciplinarity Cognition*, 22(2), 179-184.

6. Chapters about indicators

The logic behind the choice of the indicators relies on several criteria.

First of all, according to the theoretical background, this research is expected to outline a robust framework, in which discussing reliable sources.

Compatibility with the considered theories and data availability were the starting point of the data collection activity.

Indeed, the criteria of data availability ought to match both the considered countries (Italy and Switzerland) and the considered time framework (from 1992 to the most recent times).

It implied the arise of several consequent limitations. First of all, the belonging (or not) to the European Union is a watershed of countries' participation in specific pools, mainly related to the European context and institutions. The quite long extension of the considered arch of time (starting from the Maastricht Treaty) made it even more difficult: several reliable databases, such as Eurostat, did not include data collected about thirty years ago.

According to this premise, this chapter is expected to present the selection of proper secondary data, specifying the limitations and the main insights through a theoretical contextualization.

The choice of the indicators is expected to depict specific aspects, according to the already mentioned dimensions: social, political and economic.

Subdividing the indicators according to the dimensions allows us to outline useful insights to answer the research questions. Nevertheless, as we will see, social and political indicators partially overlap their borders, letting mutually emerge further hints to the contextualization of the dimensions.

Before introducing the results of this secondary data analysis, an overview of the selected indicators will outline the logic at the basis of that choice, the considered sources, the data availability, and the consequent limitations.

Social Indicators

TRUST/CONFIANCE at the national and supranational level: this indicator embraces a wide concept. Considering its connotation referred to the institutional framework, this research identified the institutional trust towards the national and the supranational institutions as a crucial aspect.

Trust and "confiance" are at the basis of a rational and emotional attachment to institutions and Europeanization. Moreover, Hartevelde et Al (2013)⁴⁷ claimed that: "Trust in the EU goes hand in hand with trust in other institutions (..) because trust in the EU is derived through trust in national political institutions".

Here relies upon the logic behind the interest towards both the national and supranational level, as coexistence and interrelated aspects to be considered.

In the first stage of the research, we did a recognition on Eurobarometers and MosaiCH's questionnaires, but several issues emerged, especially of data availability comparable criteria, different questions' formulation and so on. A second recognition gave us the choice to evaluate World Values Survey (WVS)⁴⁸ and of European Values Study (EVS)⁴⁹. The contemporary presence of Italy (in EVS) and of Switzerland (in WVS) allowed us to be satisfied to find the only available data, even if they are not complete for every single year⁵⁰. Despite the few available data, both questionnaires presented homogeneity in the formulation of the question, measuring "Confiance" by Italians and by Swiss to towards the national government and Europe. The questions' formulation provides the French term "Confiance"

⁴⁷ Hartevelde, E., Meer, T. van der, & Vries, C. E. D. (2013). In Europe we trust? Exploring three logics of trust in the European Union. *European Union Politics*, 14(4), 542–565.

⁴⁸ *World Values Survey Time-Series (1981-2020)* Haerpfer, C., Inglehart, R., Moreno, A., Welzel, C., Kizilova, K., Diez-Medrano J., M. Lagos, P. Norris, E. Ponarin & B. Puranen et al. (eds.). 2021. World Values Survey Time-Series (1981-2020) Cross-National Data-Set. Madrid, Spain & Vienna, Austria: JD Systems Institute & WWSA Secretariat. Data File Version 2.0.0

⁴⁹ *European Values Survey Trend File (1981-2017)* EVS (2021): EVS Trend File 1981-2017. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA7503 Data file Version 2.0.0,

⁵⁰ "Such repeated questions constitute the Integrated Values Surveys (IVS), the joint EVS-WVS time-series data which at the moment covers 40 years (1981-2021)". Source: IVS database.

but, after disambiguation, it can be translated in "Trust". Starting from this point, we will talk about national and supranational (EU) trust to linguistically simplify the discourse

The availability of both the “levels of government” is crucial for our comparison because we can underline several pieces of evidence of peaks in trust (or mistrust) according to specific political contingencies/crises on both the national and supranational levels.

Political Indicators

The choice of political indicators was driven by the idea that electoral behaviour reflects people’s propension towards Europeanization in the light of the most crucial events.

According to Braun & Tausendpfund (2020)⁵¹"Multiple crises that have hit the EU have the potential to determine both turnout and the decision to vote for a Eurosceptic party". Thus, electoral behaviour can be measured according to the main socio-political occurred circumstances. The same authors claim about electors' profile that: "Either individual decide to abstain or to cast their vote concerning their economic situation ('egocentric voting'), or they take into account the national economic conditions ('sociotropic voting')".

Starting from those assumptions, we can say that electoral behaviour is a social factor, reflected in the political arena because it is at the basis of the composition of national and supranational parliaments. The presence of Eurosceptic parties in the political assemblies embraces people's electoral opposition to the European Institutions and its modus operandi (Ultan, M. O., & Ornek, 2015)⁵².

Despite having different origins depending on countries 'traditional background and on current countries' socio-political conditions, Euroscepticism is part of the phenomenon of electoral volatility (Caramani, 2006)⁵³, mainly driven by incumbent massive inclinations,

⁵¹Braun, D., & Tausendpfund, M. (2020). Electoral behaviour in a European Union under stress. *Politics and Governance*, (1), 28-40.

⁵²Ultan, M. O., & Ornek, S. (2015). Euroscepticism in the European Union. *International Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(2), 49-57.

⁵³Caramani, D. (2006). Is there a European electorate and what does it look like? Evidence from electoral volatility measures, 1976–2004. *West European Politics*, 29(1), 1-27.

socio-economic circumstances and by populist parties and media's rhetoric (Condruz-Băcescu, 2014)⁵⁴.

The majority of the empirical studies about the European electorate refers to the European Parliament elections. Finding electoral data about the European Parliament is quite easy when we consider European member states as units of analysis. As long as our research interest involves not the only member states, we have to shift our interest on national elections, focusing on a specific aspect: the presence of Eurosceptical parties in the Lower Chamber.

According to Leruth et Al. (2017)⁵⁵, the first time in which Euroscepticism became a political label was in the United Kingdom, in the eighties during the debate about the European Single Act. Among the Conservative Party emerged reluctance towards the project of a stronger European Integration based on the principle of delegation of power to a Supranational entity. Scepticism towards the EU project assumed an evolutive connotation, based on the socio-political issues that emerged in every specific arch of time, potentially attributable to far-right or far-left parties (Rooduijn et Al., 2019)⁵⁶. In today's debate, those "contemporary extremism" are labelled as "populists", in opposition to a more moderate political ideal, anchored on the Europeanism line of thought.

Starting from those contributes, the idea to consider as a political indicator the representation of Eurosceptical movements in the lower chamber of the considered units of analysis.

The consideration of the lower chamber has its roots in the idea of political representation of the entire population, including the youth, sometimes excluded from the electorate and the criteria of eligibility for the upper chamber (Krook & Nugent, 2018)⁵⁷. Thus, the presence of Eurosceptical parties in the lower chamber is expected to intercept the wider feeling about Europeanization: as long as Eurosceptic movements consider the criticism of the EU project

⁵⁴ Condruz-Băcescu, M. (2014). Euroscepticism Across Europe: Drivers and Challenges. *European Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 6(2).

⁵⁵ Leruth, B., Startin, N., & Usherwood, S. (Eds.). (2017). *The Routledge Handbook of Euroscepticism*. Routledge. Chapter 1.

⁵⁶ Rooduijn, M., Van Kessel, S., Froio, C., Pirro, A., De Lange, S., Halikiopoulou, D., ... & Taggart, P. (2019). *The PopuList: an overview of populist, far-right, far-left and Eurosceptic parties in Europe*.

⁵⁷ Krook, M. L., & Nugent, M. K. (2018). Not Too Young to Run? Age requirements and young people in elected office. *Intergenerational Justice Review*, 4(2), 60-67.

as their political barycentre, the remaining part of the electoral consensus shows a positive or, at least, indifferent attitude towards the European Union.

Finally, the percentage of Eurosceptic seats in the national parliament is a more useful indicator than the percentage of political consensus for several reasons: first of all, it is a comparable indicator because it overlaps existent discrepancies deriving from the different national electoral systems.

Then, the percentage of seats reflects also the practical influence that a party can address to the national political address or, at least, to the political debate.

Furthermore, another crucial aspect to consider is the “normative framework” among the key political indicators. Since this thesis is a sociological study, the normative aspect will not be considered with the lenses of a juridical expert.

The normative framework will be more or less constituted by a list of treaties, norms or key reforms regarding the relationship among the considered units of analysis and the European Institutional framework. It means that those indicators will be studied as “milestones” while dealing with the relationship with the supranational assets.

Furthermore, they can be seen contemporary as a cause and as the effect if we look for the explanation of their prodromes or their consequences. This flexible way to interpret the contingencies that occurred in the last 30 years will be part of an overall argumentation that characterizes the entire thesis.

This logic can be seen reflected in historical institutionalism as a response to crucial junctures (Capoccia & Kelemen, 2007)⁵⁸ that occurred in the reference scenarios, in our case in the Italian, Switzerland and European context. Those authors underlined the importance of the causal logic at the basis of the key choices made during specific contingencies. While dealing with crucial milestones in History, (such as Institution building process, response to the endogenous or exogenous crisis and the emergence of further issues) institutions are stressed towards a concrete response, based on the logic of institutional consolidation/survival (Capoccia, 2016)⁵⁹. Capoccia used as a synonym of "critical juncture" the words "turning

⁵⁸ Capoccia, G., & Kelemen, R. D. (2007). The study of critical junctures: Theory, narrative, and counterfactuals in historical institutionalism. *World politics*, 59(3), 341-369.

⁵⁹ Capoccia, G. (2016). *Critical junctures* (pp. 89-106). Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chapter 5.

point", "crisis" or "unsettled times"; the role of "antecedents conditions" can be seen as the starting point where the causal logic operates. Then, it proceeds with the politics of "institutional formation" as a first progressive response. Finally, again facing the consequences of a critical juncture, the final output can alternatively lead to an "ideational change" or in the "legitimation of New Institutions".

Starting from this theoretical argumentation, the abovementioned list of normative aspects is expected to be mixed with a chronological enunciation of the most crucial critical junctures affecting our reference scenario.

Thanks to this indicator, we can have a sort of "interpretative handbook" by which we can contextualize the socio-economic trends under analysis.

Economic Indicators

Talking about the economic dimension, we thought about which indicators could track a reliable prospectus, aligned to our aims.

Our research hypotheses aim at identifying which factors could foster (or undermine) the process of Europeanization. More specifically, finding the logic at the basis of a process of enlargement that involved almost every country in international trade. Thus, the European Union and its European Single Market is a privileged context in which countries could import and export goods and services in an easier way and without suffering custom duties.

Here normative aspects emerge while considering the evolution of the relationship of the abovementioned market among the member States and with non-member States, such as Switzerland (Knöpfel & Najy, 2018)⁶⁰. More specifically, Switzerland is part of the EFTA (European Free Trade Association) Convention and the Free Trade Agreement since 1972. As reported by the institutional source "Admin.ch"⁶¹, "Switzerland currently has a network of 32 free trade agreements (FTAs) with 42 partners".

60 Knöpfel, L., & Najy, C. (2018). Negotiating single market access with the EU: institutional lessons from Switzerland. LSE Brexit.

61 https://www.seco.admin.ch/seco/en/home/Aussenwirtschaftspolitik_Wirtschaftliche_Zusammenarbeit/Wirtschaftsbeziehungen/Freihandelsabkommen.html (5th October 2021)

As we will furtherly dig into the discussion about the Swiss political inclination proposing democratic referenda, Switzerland was interested in strengthening commercial relations with EU and non-EU partners. Thanks to a partial adhesion to treaties and thanks to a wide range of Bilateral Agreements, that inclination has been consolidated, allowing a mutual interaction expected to foster its economy.

According to Dupont and Sciarini (2001)⁶², the Swiss government demonstrated a fluctuating behaviour: on one hand a more reluctant behaviour aiming at appeasing the Eurosceptic tendencies, on the other hand, a more cooperative one, as demonstrated in the achievement of convenient agreements. This is well represented by the Bilateral I Agreements (signed in 1999, in force since 2001) where several economic aspects were clarified among the parts such as free movement of people, air traffic, road traffic, agricultural products, technical trade barriers, public procurement and Science. As emerges by this shortlist of the topics treated by this first package of bilateral agreements, the considered topics regard such a wide range of sectors that some scholars talk about a process of “integration without membership” (Vahl, Grolimund, 2006)⁶³. This process identifies a logic in which Switzerland seems to guarantee its neutrality and, in the meanwhile, looks for the opportunities deriving from a fruitful interaction with the EU without being bound with the duties of full membership.

This very premise about Switzerland allows us to explain why we choose the following indicators. Mainly, we expect to identify both for Italy and for Switzerland a common path, based on the empowerment of the economic integration and interdependence, mainly on a European scale (Moravcsik, 2005)⁶⁴.

Thus, here emerges the logic behind the choice of the first indicators from World Bank open data: the percentages of import and export (and then import and export in total values to simulate the trade balance). Those data in percentages allow us to compare useful data

62 Dupont, C., & Sciarini, P. (2001). Switzerland and the European integration process: Engagement without marriage. *West European Politics*, 24(2), 211-232.

63 Vahl, M., & Grolimund, N. (2006). Integration without membership: Switzerland's bilateral agreements with the European Union. CEPS.

64 Moravcsik, A. (2005, September). Sequencing and path dependence in European integration. In conference, "The Sequencing of Regional Economic Integration: Issues in the Breadth and Depth of Economic Integration in the Americas," Kellogg Institute for International Studies, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana, September (pp. 9-10).

without biases of the currency and allow us to think about the weight of the import and the export, opening a debate on the crucial sectors involved country by country.

Then, again from World Bank open data, we considered comparable indicators such as the GDP Growth (in percentages) and the GDP per capita (in USD, as a third currency).

Despite the several limitations of those indicators (Ivković, (2016)⁶⁵, Boarini & D' Ercole (2013)⁶⁶) to measure the overall welfare of the country, we chose them for the following reason:

GDP Growth is expected to measure the economic performances at the state level, showing the current macro-economic performances.

As long as GDP per capita is "the total value of all the goods and services produced by a country in a particular year, divided by the number of people living there"⁶⁷, we aim at intercepting an overall estimation about the individual's condition.

This choice gives us a double overview: one micro and one macro, letting us compare the trends and their related peaks, showing if there are specific overlaps or discrepancies.

Finally, again considering the connected limitations (Fontanel, 2020)⁶⁸, GDP per capita aims at detecting an overview on the well-being of individuals, at least as a superficial estimation of citizens' well-being.

What emerges from those indicators according to the aim of our research is that we can outline a path dependence in pro-EU attitude (and vice versa) while facing specific economic contingencies, positive or negative. Again, this attitude is the result of a blending between economic interests and incumbent socio-political trends.

In many cases, the EU framework has been considered responsible for positive or negative events and economic trends. As we will see, starting from each considered ideological

⁶⁵ Ivković, A. F. (2016). Limitations of the GDP as a measure of progress and well-being. *Ekonomski vjesnik/Econviews-Review of Contemporary Business, Entrepreneurship and Economic Issues*, 29(1), 257-272.

⁶⁶ Boarini, R., & d'Ercole, M. M. (2013). Going beyond GDP: An OECD perspective. *Fiscal Studies*, 34(3), 289-314.

⁶⁷ Definition from the Cambridge Dictionary.

⁶⁸ Fontanel, J. (2020). GDP, an insufficient indicator for estimating the power of a country and GDP per capita, an insufficient indicator for estimating the well-being of citizens.

framework, we will be able to outline the logic behind a more enthusiastic or more reluctant governmental Europeanization, again depending on coexistent elements of satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) based especially on economic trends (Fligstein & Menard, 2002)⁶⁹.

As completion of this section, we added a brief analysis about the Italian and Swiss sovereign debts, opening a brief discussion about the Stability Growth Pact and about recent economic trends. A proper contextualization will be later exposed in a dedicated sub-chapter with charts.

Tables and charts:

- Social indicators.

As already presented in the logic of splitting this study in the analysis of three dimensions, the social one assumes a crucial interest for several reasons. We can sum up all those reasons in the logic of legitimization: in a democracy, only when something is socially recognized and accepted, it can be implemented politically (Connors, 2020)⁷⁰ and economically (Streeck, 1993)⁷¹.

This is the case also of governmental Europeanization and its prodromes, anchored also in citizens' attitudes towards the considered institutional framework.

Here charts, evidence and comments are expected to explain the logic of the choice of those indicators and are also expected to underline the specific paths that characterize the Italian and the Swiss social context.

69 Fligstein, N., & Merand, F. (2002). Globalization or Europeanization? Evidence on the European economy since 1980. *Acta Sociologica*, 45(1), 7-22.

70 Connors, E. C. (2020). The social dimension of political values. *Political Behavior*, 42(3), 961-982.

71 Streeck, W. (1993). The social dimension of the European economy. In *Public Interest and Market Pressures* (pp. 98-157). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

TRUST towards the European Institutions

% ITA EU	1990 (EVS)	1999 (EVS)	2005 (WVS)	2009 (EVS)	2018 (EVS)
None at all	6	5	4	6	17
Not very muc	19	24	27	26	40
Quite a lot	54	50	55	47	32
A great deal	19	15	9	12	6
Don't know		5	4	8	4
No answer	1	1	1	2	0
Total	2019	2000	1012	1519	2281

% CH EU	1996 (WVS)	2007 (WVS)	2008 (EVS)	2017 (EVS)
None at all	21	16	14	20
Not very muc	31	44	39	49
Quite a lot	33	33	31	27
A great deal	6	3	4	2
Don't know	9	3	10	1
No answer		1	2	1
Total	1212	1242	1271	3174

As already introduced in this chapter, the French word “Confiance” can be translated into the English word “Trust”, according to the translation in the considered literature.

The label “confiance” comes from the IVS, Integrated Values Survey and is applied both for the Confiance towards the institutions of the European Union (the first two charts) and towards the National Government (the charts in the next sections).

Talking about the confiance towards the EU, the pools were conducted four times in the considered arch of time, both for Italian and Swiss respondents. The considered years do not

perfectly overlap, but they are the only available data using the same questions and the same criteria to be compared.

As we can see in Italy, the considered sample privileged the answer “Quite a lot” while talking about the trust towards the EU, with a moderate decrease only in 2018.

The general elections of 2018 were polarized by Eurosceptic rhetoric that brought to the government two populist parties: Movimento 5 Stelle and Lega. During that year, the political rhetoric was very polarized and shaped people’s attitudes, insisting on people’s worries about immigration and the lack of autonomy in the economic field (Washington Post, (2018)⁷²; Marangoni Verzichelli, (2019)⁷³).

Nevertheless, that decrease was transitory because, except for the short arch of time of that populist coalition, in 2019 Europeanism returned to the political agenda because of a change of alliance at the government. Despite the presence of the same prime minister, Giuseppe Conte, the political agenda deeply changed, and a pro-EU paradigm dominated his government also during the Covid-19 pandemic (De Luca, 2020)⁷⁴. Unfortunately, the last pool registered for the Italian sample was conducted in 2018, but several analysts underlined a renovated trust of Italian people in the EU especially under Mario Draghi’s government. Mario Draghi oversees a government supported by a wide coalition, in a logic of emergency to get Italy out of the Covid-19 crisis and to benefit from the EU expansionary policy (De Luca, 2021)⁷⁵.

Thanks to this paradigm, analysts underlined an increased trust towards the EU, strengthening a positive attitude towards the supranational context. Thus, except for the polarization inducted by populists’ rhetoric especially in 2018, the Italians’ trust towards the EU grew again and further IVS surveys are expected to give evidence in this kind of direction.

⁷² https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/a-political-deal-in-italy-could-lead-to-western-europes-first-fully-populist-government/2018/05/10/b9917d60-5452-11e8-a6d4-ca1d035642ce_story.html

⁷³ Marangoni, F., & Verzichelli, L. (2019). Goat-stag, chimera or chameleon? The formation and first semester of the Conte government. *Contemporary Italian Politics*, 11(3), 263-279.

⁷⁴ de Luca, M. (2020). The Italian style: Giuseppe Conte’s ‘half-populist’ leadership during Covid-19. LSE European Politics and Policy (EUROPP) blog.

⁷⁵ de Luca, M. (2021). The new Draghi government and the fate of populism in Italy. LSE European Politics and Policy (EUROPP) blog.

In addition, according to a recent survey by Demos & PI (2021)⁷⁶ about a remote interest of Italians for a potential referendum of “Italexit” from the EU, more than 2 respondents on 3 were absolutely against that perspective, underlying the stronger attachment of Italian people to the Union, also in more recent times.

Moreover, going through data about trust and distrust towards the European Institutions, we can propose an analysis of the averages of the positive answers (“Quite a lot” and “A great deal”) and of the negative answers (“Not very much” and “Non at all”).

According to data availability, we approximated the time series into four detections: late nineties (1996-1999), early years of the new Millennium (2005-2007), years of the beginning of the global recession (2007-2008) and more recent times (2017-2018).

We have weighed the data for the total of the interviewees referred to the two considered countries. In this way we obtained an index that allows you to compare data.

According to this preamble, we got the following results: on the right side of the chart, we can find results regarding trust towards the European Institution, on the left side we can find distrust towards the European Institutions, both for Italy and for Switzerland.

Two last remarks before presenting those results: the main indicator of our analysis remains trust. Thanks to the construction of the considered surveys, we have created the chart distrust, in a logic of contraposition of the values embedded by trust (Lenard, 2008)⁷⁷. Moreover, in order to maintain the focus on Europeanization and due to the lack of data about the nineties for Italy, this kind of analysis will not be replied for trust (and distrust) towards national governments as long as our research interest relies more specifically on the supranational level.

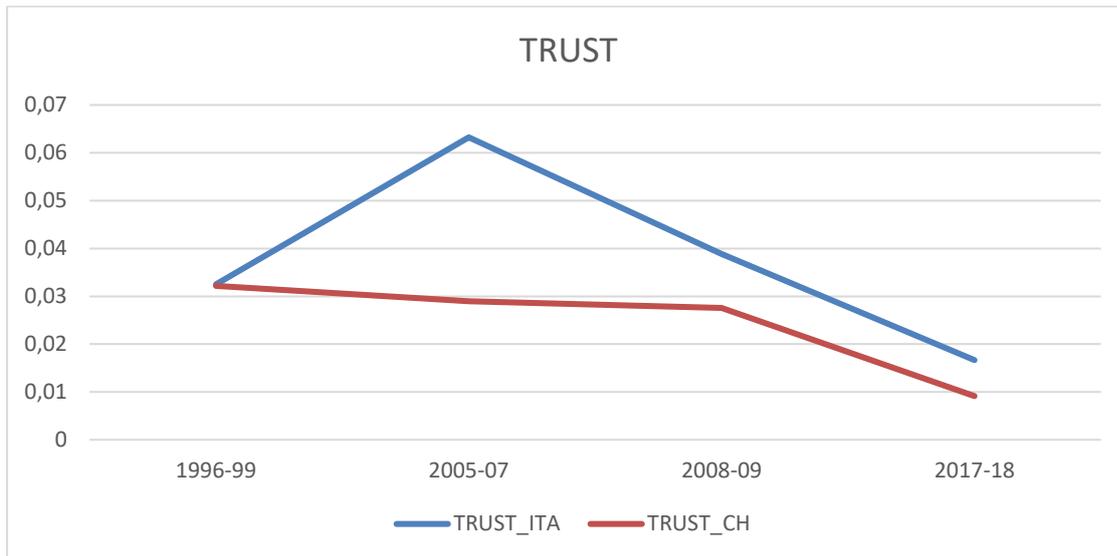
	TRUST_ITA	TRUST_CH		DISTRUST_ITA	DISTRUST_CH
1996-99	0,0325	0,03217822	1996-99	0,0145	0,04290429
2005-07	0,06324111	0,02898551	2005-07	0,03063241	0,048309179
2008-09	0,03884134	0,02753737	2008-09	0,02106649	0,041699449
2017-18	0,01665936	0,00913674	2017-18	0,02498904	0,02173913

⁷⁶https://www.repubblica.it/commenti/2021/10/25/news/l_euroscetticismo_italiano-323635667/

<http://www.demos.it/a01903.php>

⁷⁷ Lenard, P. T. (2008). Trust your compatriots, but count your change: The roles of trust, mistrust and distrust in democracy. *Political Studies*, 56(2), 312-332.

In order to be more intuitive, we realized two charts showing the trend of our indicators.

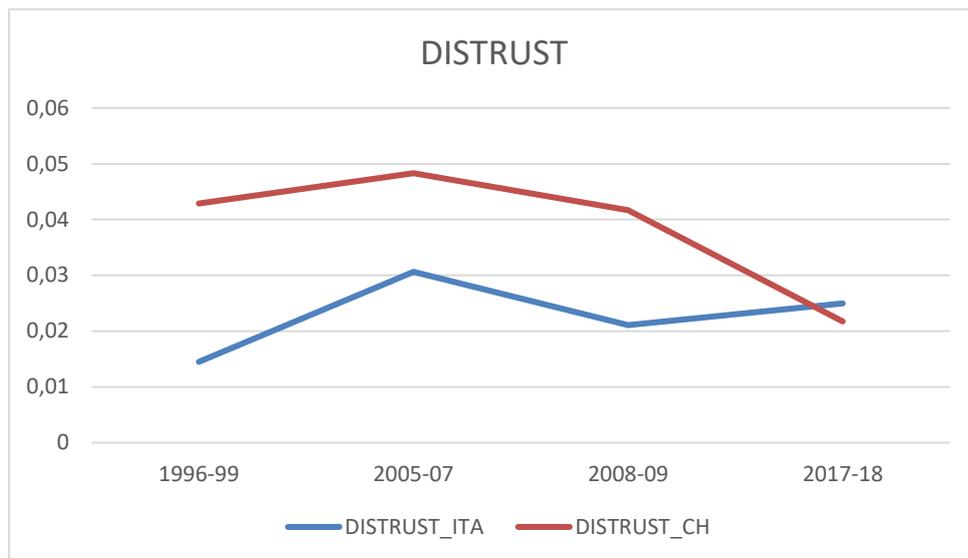


The first chart about trust includes the positive answers of the respondents. Both Italy and Switzerland start at a similar level in the nineties. Italy shows a growth in trust until 2005-2007, before starting a long decrease, with the lower peak in 2017-2018 (when populist parties grew their consensus). Unfortunately, data about the pandemic and post-pandemic times are not available in the considered comparable surveys.

This intuition partially confirms what underlined before. On one hand, we are not dealing with an Italian “Euro-enthusiastic” attitude despite being more confident than Swiss respondents. What mainly emerges is a significant decline in the Italian confidence towards the EU since the second survey (2005-2007).

On the other hand, Swiss respondents follow a constantly decreasing level of trust towards the EU, following their path of detachment from the EU Institutional framework.

In order to better interpret the reasons behind those trends, we can maybe identify in distrust which are the main turning-points at the basis of the abovementioned decrease in trust.



In this chart about distrust, we can find several evidences that boosted a sense of detachment from the EU Institutional framework that we can identify in the following logics:

- Distrust grew after a loosing of competitiveness of the Italian production: a trend that begun from the last years of the Nineties and the beginning of the new millennium. This process undermined the confidence towards the opportunities of a global market in which cheaper players enhanced their status of economic competitors. For example, China entered in WTO in 2001 and the eastward enlargement of the EU implied a repositioning of the Italian production, eroding profitability and purchasing power. Please refer to the next section dedicated to the economic indicators (import and export, trade balance) for a more extended discussion.
- A growing distrust towards the EU began during the great recession, especially as a consequence of the austerity measures imposed during Mario Monti's government and in accordance with the EU institutions, reaching the peak of mistrust during the last national and European elections where populist claims were based on an Eurosceptical rhetoric.
- Switzerland seems showing a considerable decreasing in distrust towards the EU after the signing of the Bilateral II. Maybe the justification of this trend relies in a clearer way to interact with the supranational context.
- The imposition of budget constraints is another key point (we will discuss about it later) where Italy suffered more, especially because of the combination of an

insufficient economic growth, not enough to sustain the weight of its Debt. Those constraints were the target of several populist claims, boosting mistrust towards the EU.

To sum up, Italy, as an EU founding state, maintained its path of enforcing governmental Europeanization also thanks to a social commitment towards the supranational institutions. Italian trust towards the EU is neither constant nor at high levels, but no political forces were able to re-put under discussion the adhesion to the EU project. As we can see, never the mistrust towards the EU was more than the 35% of the respondents.

Talking about Switzerland, we can see coherent maintenance of its neutral path, never showing an enthusiastic confidence towards the EU Institutional context. Its position of non-member state, allows a more realistic attitude. When the interaction between Switzerland and the European Union implies positive externalities, the level of mistrust decreases, despite showing an overall decrease of trust towards the same supranational context, according to the disillusionment caused by globalization and by the global recession.

From the chart we should note the decline in Swiss distrust. Especially, in recent surveys, Swiss distrust falls below the Italian level.

Again, as Italy maintained its willingness to participate in the EU project, Swiss people preferred being a bit skeptical if they talk about trusting the supranational level, preferring the autonomy given by its neutrality (Melich, 1991)⁷⁸. Maybe, the case of 1996 was more fostered by the enthusiasm recognizable in the EU before the several criticisms emerged in the last part of the century (such as immigrations, polemics about the single currency and economic ties within EU countries). What emerged at the end of the century, in response to the interest in fostering relations with the EU, were the Bilateral Agreements that tried to get interesting opportunities for the Helvetic Confederation, preserving at the same time its neutrality (Bauer, et Al, 2019)⁷⁹.

⁷⁸ Melich, A. (1991). Switzerland: To Be or Not To Be—in Europe?. In *Eurobarometer* (pp. 65-79). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

⁷⁹ Bauer, P. C., Freitag, M., & Sciarini, P. (2019). Political trust in Switzerland: Again a special case. *Queen's policy studies series*, 197, 115-146.

The interest of maintaining countries autonomy, induced people to trust less the supranational level because it would have implied a stronger integration in political affairs but would have also asked for an increased power delegation.

TRUST towards the National Government.

% ITA	2005 (WVS)	2009 (EVS)	2018 (EVS)
Not asked in survey			
None at all	20	29	27
Not very muc	52	40	47
Quite a lot	24	23	21
A great deal	2	4	3
Don't know	1	3	2
No answer	1	2	1
Total	1012	1519	2281

% CH	1996 (WVS)	2007 (WVS)	2008 (EVS)	2017 (EVS)
Not asked in survey				
None at all	12	4	5	5
Not very muc	34	27	30	27
Quite a lot	45	58	48	57
A great deal	5	7	8	9
Don't know	4	2	7	2
No answer		1	1	1
Total	1212	1241	1272	3173

Talking about the trust towards the national government, again, we can find for both countries a coherent response: the prevalence of “not very much” confidence towards the Italian Government by Italians and the prevalence of “quite a lot of” confidence towards the Swiss Government by Swiss people (Bauer et Al., 2019).

Again, it is a confirmation that both countries maintain the same attitude and, especially, we can identify an interesting correlation comparing this indicator with the previous one about confidence towards the European Union institutional framework: the fewer citizens trust their national government, the more they trust the supranational level. It is the case of Italy.

At the same time, the more citizens trust their national government, the less they trust the supranational level. It is the case of Switzerland. Probably the idea to delegate power to other institutions when political affairs are already well managed, do not let Swiss people trust more in the EU framework than in Bern's government.

This kind of correlation presented above (Muñoz, 2017)⁸⁰, underlines a predictable behaviour of citizens' trust also for the most recent times, without manifesting excessive discrepancies neither in critical junctures nor in the proceeding of the Europeanization process. Also, thanks to that evidence, both for Italy and Switzerland, the logic of path dependence is respected.

⁸⁰ Muñoz, J. (2017). Political trust and multilevel government. In Handbook on political trust. Edward Elgar Publishing.

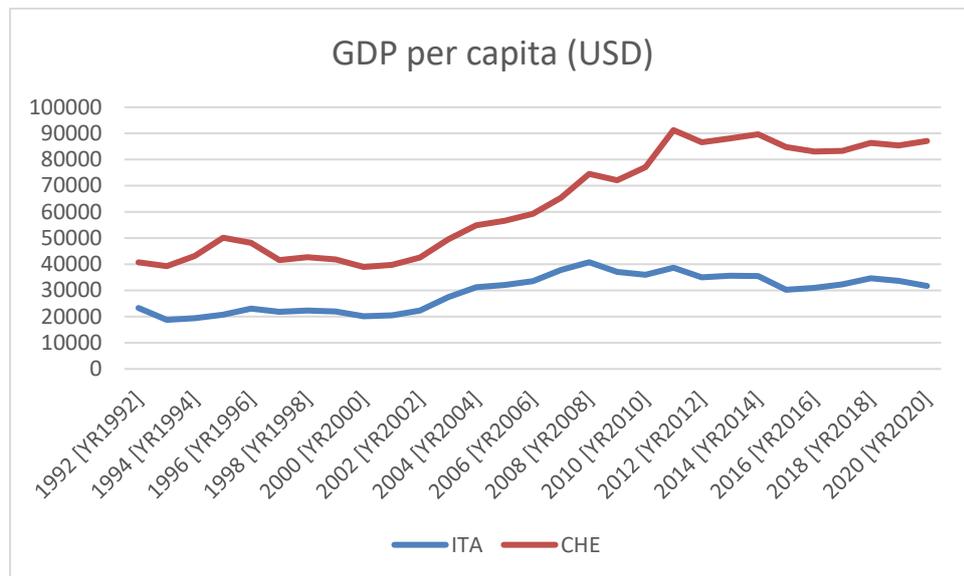
- Economic Indicators

Commenting on the economic indicators, we can find an overall general framework that can be summed up in this logic: the general welfare of Switzerland is higher than the Italian one, both at the state and at the individual level.

Additionally, both countries have analogous trends about the percentages referred to the trade balance, with a prevalence of Swiss percentages of import and export on the Italian ones.

Let us go into details.

GDP per capita



Talking about GDP per capita, the idea to consider this economic indicator relies on the idea to measure an individual's welfare, at least its trend.

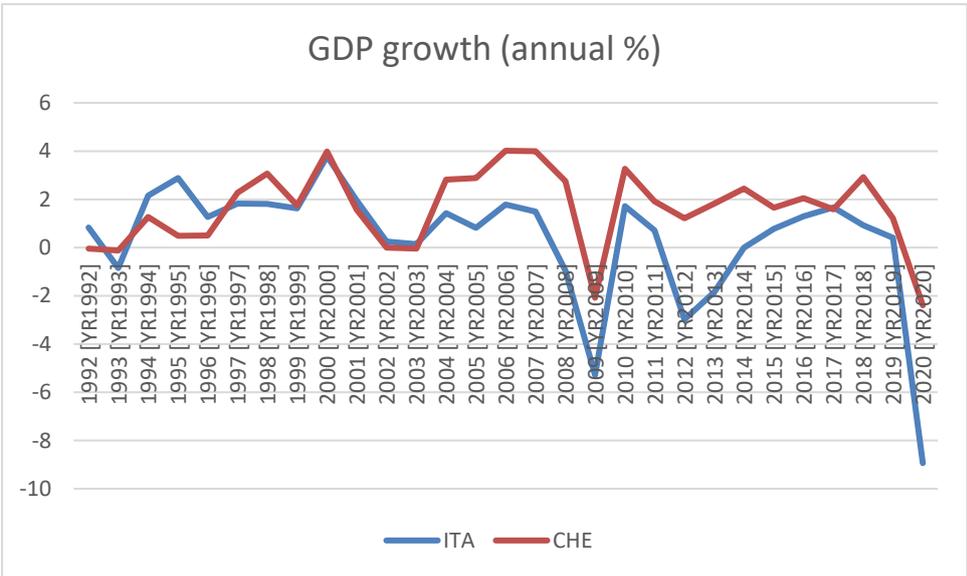
Of course, GDP per capita shows several limitations because it ought to be also matched with the cost of life (Di Pietro & Anoruo, 2006)⁸¹. Italian GDP per capita is lower than Swiss one and also Italian cost of living is lower than Swiss ones. Thus, despite not showing specific changes or peaks we could say that the average quality of life (under the average economic

⁸¹ Dipietro, W. R., & Anoruo, E. (2006). GDP per capita and its challengers as measures of happiness. *International Journal of Social Economics*.

perspective) could be similar because we are in both cases in an advanced western socio-economic context.

But, according to the IMF ranking about wealth by inhabitants, Switzerland is the third country in the world (IMF ranking in RTL website, 01/12/2021)⁸². This underlines how the average Swiss life condition could be aligned to the higher standards in the world.

GDP Growth



What could be mentioned as an interesting indicator about the overall economic situation and about the most critical junctures faced in recent times, could be identified in the GDP growth indicator.

This indicator, expressed in percentages, shows the economic trends regardless of the starting condition.

Such a long arch of time from 1992 could let us identify a similar trend, also in the lower peaks, recognizable in the world economic crisis started in 2008, in the sovereign debt crisis in 2011 and, finally, in the Covid-19 crisis during 2020, during the lockdown and the global value chains emerging issues.

⁸² <https://today.rtl.lu/news/luxembourg/a/1826061.html>

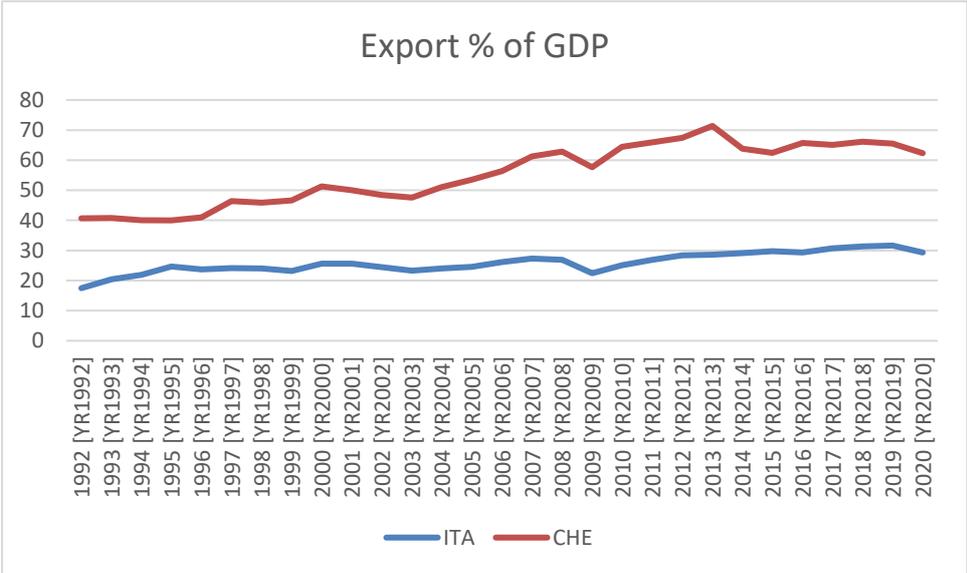
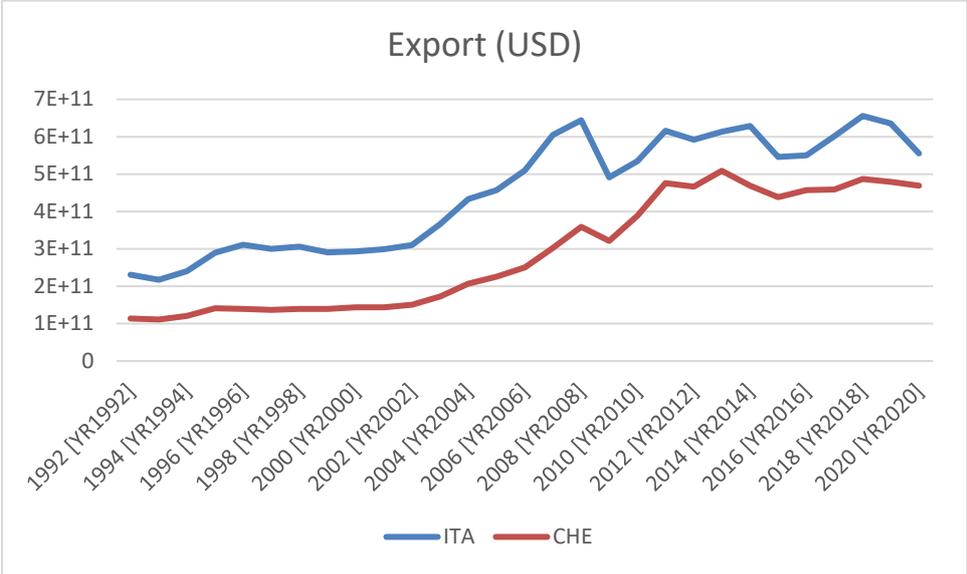
We could open a debate about the symmetric and asymmetric crisis and their consequences, but the main emerging hint is the interconnection of the global economies and the inevitable reflection on interconnected markets.

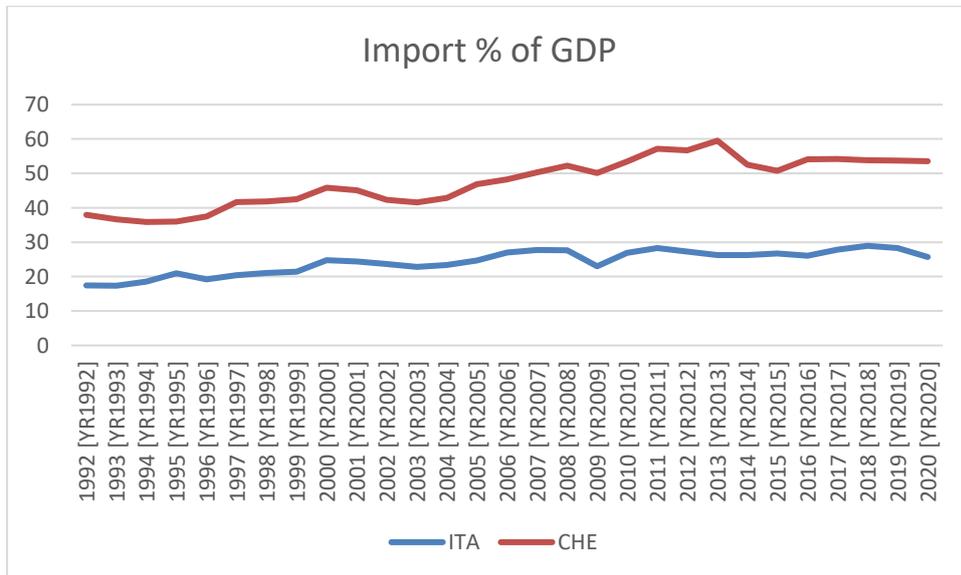
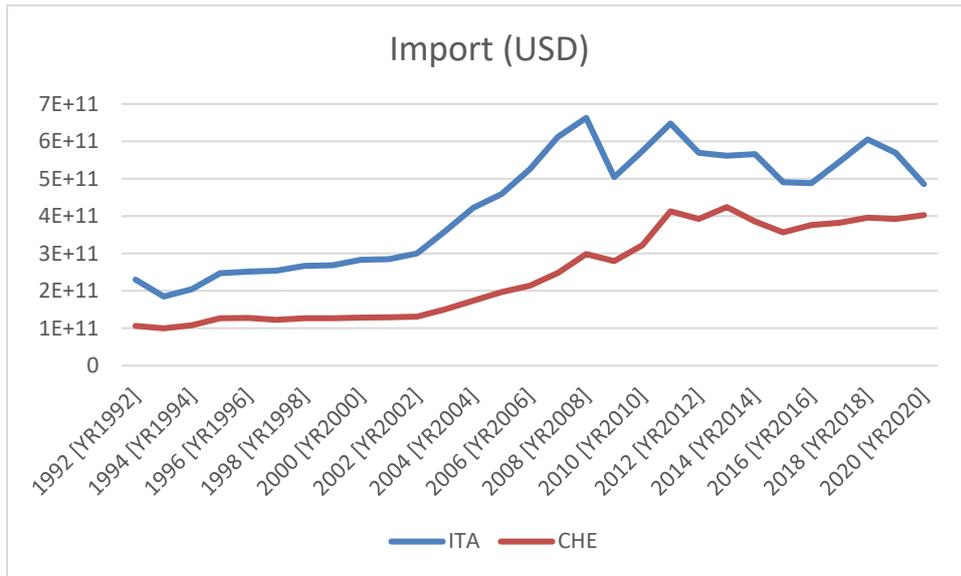
It is what happened in Italy and Switzerland during the abovementioned crisis, recognizable in the main trends of GDP growth.

We can add that the dramatic consequences of the economic crisis impacted more on the Italian economy than on the Swiss one for several reasons: a higher public debt, issues of political credibility and a stronger hurt of the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic (Rozmainsky & Rodionova Tatyana, 2021)⁸³.

⁸³ Rozmainsky I. & Rodionova T. "The financial fragility hypothesis and the debt crisis in Italy in the 2010s." *Terra Economicus* 19.1 (2021): 6-16.

Total values and percentages of import and export





Coming back to the logic of the economic integration, both countries show analogous trends of import and export, again with a higher level for Switzerland for both the indicators (when considered as percentages on GDP).

Talking specifically about Switzerland, both the supply and the export market are crucial for its economy primarily based on the tertiary sector and with a key production of niche products, especially addressed to premium markets. The necessity of integration for the Swiss

economy is crucial, especially with its main sales market: countries of the EU (Trofimova, 2020)⁸⁴.

Italy, as the second manufacturer of Europe, needs, of course, a wider supply and an export market but it has also to think about its internal demand, quite high because of its dimension. Thus, Italy cares about qualifying itself as a global economic player, especially for the export of its excellence. Here we can see the evolution of the Italian economy since its “Economic Miracle” of the ‘60s, always looking for profitable interaction with foreign markets. Since the ECSC community, Italy proceeded towards a model of strategical import and export that is a fundamental part of its economic strategy. Being a member of the European Community and now of the European Union is a key strategy to foster the development and/or to maintain its economic standards (Gomellini, 2020)⁸⁵.

To sum up, thanks to those economic indicators, we can see that both countries live an analogous economic paradigm, having always Switzerland in a higher welfare condition compared to Italy.

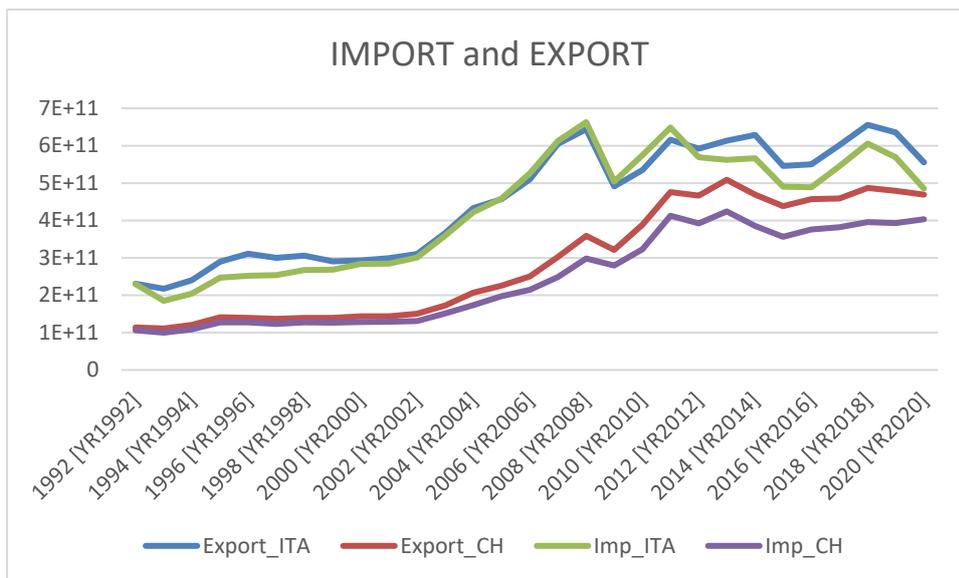
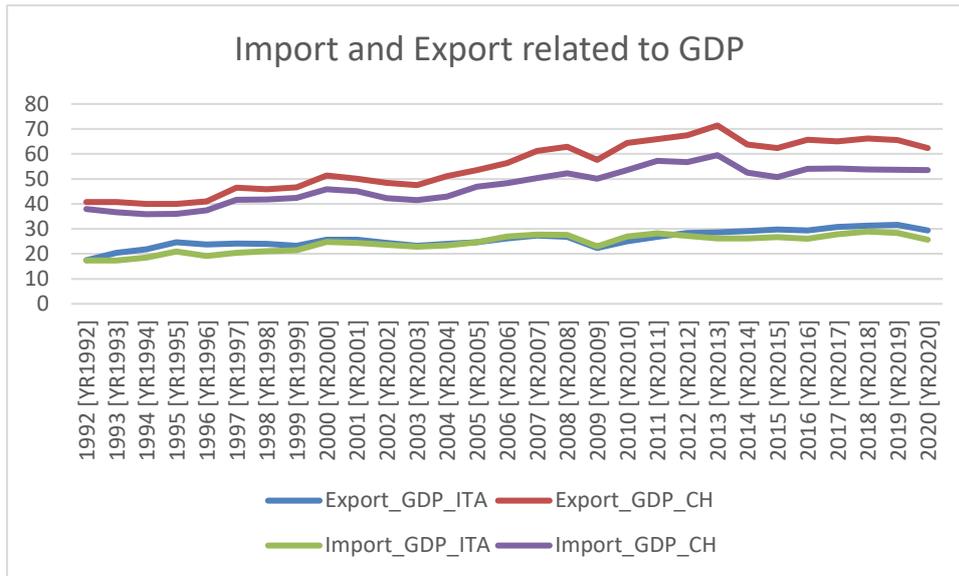
Despite the limitations of those indicators, both countries seem to ask for an increasing necessity to interact with foreign markets, especially with the nearer ones, more easily and cheaply.

The willingness of interacting at the European level, as remarked in the list of Treaties and Agreements, is an aspect that proceeds in the same logic for both countries. Again, how achieving this goal is influenced by the different paths chosen by those countries when relates to the EU scenario: treaties for Italy and Agreements for Switzerland.

Here follows two charts about the abovementioned data that can foster additionally our debate about the import and the export.

⁸⁴ Trofimova, O. (2020). Switzerland and European Union: Specifics of Trade and Investment Relations. *Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia*, 64(9), 96-104.

⁸⁵ Gomellini, M. (2020). *Breve storia delle barriere agli scambi in Italia* (No. 46). Bank of Italy, Economic Research and International Relations Area.



As we can see from those charts, we can recognize some interesting evidences. We can see not only the increase of the trade volumes but also the approximation of the level of import and export for both countries.

It is interesting underlying that if we relate trade volumes with GDP, Switzerland occupies the higher part of the chart while. Talking about the total volumes of international trade, the bigger size of Italian economy shows higher volumes of import and export than Switzerland.

What seems more interesting about those time series is the trend during crisis and after some relevant events that have radically changed the international economic context (such as the already mentioned access of China in WTO in 2001).

Between 1992 and 2001, the Italian trade balance maintained positive volumes, before starting a long period of deficit, at least until 2012. As emerged in the above graphs referred to GDP growth, when the Italian trade balance is in deficit, we face recessive periods for the Italian economy. After the long period of deficit, from 2012 the Italian trade balance returned positive, and it remained positive also during the most recent pandemic crisis.

On the other hand, since the beginning of the new millennium, Switzerland shows an increasing positive trade balance, behaving in a more stable, like a sort of “small Germany”.

Coming back to Italy, despite the process of Europeanization that fostered the possibilities of interaction among the economies, the entrance of China in WTO can mark the turning point in its trade balance. Evidently China begins to dominate the international globalized market, also in the capital goods sector (Lucarelli et Al, (2013)⁸⁶ et Lucarelli & Perone (2020)⁸⁷). Italy suffers more than other European countries from the consequences of this global change.

Looking at the development of the Italian trade balance compared to the rest of the world, it is in fact zero between 2001 and 2010 and even negative between 2010 and 2012.

The thesis expressed in Lucarelli et Al. (2013) and in Carnevali et Al. (2020)⁸⁸ is that Italy tends to despecialize itself and maintain price competitiveness on international markets. It implies that Italy became increasingly dependent on imports of high-tech capital goods.

Thanks to the evidence that emerged from the charts and from this contribution, we can underline again the overlapping economic dynamics on the socio-political ones: the abovementioned tendency addressed the Italian economy towards a despecialization and

⁸⁶ Lucarelli, S., Palma, D., & Romano, R. (2013). Quando Gli Investimenti Rappresentano Un Vincolo. Contributo Alla Discussione Sulla Crisi Italiana Nella Crisi Internazionale (When Investments Represent a Constraint. A Contribution to the Discussion on the Italian Crisis in the International Crisis). *Moneta e Credito*, 67(262), 169-205.

⁸⁷ Lucarelli, S., & Perone, G. (2020). Quando la produttività è limitata dalla bilancia dei pagamenti. Una riflessione sulle relazioni fra centro e periferia nell'unione monetaria europea a partire dall'equazione della produttività di Sylos Labini (When productivity is limited by the balance of payments. A reflection on the relationship between center and periphery in the European Monetary Union from the perspective of Sylos Labini's productivity equation). *Moneta e Credito*, 73(292), 325-353.

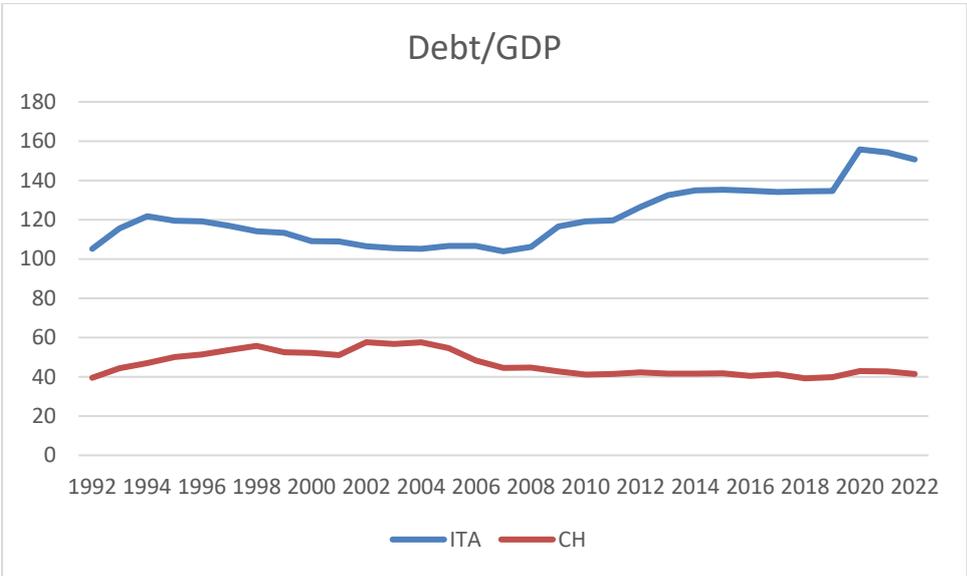
⁸⁸ Carnevali, E., Godin, A., Lucarelli, S., & Veronese Passarella, M. (2020). Productivity growth, Smith effects and Ricardo effects in Euro Area's manufacturing industries. *Metroeconomica*, 71(1), 129-155.

towards a loss of international competitiveness. Also this frustration, caused by the competitiveness of a less profitable globalized market, boosted the populist rhetoric that tried to translate this kind of responsibility to the process of Europeanization (as emerged also from the analysis of the Italian trust towards the European Institutions). We will come back on further considerations about it in the chapter dedicated to the conclusions and to the further research avenues.

This dynamic probably does not characterize Switzerland, which should perhaps be understood as a "small Germany".

An additional discussion about Debt and Europeanization

Before closing this section about the economic indicators, we want to add a final remark on the public debt issues, especially for Italy. Here we are going to provide data and charts of the debt to GDP ratio both for Italy and Switzerland.



Sources for ITA: Istat e DEF
 Source for CH: Federal Department of Finance

Talking about Italy, we have to underline the importance of this parameters, as long as it is part of the Stability and Growth Pact (established during the European Council in Dublin in 1996, in which public debt should not be higher than the 60% of countries GDP) (Schuknecht, at

Al., 2011)⁸⁹. For Italy, its debt exposure is a huge problem because it is a mandatory aspect anchored to the Maastricht parameters. This is even more critical because not accompanied with enough growth (growth is fundamental also for the respect of another parameter of the abovementioned Pact: deficit to GDP ratio, lower 3%).

For Italy, this debt exposition implies further constraints in public expenditures while it is not problematic for non-member states such as Switzerland.

Italy shows a worsening of the Debt to GDP ratio since the global recession, also due to austerity policies.

Talking about Switzerland we can identify a lower and more stable trend in the Debt to GDP ratio, especially from the years of the great recession until nowadays. We can affirm that Switzerland seems less exposed to global crisis (financial or pandemic) under the perspective of the debt exposure related to its GDP. Taking into consideration the Helvetic niche we could say that it is more anchored to a Germanic paradigm and its economy results more stable while facing the turbulences of the international markets (Culpepper, 2007)⁹⁰. This condition, not bounded by supranational constraints, gives Switzerland more autonomy also for its fiscal expenditures, potentially also in a logic of deficit spending.

The conclusion of this section about the Economic Indicators is crucial for our analysis about Europeanization because it paves the way for further debates about the role of budget constraints as a consequence of the EU membership.

Moreover, according to the studies of Domar (1993)⁹¹ and Pasinetti (2000)⁹² the logic of debt sustainability depends more on the condition of an economy rather than on the overall amount of the debt or on its ratio with GDP. If an economy is growing or it is in a steady-state, its primary surplus should be higher or equal to the interest paid on its debt.

Nevertheless, the Debt to GDP ratio and the Deficit to GDP ratio stands at the basis of the budgetary policies for EU member states such as Italy, implying the logic of austerity even when countercyclical fiscal policies could be useful in order to face economic crisis.

⁸⁹ Schuknecht, L., Moutot, P., Rother, P., & Stark, J. (2011). The stability and growth pact: Crisis and reform. *ECB Occasional Paper*, (129).

⁹⁰ Culpepper, P. D. (2007). Small states and skill specificity: Austria, Switzerland, and interemployer cleavages in coordinated capitalism. *Comparative Political Studies*, 40(6), 611-637.

⁹¹ Domar, E. D. (1993). On deficits and debt. *The American journal of economics and sociology*, 52(4), 475-478.

⁹² Pasinetti, L. L. (2000). Public Debt in the European Countries: Two Ways of Facing the Problem.

The abovementioned limits related to the Maastricht parameters (suspended only during the pandemic crisis) are crucial also in the evaluation of the process of Europeanization: those constraints had an impact both on the socio-political trends and especially on the economic ones. The Italian economy, due to its high debt exposure, suffered a lot and its consequences impacted on its industrial context, on the high fiscal pressure and on the possibility of expenditures for the state. The process of Europeanization made through economic constraints was perceived as too rigid and it implies a decrease in trust among Italian people towards the EU Institutional framework.

- **Political indicators**

We can split the political indicators into two different parts: the first one with a shortlist of the main treaties and agreements that regarded the European Union. The second one dedicated to electoral trends since 1992.

Section about treaties, agreements and critical junctures

We decided to list among treaties and agreements also the critical junctures that occurred in recent history.

Before opening this section, we provide a list of the most critical junctures faced in recent times as interpretative keys for electoral results and political tendencies:

1992 Maastricht Treaty

1992-1993 “Mani Pulite” political scandal and end of the Italian “First Republic”.

1999 Introduction of the Euro currency in Italy.

2001 Attack on the Twin Towers (USA) and spread of international terrorism.

2008 Subprime mortgage crisis (begun in the US and spread worldwide).

2011 Sovereign debt crisis.

2010 -2012 Arab springs and consequent geopolitical instability for the Mediterranean Region.

2014 Spread of Daesh in Syria and Iraq.

2013 -2015 Refugees' crisis.

2016 Brexit referendum and election of Donald Trump as President of the United States: the spread of populism.

2020 First wave of the Covid Pandemic.

2021 European expansionary policy through the investments of the Next Generation EU.

2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Those junctures are crucial for our study because they impacted the socio-political decisions taken in the considered arch of time, both at the national and at the supranational level (Capoccia, 2016)⁹³.

We can find elements that imply an increased interest in security and border control, elements that fostered populist rhetoric and elements that implied a stronger response about the economy to face the crucial crisis suffered in recent years.

According to those contingencies, we can find a specific address in the political behaviour of government and specific electoral trends that influenced the path of governmental Europeanization.

⁹³ Capoccia, G. (2016). *Critical junctures* (pp. 89-106). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Treaties and Agreements.

To provide a comparable list about legislative aspects, we do not put laws regarding internal policies or referenda. We think that governmental Europeanization relies more on the foreign policy level rather than on internal affairs.

Nevertheless, internal affairs become crucial when we talk about general elections because of the consequent parliamentary composition. Parliamentary composition addresses the governmental political action, thus governmental Europeanization. The presence of Eurosceptic parties in the lower chamber is the litmus test for the general political polarization. Its consistency could obstacle the overall process of governmental Europeanization.

Going into details, we could outline if there were considerable phases more or less keen to Europeanization in both countries.

List of the main Treaties, Agreements and critical junctures.

(I= Italy; CH= Switzerland; EU= European Union).

FOUNDING TREATIES FOR THE EU SINCE 1992.

Sources: EU Lex⁹⁴ and EU website⁹⁵

Maastricht Treaty (EU)

Signed: 7th February 1992

Also known as Treaty on the European Union, established the European Union (before we had a Community). It introduced elements of political union, paving the way for stronger cooperation among EU governments and for a future monetary union.

⁹⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/collection/eu-law/treaties/treaties-founding.html>

⁹⁵ https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/principles-and-values/founding-agreements_en

Treaty of Amsterdam (EU)

Signed: 1st May 1997

This treaty put further elements on the ordinary legislative procedures, paving the way also for the incumbent enlargements of the EU. It harmonized the legislation of the former European Community with the legislation of the EU, in a logic of reform of the EU institutions.

Treaty of Nice (EU)

Signed: 26th February 2001

This treaty aimed at preparing the functioning of the EU composed of 25 countries. It implied a reform in the voting process of the Council and in the process of changing the Commission's composition.

Treaty of Lisbon (EU)

Signed: 13th December 2007

This treaty is the most interesting for our purposes for several reasons. It aimed at strengthening the EU as a global player while tackling international issues.

It introduced a new EU diplomatic service with a High Representative for Foreign Affairs, it enforced the democratic action through, citizens' initiatives and an enforced role for the parliament. Moreover, it changed again the voting process in the Council.

This treaty was accompanied by an EU fundamental right chart and would have boosted the logic behind the former project of a European Constitution (presented in 2004 but never ratified because of the contrariety of some countries in ad hoc referenda)

This treaty is crucial for us because it shows clear evidence of the direction that the EU was expected to take through constitutional principles. Thanks to this treaty and according to the renewed impact of the EU on international affairs, we could consider this phase as a peak for the process of governmental Europeanization.

Accessories Treaties and Treaties for States' accession to the EU, since 1992.

Those treaties are crucial in the logic of governmental internationalization. As we can underline, Switzerland became surrounded by EU countries.

Treaty of accession for Austria, Finland and Sweden (1994).

Treaty of accession for Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Cyprus, Hungary, Malta, Slovenia, Slovakia and Poland (2003).

Treaty of accession for Bulgaria and Romania (2005)

Treaty of accession for Croatia (2012)

Even if before 1992, we ought to mention:

Schengen Treaty (1985): “is a treaty that led most of the European countries towards the abolishment of their national borders, to build a Europe without borders known as the “Schengen Area” “(Schengen Visa Info website)⁹⁶. (I); (CH).

Here we can find both Italy and Switzerland (signed in 2004, in force since 2008). We remember that since 1960, Switzerland was a founding state of the EFTA, European Free Trade Agreement, paving the way for a stronger interconnection with other European countries for free trade. This presence in the EFTA approximated Switzerland to the adhesion to Schengen agreements and other commercial aspects through ad hoc treaties (Straubhaar, 1994)⁹⁷.

Again before 1992, in 1972 the Helvetic government signed the Switzerland–EU Free Trade Agreement. This is another crucial milestone to be mentioned in the CH-EU relationship.

⁹⁶ <https://www.schengenvisainfo.com/schengen-agreement/>

⁹⁷ Straubhaar, T. (1994). Switzerland and the EFTA Countries. In *The Politics of East-West Migration* (pp. 201-213). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Thanks to the EDA Swiss Website, we can propose a detailed chronological chart about the main agreements signed by Switzerland since 1992 (Eda Admin CH website)⁹⁸:

- 2019: Signing of the Agreement on the participation in the area of police cooperation (Prüm Decision)
- 2017: Signing of the Agreement between Switzerland and the EU on the linking of their emissions trading systems
- 2017: Full association of Switzerland in «Horizon 2020»
- 2016: Decision by Parliament on the implementation of Art. 121a Cst
- 2016: Signing of Protocol III extending the free movement of persons to Croatia
- 2015: Signing of the Agreement on the Automatic Exchange of Information in Tax Matters
- 2014: Signing of the EASO participation Agreement (European Asylum Support Office)
- 2014: Adoption of the federal popular initiative «Stop Mass Immigration»
- 2013: Adoption by the Federal Council of a mandate to negotiate an agreement on institutional matters
- 2013: Signing of the Satellite Navigation Cooperation Agreement
- 2013: Signing of the Agreement on Competition
- 2012: Signing of the Agreement on the European Defence Agency
- 2010: Signing of the Agreement on Education, Training and Youth
- 2009: Continuation of the free movement of persons and extension to Romania and Bulgaria
- 2008: Signing of the Agreement with Eurojust
- 2006: Adoption by the Swiss electorate of the Federal Act on Cooperation with the Countries of Eastern Europe
- 2005: Extension of the free movement of persons to the EU10
- 2004: Signing of the Agreement with Europol
- 2004: Signing of Bilaterals II (Schengen/Dublin, taxation of savings income, combating fraud, processed agricultural products, environment, statistics, MEDIA programme, pensions)
- 1999: Signing of Bilaterals I (free movement of persons, technical barriers to trade, public procurement, agriculture, overland transport, civil aviation, research)
- 1992: Rejection of EEA membership by the Swiss electorate

According to the aim of our research, we ought to focus on the Bilateral I (1999) and the Bilateral II (2004) as the turning point of the logic of Governmental Europeanization for Switzerland.

Here we can find the logic of “relative Europeanization” (Papadopoulos, 2008)⁹⁹, where Switzerland improved its relationship with the overall EU institutional framework and

⁹⁸ <https://www.eda.admin.ch/europa/en/home/europapolitik/ueberblick.html>

embraced a consistent part of the EU legislation about free movements of people, transport, immigration (mainly focused on asylum) and other aspects connected to justice (with a peak in 2008 with the Helvetic agreement with Eurojust).

As emerges from the abovementioned list, popular initiatives (such as the one of 2014 against massive immigration (Perkowska, 2016)¹⁰⁰) caused sometimes a “stop and go” when talking about EU issues. Nevertheless, the considerable amount of referenda in Switzerland is part of the Swiss concept of democracy and representativeness at the basis of the Helvetic social cohesion (Trechsel & Kriesi, 1996)¹⁰¹.

Thus, we can identify the coexistence of a double-track balanced political action: one conducted by the government and the other promoted by people and legitimized through the instrument of the referendum, also about foreign policy.

Finally, to remark the main insights on governmental Europeanization, we can find a convergency for both countries towards a more integrated perspective, but how achieving them, follows two different autonomous paths.

Italy embraced a logic of full adhesion to all those main EU treaties while Switzerland privileged a more customized way based on agreements. Talking about Switzerland, in the most recent times, several bounds seem now putting obstacles to this logic, to avoid a potential “cherry-picking attitude” of the Helvetic Government about the EU opportunities (Franklin, 2019)¹⁰².

⁹⁹ <https://www.eda.admin.ch/europa/en/home/europapolitik/ueberblick.html>

¹⁰⁰ Perkowska, M. (2015). The migration policy of Switzerland. *Przegląd Politologiczny*, (3), 41-54.

¹⁰¹ Trechsel, A. H., & Kriesi, H. (1996). Switzerland: The referendum and initiative as a centrepiece of the political system. In *The referendum experience in Europe* (pp. 185-208). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

¹⁰² Franklin, J. (2019). Switzerland and the EU show Britain what is in store. *International Financial Law Review*.

Electoral results of elections in the Lower Chamber since 1992.

This section is quite complicated because our interest relies upon the Eurosceptical Parties and their representativeness in the lower chamber of the parliaments of our units of analysis.

It works in the logic that: the less populist movements are represented in the parliament, the less Eurosceptical tendencies could take place in the governmental action (Mudde, 2013)¹⁰³.

The choice of considering national chambers rather than the European Parliament comes from the idea to provide comparable data, because Switzerland does not take part in European elections.

According to this logic, we have to remember some premises (Dunn, 2015)¹⁰⁴:

-the lower chambers guarantee a wider political representation, in both cases involving a wider active and passive electorate.

-the lower chambers have analogous competencies of the higher ones in both cases.

-the lower chambers guarantee more local representativeness through an adequate distribution of the number of seats per geographical area.

The first big issue to face while managing those data is to identify which could be listed as Eurosceptic parties.

A very first step to be considered is identifying the evolution of Eurosceptic movements, not only identifiable under the label “populism”. On one hand, Euroscepticism was part of the far-left movements against globalization but, in recent times, took place especially in the most conservative movements.

Thus, elaborating a taxonomy of the Italian and Swiss Eurosceptic parties is the first issue to be solved.

¹⁰³ Mudde, C. (2013). Three decades of populist radical right parties in Western Europe: So what?. *European Journal of Political Research*, 52(1), 1-19.

¹⁰⁴ Dunn, K. (2015). Voice, representation and trust in parliament. *Acta Politica*, 50(2), 171-192.

Talking about Italy, for example, Forza Italia (the party founded by Silvio Berlusconi in 1994) is sometimes labelled in the literature as a populist movement (Quaglia, 2008)¹⁰⁵, while for other authors it is anchored in the pro-EU forces (Castaldo & Verzichelli, 2020)¹⁰⁶.

Always recognized as Eurosceptic movements in the literature are Lega and Movimento 5 Stelle. Both parties changed their political attitude towards Europe in most recent times: in the Italian political arena, Lega became the most critical party against the “European technocrats” while Movimento 5 Stelle became pro-EU after the end of the alliance with Lega (Zappettini & Maccaferri, 2020)¹⁰⁷.

Other minority movements were explicitly against anti-Euro and other ones were in favor of an “Italexit”, analogously to what the United Kingdom did with the Brexit referendum in 2016. The most extremist parties such as Italexit and the no-global ones are marginalized in the electoral scenario, thus, the only parties to be considered in our indicator for Italy are Lega (also with its former name “Lega Nord”) and Movimento 5 Stelle (being aware of its changes occurred in 2019).

Even more complicated is the case of Switzerland because several parties embrace local instances rather than supranational topics.

Maybe the most crucial party to consider as Eurosceptic is the conservative “Lega dei Ticinesi”, a conservative movement prevailing in Ticino (Mazzoleni, 2021)¹⁰⁸ and the Unione di Centro (UDC) (Schimmelfennig, 2021)¹⁰⁹.

¹⁰⁵ Quaglia, L. (2008). Euroscepticism in Italy. *Opposing Europe*, 58-74.

¹⁰⁶ Castaldo, A., & Verzichelli, L. (2020). Technocratic populism in Italy after Berlusconi: The trendsetter and his disciples. *Politics and Governance*, 8(4), 485-495.

¹⁰⁷ Zappettini, F., & Maccaferri, M. (2021). Euroscepticism between Populism and Technocracy: The Case of Italian Lega and Movimento 5 Stelle. *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, 17(2).

¹⁰⁸ Mazzoleni, O. (2021). Regionalism and Euroscepticism: The case of Ticino. In *Switzerland–EU Relations* (pp. 148-156). Routledge.

¹⁰⁹ Schimmelfennig, F. (2021). Switzerland: A Vital Relationship in the Stranglehold of Euroscepticism. In *Euroscepticism and the Future of Europe* (pp. 149-151). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

Here follows a chart with the results of the general elections, focusing our interest on those parties.

Remember that the Italian Camera dei Deputati is composed by 630 seats (at least to 2023, Giannitti & Lupo, 2020¹¹⁰) and the Swiss National Council is composed by 200 seats.

Here follow the results in terms of seats in the lower chamber of the identified Eurosceptic parties in Italy.

Parl-seats	1992	1994	1996	2001	2006	2008	2013	2018
Lega	55	11	59	30	26	60	18	123
Movimento 5 Stelle	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	109	225

As we can see, Movimento 5 Stelle participated in general elections since 2013, at the beginning without accepting any alliance. It changed in 2018, when its votes were necessary for the constitution of a government, choosing Lega as a first ally, then moving to the Democratic party at the end of the first government held by Giuseppe Conte.

As we can see by the numbers, the electoral volatility presented in the literature especially characterizes contemporaneity and, especially, populist claims.

This is not the case of Switzerland

Parl-seats	1995	1999	2003	2007	2011	2015	2019
UDC	26	44	55	62	54	65	53
Lega dei Ticinesi	0	2	1	1	2	2	1

¹¹⁰Giannitti, L., & Lupo, N. (2020). Le conseguenze della riduzione dei parlamentari sui Regolamenti di Senato e Camera. *Quaderni costituzionali*, 0-0.

As we can see from the results coming from UDC and Lega dei Ticinesi, there is a less volatile electoral environment also because impellent claims by people are supported by the instrument of the referendum.

According to this, we can see also increased stability in the parliamentary composition because of the political organization of the State.

7. Empirical analysis and comments.

In this section we expect to bring together all the crucial hints deriving from the indicators.

A first step to open this part is to report the overall model, considering every research question and its consequent hypotheses.

Before going through them, it is important underlining the crucial recurrent aspects characterizing the model of our analysis.

At the political level:

Existence of paths in governmental internationalization and, thus, in the Europeanization process.

At the social level:

Constancy of a shared attitude (or reluctancy) to delegate power.

At the economic level:

Countries' economic interest is at the basis of every governmental internationalization strategy.

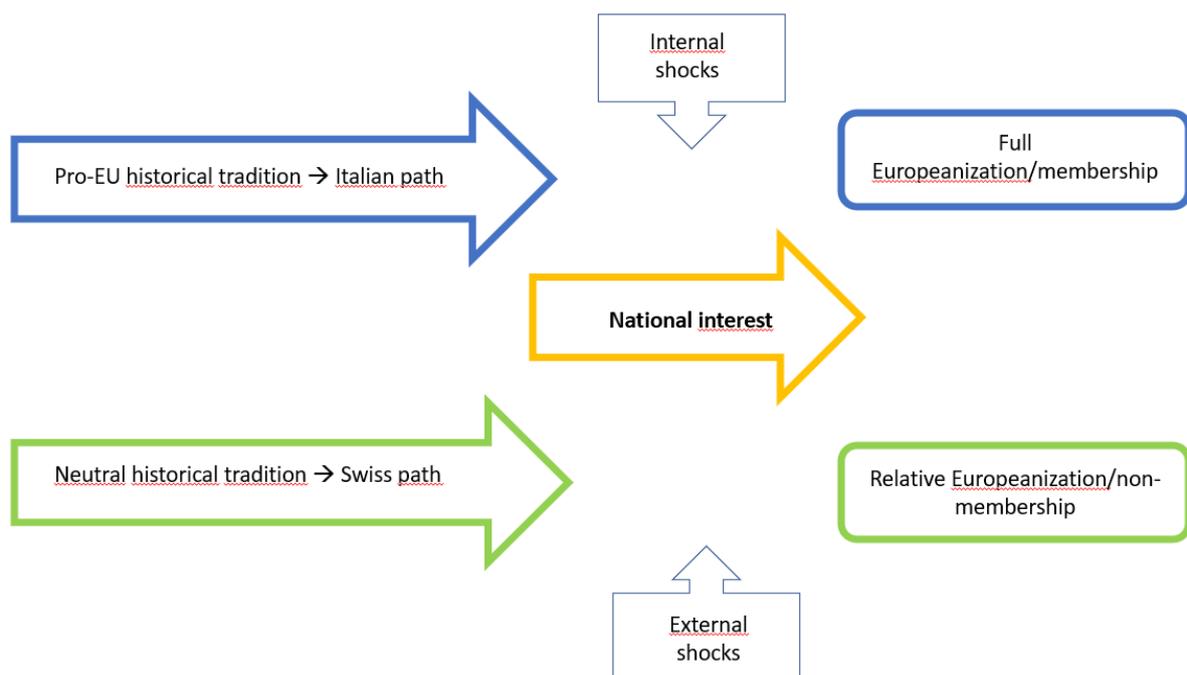
At a transversal dimension:

Existence of breaking points in History (identifiable especially in crises), readdressing the political action about governmental internationalization, according to a quite predictable direction.

This premise is necessary because, according to the already commented indicators, we can outline specific variables:

- The role of the political tradition (referred to the abovementioned paths)
- The role of interests and opportunities.
- The role of shocks (internal or external).

Here we can graphically summarize the logic in which those variables are operating, addressing Italy and Switzerland towards a specific model of Europeanization.



Those variables are anchored in the literature review chapter. There we presented our choices in theories, then explained through our considered data in the empirical section.

More specifically, we underlined the prominent role of path dependence theory in institution-building strategies. Path dependence theory embraces the logic of linearity in governments'

behaviour, according to their countries' traditions and history (David, 2007)¹¹¹. This self-enforcing dynamic is used to guide and address political action, both for Italy and Switzerland.

Our research model underlines two parallel ways to interpret governmental internationalization for our units of analysis. This is the most characterizing difference among them. Those are two different strategies of governmental internationalization, both characterized by their historical political tradition: Italy as a “pro-EU” country and Switzerland as a neutral one.

At the same time, emerges that both countries look for a more internationalized path but in different ways. The commonality of those paradigms stands in the shared interest to exploit the several opportunities coming from international trade and globalization. This logic explains the necessity to internationalize their policy, their society, and their economy (Bakhtiari & Shajar, 2006)¹¹². As underlined by the abovementioned authors, globalization implies several opportunities, threats, and challenges. For governments, the coexistence of those potential outputs implies the definition of a proper strategy to tackle contemporaneity.

The discriminating point that makes those paths parallel (but not aligned) is the willingness to delegate power at the supranational level (Saalfeld, 2005)¹¹³. The connotation of the Swiss government is keener to maintain its autonomy also in international relation, according to its neutral history.

On the contrary, Italy is keener to delegate power to the European Institution, with a proactive role in its institution-building process since their origins of the ECSC (Guerrieri, 2013)¹¹⁴.

Since this point we can affirm that Gstöhl (2002)¹¹⁵ is confirmed, also through to our data: Switzerland seems reluctant in embracing a Europeanized path. Its reluctance relies on social

¹¹¹ David, P. A. (2007). Path dependence: a foundational concept for historical social science. *Cliometrica*, 1(2), 91-114.

¹¹² Bakhtiari, S., & Shajar, H. (2006). Globalization and education: Challenges and opportunities. *International Business & Economics Research Journal (IBER)*, 5(2).

¹¹³ Saalfeld, T. (2005). Deliberate delegation or abdication? Government backbenchers, ministers and European Union legislation. *The Journal of Legislative Studies*, 11(3-4), 343-371.

¹¹⁴ Guerrieri, S. (2013). La genesi di una rappresentanza sovranazionale: la formazione dei gruppi politici all'Assemblea comune della Ceca (1952-1958). La genesi di una rappresentanza sovranazionale: la formazione dei gruppi politici all'Assemblea comune della Ceca (1952-1958), 273-287.

and political attitude. Nevertheless, talking about the economy, Switzerland is maintaining a prominent interest in the European market. Thus, this reluctance is partially overtaken through the already mentioned bilateral agreements.

At this stage, we can identify the transversal variable characterized by the countries' interests: the desire for an higher economic growth, receptivity of foreign direct investments, an extension of shared welfare and an improvement of life quality. This short list is necessarily boosted by progress and by more interconnected economies (Bandelj, 2009)¹¹⁶.

Those interests foster both countries' willingness to interact internationally, thus also governmental internationalization.

Fostering internationalization implies upsides and downsides. Here we can mention the role of the intervening variable of shocks. Internal and external shocks involved both countries, in a different way. Especially external shocks impacted both the units of analysis because of the interconnection of the economies. For example, as emerged from our indicators with the lower peaks, the global economic crisis (2007-2011) and the pandemic crisis (2020) affected symmetrically Switzerland and Italy. Because of the differences among those economies and because of the different institutional approaches facing crises, the impact on the GDP per capita, GDP Growth, and on the trade balances differed, but not too much.

To conclude the explanation of our model, we aim at demonstrating the different outputs of those different strategies of governmental internationalization.

The abovementioned paths bring to two different strategies of governmental Europeanization.

The Italian path bring towards a logic of full membership and consequent full Europeanization. It means a direct involvement in the institution-building process, direct involvement in supranational affairs and, especially a delegation of power bounded by treaties (Giuliani, 2000)¹¹⁷.

¹¹⁵ Gstöhl, S. (2002). *Reluctant Europeans: Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland in the process of integration*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

¹¹⁶ Bandelj, N. (2009). The global economy as instituted process: The case of Central and Eastern Europe. *American Sociological Review*, 74(1), 128-149.

¹¹⁷ Giuliani, M. (2000). Europeanization and Italy: A bottom-up process?. *South European Society and Politics*, 5(2), 47-72.

The Swiss path proceeded formally in its neutral collocation. Its reluctance towards a process of power delegation could not be ignored, especially because of the several referenda periodically proposed to the Helvetic population. Nevertheless, this paradigm could not ignore the practical interests, especially about economic opportunities, and about free movements. The adherence to a limited number of treaties (where those ones did not imply the cession of state-prerogatives or the membership to the EU) and especially to bilateral agreements, accomplished the mission to select specifically the fields of action. The most interesting ones, especially about international trade and tariff barriers were at the core of the governmental action. This idea is to consolidate the Swiss position as a collaborative external interlocutor for the EU. Here emerges the output of the Helvetic governmental internationalization strategy: the already described process of “relative Europeanization” ((Papadopoulos, 2008¹¹⁸); (Schroedter et Al. (2015)¹¹⁹)).

¹¹⁸ Papadopoulos, Y. (2008). Europeanization? Two logics of change of policy-making patterns in Switzerland. *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis*, 10(3), 255-278.

¹¹⁹ Schroedter, J. H., Rössel, J., & Datler, G. (2015). European identity in Switzerland: the role of intermarriage, and transnational social relations and experiences. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 662(1), 148-168.

Empirical analysis

Here follows a series of charts, elaborated from the indicators of the previous sections.

They will be useful to interpret the consequent analysis and conclusion, aiming at demonstrating our research hypotheses.

Economic charts

GDP Growth	Lowest Peak	Highest Peak
Italy	2009, 2020	2000, 2006
Switzerland	2009, 2020	2000, 2006

GDP per capita	Lowest Peak	Highest Peak
Italy	1993	2008
Switzerland	1993	2011

Export	Lowest Peak	Highest Peak
Italy	1993	2018
Switzerland	1994	2013

Import	Lowest Peak	Highest Peak
Italy	1993	2018
Switzerland	1995	2013

Here follow the Descriptive Statistics of the abovementioned indicators. Mean, Median, Standard Deviation, maximum and minimum record additionally reconfirm the abovementioned hypothesis and comments.

GDP per capita (current USD)

Variabile	Mean	1992 - 2020		Min	Max
		Median	St. Dev.		
GDPpercapita_ITA	2,92e+004	3,13e+004	6,91e+003	1,87e+004	4,08e+004
GDPpercapita_CH	6,36e+004	5,93e+004	1,98e+004	3,90e+004	9,13e+004

GDP growth (percentage)

Variable	Mean	1992 - 2020		Min	Max
		Median	St. Dev.		
GDPgrowth_ITA	0,369	0,926	2,52	-8,94	3,79
GDPgrowth_CH	1,61	1,75	1,62	-2,39	4,02

Export (percentages on GDP).

Variabile	Mean	1992 - 2020		Min	Max
		Median	St. Dev.		
Export_GDP_ITA	25,9	25,6	3,37	17,5	31,6
Export_GDP_CH	55,2	56,4	10,0	40,0	71,4

Import (percentages on GDP)

Variable	Mean	1992 - 2020		Min	Max
		Median	St. Dev.		
Import_GDP_ITA	24,3	24,8	3,46	17,4	28,9
Import_GDP_CH	47,4	48,3	7,06	35,9	59,5

Export (total value, current USD)

Variable	1992 - 2020				
	Mean	Median	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Export_ITA	4,53e+011	4,91e+011	1,52e+011	2,17e+011	6,56e+011
Export_CH	2,90e+011	2,50e+011	1,51e+011	1,11e+011	5,09e+011

Import (total value, current USD)

Variable	1992 - 2020				
	Mean	Median	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Import_ITA	4,28e+011	4,85e+011	1,54e+011	1,85e+011	6,63e+011
Import_CH	2,46e+011	2,14e+011	1,22e+011	9,98e+010	4,24e+011

According to those recap tables, regarding the trade balance (divided into import and export, both in total values and considered as percentages on GDP) we can underline the coherence among the economic behavior of those countries, aiming at an overall increase of trade volumes, thus aiming at a wider market.

This perspective, anchored to the abovementioned literature review, demonstrates the economic interest to increase commercial relations within the European continent. It is both demonstrated by the interconnection of the economies and by the necessity to rely on a collaborative context, not biased or hampered by too many tariffs, regulations and limitations.

This is embraced by the logic of the European Single Market and by the Schengen agreements, characterized by the progressive fall of several limitations for the movements of people and goods, services and capitals.

A very important remark relies in the similarities of the trends of GDP Growth and GDP per Capita between the two countries.

The trend of GDP Growth remarks the interconnection of the market while facing an economic crisis (or global critical junctures such as a pandemic). Thus, we can see the similarities between the lowest peaks. The volumes of GDP per capita show similarities in the

growing trends, underlining the increasing individual welfare for Italian and Swiss citizens in the last 30 years, which grew in parallel to the increasing volumes of international trade.

The mutual interdependence of the Swiss and the European market is evident, especially if we consider the several premium goods produced there and the crucial role played by Switzerland in the movements of financial capitals.

At the same time, Italy, as the second European manufactory, needs a wide supply and export market to serve the real economy.

This comparison underlines the key interests for both the Italian and Swiss governments in governmental Europeanization, with the primary goal to strengthen economic relations.

According to those evidences, the Italian and Swiss governments aim at proceeding on the same path of Europeanization but maintain the fundamental different formality of the membership in the same supranational context.

Thus, according to the choice (and the consequent limitations) of those indicators, the economic sub-hypothesis is validated.

Socio-Political Charts

Fundamental Treaties		
Italy	Maastricht (1992)	Lisbon (2007)
Switzerland	Bilateral I (1992)	Bilateral II (2004)

Nr. of Eurosceptic seats in the lower chamber	Lowest Peak	Highest Peak
Italy	11 in 1994	348 in 2018
Switzerland	26 in 1995	67 in 2015

TRUST EU Institutions	Lowest Peak	Highest Peak
Italy	2018	1990
Switzerland	1996	2017

TRUST national government	Lowest Peak	Highest Peak
Italy	2018	2009
Switzerland	1996	2017

When we commented on the indicators about trust in the previous chapter, we tried to identify the average Italian and Swiss level of trust towards the EU and their own National Governments.

In those last two charts about trust, the comparison shows its peaks (summing in the lower peak the two negative alternatives and in the higher peak the two positive alternatives proposed by the original questionnaire) and its consequent commitment towards the governmental action.

This comparison underlines how the Italian and Swiss trends are independent for several reasons, again anchored in the previous literature about their historical attitude towards the European Union's project.

Italy showed both a pro-EU enthusiastic attitude during the crucial phases of the recent EU institution-building process and consolidation. At the same time, Italy suffered several turbulences caused by globalization, especially hurting its economic performance during the global and sovereign debt crisis (Quaglia, 2013).

It exposed Italy to more influential rhetoric of populism and consequent distrust towards the political system. It emerged in the lowest level of trust and in the consequent growth of Eurosceptical seats in the Italian political arena in the elections of 2018.

As claimed by Della Porta and Caiani (2007)¹²⁰, the Italian culture about the EU is grounded more in a sort of ideological sense of belongingness than in a full awareness of EU affairs. According to Lucarelli (2015)¹²¹, the Italian “First Republic was in favor of European Integration and since the 70s, we have a sort of bipartisan consensus. The Italian Second Republic (after “Mani Pulite” juridical scandal) inaugurated the end of a “permissive consensus” towards the EU. The rise of populism against Europeanization corresponded especially to periods of crisis and of austerity. Thus, coming back to Della Porta & Ciriani (2007), the Italian political scenario can be simplified into the following parts: center-right parties that consider Europe especially for economic advantages in trade opportunities, center-left parties that promote a stronger Europeanization in each field, far right and far left parties that underline the too pervasive role of the EU in countries’ affairs. This fragmentation of the political scenario embraces people’s claims and expectations from the EU and let those scholars talk about a sort of “Italianization of European Processes”. This undefined formula is the counterprove that Italy still remains a pro-EU country, but it is less Euro-enthusiastic and more keen to Euro-Realism. Diamanti & Bordignon (2002)¹²² tried to define Eurorealism as “the feeling of separateness from the Europe of the Euro (currency)”, but with the shared awareness of a Europe “seen more as a necessity rather than as a concrete source of concrete advantage”.

Talking about Switzerland, it seems following another trend in institutional trust and political representativeness of Eurosceptical parties, probably because of its political collocation: less

¹²⁰ Della Porta, D., & Caiani, M. (2007). Talking Europe in the Italian public sphere. *South european society & politics*, 12(1), 1-21.

¹²¹ Lucarelli, S. (2015). Italy and the EU: From true love to disenchantment. *J. Common Mkt. Stud.*, 53, 40.

¹²² Diamanti, I. & Bordignon, F. (2002) ‘Gli italiani si riscoprono euroentusiasti’, *Limes*, no. 1, pp. 53–62.

polarized and outside direct EU dynamics. As already mentioned in the previous chapters, the overall interest for the Swiss government is to get the most attractive opportunities of cooperation with the EU (especially economically), preserving, at the same time, its neutral connotation. The moderate growth of Swiss Eurosceptic parties is more connected to global tendencies and to contextual national debates, in several cases related to borders' policies and economic affairs.

It is not a case that the spread of academic literature about governmental Europeanization of Switzerland is concentrated on the several topics disciplined by the Bilateral Agreements. Those agreements are the result of "on topic negotiations", according to the abovementioned paradigm characterizing Swiss policies towards the European Union.

On the other hand, confirmative literature about EU treaties, in which Italy is involved, underlines the prominent role of the Maastricht and of the Lisbon ones: considered as the milestones (and turning point) of the recent EU institution-building process. According to this, the Italian Government seems still embracing the soul of the Founding Fathers of the European post-war dream.

Finally, empirical evidences about the abovementioned data during the pandemic are not still complete or available.

The pandemic is surely another turning point of the recent history that put again under discussion the relations with the EU for both the units of analysis. Very early pieces of evidence are showing a more collaborative attitude of national governments and citizens towards the EU, especially because of a more Keynesian approach applied during this crisis, very different if compared with EU's approach during the sovereign debt crisis (characterized by the so called "austerity").

Especially this last sentence cannot be still validated empirically, but it could be an interesting hint for further research avenues.

Finally, talking about the overall socio-political scenario, here we can again underline that the Mill's most different criterion is still valid and all the sub-hypotheses are validated.

Despite the limitations of the considered indicators and the matters of data availability, Switzerland shows its autonomous paradigm maintaining its fundamental connotation of a neutral country, a bit skeptical about proceeding towards a formal adhesion to the EU. This is

demonstrated in both the independent trends in trust and in the strategies adopted by its government in the last 30 years. Neither the trend about Eurosceptic parliamentary seats seems to suggest similarities with the Italian trends. This is very well explained also in the previous literature, where we underlined how the Swiss process can be defined of “relative Europeanization”: being independent without missing the opportunities of ad-hoc synergies with the EU context. The Swiss path seems even more constant and coherent than the Italian one, especially talking about the electoral trends and the perception of trust towards national and supranational institutions.

Italy maintained its constant path in its “full Europeanized” governmental strategy. This is underlined by its constant presence inside the most crucial treaties since the beginning of the European project.

Despite the several changes that occurred during the last three decades characterized by globalization and by several critical junctures, neither the first Italian first populist government considered the membership to the EU under re-discussion. It is another proof that the Italian path about Europeanization proceeded in the same direction, letting the European Institutions-building process grow with an active contribution, also during its crucial steps and despite the several criticalities underlined by the Eurosceptic movements inside the Italian political arena.

8. Conclusions

Huge parts of the conclusions are already included in the previous lines, especially being put in relation with the previous charts.

The previous charts are an intuitive empirical elaboration of the considered indicators. Thanks to this we had the opportunity to blend the main hints characterizing the three considered dimensions: political, social and economic ones.

On one hand, talking about Italy we found an interesting evolution of its path, always anchored to the EU: before driven by an enthusiastic attitude of Founding member, then with

a more realistic approach. On the other hand, talking about Switzerland, all the previous analysis are anchored in the wide literature about neutral countries and confirmed also empirically. More specifically, our study fostered the debate especially about the logics behind being a “reluctant European”, citing Gsthol’s study.

What mainly emerges talking about Europeanization in both countries is the importance of two main drivers for this process: the existence of a governmental strategy pursuing goals of countries’ interest and the contemporary presence of socio-political traditions (based on institutional trust and perceived national identity).

The literature adds further hints about the awareness of the opportunities and of the risks behind a process of Europeanization, especially considering the abovementioned critical junctures. Geopolitical crises, economic crises and a pandemic fostered the debate about the importance of a coherent and cooperative action, but we are still very far from a common continental response facing contemporary issues.

Favell & Recchi (2009)¹²³ remarked the ancestral contrast between globalization trend and national claims. This is at the basis of our analyzed contrast between a supranational and a national perspective. This process means not only normative changes but also social ones.

Again in the same book, Recchi & Favell (2009)¹²⁴ underline that the EU grew thanks to both pressures of intergovernmentalism and functionalism, under the ideological flag of potential supranational development.

The non-member countries belonging to the same continent, perceive the influence of a reality like the European Union. This implies what we defined as processes of relative Europeanization, based on a spontaneous or ad hoc adaptations to the EU topics of countries’ interest, regardless the formal process of membership.

Thanks to our research, we were able to outline the prominent role of the countries’ economic interests, while addressing the relationship with the closer supranational context. Then we depicted how the Swiss path, characterized by “relative Europeanization”, proceeded with coherence in parallel to the “full Europeanized one” embraced by Italy.

¹²³ Favell, A., & Recchi, E. (2009). Pioneers of European integration: An introduction. *Pioneers of European integration: Citizenship and mobility in the EU*, 1-25.

¹²⁴ Recchi, E., & Favell, A. (Eds.). (2009). *Pioneers of European integration: Citizenship and mobility in the EU*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

The role played by the historical background was the key factor that avoided the overlap of those paths and the maintenance of that parallel trajectory even during the last complex 30 years.

Switzerland preserves its connotation of a neutral country while Italy maintained the “first-line” in the institution-building process since the origins of the European Community.

The evolution of the national institutional organization is the mirror of this kind of behaviour, constantly enriched by new norms/treaties/agreements that never re-put under discussion the abovementioned paradigms.

Neither crucial critical junctures deeply influenced the fundamental values of Neutrality for Switzerland and of EU-Sense of belongingness for Italy.

What can be furtherly remarked at this stage, is also the new centrality of EU affairs in contemporary political debate. Cremonesi et Al. (2019)¹²⁵ underlined the increased media coverage of the last European election, as a consequence of an increased awareness of the importance of EU topics and of the EU Institutional Framework as a co-decision maker also in national policies. The rise of populism polarized the debate furtherly and its reflections were perceived also in Extra UE countries.

EU elections were originally perceived as secondary ones, when compared to national political consultations. Now, this paradigm changed because of the consolidation of the process of Europeanization and because of the growing importance of the political-economic EU measures. Political and economic actors, lobbyists, and an improved institutional system are involved in this progressive change of paradigm that increased the centrality of the EU supranational system, as a progressive result of the process of Europeanization (Pritoni, 2019¹²⁶).

This increased awareness has a direct impact on the national electorate that is called to express his political view in elections and/or referenda regarding EU topics. The level of trust

¹²⁵ Cremonesi, C., Seddone, A., Bobba, G., & Mancosu, M. (2019). The European Union in the media coverage of the 2019 European election campaign in Italy: towards the Europeanization of the Italian public sphere. *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 24(5), 668-690.

¹²⁶ Pritoni, A. (2019). Preferring Rome to Brussels: Mapping interest group europeanisation in Italy. *South European Society and Politics*, 24(4), 441-462.

towards the EU is not only measured in member states but also in non-member states, such as Switzerland. According to our results, we identified specific trends and a specific consequent governmental behavior.

Governmental conducts were coherent, even if they had to face a wavering level of consensus and political trust; it is another confirmation that underlines the values at the basis of both the countries.

A very last remark is about the main research hypothesis, reported in the following box:

Main research Hp: In the last 30 years, Italy and Switzerland did not contradict their socio-political traditions about governmental Europeanization. They just moderately adapted practical measures while facing specific economic necessities of stronger integration.

This sentence embraces what our empirical analysis tried to explain, thanks to a critical analysis of the abovementioned dimensions.

Those dimensions, if considered separately or together, always underline what is written in the grey box and prove how the lenses of historical institutionalism can help us interpret contemporaneity.

Path dependence theory was a useful tool to track since the beginning the coexistence of the two parallel strategies of governmental Europeanization that, despite the changes of times, of interests, and of socio-political tendencies, never betrayed the fundamental countries' values. The future is well anchored on a more interconnected dimension, but this goal can be achieved in many modalities.

Our case study hopes to foster the debate about this topic, for a future of peace and productive interaction among States, economies and individuals.

9. Limitations and further research avenues.

This thesis has been conducted after having defined a research model and a choice of indicators. Those indicators are part of a selection among several ones that could be furtherly studied. Especially focusing on the economic indicators, we decided to tackle them in terms of total values, ratios and descriptive statistics. No econometric models were used in order to focus our comparative analysis in an equilibrated way between the historical facts, normative aspects and numerical data.

Moreover, some limitations are a direct consequence of data availability: European surveys such as Eurostat and Eurobarometer did not provide all the time series required for our comparison. Thus, we mainly focused on World Bank's indicators and on international surveys that could provide us enough data for our considered arch of time.

Additionally, this thesis paves the way for multiple comparisons among several countries. The choice of Italy and Switzerland is the result of a selection based on the identification of a research gap and also according to my personal research interests, constantly supported by the guidance and the mentorship of my Supervisors.

A potential extension of the research could embrace a deeper study about the same units of analysis, maybe using statistical inferences with the same indicators or even changing them.

In this thesis, the research model has been customized according to the proper characteristics of Italy and Switzerland, more specifically, focusing on their strategies of governmental internationalization. So, this research is mainly referred only to the European continent.

On one hand, if we were interested in maintaining the same logic behind this comparison, we could reproduce the same study considering the other neutral countries in the European geographical area.

On the other, if Switzerland remains our research interest, we could change Italy with another EU country, maybe dealing with a completely different history (maybe thinking about another EU founding country or a former Soviet country).

We personally think that Switzerland puts several elements of originality because of its special relationship with the EU; at the same time, the expression "special relationship" let another country emerge in our memories. It is the case of the United Kingdom. We do not

mean the historical special relationship between Great Britain and the United States of America. We mean the emerging post-Brexit relationship between the United Kingdom and the European Union. Several British politicians use Switzerland as a term of optimistic comparison; thus, the core of our future research could also shift in this direction.

Moreover, other hypothetical terms of comparison could consider the Extra-UE context, maybe underlying the propensity (or rejection) towards other supranational institutions and international organizations.

In the literature review, we mentioned Lunedstad's contribution "Empire by invitation"; further research avenues could follow that path of research, underlining the key role played by the United States of America in supporting the process of EU integration. Another Lundestad's contribution entitled "Empire by Integration" deeply underlines the role of the US fostering specifically EU integration also in recent times and for several reasons. Those reasons can be reassumed in EU crucial geopolitical role played during the last decades and its crucial importance as a continental economic player. Further research avenues could reconsider the logic behind Europeanization from the US point of view, maybe analyzing again our units of analysis from that specific perspective.

Other potential developments could put under discussion the entire research model, changing the logic of the secondary data analysis with primary data, maybe thinking about an ad-hoc questionnaire. In this last case, the availability of time and financial resources could make a difference.

Finally, we ought to underline that this research opens several debates about a wide variety of concepts, characterizing contemporaneity under the social, political and economic dimensions. Because of the evolving context, characterized by the forces of globalization and by a global pandemic, we could open a debate about the main challenges of contemporaneity, declined on the considered units of analysis.

According to the recent tragic events that occurred in Ukraine, we expect to tackle this dramatic topic also in further research about governmental Europeanization. The war between Russia and Ukraine paved the way for a discussion about the military role of Europe and about the socio-economic consequences of a conflict in our continent. Ukraine, as a non-member state interested in joining to the EU, can be another interesting unit of analysis in a comparison like ours. A "what if" analysis about the consequences of an aggression to a

potential EU member state is already under analysis in several think tanks and universities worldwide. The process of Europeanization in former Soviet Countries can be another interesting topic to be studied through the lenses of historical institutionalism and of its flagship of path dependence theory.

The several changes in socio-political and economic strategies make the historical comparison more interesting: it can be a reliable way to measure if the current strategies tackle contemporary issues in a more (or less) efficient way, compared to the past times.

As a PhD candidate, I think that this thesis, written during the pandemic, has been a first step to think about the evolution of my research interest. This thesis changed its structure many times due to the limitations caused by the pandemic and it was expected to include interviews from the European, Italian and Swiss institutions. Hopefully, after the pandemic, the very original plans are expected to be reconsidered and put into practice.

This research has been written under a cotutelle agreement between an Italian and Swiss University. This agreement gave me the opportunity to work in two dynamic contexts and with proactive Supervisors that, despite the pandemic, motivated me to interpret impartially contemporaneity. We hope that this research could foster the debate about historical, current and future strategies of governmental internationalization, especially in this Age characterized by several elements of complexity.

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