

Milestones of the European integration process

IREU 411 European Politics

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Analysing Decisions

- Guiding questions:
 - To which extent decisions are the outcome of the political will of the governments?
 - To which extent the governments are constrained by the agency of supranational actors, external events, functional necessities or normative pressures?

Paris Treaty 1951/Content

- Establishment of Coal and Steel Community
 - Proposed by French foreign minister Robert Schuman on 9 May 1950
 - Aim: Common Management of Coal and Steel Resources
 - Implementation of common decisions monitored by High Authority (forerunner of European Commission)

Paris Treaty/Explanations

- Intergovernmentalist explanation:
 - Cold war context: UK/US pushed France to accept the reestablishment of a Western German state
 - France tried to find a way to control German - common control of coal and steel sector which are important for the war industry
 - Germany and Italy considered the common project as way to regain international reputation

Paris Treaty/Explanations

- Supranationalist factors:
 - Idea of a federalist Europe was very popular in the aftermath of WW2, however the immediate establishment of a federal state turned out to be unrealistic
 - Therefore, Jean Monnet suggested a step by step approach; ECSC first, then spillover into other policy fields

Rome Treaties 1957/Content

- Establishment of European Economic Community (EEC), first step: abolition of import taxes
- In addition creation of Euratom (cooperation in nuclear energy research) and establishment of a common agricultural policy (a subsidies system for farmers)

Rome Treaties/Explanation

- Intergovernmentalist explanation
 - Germany and the Benelux countries in favour of a common market, however France was rather sceptical as it considered the German industry more competitive than the French
 - Package Deal: France accepted the EEC in return for Euratom (common research on nuclear energy could facilitate the construction of a French atomic bomb) and CAP (as France had a larger farming sector than Germany France benefitted more from CAP)

Rome Treaties/Explanation

- Supranationalist factors:
 - The failure of the European Defence Policy showed that political integration projects are too ambitious, however the political leaders were under pressure to deliver results
 - This pressure facilitated a compromise between the different preferences of France, Germany, Italy and the Benelux countries

Single European Act '86/Content

- Abolition of non-tariff barriers (such as technical or product related standards)
- Introduction of the principle of mutual recognition (a product permitted in one country can be exported to the rest of EEC)
- Extension of qualified majority vote in the Council in market related issues

Single European Act/Explanations

- Intergovernmentalist Explanation:
 - The common market did not work efficiently in the late 1970's and early 1980's – protectionist measures often worsened the situation, in particular the socialist French government realised that further market integration is probably the better solution
 - Single European Act was therefore an attempt to revive economic growth

Single European Act/Explanations

- Intergovernmentalist explanation:
 - Venue Shopping: German government wanted further economic liberalization which was however unpopular at home
 - Defending the SEA allowed the German government to pursue unpopular policies under the cover of pursuing European integration, which was popular in Germany

Single European Act/Explanations

- Supranational explanation:
 - The member states were split regarding the necessity and degree of further market liberalization
 - Therefore, the Commission was an important policy entrepreneur and pushed the MS to accept the SEA, agenda setting power of Com based on
 - Transnational network including leading European economists and business associations
 - Charisms/Personality of Com President Jacques Delors

Maastricht Treaty '92/Content

- Introduction of pillar structure
 - European Community (ECSC, EEC, Euratom)
 - New: Common Foreign and Security Policy
 - New: Justice and Home Affairs
- Introduction of the European Monetary Union

Maastricht Treaty/Explanations for move towards a more political union

- Intergovernmentalist explanation
 - End of communism enabled a more political role of Europe
 - German reunification raised fears about Germany's dominant role in Europe – this pushed plans for a deeper European integration

Maastricht Treaty/Explanations for CFSP

- Intergovernmentalist explanation
 - The inability of the EU to react to the Yugoslavian wars with a common voice/strategy demonstrated the necessity of a common foreign and security policy
 - UK, which was for a long time against a common security/defence policy because it was considered as being in competition with NATO, changed its position

Maastricht/Explanation for EMU

- Supranationalist explanation
 - Functional necessity: Increase trade integration, avoid fluctuation of currency exchange rates
 - Prevailing idea: Monetarist consensus facilitated an agreement on EMU
 - Role of the Commission: Commission's strategic use of expertise was crucial in changing perceptions of EMU

Maastricht/Explanation of EMU

- Intergovernmentalist explanations
 - Bargaining theory explains the design of EMU:
 - The government that has the least to lose from non-agreement on a policy is most likely to secure an outcome closest to its ideal preferences
 - German government ready to veto the whole project
 - Other MS prepared to accept German proposals in order to regain some say over the monetary policy
 - Package deal: France supported German reunification in return for Germany giving up the Deutschmark

Amsterdam '97 and Nice Treaty '01/Content

- Institutional Reforms
 - Extension of Qualified Majority Vote in the Council
 - Extension of Co-decision
 - Recalculation of votes in the Council
- Introduction of a European Employment Policy/Lisbon Strategy
 - Aim: making EU most competitive and the most dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world

Amsterdam and Nice Treaty/Explanations

- Intergovernmentalist explanation:
 - The introduction of an employment chapter/Lisbon strategy can be explained by the rule of social democratic parties in the three most influential countries of the EU (Germany, France, UK)
 - They argued in favour of such a policy due to the declining public support for the EU

Amsterdam and Nice Treaty/Explanations

- Supranational explanations:
 - **Functional necessity:** The extension of QMV is the functional consequence of the looming Eastern Enlargement as in an enlarged EU the unanimity principle simply does not work anymore
 - **Normative necessity:** The extension of co-decision (=empowerment of the European Parliament) is a democratic necessity)
 - The Commission/EP were important agenda-setters regarding institutional reforms

Constitutional Treaty '03 and Lisbon Treaty '09/Content

- Constitutional Treaty
 - For the first time elaborated by a Convention (composed of delegations of the EP, NP, MS, Com), not the MS alone, convention draft was accepted by MS almost unchanged
 - Further extension of EP competences, elected president for European Council and Council of foreign ministers, better integration of national parliaments
 - Constitutional Treaty rejected in a referendum in France and in Netherland 2005

Constitutional Treaty '03 and Lisbon Treaty '09/Content

- Lisbon Treaty
 - The failed Constitutional Treaty was slightly modified and renamed Lisbon Treaty
 - Also the Lisbon Treaty failed in a referendum in Ireland in 2008
 - Modified version: 1 country – 1 commissioner (important for smaller countries, such as Ireland)
 - Plus further guarantees regarding the sovereignty of Ireland/the MS in certain policy areas

Constitutional Treaty '03 and Lisbon Treaty '09/Explanation

- Intergovernmentalist explanation
 - The member states reacted to the declining public support, the new treaty should make the EU more visible to the citizens, e.g. by the now for 2.5 years elected presidents of the European Council and the Council of Foreign Ministers

Constitutional Treaty '03 and Lisbon Treaty '09/Content

- Supranationalist explanations
 - The outcome of the convention does not reflect the initial positions of a number of influential government, which were (1) reluctant to confer more powers to the EP and (2) wanted to strengthen the European Council more than has been achieved
 - The strengthening of the EP can be explained by the role of the norm of parliamentary democracy which was used by the supporters of a more supranational EU in order to exert pressure on their opponents

Eastern Enlargement/Content

- Accession of 12 new member states in 2004/2007
 - Much poorer than EU average
 - Thus entitled to receive transfer money
 - Increased heterogeneity of EU

Eastern Enlargement/Explanations

- Intergovernmentalist explanation
 - The enlargement preferences of the old member states may be explained (geographical proximity, economic advantages/disadvantages),
 - However, influential governments preferred rather privileged partnership than full membership – decision for the rather quick accession is a puzzle for intergovernmentalist explanations

Eastern Enlargement/Explanations

- Supranational explanation:
 - Negotiation power is also based on argumentative power; the supporters of a quick eastern enlargement were in a stronger argumentative position, as the possibility of full membership was promised during cold war times – EU was under pressure to fulfill its historical promises
 - Therefore: Enlargement = a normative necessity