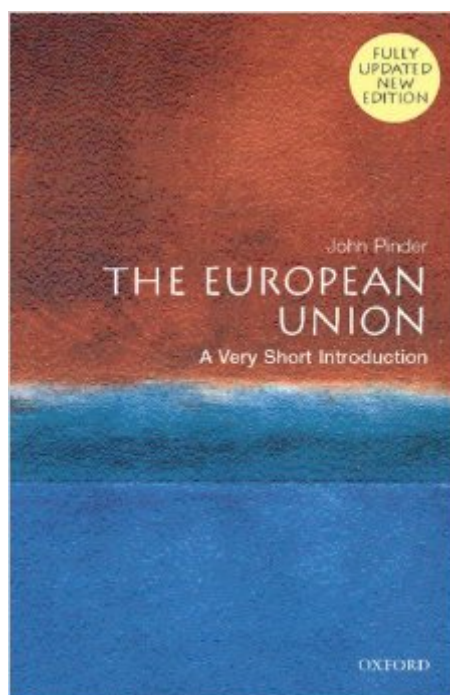


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# The European Union: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)



## Synopsis

This Very Short Introduction explains the European Union in plain English. Fully updated for 2007 to include controversial and current topics such as the Euro currency, the EU's enlargement, and its role in ongoing world affairs, this accessible guide shows how and why the EU has developed from 1950 to the present. Covering a range of topics from the Union's early history and the ongoing interplay between 'eurosceptics' and federalists, to the single market, agriculture, and the environment, the authors examine the successes and failures of the EU, and explain the choices that lie ahead in the 21st century.

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## Customer Reviews

This book describes the sequence of events by means of which the European Union (EU) was contrived from the time of its inception immediately following World War II up to the time of the book's publication in 2007. The word "contrived" is used here because it best describes the manner in which the Union of 2007, as portrayed in this book, was cobbled together. Its use is not intended to disparage either the political elitists who created the Union or this book's authors. For in reading

about the process one can only marvel at the fact that the European elitists were able to create, compromise, adapt, jury-rig, and keep the Union together at all, let alone expand it; and equally impressive is the fact that this book's authors were able to outline that arduous process as well as they did in such a small book as this. For the most part, I found the book to be both interesting and informative; and it gave me a much greater appreciation for the difficulties involved in the EU's creation and maintenance, a few of which surprised me. To illustrate: I didn't know that the Union owes its beginning, at least in part, to fear on the part of France that Germany might one day regain its pre-WWII strength and once again dominate France and Europe; leading to this attempt to constrain Germany and tie it as closely as possible to the rest of Europe. I did know, however, that the EU was created solely by "treaty," i.e. without popular vote, but I was surprised that these authors seemed to downplay that fact although it was apparent throughout the book. And, although it was mentioned in passing that the EU's Constitution was put up for a popular vote only twice --- once in France and once in the Netherlands --- failing both times; I was surprised that this fact was glossed over so quickly.

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