



Transatlantic Policymaking in an Age of Austerity: Diversity and Drift (American Governance and Public Policy series) (American Government and Public Policy)

Martin A. Levin

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Transatlantic Policymaking in an Age of Austerity integrates the study of politics and public policy across a broad spectrum of regulatory and social welfare policies in the United States and several nations of Western Europe. The editors and a sterling list of contributors look at policymaking in the 1990s through the present?providing a comparative politics framework?stressing both parallel development and the differences between and among the nations. Similar prevailing ideas and political factors can be identified and transatlantic comparisons made?providing for a clearer understanding of the policymaking process.

Faith in regulated markets and the burden of rising welfare costs are concerns found on both sides of the Atlantic. Western democracies also share political climates colored by economic austerity; low trust in government, pressures from interest groups, and a sharply divided electorate. Because of differing political processes and differing policy starting points, a variety of disparate policy decisions have resulted.

Real world policymaking in the areas of welfare, health, labor, immigration reform, disability rights, consumer and environmental regulation, administrative reforms, and corporate governance are compared. Ultimately, the last decade is best characterized as one of "drift," sluggish changes with little real innovation and much default to the private sector. In general, policymakers on both sides of the ocean, constrained by economic necessity, have been unable to produce policy outcomes that satisfy the key segments of the electorate.

The contributors examine the United States, Great Britain, France, and Germany, as well as a number of other European countries, and study the European Union itself as a policymaking institution. *Transatlantic Policymaking in an Age of Austerity* distills the prominent issues, politics, and roles played by governmental institutions into a new understanding of the dynamics of policymaking in and among transatlantic nations.

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