

Notes on Lisa Martin, *Democratic Commitments: Legislatures and International Co-operation* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2000) Chs 2 and 7.

Chapter 2 'Theoretical Framework: Legislatures, Executives, and Commitment'

2 arguments underlie the chapter

1. legislative influence on state international policy is 'deep and subtle'
2. the participation of legislatures in international policy explains the success democratic states have had in winning wars and co-operating, since the involvement of legislatures increases the credibility of states positions, which in turn increases confidence between states. It is only when executives try to marginalize legislatures that foreign policy problems arise.

Developing arguments of legislative influence and commitment requires models of legislative organization, the interaction between the legislature and the executive and of 'credible commitment'.

Martin wants to emphasize two points in developing these models.

1. Legislatures can pass authority over international policy to the executive while still retaining ultimate control over the process, through the options to withdraw authority or to refuse to ratify any results the executive may achieve.
2. the legislature can exercise subtle influence over the actions of the executive, by such methods as delay, obstruction and withholding funds. The executive will be mindful of such tactics and modify its behavior accordingly.

This leads Martin to claim that the nature of the exchange between the executive and the legislature is more important than who dominates the process of international policy formation.

In the course of developing the above models, Martin establishes four hypotheses which comprise the key testable ideas of the book.

1. Influence Hypothesis. The executive cannot ignore the importance of the participation of the legislature, to the extent that the legislature has significant influence on the conduct of international co-operation.
2. Delegation Hypothesis. The legislature will tend to assume more control over foreign policy where there is greater conflict between the executive and the legislature.
3. Credibility Hypothesis. The participation of the legislature in foreign policy increases the credibility of the commitments the state makes.
4. Co-operation Hypothesis. Since co-operation requires credibility, increased institutionalized participation of the legislature in international policy will result in more co-operation.

Chapter 7. 'Implementing the EU's Internal Market: The Influence of National Parliaments'

This chapter comprises an extensive test of the Credibility Hypothesis.

Traditionally, national parliaments have been considered a barrier to further integration. The famous democratic deficit of the EU being seen as a necessary evil in order for integration to continue at a reasonable pace. However if the process of integration is expanded to include implementation as well as negotiation, the role of legislatures becomes crucial. In other words, the credibility enhancing role of legislative participation can assist, rather than hinder European integration.

In this test of the credibility hypothesis, the implementation of EU directives is the key dependent variable.

According to Martin, three factors contribute to the credibility increase from parliamentary involvement.

1. The early involvement of the legislature, so governments can anticipate the like resistance over a range of issues
2. Accountability. i.e. negotiating ministers are aware of real consequences if they exceed the commitments the parliament will accept.
3. Transparency. The process of national implementation is clear and widely understood.

Martin justifies these three factors through the case study of Denmark, notorious for being slow to accept further integration and being skeptical of the project, and yet which has the best record for implementation of EU Commission directives. Martin argues that Denmark's legislature implements a high degree of EU measures because it maintains a high degree of control over the negotiating process through committee oversight and stringent parliamentary requirements for accepting new EU treaties.

Essentially, Denmark's parliament implements what its ministers negotiate because the ministers can only agree to measures the parliament will accept. Martin shows that all three factors above exist in Denmark.

Beyond Denmark Martin finds a statistical correlation between implementation and robustness of national legislature's control over governments with respect to negotiations.

Martin then examines alternative explanations of European state behavior.

1. executive dominance. This does not hold since there is a clear correlation between non-executive domestic political institution participation and co-operation
2. neo-functionalism. This theory, which involves the gradual transfer of authority to supranational actors, holds in the case of economic integration but in other areas it is not clear. The credibility hypothesis better explains implementation rates over time.
3. regionalism. This process, which concerns implementation at the sub-state level, complements the credibility hypothesis. Regions will have a poor record of implementing agreements if they, like national parliaments, are not included in the process.

Martin concludes that parliaments never relinquish authority over implementation and remain important from the beginning. Because of the ever present danger of renegeing, implementation is as vital as negotiation. Any 'implementation deficit' harms integration, and hence study of legislatures' relationship with the executive is an important part of the study of EU integration.