

# **Enforcing the Unenforceable**

## Politicisation and the European Commission in the economic governance of the European Union

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### **Propositions**

1. The societal politicisation of the European Union (EU) has important consequences for policy implementation and enforcement practices by EU actors (this dissertation).
2. Processes of politicisation and depoliticisation should take centre stage in the study of the economic governance of the EU (this dissertation).
3. An analytical focus on the preferences, power, and issue attention of the audiences that matter for public organisations yields more comprehensive explanations of the behaviour of these public organisations (this dissertation).
4. ‘Unresponsive’ public organisations do not exist empirically: no public organisation, no matter how politically insulated, is wholly unresponsive, but perceived unresponsiveness indicates the researcher’s omission of an important audience (this dissertation).
5. The European Commission’s strategy of ‘politically intelligent enforcement’ of EU macro-economic and fiscal rules is both an inevitable and a self-defeating enforcement strategy (this dissertation).
6. In their current form, EU macroeconomic and fiscal rules are useful insofar as they enable the Commission to raise or lower the pressure exerted on EU member state governments by financial markets.
7. Technocracy is not the absence of politics in public decision-making, but the legitimization of the inevitable political elements of public decision-making based on science and expertise.
8. The disadvantages of using of statistical ‘defaults’ (such as p-values and fixed-effects models) in quantitative research vastly outweigh the benefits of their use.
9. Self-doubt is one of the most desirable qualities for the social scientist to have, but one of the least desirable qualities for the social scientist to show.
10. The hallmark of a good scientist is her ability to truly disengage from her work.
11. Academia is publishing itself into perishment.