

# THE PROCESS OF CHANGING THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM – A CONCEPTUAL APPROACH TO THE INSTITUTIONS

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**Abstract.** *Institutions are now the focus of political actors. They will try to modify the institutions depending on factors characterizing a certain historical period. For this reason, various branches of theoretical science tried to explain and evaluate the operation and interaction of institutions. Today, there are many differences between the new institutionalists, both theoretically and in terms of methodology. There are however two things on which everyone agrees: institutions shape policy. Rules and standard operating procedures of the institutions put their mark on the political, in that they structure behavior. Institutions influence these consequences, because they give shape identity, power and strategies of actors. Institutions are shaped by history. History matters because it is a dependency path: what happens first (even if somewhat accidental) determines what will happen later. Individuals can choose their institutions, but they can choose in circumstances created by institutions and their choices influence the rules by which their successors will choose in the future.*

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