

The European Union: A Very Short Introduction

By John Pinder and Simon Usherwood

Questions for Thought and Discussion

- What is the purpose of the European Union (EU)? Why did countries decide to work together in this way?
- Does it matter if the EU does not have a political end-point, e.g. a federation?
- Could the European Economic Community (EEC) have succeeded without the Cold War?
- Could the EEC have succeeded if the UK had been a founder member?
- Are the institutional checks and balances a strength or a weakness of the EU?
- Where does power lie in the EU?
- Consider the relative weight of supranational and intergovernmental institutions. Why do we have this mix and what are the consequences?
- Market integration is central to the EU, but does this require a single currency?
- Is the eurozone crisis likely to result in more or less integration?
- Why does the EU's budget look so different from national budgets?
- How successful has the Union been in playing an active role in the international system? Does this depend on the policy area?
- The Union is a leader in environmental policy, but does this make the EU a 'green actor' more generally?
- To what extent can the EU be a model for regional integration in other parts of the world? It is something intrinsically 'European', in which case, what does that mean?
- The EU is not the same as Europe, so how should the former relate to the latter?
- Do we need to feel European to participate in the European Union? Where then can/should the boundaries of an enlarged Union lie?
- If the EU didn't exist, would we have to invent it (or something like it)?
- Does your country have a future with the Union, and what will that relationship look like?
- Does the Union have a future, and what does it look like?

Other books by the authors

- R. Guerrina and S. Usherwood, *21st Century Politics* (Pearson, 2014) [forthcoming]
- S. Usherwood, *European Union* (Routledge, 2011)
- J. Pinder (ed.), *Foundations of Democracy in the European Union* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1999)
- J. Pinder, *European Community: The Building of a Union* (Oxford University Press, 1991)
- J. Pinder, *The Economics of Europe: What the common market means for Britain* (Federal Trust, 1971)

Further Reading

Please see the Further Reading section of *The European Union: A Very Short Introduction* (pages 157-159)