

# Formalizing Informality: How States Control Intergovernmental Organizations Through NGO Participation

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## Research Question & Contribution

- What explains the participation of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) across intergovernmental organizations (IGOs)?
- Emphasis on institutional design and the degree of access granted.
- Brings together explanations of formal design and informal influence.

## Proposed Explanation

- Upon “losing control” of an IGO, the United States pushes for increased NGO access.
- NGOs provide additional *information* and *dilute* the normal process of governance, which allows the U.S to regain control.
- But NGOs remain independent, so the U.S. has limited incentive to increase access when control is insulated.

## Data & Methods

- Quantitative analysis with TRANSACCESS data set
- NGO access measured on a spectrum
- Control loss measured as an interaction (membership size\*competitive environment)
- Process-tracing analysis of the World Bank

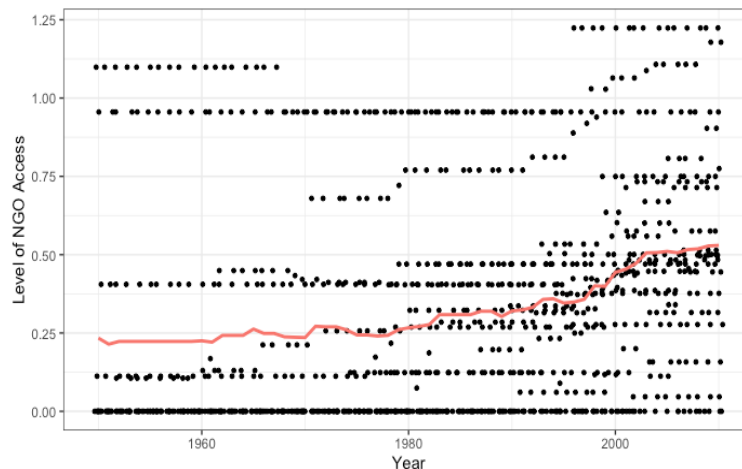


Figure 1: NGO Access across IGOs

## Quantitative Results

- OLS regression with year fixed effects
- Competition & membership alone posit a negative relationship; interactive effect is positive
- Results are robust to checks for temporal trends; issue-area; Tobit models; clustered SEs
- Separating the *depth & range* of access presents similar results; supports my proposed mechanisms

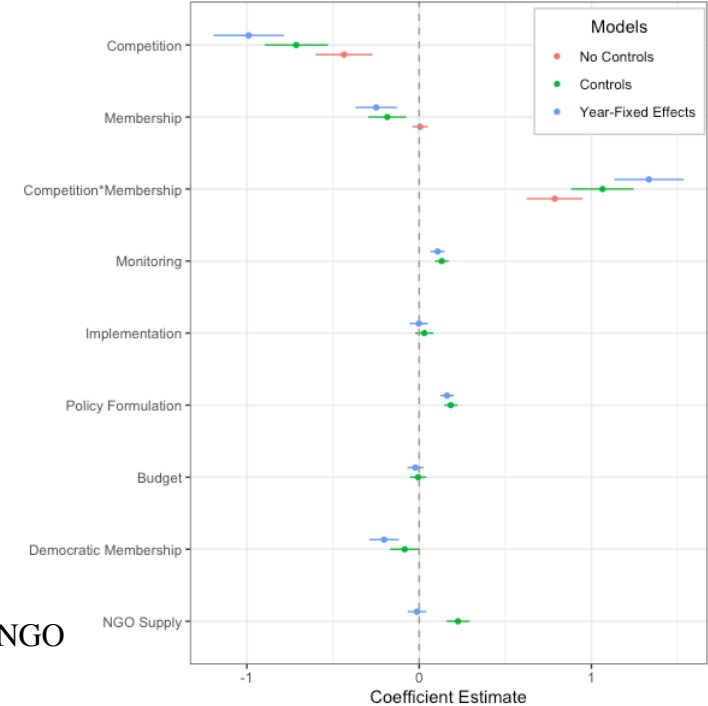


Figure 2: Effect of Losing Control on NGO Access, 1950-2010 (OLS models)

## World Bank Case Evidence

- *Losing control*- U.S. faces reduced voting powers and monitoring in the 1970s.
- *Informal access*- NGOs collaborated on World Bank projects with USAID coordination, beginning in 1973.
- *Formalizing informality*- United States pushed for widespread, formal NGO access from 1981-1993 while bureaucratic actors remained skeptical.

## Implications

The changing landscapes of global governance may represent a consolidation, rather than an upheaval, of the *status quo*.