

Community Building as Governance – Governance as Community Building : The Case of Competition.

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The landscape of transnational governance can be characterized as a complex and dense web of processes, discussion and negotiation platforms, discourses, organizing nodes as well as meta-norms and standards (Djelic and Sahlin-Andersson 2006, Svensson 2009, Bartley and Smith 2010). In that context, we should not miss the importance of agreement and consensus building mechanisms as important "technologies" of governance. In fact, the very possibility of transnational governance probably hinges to quite an extent on the emergence, construction and stabilization of governance "communities" with a transnational scope (Smith et al. 1997, Keck and Sikkink 1998, Guidry et al. 2000, Djelic and Quack 2010). Transnational communities imply transnational networks but they are more than that since the notion of "community" connotes a sense of belonging to a common culture. Transnational communities are social groups emerging from mutual interaction across national boundaries, oriented around a common project and or "imagined identity" (Anderson 2006[1983]), which is constructed and sustained through the active engagement and involvement of at least some of their members (Djelic and Quack 2010).

The case of competition regulation is an interesting empirical setting to explore the contemporary interplay between transnational governance and community building. We will compare and contrast in particular the emergence of two transnational communities within that setting – the International Competition Network (ICN set up in 2001) and the European Competition Network (ECN active since 2004). The founding document of the ICN indicated that it would "provide antitrust agencies from developed and developing countries a stronger and broader network for addressing practical competition enforcement and policy issues (ICN 2002). As years have passed, it has become clear that the ICN is much more than an informal club of like-minded organizations and individuals sharing problems, information and solutions. The ICN is not only a platform for discussion around topics of common interest. It is also a self-disciplining transnational community. The ICN was created as a transnational network, striving to become a "community of interest". Arguably, it has

become that and much more, coming to be, through time, an influential transnational governance forum. As such, it produces collective rules and standards, monitors their diffusion and implementation and helps members as they familiarize themselves with those rules. The European Competition Network was set up formally by the European Competition Agency (DG Competition) in 2004, as a projected tool to help in the planned decentralization of competition regulation. It is made of DG Comp. and the national competition agencies from 27 European countries. While the ICN was a transnational network striving to become a community and becoming in time an influential arena of transnational governance, the ECN was built as a transnational governance tool and is only moving through time to become effectively a transnational community.

We look at the ICN and the ECN as contrasting examples of the contemporary interplay between community building and transnational governance. In the case of the ICN, we have a process of community building that ends up having a governance impact. In the case of the ECN, we have a transnational governance tool that generates a process of community building. Beyond the contrast, though, we also underscore quite striking similarities with respect to the ways in which governance technologies build upon but also reinforce processes of transnational community building. In the particular case of competition regulation, it is also important to underscore that the role of the ICN and that of the ECN should not be analysed only in parallel or in contrast but that they should also be understood as complementing each other. The ICN and the ECN are two different but complementary layers of the complex and dense web of contemporary governance with a bearing on competition. In fact, they are not the only layers – and we could also mention here the recent community initiatives that have emerged in East Africa, East Asia or Latin America. Naturally, the case of the transnational governance of competition is interesting in itself. But even more, we argue, it is interesting as a rich exemplar of dynamics that are common to many fields of transnational governance.

Biography

Marie-Laure Djelic is Professor at ESSEC Business School (Paris – Singapore) in the Management Department and Head of the ESSEC Research Center for Capitalism, Globalization and Governance. In 2002-2003, she was holding the Kerstin

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She has published extensively in different outlets on the historical transformations of capitalism and national business systems, on the role of professions and social networks in the transnational diffusion of rules and practices, on globalization and americanization, on the dynamics of transnational regulation and governance, on corporate governance and corporate social responsibility, and on the ethical foundations of contemporary capitalism.

She is, in particular, the author of *Exporting the American Model* (Oxford University Press 1998) – which obtained the 2000 Max Weber Award for the Best Book in Organizational Sociology from the American Sociological Association. She has edited, together with Sigrid Quack, *Globalization and Institutions* (Edward Elgar 2003), with Kerstin Sahlin-Andersson, *Transnational Governance* (Cambridge University Press 2006), with Radu Vranceanu, *Moral Foundations of Management Knowledge* (Edward Elgar 2007) and in 2010, with Sigrid Quack, *Transnational Communities: Shaping Global Economic Governance* (Cambridge University Press).