What role do states play in promoting policy innovation and learning in Europe? Since the 1990s, politics scholars have spent a great deal of time examining how the European Union (EU) shapes the policymaking processes of its member states. But to date the literature has remained rather blind to how EU member states influence one another via the policy networks that have been created by regional political integration. In this paper I illustrate how the Netherlands has used its status as the first country to allow same-sex couples to marry to promote this reform to other countries in the region and beyond, largely in the absence of EU mandates or influence. In so doing I argue we miss a great deal by ignoring the role that individual states play in the creation and promotion of new policy ideas within processes of Europeanization. European states are not mere receptacles within these processes. They also often act as innovators and teachers of the policy ideas they have pioneered.