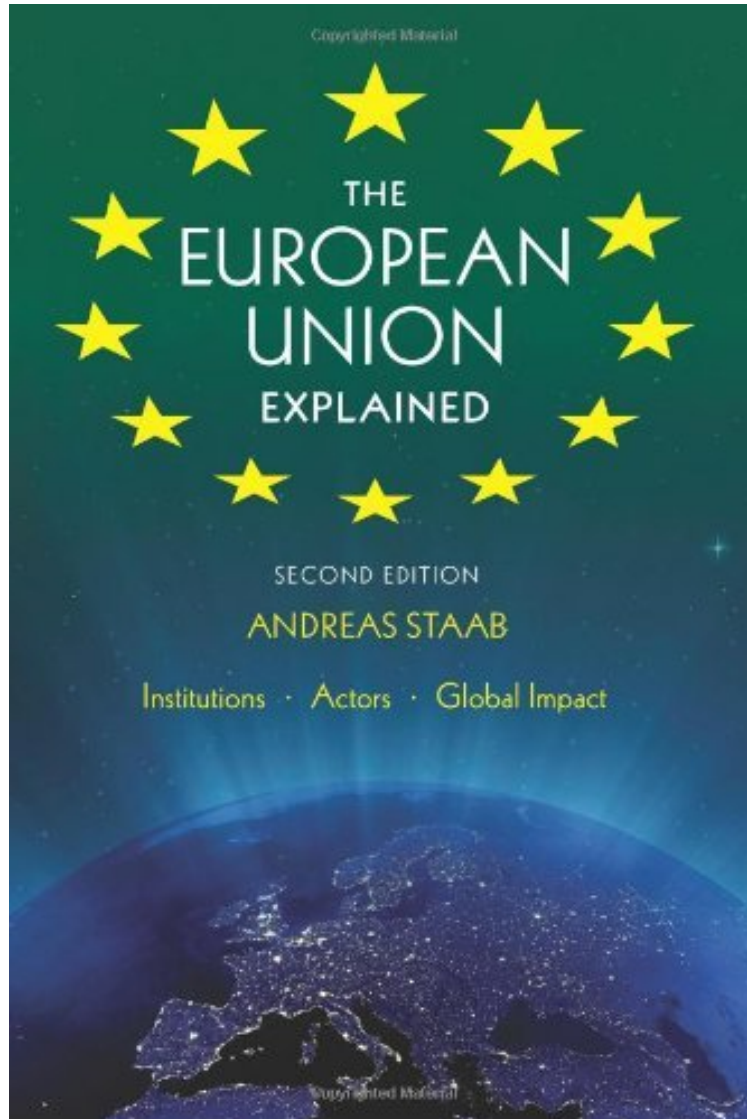


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The European Union Explained: Institutions, Actors, Global Impact

Andreas Staab

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Andreas Staab : The European Union Explained: Institutions, Actors, Global Impact before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *The European Union Explained: Institutions, Actors, Global Impact*:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Both an overview and an assessment of the EU by Glenn A. Carleton. I was looking for a good introduction to the European Union as the Greek and Italian debt crisis was getting more attention, critical to understand their situation in light of the EU. I didn't understand the role of the EU and how it was structured to address these and other European problems. This book in many ways is a history book, outstanding historical background of many events going back to WWI and especially WWII, and beyond Europe. The author

explains how they impact the goals of the EU over its history and thus how the EU decided to organize itself knowing with so many members major weaknesses were inevitable. He explains these weaknesses and the impact of them. Conflicting goals between countries is explained in depth. The author has plenty of opinions, and a few I questioned, but I was looking for an expert's opinion, not objectivity that one would find in a text book. The author wants the EU to continue, but explains how it might not be able to function in light of new challenges in a poor world economy, and even ends with some options to the present structure. This book will give you every component of the EU, which before I had no idea there were so many (thinking it was purely economic, not political, environmental, etc). Now when I listen to podcasts from the Economist or read articles from Stratfor, they make much more sense. In one book one can become fairly sophisticated about the EU and follow current events with a solid background. Parts were dry, but overall, this was an enjoyable read. Highly recommended for anyone who wants to understand current world events, both in Europe and the rest of the world. It is all connected. In light of what has been happening in Europe in late 2011, it seems highly unlikely the EU will eventually find a way to pull itself together and benefit from surviving the crisis of its weak members. It seems that the EU can only survive and function in a robust world economy. The author might think otherwise, but he might also be biased or having wishful thinking. Final comment - excellent overview of why Turkey will never get into the EU. Seems like shared country views on religion is core to being accepted. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good introduction to the EU though weaker on the economics side. By A. Menon The European Union Explained is a solid introduction to how the EU is arranged, how it got here and what its soft goals are. The purpose of the book is mainly to describe history and function rather than to analyze current frictions and institutional failures. The book is split into 3 parts - The Evolution of the European Union, Institutions, Policies. I will describe them briefly. The evolution of the European Union brings the reader up to speed by providing the background to the EU starting in the aftermath of the second world war. It provides a brief and readable history of policy that started bringing Europe closer together from a trade perspective starting in the early 50s. It takes the readers through all the recent treaties signed over the last 2 decades as well including Lisbon. It then discusses the process by which the membership of the EU grew and in what order. The book continues on describing the Institutions. This section is most relevant for understanding the current power structure of the EU and how it is distributed. The European Commission, European Council, the Council of Ministers, The European Parliament and the European Court of Justice are all introduced and discussed. One gets a sense of the evolving power structure of each of these institutions and their strengths and mainly limitations for enacting regional change. Finally the book analyzes the policy goals of the EU. With its focus on trade of goods and services- the policy of a single market is tackled first. Policy goals of having converging standards of living are discussed and the nuances of agricultural policy are touched upon. The monetary union, a massive subject and the source of most stress is also discussed briefly. The book also discusses human rights, foreign affairs trade and the environment from a unified policy perspective (or lack thereof in some of the subjects). The major institutional as well as policy areas the EU is involved in are all discussed. However coverage is not commensurate with importance. The monetary union is by far one of the most important aspects of the EU and not just because the problems are visible today; that warrants a far deeper discussion than some of the sections of equal length. The author does a fine job of giving an overview but this job will give no insight into what the future will hold for the EU. If one is unsure of what various institutions in the EU are responsible for and how the EU was formed, this is a nice easy introduction; if one is looking for something about where the EU is headed this book makes no attempt to answer that question. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great! By HatsOff813 This book is wonderful. If you are looking for lots of details about the EU, then skip this book. However, if you are looking for a well summarized overview complete with NECESSARY details, then this book is for you. It is well written and doesn't feel dry at all when you are reading it. It really is fantastic and would recommend it to anyone looking to understand the EU.

This brief and accessible introduction to the European Union is ideal for scholars and professionals in government, business, the media, or the nonprofit sector who need a concise overview of the structure, history, and policies of the EU. This new edition also provides useful background reading for advanced high school and college courses and for those planning overseas study, work, or research. Andreas Staab offers basic terms and interpretive frameworks for understanding the evolution of the EU; the overall structure, purpose, and mandate of its main constituent divisions; and key policy areas, such as market unification. The entire text has been thoroughly updated to incorporate information about key actors, terms, and new developments, and a new chapter on environmental policy has been added.

"Very informative, comprehensive, and well constructed." Ljerka Mintas Hodak, former Minister of Education, Government of the Republic of Croatia "Readers in America and Europe alike will benefit from the very considerable expertise revealed in these pages." Hugh Dykes, House of Lords Liberal Democrat Spokesperson on the European Union "The European Union Explained offers a fine introduction to the European Union and will appeal to a range of collections, from political science and business holdings to college-level collections strong in the media." Midwest

Book , October 2011 "A wonderful exposition of the European Union." Ambassador Donato Chiarini, European Commission "An informative, well-paced, and clearly articulated narrative of the European Union's development." Jennifer Yoder, Colby College "Covers all the essential topics related to the EU." Choice, reviewing a previous edition or volume About the Author Andreas Staab is the founder and director of EPIC the European Policy Information Centre, a UK-based consultancy on the European Union. He teaches in the London programs of three North American universities and is author of *National Identity in Eastern Germany*.