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The making of the European Union: foundations, institutions and future trends

Berglund, Sten | Ekman, Joakim | Vogt, Henri | Aarebrot, Frank H.
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Biography

Sten Berglund (Swedish, born 1947), professor of political science, Örebro University, Sweden, has also worked as Professor in other universities, namely in Finland. His research work focuses primarily on the democratisation process in Eastern Europe.

Joakim Ekman (Swedish), professor of political science, Södertörn University, Stockholm, Sweden, works at the Centre for Baltic and East European Studies (CBEES). His main fields of research are democratisation, public opinion and political participation.

Henri Vogt (Finnish), professor of political science at the University of Turku, Finland. Scope of research consists of democratisation, European integration and global governance.

Frank H. Aarebrot (Norwegian, born 1947) professor of comparative politics at the University of Bergen, Norway and adjunct professor of democracy development at the Örebro University, Sweden, has written extensively about politics and is a well known lecturer both in Norway and abroad. He is also known as a political commentator on Norwegian TV, radio and in the press.

Summary

The French rejection of the EU constitution in a referendum in May 2005 was swiftly followed by a 'No' vote in the Netherlands, leaving the EU in the middle of a crisis. The book focuses on citizens’ attitudes towards the integration process on the European continent over time. Changes in public opinion are scrutinised on a national level. Countries are divided into groups according to common denominators. A comparative perspective highlights the variety of national interests and the multidimensional nature of public opinion.

The book starts by reviewing the foundations of European social, economical and political integration and then covers a range of themes at the heart of integration: deeper economic and political cooperation, further enlargement following the accession of ten new Member States in 2004, and public trust in the EU institutions. Views on globalisation and euroscepticism are also expressed.

The authors conclude by developing various scenarios for the future of the EU. The analysis of long-term prospects highlights contemporary trends as well as more profound feelings and perceptions of Europeans in EU Member States and beyond. These visions, shaped by national interests and common European goals, have been driving forces of European unity in the past and will continue to influence this unique integration process in the future.