

THE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

SECOND EDITION



Neill Nugent

The Government and Politics of the European Community

Second Edition

Neill Nugent

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THE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

Preface to the First Edition

The aim of this book is to provide an introduction to the government and politics of the European Community. I hope it will serve both as a useful text for students and as a readily understandable guide for the general reader.

The book is divided into three parts. In Part One the historical evolution of the Community is explored: from pre-Second World War tensions and hostilities between the states of Western Europe to present-day co-operation and integration. Part Two focuses on the institutional structure, and the associated political actors, of the Community. In Part Three, the policy output of the Community, and the processes which produce that output, are considered. It is hoped that, having read all three parts, plus the conclusion, the reader will have a good understanding of why and how the Community has developed, how it works, and what it does.

Many people working in the institutions of the Community, and in national capitals, provided information and advice without which I would have been unable to write this book. To them I express my genuine thanks. For their detailed comments on the manuscript I am extremely grateful to Simon Bulmer, John Gibbons, and Vincent Wright. For his encouragement and helpful advice I must also express my debt to Steven Kennedy of the publishers.

Finally, I would like to thank my family. My daughters Helen and Rachael were often patience personified, and endured endless requests to 'keep the noise down' when I was writing. My wife Maureen, in addition to suffering the added domestic burdens which fell to her because of my involvement with the book, did a superbly efficient job in typing the manuscript.

Any responsibility for errors in the book remains, of course, mine.

November 1988

NEILL NUGENT

Preface to the Second Edition

It is customary for second editions of books on aspects of modern government and politics to appear about five years after the first edition. Such a timetable would have suited me nicely with this book. However, developments in the European Community are unfolding at such a pace, and so much has happened since the first edition was completed in 1988, that I decided a second edition ought to be produced in advance of the usual schedule.

In writing this second edition I have concentrated on four things. First, I have updated where that was necessary. Second, I have examined and explained some aspects of the Community in greater detail than in the first edition: Community legislative processes for example, and the implementation of Community law. Third, I have incorporated more tables, figures, and exhibits. Fourth, I have corrected a few mistakes which appeared in the first edition.

As a result of these changes the book has been lengthened. No chapter has been left untouched, and most have been subject to a considerable amount of rewriting.

Again I must thank the many people working in Community institutions and in national capitals who provided me with information. Wolfgang Gaede of the Council of Ministers and Gary Titley MEP were especially helpful. I would also like to take this opportunity of thanking Tom Kennedy of the Court of Justice, and David Lowe and Michael Shackleton of the European Parliament, who really ought to have been thanked in the Preface of the first edition. Steven Kennedy of the publishers was again very helpful and encouraging. My wife, Maureen, did a wonderfully quick job in preparing the typescript and I am extremely grateful to her, and to my children, Helen and Rachael, for all their help and support.

January 1991

NEILL NUGENT

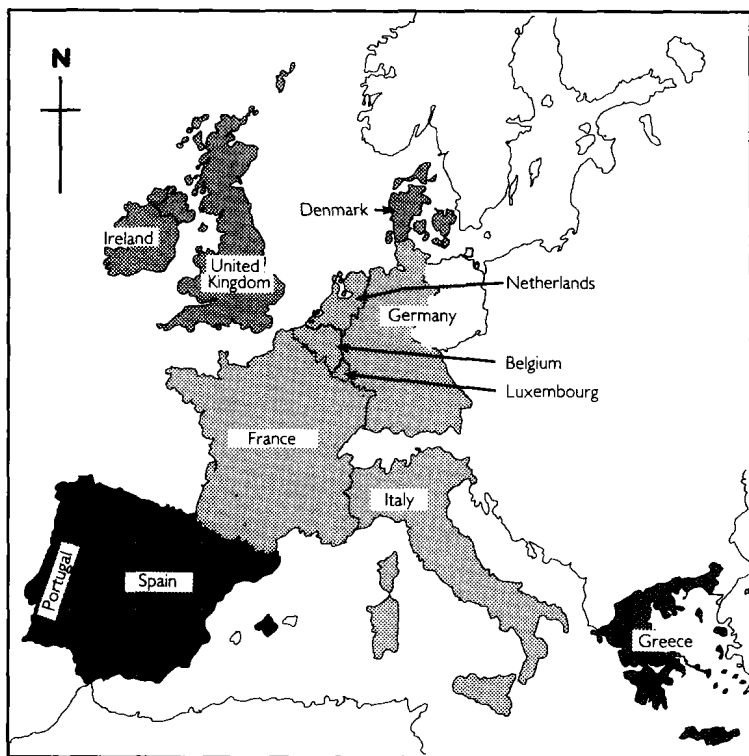
List of Abbreviations






ACP	African, Caribbean, and Pacific Countries
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations
BEUC	European Bureau of Consumers' Associations
BRITE	Basic Research in Industrial Technologies for Europe
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CCP	Common Commercial Policy
CCT	Common Customs Tariff
CDU/CSU	German Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union
CEEP	European Centre of Public Enterprises
CEFIC	European Chemical Industry Federation
CEN	European Committee for Standardisation
CENELEC	European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardisation
CET	Common External Tariff
CFP	Common Fisheries Policy
COPA	Committee of Professional Agricultural Organisations
COREPER	Committee of Permanent Representatives
CSF	Community Support Framework
CSCE	Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe
CSP	Confederation of the Socialist Parties of the European Community
DC	Italian Christian Democratic Party
DG	Directorate General
DRIVE	Dedicated Road Infrastructure for Vehicle Safety in Europe
EAGGF	European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EC	European Community
ECOFIN	Council of Economic and Finance Ministers

ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
Ecu	European Currency Unit
ED	European Democratic Group
EDA	Group of the European Democratic Alliance
EDC	European Defence Community
EEA	European Economic Area
EEB	European Environmental Bureau
EEC	European Economic Community
EES	European Economic Space
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EIB	European Investment Bank
EMS	European Monetary System
EMU/Emu	Economic and Monetary Union
EP	European Parliament
EPC	European Political Co-operation
EPP	European People's Party – Federation of the Christian Democratic Parties of the European Community
ER	Technical Group of the European Right
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ERM	Exchange Rate Mechanism
ESC	Economic and Social Committee
ESF	European Social Fund
ESPRIT	European Strategic Programme for Research and Development in Information Technology
ETUC	European Trade Union Confederation
EUL	European United Left
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
EUREKA	European Programme for High Technology Research and Development
EUROFER	European Confederation of Iron and Steel Industries
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FDP	German Free Democratic Party
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GDR	German Democratic Republic
GNP	Gross National Product
IEA	International Energy Agency
IGC	Intergovernmental Conference
IMF	International Monetary Fund

IMP	Integrated Mediterranean Programme
JET	Joint European Torus
JRC	Joint Research Centre
LDP	Federation of Liberal and Democratic Parties of the European Community
LDR	Liberal Democratic and Reformist Group
LU	Left Unity
MCA	Monetary Compensation Amount
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCI	New Community Instrument
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OEEC	Organisation for European Economic Co-operation
OJ	Official Journal of the European Communities
PCF	French Communist Party
PCI	Italian Communist Party
PDB	Preliminary Draft Budget
PHARE	Poland and Hungary: Aid for the Restructuring of Economies
RACE	Research and Development in Advanced Communications Technologies for Europe
RBW	Rainbow Group
R & TD	Research and Technological Development
SCA	Special Committee on Agriculture
SEA	Single European Act
SEM	Single European Market
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNICE	Union of Industries of the European Community
USA	United States of America
VAT	Value Added Tax
WEU	Western European Union

Member States of the European Community



-  Founding members (1952 ECSC; 1958 EEC and Euratom)
-  First enlargement (1973)
-  Second enlargement (1981)
-  Third enlargement (1986)
-  Incorporation of the territory of the German Democratic Republic into a united Germany (1990)

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PART ONE

The Historical Evolution

Introduction

No political system or organisation can properly be understood unless it is set in its historical and operational contexts. The structure and functioning of government institutions, the nature and dynamics of political forces, and the concerns and conduct of those who exercise power do not happen as a matter of chance. They are shaped and are constantly being remoulded by evolving forces and events.

Though a relatively new organisation, the European Community (EC) is no less subject to these dictates than are long established nation states and, like them, its nature cannot be appreciated without reference to its historical sources or to the world in which it functions. Thus, the Community is often criticised for being weak in structure and quarrelsome in nature, with far too much bickering over matters such as the price of butter and not enough visionary thinking and united action to tackle unemployment, regional imbalances, and other major problems. Unquestionably there is much in these criticisms, but that the Community should find harmonious collective policy-making difficult is not surprising to anyone with a historical perspective. For before they became members of the Community the now twelve member states made decisions for themselves on most matters. It is not easy, especially for those which, until relatively recently, have been great powers or which believe themselves to be different or to have special interests, to have to cede sovereignty by transferring decision-making responsibilities to a multinational organisation in which other voices may prevail. An explanation and understanding of what the EC is, and what it has and has not achieved, must recognise this. The Community must, in other words, be seen in the context of the forces that have made it, and are still making it. Some of these forces, notably ones of increasing economic interdependence, have served to push the states together. Others, and long established assumptions regarding the importance of national independence and sovereignty

are very much amongst these, have resulted in progress towards co-operation and integration being slow, difficult, and far from continuous.

The sovereignty issue may also be used to give another, rather different, example of the importance of both historical background and contemporary operational context in explaining and evaluating the EC. Many of the Community's opponents and critics subscribe to the view that the nation state, not an international organisation, is the 'natural' supreme political unit. They argue that insofar as transferences of power to Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg – the three main seats of the Community's institutions – undermine national sovereignty, they should be resisted. But what proponents of this view all too often fail to recognise is that the member states of the Community were seeing their sovereignties being steadily eroded long before the EC was established, and since it was established they have seen their sovereignties further eroded by forces that are not a consequence of Community membership. Whether it is because of movements in financial markets, transfers of capital within multinational corporations, changing trade patterns, or superpower military dominance, virtually all West European states have become increasingly affected by, and at the mercy of, international developments they cannot control. This loss of power may not have involved legal transfers of sovereignty as has been the case within the Community, but it has had a very similar effect. The fact is that in an ever expanding range of policy and decision-making sectors states have not been able to act in isolation but have had to adjust and adapt so as to fit in with an array of external influences. The Community should not, therefore, be viewed as constituting a unique threat to the sovereignties of its member states. On the contrary, it is in some ways an attempt to meet this threat by providing a means by which the member states, if not able to regain their sovereignty, can at least reassert control over aspects of decision-making by co-operating together at levels and in ways which match post-war internationalism.

The purpose of Part One is thus to provide a base for an understanding of the Community by tracing its evolution and placing it in its historical and operational settings.

In Chapter 1 the sharp divide between pre-war and post-war West European inter-state relations is examined. The factors which explain what amounted to a post-war transformation in those relations are