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Mendez, Fernando, Mendez, Mario and and Vasiliki, Triga. Referendums and the European Union: A Comparative Inquiry. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

The question of the public's role and influence over European integration has taken on increasing importance since the Danish rejection of the Treaty of Maastricht and end of the so-called "permissive consensus" in the early 1990s. Perhaps the most direct and significant form of public influence are referendums, as demonstrated by the French and Dutch rejections of the proposed European Constitution that effectively ended that proposed reform. The authors offer an insightful analysis of EU referendums, seeking to explain the motivations behind and implications of these instruments and to examine potential alternatives to the status quo that might retain the benefits of the referendum as an instrument of democratic accountability while better ensuring the stability of the EU.

The authors employ comparative institutional analysis; more specifically, comparing institutional frameworks for constitutional reform across a number of countries. Their methodology is largely qualitative, focused on establishing a conceptual framework for distinguishing between different types of referendums and conducting a well-researched historical analysis of how and when such referendums have been employed in different settings. The text is rich with both descriptive and prescriptive analysis (the latter drawing on relevant areas of political theory), but does not offer any causal analysis. The authors make clear their intentions to bridge the research conducted on referendums by political scientists with the work of legal scholars on formal institutional procedures; although the result should be interesting to anyone interested in questions about how democracy currently functions and may evolve in a system as complex as the European Union.

The first chapter begins by summarizing the theoretical arguments in favor of and opposed to direct democracy and moves on to review the research on referendums in the European Union. Drawing on the legal literature, the authors establish a guiding typology of three different types of EU referendums: membership referendums, which define the relationship between a political unit and the EU; policy referendums that determine a course of action of a political unit on a specific policy area within the EU; and treaty-ratification referendums held in advance of an EU member state ratifying a proposed amending treaty. The second chapter analyzes the constitutional provisions for actions toward the EU within all of the individual member states. This analysis suggests that,

in most European democracies, referendums are not constitutionally-mandated and are historically rare occurrences, but that the prospect of EU membership and continued European integration (through treaty revisions) has generated increasing political demands for the use of the referendum mechanism.

The third chapter applies insights from the political science research to better understand the circumstances surrounding the use of EU referendums. The authors begin by identifying three possible motives for political elites to commit to holding an EU referendum: first, referendums may be held due to constitutional mandate, in which case the elites have little choice; second, elites may be pressured by internal or external forces (such as membership referendums in neighboring candidate countries) to secure the legitimacy of a particular course of action toward the EU; third, governing elites may use a referendum strategically to shore up their own political support. In addition to elite motivations, the degree of inter-party consensus on the EU and public attitudes about both the EU and the national government may also influence the likely use and outcomes of EU referendums. To parse out the influence of these different considerations, the authors examine 42 referendums on the EU from the last half century. The most notable findings are that nearly three-quarters of EU referendums are motivated by political pressure or strategic calculations and not a constitutional mandate; the degree of inter-party consensus (measured using content analysis of party statements) is much lower with the politically-motivated referendums than those held by constitutional mandate; and elites appear more likely to hold powerreinforcing referendums when public support for the EU is higher.

The second part of the text shifts to a discussion of the implications of these referendums for the political stability of the EU. The fourth and fifth chapters consider the problem inherent to multi-level political systems of balancing constitutional safeguards for the territorial division of powers with the need for institutional flexibility to address new and changing circumstances. Most of the fourth chapter discusses how the EU has struggled with achieving such a balance, while the fifth chapter examines historical instances in which six other multi-level systems (the United States, Switzerland, Canada, Australia and Germany) have had to reconcile these competing demands. Based on the comparative analysis, the authors conclude that failed referendums are not uncommon in multi-level systems and that political elites often seek to circumvent direct democracy (such as through a high court) in order to institute constitutional change. As the possible and actual use of EU referendums has increased, European

leaders have also had to develop creative solutions for ing the individual characteristics and perceptions of the Commission's personnel, it traces concrete policy bypassing the referendum process to approve needed treaty amendments: the European Financial Stabilizaprocesses in order to explain the policy positions and tion Mechanism (EFSM), for instance, was created the power of different DGs. Second, while in-depth process tracing is hardly feasible on a large-n scale, as part of an international treaty outside of the EU's legal framework even though the EU institutions are the book moves beyond single or small-n case studies tasked with administering the policy. Two issues stand by adopting a medium-n research design: overall, the book draws on a systematic analysis of 48 EU legislaout within this discussion: extraterritorial referendums (those in which the effects of a vote are not just limited tive proposals from two Commission terms (Prodi and Barroso I) in three policy areas (common market and to the country holding the referendum) may impede progress desired by much of the EU and efforts to social policies, research and innovation policy, and work around the referendum instrument diminish the consumer policy). The first part of the book (chapters 1-3) introduces

democratic quality of EU decision-making. The last chapter considers a number of proposthe research questions, develops the analytical frameals to address these issues: eliminating EU referenwork and justifies research design and case selection. dums altogether; instituting a pan-EU referendum; The analytical framework consists of a broad set of replacing the current double-unanimity lock (requiring explanatory factors, which are expected to influence unanimous support at the EU level and ratification by the policy position of individual DGs and their asserall EU members) with a super-majority requirement; tiveness vis-à-vis other DGs. In total, more than 20 and allowing for enhanced cooperation on constitupotential explanatory factors are discussed – ranging tional matters. The authors ultimately conclude that from pre-existing EU law to features of internal coorenhanced cooperation may be the only politically and dination (e.g. the role of lead departments in drafting legally-viable solution that allows the EU to move legislation) and inter-institutional policy-making (e.g. ahead without damaging the democratic process. The the anticipated position of the Council or the EP) to authors provide a comprehensive understanding of "additional resources," such as the support of orgaboth the theoretical and the actual implications of EU nized interests or experts. The rationale why some referendums. The text ultimately contributes more to factors are expected to matter mainly for the position the legal discussion surrounding these referendums, formation of individual DGs, whereas others appear to play a major role in the interaction between different although the third chapter develops a useful framework for political scientists to study the use of these DGs is not always clear-cut, but generally, the anainstruments in the future. lytical framework of the book convinces by carefully theorizing and operationalizing a sophisticated set of Nick Clark potential explanations. Combined with the well justi-Susquehanna University fied medium-n research design and case selection, the analytical framework suits the authors' ambition to provide a comprehensive and balanced account of the Commission's internal dynamics rather than ex ante Hartlapp, Miriam, Metz, Julia and Rauh, Christian. limiting themselves to a particular theoretical perspec-Which Policy for Europe? Power and Conflict inside tive.

the European Commission. Oxford: Oxford University

The second, empirical part (chapters 4-10) starts Press. 2014. with a historical overview of the Commission's leading political and administrative personnel (i.e. Commis-Despite its complex institutional structure and sioners and Directors-General) as well as the evoluheterogeneous composition, the European Commistion of relevant DGs, before turning to the empirical sion usually manages to create a public perception of core: the process-tracing analysis of 48 EU legislative "speaking with one voice". This book adds to the growproposals. In three policy chapters, the internal deciing literature on the Commission's internal dividing sion-making process is briefly summarized for each of lines and political dynamics by addressing two interthese proposals; key issues and lines of conflict are related questions: How are policy positions developed established; factors determining the position and powat the level of individual Commission Directorateser of individual DGs are identified and summarized General (DGs)? And how are conflicting DG positions in standardized tables. While these chapters mainly coordinated and negotiated inside the Commission serve to lay the ground for the comparative analysis, to arrive at a final legislative proposal? In answering they will also be valuable for anyone interested in spethese questions, the book complements existing studcific legislative proposals and, more generally, they ies in two important respects: First, rather than study-





provide an impressive panorama of the complexity and diversity of the Commission's internal policy-development. The remainder of the empirical part complements the policy chapters and emphasizes three cross-cutting issues: expert groups, public opinion and internal coordination mechanisms. These chapters partly address separate literatures; in particular the chapter on public opinion provides an original, balanced account of the Commission's selective responsiveness to diffuse public demands and their mixed enabling and constraining effects.

The final part of the book (chapters 11-13) aggregates the empirical findings and generalizes them in two ways. First, the relative weight of factors explaining the position and assertiveness of individual DGs is established. While the authors are cautious not to overstate the generalizability of their findings given their selection of policy areas and a certain bias towards instances of internal conflict, the comparative assessment of 48 cases supports numerous interesting insights, e.g. regarding the pervasive importance of the legal status quo (and, accordingly, the Commission's susceptibility to path dependent policy-making), the great external influences exerted by organized interests and experts on the position of individual DGs, or the structural advantages of the lead department and the Commission's horizontal services in cases of internal conflict. Second, a typology of three models of Commission policy-position formation - characterized by technocratic problem-solving, competenceseeking or policy-seeking – is introduced and the relative prevalence of the different ideal types in practice is assessed. Technocratic problem-solving is found to dominate in a majority of cases; competence-seeking is most likely in cases of internal conflict; and ideologically motivated policy-seeking, albeit being least common, also occurs regularly in cases of internal conflict. The authors could have elaborated a bit further on how the typology was actually developed, but its overall plausibility as well as its usefulness as a heuristic tool and as a warning against one-sided depictions of the Commission are well demonstrated.

In sum, this book breaks new ground regarding the Commission's internal policy-development and while it does not convey any simple or simplistic message, it sets a high standard in terms of comprehensiveness and balance.

Michael Blauberger University of Salzburg

Hay, Colin and Wincott, Daniel. The Political Economy of European Welfare Capitalism, Series on 21st Century Europe. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

Hay and Wincott address the development, evolution and potential future viability of European welfare systems. The authors provide a long-run historical context of social welfare systems of European nations, distinguish between broad approaches to welfare systems used in Europe and beyond, consider forces affecting the welfare state including globalization, European integration, and the global financial crisis, and assess whether and the degree to which European welfare systems may converge in the face of these endogenous and exogenous pressures. Based on solid foundations of political economy and in-depth knowledge of European welfare systems, the authors use careful reasoning and logic to analyze a comprehensive array of issues associated with the European social welfare systems.

The book consists of seven chapters, illustrated with informative tables and figures that help substantiate the authors' arguments. The absence of mathematical formulations and detailed discussions about statistical techniques used enables access for a wide audience, although the authors' intricate arguments may at times be difficult to follow for readers unfamiliar with the complexities of European welfare capitalism. Nevertheless, the authors convincingly challenge several conventionally-held views and traditionally unquestioned beliefs about European welfare capitalism, including its development, distinguishing attributes of alternative social welfare schemes, and where welfare states may be headed in the future.

By emphasizing the common historical context of Western European welfares states since the latter part of nineteenth century, the authors show in Chapter 1 that social policies are deeply entrenched, have withstood profound crises, and are unlikely to be eliminated in the face of current economic difficulties. The historical perspective also serves to make a fundamental distinction between different welfare systems - those rooted in conservative efforts intended to pre-empt working-class upheaval in Central Europe, and others stemming from progressive efforts developed in Northern Europe.

The authors discuss alternative approaches used by welfare states in Chapter 2, and show that European nations are clustered around alternative forms of welfare capitalism – albeit not tightly defined but with variations along similar dimensions. In contrast to conventional wisdom suggesting welfare systems will converge into a more or less similar system, the authors

show that alternative systems seem to have increasin Europe. In the book, the authors analyze European ingly mutually distinguishing characteristics. welfare capitalism with open minds by questioning In the next chapter, the authors examine of the long-held assumptions. In a balanced analysis that effects of globalization and European integration on includes external forces including globalization and welfare in additional detail. They persuasively argue European economic integration, as well as internal that the effects of regional economic integration are forces such as national political processes and demomore profound than those of broad-based globalizagraphic trends, the authors carefully make the case tion in European nations, and that neither force has that welfare states are likely to survive, but in changed thus far led to significant welfare retrenchment. The and perhaps less generous form.

authors cogently make the case that relatively generous welfare systems do not necessarily affect eco-**Evert Van der Sluis** nomic performance and competitiveness in negative South Dakota State University way, as long as economies base their competitiveness on quality rather than cost.

In Chapters 4, the authors further analyze the com-Global Europe: 21st Century Trade Politics. Oxford: patibility of welfare generosity and international com-Oxford University Press, 2014. petitiveness. They argue that the welfare state can in fact enhance economic competitiveness in the pres-This book helps fill an significant gap in the literature on the European Union's external relations: despite the importance of EU trade policy to the Union itself and to the world it is still under-researched and only partially understood. Young and Peterson provide a comprehensive overview of current EU trade policy In Chapter 5, the authors further relate the Eurobased on a theoretical framework which is in line with mainstream International Political Economy and builds on two-level game and principal-agent approaches. They argue that EU trade policy is in fact composed of multiple policies. Each of these policies presents a distinctive constellation of (1) mobilized societal preferences reflecting the distribution of anticipated costs and benefits, (2) patterns of political institutions with specific degrees of delegation and decision rules, (3) government preferences (economic welfare, market failure, foreign policy), and (4) balances of power in the international bargaining context. According to the In Chapter 6, the authors further explore the deauthors, the interaction between these four factors generates different trade policy sub-systems and helps explain the objectives and achievements of EU trade policy. The framework of analysis set out in Chapter 2 thus draws on the existing literature but also elaborates further on certain aspects, for instance by distinguishing whether trade policy is reciprocal and trade relations are symmetric or not. It integrates societal, The final chapter provides a discussion on the instate and systemic factors of explanation and puts forward a few hypotheses about how different types of policy sub-systems explain the extent to which EU trade policy responds to societal pressures. Hence, the authors discuss the factors shaping the EU's winset in various settings but not the negotiation strategies that agents such as the European Commission can use in two-level trade games.

ence of proper institutional arrangements, such as internal market flexibility, a focus on product innovation, a strong reliance on physical and human capital, and inclusive labor markets that encourage cooperation and trust. pean integration process to welfare capitalism, and arque that the absence of a comprehensive Europeanlevel social policy does not necessarily mean that role of the welfare state will diminish. European integration has meant balancing shared social policy concerns across the continent with sovereign social policy issues and also with competitive market forces, but thus far there has not been a wholesale move away from social solidarity and toward "neoliberal" policies that mainly rely on market rules, social expenditure reductions, deregulation, and privatization. gree to which social welfare systems have converged in the face of external and internal forces. Contrarv to conventional thinking, they show that there were strong convergence patterns among European welfare systems during a period of welfare expansion until 1985, and divergence trends during the time when social programs contracted since then. fluence of austerity measures in the face of the global financial crisis on European welfare states. The authors take a distinct Keynesian approach, by arguing that maintaining the integrity of social welfare serves in part to stimulate aggregate demand, and that the ongoing economic crisis in Europe is largely due to a lack of economic growth as opposed to a debt crisis per sé.

Chapter 3 outlines the development of EU trade Hay and Wincott provide a refreshing and major policy and the emergence of a more proactive trade contribution to the literature on social welfare systems strategy since the mid-1990s. Chapter 4 introduces



Young, Alasdair R. and Peterson, John. Parochial



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