

## Book Review: The European Union and Global Engagement: Institutions, Policies and Challenges by Normann Witzleb, Alfonso Martinez Arranz, and Pascaline Winand

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**Witzleb, Normann, Alfonso Martinez Arranz, and Pascaline Winand, eds. *The European Union and Global Engagement: Institutions, Policies and Challenges*. Northampton: Edward Elgar, 2015. xix + 323 pages. Hardcover, \$135.00.**

*The European Union and Global Engagement: Institutions, Policies and Challenges*—edited by three Monash University academics: Normann Witzleb (law), Martinez Arranz (environmental/energy policy), and Winand (politics)—is the compilation of eighteen, expert, in-depth accounts of the key issues confronting the European Union (EU) today. The book addresses the interplay between the EU's internal developments and global challenges. On the domestic front, many of the analyses are grounded in historical developments that have led to the current situation, namely: the Lisbon Treaty, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), challenges in monetary and fiscal policy, human rights, social policy, as well as environmental and energy policy. The external analyses focus on trade, security, and the EU's relationship to significant world regions, particularly post-communist Eastern Europe, North America, the Asia-Pacific, and Oceania.

The book has three distinct parts: Institutions, Policies, and Global Engagement. Part I discusses the institutional structure of the EU after the 2007 Lisbon Treaty, European legal integration, and the consequences and reactions of the EU following the 2008 global financial crisis. As a backdrop, the origin of the EU is traced to the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951, which aimed to unite member states. The European Economic Community (EEC), stemming from the 1957 Treaty of Rome, created a common market and a customs union for the six original EU members: Belgium, France, Holland, Italy, Luxembourg, and West Germany. The EEC members agreed to a demand by France for central planning in agriculture, known as the Common Agricultural Policy, which included price controls and production quotas. The 1992 Maastricht Treaty transformed the EEC into the EU. Thus, from a free-trade and a customs union, the EU has grown into a supranational institution that controls many aspects of the daily lives of citizens of its twenty-eight member states.

The integration achievements of the EU include: a free trade zone, a common agricultural policy, free movement and migration within the EU, and an Office of High Representative (EU Foreign Minister). Shared difficulties involve the sovereign debt crisis (Portugal, Ireland, Greece, Spain—PIGS), and a single monetary policy without strong federal fiscal policy. The latter normally entails a political union that most EU member states are not ready for. By and large, members have relinquished, completely or partially, part of their sovereignty to EU institutions. In some cases, elected public officials at the national level are required to implement decisions made in Brussels; however, migration policy, in particular, has generated growing resentment in the richer countries. Unsurprisingly, the rising support for nationalist

parties across Europe and the recent referendum decision in the United Kingdom to leave the EU (Brexit) has raised fears about the future survival of the union.

Part II deals with EU policies, including CAP, human rights, social policy, trade policy, and the integration of environmental and energy policies. The sensitive domain of agriculture remains a source of tension between the EU and global norms. With respect to human rights, the pressure to improve internal rights protection will, hopefully, nudge the EU further along concerning the rights for irregular migrants. Following the Lisbon Treaty and the global financial crisis, the field of EU social policy has mostly been prompted by globalization. With respect to trade, as a commercial giant, the EU not only has considerable leverage in international trade negotiations, but also remains particularly active in the World Trade Organization. However, the EU's role in the domain of environmental and energy policies is highly limited due to the fact that member states exercise prerogatives on these issues.

Part III of the book focuses on global engagement. Undoubtedly, one of the EU's greatest achievements has been its enlargement and the cooptation of its post-communist neighbors. By spreading its influence and norms, the EU has successfully promoted and supported peaceful development, democratization, and market economic reforms in post-communist countries. Also, as a major development aid donor, the EU is also recognized globally as a promoter of human rights and the rule of law. However, the collaboration between the EU and the United States on international security has been shaky on a number of fronts (Iraq, Libya, Georgia, Syria, Crimea), yet NATO remains a strong unifying force across the Atlantic. In addition, while the EU-Australia relationship had previously been characterized by acrimony over British defection to the European Community, and conflict over agricultural issues and trade barriers, Australians still generally regarded the EU as a positive force in the world. Post-Brexit, with its cultural-historical ties to Europe and knowledge of the Asia-Pacific and Oceania, Australia can now serve as a bridge between Great Britain and the European Union.

For readers concerned with the current crisis of confidence in the EU, the book did not attempt to predict the future survival of the institution. However, *The European Union and Global Engagement: Institutions, Policies and Challenges* is a valuable interdisciplinary resource for scholars of European studies.

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