

Decision-making  
are distinctly  
in policy areas

## Chapter 17

# Understanding EU Policies

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This chapter introduces the EU's policies. It does so by describing the diverse origins of the policies and by taking an overview of key features of the policy portfolio.

## The Origins of EU Policies

The origins of EU policies lie in a number of places. So, for example, at a general level, the changed mood in Western Europe after the Second World War enabled states between which policy cooperation, let alone coordination, would previously have been unthinkable to begin to work closely with one another in policy areas where there appeared to be shared advantages from so doing. Staying at a general level, an increasingly important factor since the Second World War has been the increasingly interdependent nature of the international, and more particularly of the European, systems, which has resulted in national borders becoming ever more ill-matched with political and economic realities and policy needs. The combined impact of the changed mood and the pressures of interdependence have been significant in helping to persuade European states to transfer policy responsibilities to a 'higher' level in an attempt to shape, manage, control, take advantage of, and keep pace with the modern world.

At a more specific level, the treaties are generally seen as key determinants of EU policy. However, their influence is not as great as is commonly supposed. Certainly they are important stimuli to policy development and they also provide the legal base upon which much policy activity occurs. For example, such 'core' EU policies as the Common Commercial Policy (CCP), the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), and the Competition Policy have their roots – though by no means all their principles – in the EEC Treaty (later EC Treaty, now TFEU). Similarly, EU involvement with coal and steel cannot possibly be fully understood without reference to the Treaty of Paris. But treaty provision for policy development does not guarantee that it will occur. The limited progress made towards the establishment of a Common Transport Policy, despite it being provided for in the EEC Treaty, illustrates this. So too does the non-fulfilment of most of the hopes that were held for Euratom. Another, and crucially important in its implications for the nature of the EU, example of limited development of treaty provisions is the only very partial implementation, until the late 1980s, of Part 3 Title 2 of the EEC



Treaty, under which member states were supposed to treat their macroeconomic policies 'as a matter of common concern' and were to coordinate, cooperate and consult with one another on key economic and financial questions. In practice, although there was cooperation and consultation in these areas – carried out mainly under the Ecofin Council of Ministers by committees of very senior national officials – the states did not work or act as closely together as the Treaty envisaged. Furthermore, one of the key steps towards economic and financial cooperation – the creation in 1979 of the European Monetary System (EMS) which, amongst other things, was designed to fix maximum and minimum rates of exchange for currencies in the system – was created outside the treaty framework because of concerns in some quarters about the rigidities that a treaty-based approach might entail, and also because not all member states (notably the UK) wished to be full participants. It was only in 1987–88, 30 years after the EEC Treaty was signed, that clear, formal, and Community-based moves towards economic and monetary integration between the member states began to be initiated and implemented, but even then they were far from being comprehensive in nature.

If treaty provision is no guarantee of policy development, lack of provision is no guarantee of lack of development. Environmental policy illustrates this. Until it was given constitutional status by the Single European Act (SEA), environment was given no specific mention in the treaties. Yet from the early 1970s Community environmental policy programmes were formulated and legislation was approved. Legal authority for this was held to lie in the (almost) catch-all Articles 100 and 235 of the EEC Treaty (now Articles 115 and 352 TFEU). The former allowed the Community to issue directives for the approximation of laws 'as directly affect the establishment or functioning of the common market' and the latter enabled it to take 'appropriate measures' to 'attain, in the course of the operation of the common market, one of the objectives of the Community'. Environmental policy was therefore able to find a treaty base, but it was only a weak one.

However, even the most liberal readings of Articles 100 and 235 could not stretch to some policy areas, but this did not prevent policy development from occurring. Foreign policy cooperation prior to the SEA illustrates this. Aware that there were no treaty

provisions for such cooperation, and unenthusiastic about subjecting such a sensitive area to the formalities and restrictions of treaty processes, the EC member states in the early 1970s simply created a new machinery – which they entitled European Political Cooperation (EPC) – alongside, rather than inside the formal framework of the treaties. EPC was first given legal (but not EEC Treaty) status by the SEA and this subsequently provided much of the basis for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) pillar of the Maastricht Treaty. This 'constitutional evolution' of foreign policy highlights a key feature of the nature of EU policy development: the treaties are facilitators and enablers of policy development, but they are not always the main causes. Indeed, many of the amendments made over the years to the Founding Treaties have taken the form of acknowledging and giving recognition to changes that have been occurring outside their frameworks.

If the treaties thus provide only a partial explanation for policy development, what other factors have been influential? There has been, and still is, an extensive academic debate on this question. Since the focus of this debate is examined at length in Chapter 10, suffice it here to focus on three factors that have been especially important: the leadership offered by the Commission; the perceptions of the member states of what is desirable; and the individual and collective capacities of the member states and the EU to translate perceptions of what is desirable into practice.

To begin with *Commission leadership*, it is generally recognised that the Commissions led by Walter Hallstein (1958–67), Roy Jenkins (1967–73) and Jacques Delors (1985–95) have been the most dynamic and forceful in the Commission's history. This is not to suggest that all their ideas and proposals were translated into practice, but it is to say that they were particularly innovative in helping to bring new issues onto the policy agenda and in pointing out what could, and perhaps should, be done. The ability of the Commission, in favourable circumstances, to have a real effect on policy development is more clearly illustrated than in the way the Delors Commissions helped to force the pace on such issues as the Single European Market (SEM) programme, Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the social dimension.

Regarding *the perceptions of the member states*, a fundamental precondition of successful EU



## The Range and Diversity of EU Policies

Many of the EU's policies and laws centre on the promotion and defence of an internally free and externally protected market. Hence, there are policies that are designed to encourage the free movement of goods, persons, services, and capital; there is the competition policy, which seeks to facilitate fair and open competition within and across the borders of the member states; and there is the common external tariff and the CCP. In practice, however, not all of these policies are complete or wholly successful. There are, for example, still barriers related to company law and company taxation that can make it difficult for firms in different member states to engage in joint commercial activities. And non-tariff barriers to internal trade still exist, despite strenuous activity on harmonisation and approximation. In consequence, the EU is, in some respects, less than the integrated internal market it is commonly supposed to be.

But in other respects it is more than an internal market in that many of its policy concerns range far beyond matters that are part and parcel of an internal market's requirements. The policy concerns of the EU are not, in other words, just concerned with dismantling internal barriers and providing conditions for fair trade on the one hand, and presenting a common external trading front to the rest of the world on the other. There are two main aspects to this wider policy portfolio.

First, with regard to the EU's economic policies, many of these are not based solely on the non-interventionist/*laissez faire* principles that are often thought of as providing the ethos, even the ideology, of the EU. In some spheres the EU tends very much towards interventionism/managerialism/regulation, and in so doing it does not always restrict itself to 'market efficiency' policies. This is most obviously seen in the way in which the EU's regional, social, and consumer protection policies, plus much of the CAP, have as their precise purpose the counteracting and softening of nationally unacceptable or socially inequitable market consequences. On a broader front, there are the euro-related policies which clearly take the EU – and especially the eurozone – far beyond being 'just' an internal market and give it all of the characteristics of a monetary union, but only some of those of an economic union.

development has been that the advantages of acting together have been judged by the national governments to outweigh the disadvantages. The advantages have mostly, though not entirely, been seen to be primarily economic in kind. So, there has been a broad consensus amongst the governments that joint policy activity is, on balance, beneficial in respect of the building of a single and integrated internal market, having a common external trading position, and engaging in some collective action and pooling of resources in particular functional and sectoral areas. The principal perceived disadvantages of acting together have been the loss of national decision-making powers and sovereignty that transfers of power and responsibilities to the EU entails and the associated limitations placed on the national room for policy manoeuvre. Policy areas where these disadvantages have been seen as being especially problematical, at least by some member states, have resulted in only limited convergence in the positions of states in favour of joint policy action. This, in turn, has resulted in policy development in these areas being, at best, only slow and limited (as with social welfare and taxation policies), or being accompanied by member state opt-outs (as with the single currency and aspects of AFSJ).

As for the capacities of the member states and the EU to operationalise their perceptions of what is desirable, there are many problems. At the individual state level, a government may be favourably disposed towards an EU initiative but be inhibited from supporting it because of opposition from a powerful domestic interest or because it could be electorally damaging. Following this through to the EU level, opposition from just one state, whether it is principled or pragmatic, can make policy development difficult to achieve given the practice of the European Council to make its decisions by consensus, the continuing treaty requirement of unanimity in the Council in several key policy areas, and the preference in the Council for progress through general agreement – especially on major issues – even when majority decisions are legally permissible. This situation whereby a majority of member states is unwilling or unable to oblige states that are in a minority to participate in policy activities against their will has, along with the above noted varying perceptions of states, further promoted 'differentiated integration': that is, policy development without all member states being fully involved.



Second, the EU has developed policies that are not only non-market focused but also non-economic focused. Of these, the most obvious are those where the member states consult and attempt to coordinate their positions on key foreign policy and some defence policy questions. In addition to foreign policy and defence policy, there are many other 'non-economic' policy areas – such as public health, broadcasting, and combating crime – which were long thought of as not being the EU's concern, but where important developments have occurred.

The EU's policy portfolio is thus very wide-ranging. The main areas of interest and responsibility within the portfolio can be grouped under five broad headings: establishing the internal market, macro-economic and financial policies, functional policies, sectoral policies, and external policies. The first four of these are examined in some detail in Chapter 20, whilst external policies are examined in Chapter 22.

## The Varying Extent of EU Policy Involvement

The extent of the EU's responsibility for policy-making and policy management varies enormously between policy areas. As Box 17.1 shows, it ranges from very extensive involvement in some areas to very marginal involvement in others.

In those spheres where significant responsibilities are exercised, policy-making arrangements are usually well-established and effective policy instruments are usually available. Where, however, EU involvement is marginal, policy processes may be confined to little more than occasional exchanges of ideas and information between interested parties, whilst policy instruments may merely be of the exhortive and persuasive kind such as are common in many international organisations.

External trade, agriculture, and fishing are prominent amongst the policy areas where there is extensive EU involvement. Here, most major policy decisions, such as those on external tariffs, agricultural support mechanisms and payments, and fishing quotas are taken at the EU level, whilst their detailed and supposedly uniform implementation is left to the member states, acting as agents of the EU. In areas where these

so-called common policies are not in reality totally common – and both the CAP and the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) allow room for governments to provide national aids and assistance – decisions of any significance normally require at least clearance from Brussels.

Moving along the spectrum of EU policy involvement, there are many policy areas where the EU's interests and competence, though less comprehensive than in the examples just given, are still very significant and complement and supplement the actions of the states in important ways. Competition policy is one example. This seeks to encourage free and open competition throughout the EU by, for instance, setting out rules under which firms can make and sell their products, laying down conditions under which national authorities may assist firms, and imposing restrictions on certain types of company merger. Employment policy is another example, with much of the EU's focus in this sphere being on job training and retraining, facilitating labour mobility, underpinning safe working conditions, and generally promoting employment.

Turning finally to policy spheres where the EU's involvement is at best limited, examples include education, health, housing, pensions, and social welfare payments. As these examples make clear, many of the policies that fall into this category of low EU involvement are public welfare policies and policies that have major budgetary implications.

This complex mosaic of policy involvement has over the years moved almost unceasingly in an increasingly integrationist direction. The pace of this movement has varied, both over time periods and within policy areas, but it has been constant. So, if we look back to, say, the mid-1970s, many issues that would have been listed then as being in the category of very limited policy involvement – such as environment and foreign policy – are now by no means marginal. Environment has spawned many policy programmes and much legislation, foreign policy has evolved its own machinery and has seen increasingly coordinated policy development, and both have been awarded treaty recognition. At the same time, some policy spheres which in the mid-1970s the Community would not have been thought of as having any competence in at all have assumed significant places on the EU's policy agenda. Examples include defence policy and the various AFSJ policies.



## 17.1

## The extent of EU policy involvement

Intensive EU policy involvement	Considerable EU policy involvement	Policy responsibility shared between the EU and the member states	Limited EU policy involvement	Virtually no EU policy involvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trade</li> <li>Agriculture</li> <li>Fishing</li> <li>Monetary (for euro members)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Market regulation</li> <li>Competition</li> <li>Movement across external borders (especially for Schengen members)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional</li> <li>Industrial</li> <li>Foreign</li> <li>Environmental</li> <li>Equal opportunities</li> <li>Working conditions</li> <li>Consumer protection</li> <li>Macroeconomic (especially for euro members)</li> <li>Energy</li> <li>Transport</li> <li>Cross-border crime</li> <li>Civil liberties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health</li> <li>Education</li> <li>Defence</li> <li>Social welfare</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housing</li> <li>Domestic crime</li> </ul>

## The Varying Nature of EU Policy Involvement

EU policy involvement varies not just in its extent but also in its nature. The most important aspect of this varying nature is whether policies rely heavily on EU law or are more based on voluntary and semi-voluntary forms of intergovernmental cooperation.

It used to be the case that in those policy areas where the EU exercised significant responsibilities, well-established and effective policy instruments resting on EU law were almost invariably in place. It used also to be the case that where EU policy involvement was very limited, policy instruments tended mostly to be of the voluntaristic and persuasive kind. However, over the years these two generalised statements, and especially the first, have become increasingly less accurate as the EU has made use of an increasing number of diverse policy instruments and mechanisms.

More policy instruments and mechanisms have been used because as the EU has expanded its policy portfolio it has moved into areas where member states have seen advantages in working together

but have wished to stop short of making laws that would restrict and bind their own policy choices and options. Legal regulation is still very much used in areas where uniform rules and enforceable rules are seen as being necessary – such as external trade, competition, and internal market standards – but in many areas the enforcement of commonality has been resisted, at least by some member states. Foreign policy – which began to be developed from the early 1970s, was given a heightened political importance and a sharper focus by the Maastricht Treaty, and which has become increasingly operational ‘on the ground’ in the 2000s – is a prime example of such a policy area. The benefits of EU states speaking and acting as one on key international issues are recognised, but such are the political sensitivities associated with foreign policy – and even more so with defence policy, which has come to join foreign policy on the EU’s policy agenda – that it has not been politically possible to *communitarise* it. Accordingly, it rests essentially on intergovernmental cooperation, which does not involve the making of laws but rather sees member states agreeing to policy positions and policy actions on a voluntary basis.



## Box 17.2

## The nature of EU policy involvement

Heavy reliance on legal regulation	Very considerable reliance on legal regulation	A mixture of legal regulation and inter-state cooperation	Some legal regulation but a considerable reliance on inter-state cooperation	Largely based on inter-state cooperation
Trade Agriculture Fishing Market regulation Monetary (for euro members)	Regional Competition Environmental Consumer protection Working conditions Equal opportunities	Industrial Transport Movement across external borders Macroeconomic Energy	Social welfare Energy Defence AFSJ Europe 2020 issues (mainly concerning economic growth and employment)	Health Education Foreign and defence

Much of employment and social policy also illustrates how significant EU policy areas can rely heavily on intergovernmental cooperation. With employment and social policy, however, it is a different form of intergovernmental cooperation than that which applies in the foreign policy sphere. Like foreign policy intergovernmental cooperation, employment and social policy cooperation is based on agreements that are reached by consensus in the Council and it too does not involve the making of legislation and therefore is non-binding. But, intergovernmental cooperation in much of the employment and social policy spheres is different from foreign policy cooperation in that it is largely based on what is known as the open method of coordination (OMC). As compared with 'classic' inter-state cooperation such as exists in the foreign policy sphere, OMC is different in three particular ways: the Commission is extensively involved in the making of much of the policy; the policy itself consists mostly of the identification of broad goals, accompanied by guidelines to member states as to how they should be achieved; and there is considerable devolvement of responsibility to the member states as to how each of them operationalises the pursuit of the goals. (OMC is considered at greater length in Chapter 18.)

In the same style as Box 17.1, Box 17.2 plots EU policy areas along a spectrum, in this case according

to the extent to which policy areas are based on legal regulation or on inter-state cooperation. Some correspondence between the placement of policy areas in the Boxes can be seen, but so too can some significant differences.

## The Regulatory Emphasis

A classic way of distinguishing between policy types in terms of regulatory, redistributive and distributive policies (Lowi, 1964). Regulatory policies lay down rules governing behaviour. Redistributive policies transfer financial resources from groups of individuals (most commonly social classes), regions, or countries to others. And distributive policies also generally involve allocations of financial resources, but not from one 'side' to another (as from the better off to the worse off) but rather between alternative users and usually on the basis of *juste retour* (which in the EU context means member states attempt to draw at least a 'fair share' from the resources available for distributive policies).

This scheme of policy types is by no means exhaustive or mutually exclusive, but it is much-used and is helpful in throwing light on the nature of the EU policy portfolio.

## Regulatory

EU policies have indeed is the extent Majone has suggested as being a regulatory. The regulatory emphasis is seen in respect of extensive legislative operation of the market. 'pure' market competition product specification but also many policies for their own intrinsic value because they have examples of such policies consumer protection.

The reason that the regulatory emphasis has developed and has displaced the redistributive emphasis is that the demand for it. The demand comes most especially from the integrated a market as a whole in all member states. Business activities within the EU comes mainly from the regulatory policy and legislative setting the regulatory framework produces this supply function. The reason is simply that it is consistent with redistributive policies because the technical policy tends to make it possible to distinguish two policy types, and it is the costs of implementing the EU budget but on the one hand public authorities in the member states. The Commission produces public choice theorists, and the Commission also expands the Commission's powers.

## Redistributive po

The EU does have redistributive policies in the form of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) – but nothing like to the extent that some states have such policies in the health and educational policy areas. This explains why EU redistributive policies have not been developed. First, no pressing



## Regulatory policies

EU policies have a strong *regulatory* emphasis. Such is the extent of the emphasis that Giandomenico Majone has suggested that the EU can be thought of as being a regulatory state (Majone, 1992; 1994; 1996). The regulatory emphasis of EU policies is most obvious in respect of the internal market, where an extensive legislative framework exists to govern the operation of the market. This framework covers not only 'pure' market activities, such as the rules governing product specifications and market movements, but also many policies that though partly regulated in their own intrinsic importance are partly regulated because they have significant market implications. Examples of such policy areas are working conditions, consumer protection, and the environment.

The reason that EU regulatory policy is so widespread and has displayed little sign of slowing down in its advance is that there is both a demand and a supply for it. The demand comes from various quarters, but especially from large business which wants as integrated a market as possible – which means common rules in all member states – so as to be able to pursue business activities with maximum ease. The supply of policy and legislative proposals plays a crucial role in setting the regulatory framework. The Commission produces this supply for a number of reasons. One reason is simply that it is much more able to do so than it is with redistributive or distributive policies. This is partly because the technical nature of much regulatory policy tends to make it less contentious than the other two policy types, and it is partly too because most of the costs of implementing regulatory policies fall not on the EU budget but on the budgets of private firms and public authorities in the member states. Another reason why the Commission produces the supply is, in the view of public choice theorists, that expanding EU regulatory powers also expands the Commission's own powers.

## Redistributive policies

The EU does have redistributive policies – most notably in the form of the cohesion funds and the CAP – but nothing like to the same extent as member states have such policies in the form of social welfare, health and educational policies. There are two main reasons why EU redistributive policies are not well developed. First, no pressing reasons have presented

themselves for redistributive policies to be transferred to the EU level, so transfers of sovereignty have been seen as being unnecessary. They are seen, for the most part, as being naturally national in character. Second, most governments have wished to keep a tight rein on EU budgetary expenditure, which means the EU has only modest funds to redistribute. Expenditure on the Regional and Social Funds – the two main components of EU cohesion funds – was doubled in 1988 and then again in 1992, but even with the 1992 increase the overall size of the EU budget was capped at 1.27 per cent of total EU GDP. Since the 1992 increase, cohesion spending has hovered between 35 and 40 per cent of total EU budgetary expenditure, but overall budgetary spending has been marginally cut as an increasing number of the member states that are net budgetary contributors have adopted tighter attitudes towards EU expenditure. Key factors accounting for these attitudes are set out in Box 17.3.

### BOX 17.3

#### Reasons why (many) member states have adopted tighter attitudes to EU budgetary expenditure

- Such attitudes conform with the ideological shift that has taken place virtually throughout the Western world since the early 1990s in favour of a more restrictive stance towards all forms of public expenditure.
- The emphasis given in the EU since the early 1990s to the doctrine of subsidiarity weighs against EU budgetary expansion.
- The EMU convergence and Stability and Growth Pact criteria place a strong emphasis on national budgetary discipline, which is a powerful disincentive against being a net EU budget contributor.
- The enlargements of the twenty-first century have brought many relatively poor countries into the EU, which has not encouraged net budgetary contributor states to expand redistributive policies – from which most of them have little to gain but for which they must pay.
- Germany, for long the major net contributor to the EU budget, has come to suffer from 'donor fatigue' – largely because of the costs incurred by German unification.



- *Exclusive Union*: the marine bio
- *Shared competences*: the ment, cons and technol
- *The Union*: member state administrati

In addition, above categories, policies, and and shall work. Adapted from literature to external *Europa* website.

This lack of development in many EU policy areas – industrial policy, energy – that three examples are not, if EU effects are consistently strong or inconsistent and consistent with many other policies implemented. They are. Of course, similar assignment and lack of commitment against many aspects of the market to the same extent. There is, even where decentralised, usually in the EU for d

The closest there is to a clear rationale for the EU's policy competences is via the so-called subsidiarity principle, which holds that only those policies that are best dealt with at EU level rather than at national level become the EU's concern. The problem with this principle, however, both as a description of the present reality and as a prescription for future action, is that it is vague and question-begging. Descriptions of the present and evolving policy framework as being centred on 'managed and tempered capitalism' or 'a controlled open market' are perhaps of more use in capturing the essence of the EU's policy interests, but they too are still far from wholly satisfactory in that they do not embrace the full flavour of the array and varying depths of EU policy interests, nor do they draw attention to the conflicting principles that underlie different parts of the policy network.

The fact is that the considerable national and political differences that exist in the EU make it difficult to develop coordinated and coherent policies based on shared principles and agreed objectives. This is because any policy development at EU level is usually only possible if searching questions are answered to the satisfaction of a large number of actors. From the viewpoint of the most important actors – the governments of the member states – these questions include: is the national (or at least government) interest being served?; is the cooperation and integration that the policy development involves politically acceptable?; and, if the policy sphere does require closer relations with other states, is the EU the most appropriate arena in which it should occur? As the EU's extensive range of policies demonstrates, these questions have often been answered in the affirmative, though normally only after being subject to caveats and reservations which sit uneasily beside, and sometimes clash with, one another. But often, too, the responses have been in the negative, or at least have been so on the part of a sufficient number of decision-makers to severely hinder policy cooperation and integration.

Policy development has consequently been much about what is possible as what is desirable. In the absence of a centre of power with the authority and internal coherence to take an overall view of requirements and impose an ordered pattern, policies have tended to be the outcome of complex and laboured interactions where different, and often contrasting, requirements, preferences, reservations and fears have all played a part. As a result, the EU's over-

The overall EU policy framework can hardly be said to display a clear pattern or coherence. The Lisbon Treaty did insert into the TFEU a new Title on ‘Categories and Areas of Union Competence’ in which policy areas were grouped into three categories according to the Union’s competence within them. However, as can be seen in Box 17.4, the second and third categories – of mixed and supporting competences – are vague, and two extremely important policy areas – macroeconomic and foreign/defence – are not placed in any of the categories.



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## Categories and areas of Union competence as specified in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

**Exclusive Union competence.** There are five areas in which the EU has exclusive competence: the customs union, the establishment of competition rules, monetary policy for the eurozone, the conservation of marine biological resources under the CFP, and the CCP.

**Shared competence between the Union and the member states.** There are 11 areas in which competence is shared: the internal market, aspects of social policy, cohesion policy, agriculture and fisheries, environment, consumer protection, transport, energy, the area of freedom, security and justice (AFSJ), research and technological development, and development policy.

The Union has competence to carry out actions to *support, coordinate, or supplement* the actions of the member states in seven areas; human health, industry, culture, tourism, education, civil protection, and administrative cooperation.

In addition, certain general principles are identified for other important policy areas not listed in the above categories. So, for example, the member states are to 'coordinate' their economic and employment policies, and in its external relations the Union 'shall define and pursue common policies and actions and shall work for a high degree of cooperation in all fields of international relations ...'.

Adapted from Part One, Title 1, Articles 2–6 of *The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union*, apart from the reference to external relations which is extracted from Article 21 of the *Treaty on European Union*. The treaties are accessible on the *Europa* website.

policy picture is inevitably patchy and rather ragged. A few policy areas – such as agriculture, fishing, and the internal market – are well developed, but other areas that might have been expected to be developed, are either developed only in uncoordinated and partial ways or are barely developed at all.

This lack of development has resulted in deficiencies in many EU policies. As Chapter 20 will show, industrial policy, energy policy, and regional policy are but three examples of key policy areas where there are not, if EU effectiveness is to be maximised, sufficiently strong or integrated policy frameworks with clear and consistent goals. The frameworks in these

and many other policy areas are too partial and too fragmented. They are also, often, under-funded.

Of course, similar critical comments about underdevelopment and lack of integration can also be levelled against many aspects of national policy frameworks. But not to the same extent. For, at the individual state level, there is, even when the political system is weak and decentralised, usually more opportunity than there is in the EU for direction from the centre. This is

partly because national decision-makers have access to more policy instruments than do EU decision-makers. It is mainly, however, because at state level there is normally some focus of political authority capable of offering leadership and imposing a degree of order: a Head of Government perhaps, a Cabinet or Council of Ministers, a Ministry of Economics or Finance, or a dominant party group. In the EU, there are several foci of political authority and leadership, but none is constituted or organised in such a way as to enable it to establish an overall policy coherence or to enforce a clear and consistent policy direction.

## Concluding Remarks

This chapter has emphasised the enormous expansion that has taken place over the years in the EU's policy portfolio. Some of this expansion has involved building on and out from policy areas that were identified in the founding treaties, whilst some has taken the



form of developing policy areas that did not get a treaty mention until the Single European Act at the very earliest.

Such has been the growth of the policy portfolio that there now are few policy areas with which the EU does not have at least some sort of involvement. But the character of the involvement varies

enormously between policy areas. It does so in many ways, not least the balance of policy control between the EU and the national levels and the extent to which policy is based on legal or cooperative policy instruments. The nature of the variations that exist between policy areas will be explored at some length in Chapters 20–23.