

# Governance Capacity and Regionalist Dynamics

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**ABSTRACT** The debate on the effects of regionalism and European integration on European nation states has been prominent for more than a decade. Regionalization of EU states has not brought with it genuine regional autonomy and regionalism has not emerged as a bottom-up public demand in European regions. It is contended here that to determine the future of regional devolution, whether as a result of bottom-up or top-down processes, the factors at play must be contextualized. This paper examines some determinants of regional political capacity, as identified in the policy literature, in tandem with a number of determinants of economic prospects and the existence of an economic milieu. This is done in a comparative context across 12 regions of the EU. It is suggested that the potential for regionalist pressures to emerge is dependent on regional governance capacity and the relative economic weight of a region.

**KEY WORDS:** Regional governance, Europeanization, regional dynamics, devolution, European integration