

Based on the Research Paper by **Nicoletta Pirozzi** and **Matteo Bonomi** (IAI)



Differentiated integration and cooperation are in the EU toolbox since its early days and will remain a necessity to improve the functioning of its policy and institutions.

But **which form** of differentiation should prevail and in **which policy fields**?

To assess the impact of differentiation on EU governance traditional approaches are not enough...

We need more, we need:

The organisational element
To grasp the different forms, venues and actors of differentiation.

The constitutional element
To connect the different forms of differentiation to the foundational elements of EU constitutionalism and identity, such as political unity and legal uniformity.

The socio-political element
To analyse differentiation as a policy choice by investigating the preferences of policy-makers and citizens directly or indirectly affected by it.



Based on these elements, we can assess:

Effectiveness

Differentiation is likely to produce a **relative improvement of policy-making and policy-implementation**, but there is **no one-size-fits-all solution** in terms of institutional design.

Clarity of objectives is therefore determinant to identify the right form of governance.

Sustainability



Excessive recourse to flexibility can produce centrifugal dynamics.

Formal differentiation arrangements can help convergence and ensure coherence.

Differentiation initiatives outside the Treaties should be connected **with the EU's institutional framework**.

Negative effects on non-members should be mitigated.

Red lines should be identified, fundamental values such as **rule of law and human rights cannot be compromised**.

Accountability

Need to improve **democratic accountability** through:

- **parliamentary oversight and direct democratic participation** (i.e. Conference on the Future of Europe);
- **administrative or judicial accountability mechanisms;**
- the participation of excluded constituencies in the preparatory and implementation phases of differentiated policies.

Differentiation arrangements can be not only compatible with, but also conducive to a more **effective, cohesive and democratic EU**, when they have a **direct link to EU institutions, established with clear objectives in line with EU core values**.