

B-6 The European Union: Looking Back, Looking Ahead

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Whither Subsidiarity? A Cross-National Comparison of Selected Regions of Spain and Germany

Abstract:

International Relations has dealt uneasily with the question of to what degree sub-states can or should be independent or autonomous from the center for both theoretical and practical reasons. First, such categories violate neat theoretical assumptions about distinct “levels of analysis” and their unique characteristics. Secondly, an emphasis on sub-state autonomy and identity enormously complicates the already complex practice of interstate relations. However, the European Union has taken the decision to promote subsidiarity and multi-level governance both as a principle and in practice, through the Committee on the Regions (COR), among other venues. Spain and Germany are the two European countries that have most clearly supported the principles of subsidiarity and multi-level governance. Their decision is buttressed by each state’s top-level courts that have the equivalent of “judicial review” and the ability to serve as the final voice on matters of conflict between sub-state entities (e.g. Spanish “autonomous communities”) and those entities and the center part of the regime. In these states we can best observe, through comparison and contrast, both the promise and the perils of subsidiarity for the European Union. The scholarly fascination with multi-level governance has abated somewhat. Today, however, the tension between calls for “ever closer union” or supra-nationalism, on the one hand, and the promotion of subsidiarity on the other, has become palpable within the European Union, affecting everything from the “neighborhoods policy” to discussions of the Common Agricultural Policy and the proposed European Constitution. This paper will examine political-economic data in selected regions in Spain and Germany in the recent past, and rely upon interviews with regional political elites, primarily in Spain, to assess the state of multi-level governance and subsidiarity in two key European Union countries, and the likely future of these key E.U. principles.

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Compliance in the European Union: Politics vs. Management

Abstract:

This study addresses compliance: state inability to implement and reluctance to conform. Within the European Union, a study of compliance departs from two perspectives. The EU is both an international organization with traditional compliance problems and a domestic polity in which the ‘government’ pledges to deliver policy. Using a time series dataset that allows for systematic testing of hypotheses generated within EU case study and theoretic literature, American public policy debates, and recent controversies in international regulatory regimes writings, I find that across time, countries, and policy areas, there is modest support for many hypotheses in the literature.

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Higher Education Transformed: The Bologna Process as Seen in Germany Since 1999.

Abstract:

Over the past eight years, higher education within and without the European Union has been undergoing a profound transformation according to an ambitious plan of restructuring and convergence known as the Bologna Process. The Bologna Process intends to create a new European Higher Education Area by 2010. It would make programs of study standard, course credits freely transferable, academic degrees universally

recognized, and quality assurance standards more uniform. It got its name from the city of Bologna, Italy, and its famed university, where in 1999 the education ministers of 29 countries issued the Bologna Declaration. Since then the number of participating countries has increased to 47. Implementation of the Bologna initiatives has proceeded rapidly. Many universities have already produced graduates with the new three-year bachelor's and two-year master's degrees. There is also a growing skepticism of the direction of the Bologna Process. Many Europeans fear that it will bend higher education toward producing narrowly-trained graduates for the corporate labor market unless it is guided toward greater social responsibility. This paper will present the objectives of the Bologna Process and summarize its present status. It also will consider the implications of some of the changes that have taken place, and offer a "look ahead" to the year 2010 and beyond. This paper focuses on Germany as an excellent case to observe both the "before and after" effects of Bologna as well as the active debate underway on the future of higher education in Europe.

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From Normative Power to Great Power: Change in the European Union's
Foreign Policy
Identity

Abstract:

Since the inception of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in the 1992 Treaty on European Union (TEU), the European Union has worked very carefully to foster a specific type of foreign policy identity. It generally presents itself and is theorized as a normative force in world politics, and as such, is seen as a leader in the promotion of international peace, justice and humanitarian issues. The EU has customarily placed great emphasis on international law, democracy, human rights, international institutions, and multilateralism in its foreign policy, while eschewing a foreign policy based on traditional national interests calculations. But in an international environment that is becoming markedly more dangerous, has the EU's foreign policy identity begun to change? In particular, has the EU begun transforming to a more traditional foreign policy orientation; one that is geared towards ensuring the most basic of state interests: survival, security, and power? Will this transformation in identity lead the EU to great power politics? What is driving this transformation? By using constructivist analysis, this paper seeks to answer these questions by examining the influence of military-defensive *epistemic communities* on the EU's foreign policy making. The paper will argue that by shifting the discourse in the Brussels' foreign policy apparatus from a focus on normative objectives towards a more defense and security orientation, these networks of knowledge based experts have begun to transform the EU's foreign policy identity from a normative power to an identity constructed on traditional great power ideas.

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Germany, Russia, and the European Union: the Energy Triangle

Abstract:

With the presidency of the EU and G-8, Germany is set to lead the path and the agenda for the Russian-European energy dispute, which effectively impacts not only the diplomatic relations between the two actors, but also strongly influences economic and political security of both. So far Germany has not been able to effectively push the EU toward a joint energy policy, nor even joint foreign policy toward Russia. Although the policy approach toward both has changed from the Schröder to Merkel chancellorship, domestic energy actors and national benefits have prevented Germany from playing a role of a catalyst for the EU energy policy. Germany's position vis-à-vis Russia in the field of energy offers a valid example of the national interests taking precedence over the EU benefits. This essay maintains that Germany has failed so far in facilitating the EU members' cooperation on a joint energy policy. This argument relies heavily on two assumptions: first, that the member-states will benefit more from a united position on energy security; and second, that the cooperation leading to a joint policy is possible. In correspondence with the goals of the essay, the first section provides the background to European energy issues. Section two sets up the theoretical stage of economic supply-demand concept, to be supplemented later with inevitable problems and obstacles to a one-voice policy for Europe. The overview of German position and its actions in the field of energy in relation to Russia complete the scope of this essay.

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