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# Culturally embedded and path-dependent: peripheral alternatives to ECSC/EEC "core Europe" since 1945

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[Professor Wolfram Kaiser](#)

[Centre for European and International Studies Research](#)

[School of Social, Historical and Literary Studies](#)

Intergovernmentalist explanations of European integration argue that the integration process is essentially driven by "national interests" which are negotiated by the governments of the member states. These studies focus on state interaction and the relative power of states participating in negotiations which allegedly determines bargaining outcomes inside the European Union (EU). Such "national interests" can concern security issues and other questions. However, liberal intergovernmentalism has strongly emphasised the mainly economic nature of those interest that matter in EU negotiations, and their domestic formation as a result of economic interest group pressures. The same is essentially true for comparable studies of the integration process by economic historians. In contrast, constructivists emphasise non-material conceptions of state power and influence. As a result, they study the role of "soft" factors such as historical orientations, identity and ideology and their impact on interest formation and national preferences, showing that decision-making processes are culturally embedded and that the resulting policy choices are path-dependent.

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Pages (from-to)

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## Documents



**jeih\_14\_2001\_2**

Final published version, 2 MB, PDF-document

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URL: <http://www.cere.public.lu/fr/publications/jeih/2001/jeih-14-2001-2.pdf>



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