Editorial

EU External Relations: Exporting the EU Model of Governance?[*]

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I Introduction

As the European Union approaches its half-century, we can expect to witness both an increase in the volume of analyses devoted to its contemporary situation and some degree of introspection about its future. Whatever one might think about the contemporary EU's strengths, failures, or defects as a political community, or even the general direction of European integration, it can be acknowledged that the project on European unity has come a long way since the leaders of six European countries put their signatures to the founding Treaty of Rome in 1957. Even then, what was proposed in the Treaty constituted a blueprint for uniting the European countries that would have seemed outside the boundaries of the possible at the beginning of the 1950s. Today, a reasonable judgement on the progress of European integration would conclude that it has gone far from that original plan, yet in some respects not very far at all. The project on European unity remains a work in progress.

Building Europe's place in the world is also a work in progress, perhaps all the more since so many uncertainties, difficulties, and complexities surround the formulation and implementation of a European foreign policy, and the

definition of the EU's identity as an international actor. Nonetheless, the Member States and the European Commission are giving more consideration to the development of substantive policy initiatives in external relations and foreign policy.

Much of the literature in recent years has addressed the question of the international role of the European Union, while there has been an impressive contribution to the literature on European governance.[1] But these contributions were largely to be found in two separate sets of literature, and mostly it was a case of 'never the twain shall meet'.[2] Yet it is essential to the needs of academic research as well as to the demands of policy that the research community can contribute to a better intellectual understanding and a clearer analysis of how the EU can define and expand its role as an international political actor, while at the same time bringing to this analysis an appreciation of how internal European-level governance emerged and what this governance model can contribute to the arena of international/global governance.

This special edition links the areas of European and international governance, to examine the role of Europe in the world, the possible application of European governance in external relations, and the relevance of the European model of governance for international and global governance. The EU is emerging as a key regional actor in certain global affairs, particularly in such areas as finance, trade, environment and development, and current policy is directed towards enhancing the role of the European Union in the global governance system. To this end, the European Commission is actively engaged in such issues as the global governance of trade, the protection of human rights, the promotion of democracy, strengthening of regional and global security communities, and encouraging regional integration in other

[1]   For a representative literature on the international relations of the EU, see: C. Hill and M. Smith, *International Relations and the European Union* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2005); W. Carlsnaes, H. Sjursen, and B. White, *Contemporary European Foreign Policy* (Sage, London, 2004); R. Ginsberg, *The European Union in International Politics: Baptism by Fire* (Rowman and Littlefield, Lanham, MD, 2001); C. Hill, 'The Capability-Expectations Gap, Or Conceptualising Europe's International Role' (1993) 31 *Journal of Common Market Studies*, pp. 305–328; K. Smith, *European Union Foreign Policy in a Changing World* (Polity Press, Cambridge, 2003). The literature on governance is substantial. For an overview, see: W. Sandholtz and A. Stone Sweet (eds), *European Integration and Supranational Governance* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001); L. Hooghe and G. Marks, *Multilevel Governance and European Integration* (Rowman and Littlefield, Oxford, 2001); M. Jachtenfuchs, 'The Governance Approach to European Integration' (2001) 39 *Journal of Common Market Studies*, pp. 245–264; F.W. Scharpf, *Governing in Europe. Effective and Democratic?* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999).

[2]   There were exceptions to this divide. See T. Risse-Kappen, 'Exploring the nature of the beast: International Relations Theory and Comparative Policy Analysis meet the European Union' (1996) 34 *Journal of Common Market Studies*, pp. 53–80. Recently, more IR scholars are addressing the subject of the EU, as in Hill and Smith, note 1 above.

parts of the world. Amidst these endeavours, the EU is seen, and indeed projects itself, as a qualitatively different (ie. normative) power in world politics, and on this basis stakes its claim to being a legitimate and thus a more effective international actor.

This European ambition, which became more articulated during the 1990s, has also to be understood in the context of the post-11 September 2001 global transformation as well as the ongoing redefinition process of the international community through the reform agenda of the United Nations. As much as American unilateralism renews the legitimacy of power politics on the world stage, the normative approach in the European management of international relations sustains the relevance of the very notion of global governance.

Arising from the preceding remarks, certain questions can be raised concerning the significance of the European experience of governance for the theory and practice of international relations, and specifically for the consideration of international and global governance models. This edition therefore aims to address the following questions:

– Does the European governance model constitute a frame of reference for international governance, and how does one characterize it?
– What is the impact of the European approach to governance on the rules and practices of international relations, and on other regional cooperation arrangements?
– If, and how, does the European experience define a model for international/ global governance?

The aim of the contributions is to go beyond the simple question of whether the European model can be exported to consider the feasibility, practicality, and relevance of the model for international/regional and global governance, and the development and maintenance of a multilateral world order. These concerns are of direct relevance in the current context of the EU's intention to play a bigger role in the world, and its desire to shape the global governance system, as well as being a reflection of the overall focus within the European Commission's external agenda.

II The EU in IR

One of the difficulties faced by international relations (IR) scholars when dealing with the European Union (and, indeed, once they decided to consider it within the IR disciplinary lenses) has been how to explain this grouping that is neither a state nor an international organization – the two entities commonly identified as subjects and actors in international relations. Similarly, foreign policy is typically the arena of action for the nation state, and indeed for

long this policy area typified the state sovereignty established by the Westphalian order. Yet, the EU has increasingly taken on 'state-like' features and responsibilities, and become recognized as a global economic power. At the same time, much of the terminology common to the IR discipline, such as balance of power, multipolarity and globalization, are also of relevance to an understanding of the European Union's place in the world system.

The discipline of international relations with its dominant schools, and the newer perspectives on the margins seeking to enter the mainstream, have all come to infiltrate the study of the European Union. Realism seems, on the face of it, inappropriate to the analysis of the EU, with the assumption of rational states as the dominant actors in an international scene characterized by the absence of an organized authority, where the major consideration is self-interest and the defence of national interest, traditionally including the ultimate action of war. In such a world, it is mainly issues of high politics that dominate the interaction and dialogue among countries. In the realist world, nobody favours international cooperation to any great degree. Yet, once the realists took a look at the European Union they could explain integration as a perfectly rational response by the European states to the challenge of post-war reconstruction and, more recently, the single market and monetary union could similarly be explained as a response to international competition and the drive for economic strength (or survival) in an increasingly globalized economy. The efforts to create a common foreign policy, and a security and defence community, can also find justification in the traditional realist concern with security. The European Union emerged out of the security concerns among the European states, and the most recent enlargement may also be seen as an effective policy to contain the newly democratizing states of the former Soviet Union.

The liberal tradition in IR starts from different assumptions about how the world operates, and is hence more favourably disposed towards international cooperation. It recognizes other actors in world politics besides states, including international organizations, multinational organizations and transnational interest groups. Anarchy can be replaced (or reduced) through the frameworks of cooperation instigated by international organizations, or networks of actors (including state bureaucrats, administrators, lawyers, activists and other non-governmental organizations). In such a world, war is only one option, and only one consideration among many, including trade, environment, security, human rights and development. Low politics as well as high politics were assumed to offer issues upon which international cooperation could be based. Of course, the simple dichotomy of high politics–low politics is just that – a simple way of categorizing what states might have been willing to cooperate on and, were sometimes forced to cooperate on,

against their better judgement. In reality, what constitutes high politics (or low politics) can change over time and space.

The liberalist tradition is broad enough to include different groups and traditions, including those who consider the importance of domestic structures as well as those who place significant emphasis upon the role of international institutions. Not surprisingly in today's globalized world, states operate simultaneously at the domestic and the international levels and, in the context of international cooperation, can influence the international level as well as see their domestic policies affected by the decisions taken in the international arena. This does not have to be always detrimental to the welfare of the sovereignty-conscious state, since the delegation of policy-making to an international authority can increase the resources available to a state. Frédéric Charillon, in his contribution to this edition, makes this point in the context of the benefits that a state can derive from the existence of a European-level security regime. International institutions have traditionally served the collective action problem, generating trust among cooperating countries and enhancing the commonality of interests. Of course, there is never a perfect solution to be found through the institutional route, and in the case of the European Union it is possible to see great variation in the preferences of the Member States as far as the nature of the institutional model is concerned.

States, and even institutions, are not always rational actors, and in the complex and multilayered arena of international politics, the calculation of interests is often limited by the knowledge of actors. A more reasonable view, favoured by the constructivist approach, is to take account of the motives of actors, and the objective and social reality in which decisions are made. What is relevant here is the way in which actors interpret their reality, and often the importance that is attached to the role of ideas. Institutional rules and the ideas and norms that underpin them have significance for the behaviour of actors, shaping and changing their behaviour. The EU as an institution that embodies certain principles, including democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights and free markets, offers a set of standards for the members to follow, to incorporate within the national structures, and hence the collective (international) identity of the European Union is formed.

III The EU Governance Model

An economic space that extends beyond the political boundaries of the state, or regulatory authority, poses particular challenges for regulation – whether we are considering the global market, or the European Single Market. Despite the capacity of the institutions of global governance, these organizations have not succeeded in overcoming the regulatory gap with efficiency and

fairness to the same degree as the EU system of governance has managed. This is not to say that the European system is perfect – clearly the debate over the democratic deficit continues, and the regulatory missing links in the European liberalization programme indicate that the programme faces some unfinished business. Further confirmation of the democratic deficit can be seen in the rejection of the draft Constitutional Treaty by national populations unwilling to vote for something proposed by their governments, when those governments had failed to persuade the national electorates of the interests in doing so.

The EU governance model is complex and many layered, embracing supranational institutions such as the European Commission and the European Court of Justice, and at the national level, the governments, ministries, national legal systems and the sub-national governmental and administrative entities; it includes also a whole host of interest groups and representative bodies as part of a wide consultative process that precedes European policy-making; there are the regulatory agencies that Christian Joerges describes in his article in this edition, and the treaties, laws and directives agreed by the Member States; and, there are the rules and unwritten laws concerning the actual Member State behaviour with regard to EU laws and policies, and the attitudes towards compliance. The multilevel nature of this governance model implies that political (policy) decisions are taken at different levels, but it also means that the different levels (supranational, national, sub-national) interact, with the supranational level decision-making being shaped by the consent of the 'lower' levels. Outcomes are the result of intense negotiations between independent actors and institutions – and there is the permanent overriding concern to preserve national autonomy. There is also the general desire of the Member States to keep the decision-making process moving in line with the goals/policies of the community, and hence to avoid the kind of stagnation that might otherwise be expected from a group of countries seeking to arrive at an agreed decision while at the same time constrained by state autonomy considerations.[3]

Implicit here are two of the fundamental normative principles of the governance system – the respect for national autonomy, and a predisposition towards decision-making that is compatible with EU policies. Other normative principles, lying dormant but yet influential to European integration for many years, were made more explicit in the process of the enlargement and accession of the countries in eastern Europe – respect for human rights, the rule of law, democracy and the free market – and these principles have also come to characterize the European Union's relations and agreements with

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[3]   M. Jachtenfuchs and B. Kohler-Koch, 'Governance and Institutional Development' in A. Wiener and T. Diez, *European Integration Theory* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2004).

third countries. European enlargement (which Soderbaum and Hettne regard as part of EU foreign policy actions) constitutes an extension of the European governance model, since it brings in new actors, with new preferences that will affect the decision-making process, and new sets of domestic constituencies with diverse interests that have to be accommodated. Though of course there are still the fixed legal requirements of the *acquis communautaire* that all the countries must adopt and abide by, yet in the enlarged community it is likely that hard rules will be supplemented by an extension of 'soft law' and other regulatory principles, in order to maintain the balance between the principles of autonomy and community. Such is the European governance model.

At a general level, the European governance model reflects features of intergovernmentalism and supranationalism in the decision-making, and there is an intricate intermingling of the multiple political arenas in the process of governing. The extent of intergovernmentalism or supranationality is usually governed by the different Treaties, and we find the principles of autonomy and community are reflected in a unique way in the decisions shared between the Member States and the European Parliament. Of course, some areas of decision-making fall more into the intergovernmental sphere (foreign policy, for instance) while others are located clearly in the supranational (notably, the single market and monetary policy). The governance approach offers what is essentially a system where different interests seek to establish and maintain points of influence that will enable their interests to be preserved or defended. Power is differently represented, and there is more power-sharing than a single nodal point where power can be said to reside. Does it matter? Not for the Member States, eager to preserve national autonomy, and retaining the exclusive power to extend or restrict EU policy-making competencies. Competition for political power, therefore, takes place at the national level. So, in such a system where authority is dispersed across different levels, the battle for influence takes place at the supranational level, and lobbying and interest representation have become central to the policy deliberations. Not surprisingly, networking has become an essential feature of the European governance model amidst a culture of consultation and dialogue, the reliance upon scientific knowledge and expertise, and interinstitutional discussion and bargaining.

How does the governance approach serve the purposes we have set out in this edition? European governance is distinctive from national or global governance models; in the former, the state has legitimacy and democratic principles are served through the national political processes, while the global governance system is both more diffuse and tends to concentrate on specific issue areas. The structural changes brought about by the turn to economic liberalism over the past three decades have impacted upon governance at all three levels, and the type of transformation witnessed at the state level which

Stephan Leibfried and Dieter Wolf describe in their article can also be found in the European and global governance models.

However, the European model is specific in the complexity of the institutional system, in the blend of national autonomy and community principles which allow it to impact on national politics, policy-making and polities in what are often quite radical ways, in the bargaining and negotiation between different interests, and in the use of law as an instrument of integration. The governance approach offers a holistic set of perspectives that link policy-making and institution building, clearly acknowledges the struggles for political power that shape the European process, and also recognizes the normative dimensions of the EU system. The specific nature of European governance is what also characterizes the EU's influence and relative power on the international scene, in Europe's immediate neighbourhood and within candidate countries, as well as in the global fora and other sites of international relations. This model of governance can also be defined as a norms producing process which in turn structures the EU as a normative power. The emergence of this normative power not only defines the EU as an international actor but also underlines the importance of collective norms (both implementation and transfer) as a specific mode of international relations.

The specific European governance model is precisely what the EU brings to the world, and it is what defines the EU as an international actor. So, to understand EU actorness, or its capacity to exercise an international role and influence (given the absence of the traditional attributes of hard power, such as military capacity), we have to both understand the internal governance structure and to identify how this is used in the international arena.

IV Challenges to the EU in the World

But one has to put the significance of the EU experience and its importance in the organization of the international scene into perspective. The European governance model and the central role it gives to norm production represents indeed one among other modes of international relations; this specific mode has been challenged notably by the main international actor, the USA. And, the influence and relevance of the European model of governance within the more limited international scene defined by the EU and its neighbours is also challenged by the de facto slowing down of the integration process that followed the rejection of the draft Constitutional Treaty by the French and Dutch electorates (May/June 2005) and the difficulties with the budget negotiations.

Since the beginning of the new millennium the EU has faced two main challenges, one external, the other internal. The external challenge originates

in the lack of interest from the USA in the global governance system, combined with the redefinition of its national security agenda after September 2001 and the subsequent focus upon the pursuit of an international war against terrorism. While the EU and most Member States (although not all of them) still refer to globalization and the existence or need for a global governance framework in the course of defining their own foreign policies, these notions have practically disappeared from American rhetoric if not the practice of its external relations. Although global governance is still a structural reality, the decline of the American commitment to the collective project of global governance is a serious challenge for the European Union, since the latter relies heavily on exerting influence through its specific contribution to the definition and implementation of a world-scale governance.

The other important challenge the EU is now facing has emerged from within its own borders. The rejection of the constitutional treaty by the French and Dutch citizens and the consequent abandonment of the proposal at the European level have produced the worst political crisis Europe as a regional construction has faced since the 1970s. The very model of European governance, combining a variety of actors, states and non-state entities, and taken for granted by Brussels practitioners and many scholars, has been questioned by the two referendums that triggered the crisis. The form of distrust expressed by the referenda – whatever the complexity of interests that supported a 'no' vote – underlined the discrepancy between the national governments and their bureaucratic elites directly involved in the regional community building process, on the one hand, and a majority of citizens that felt under-represented in that process.

The significance of the European experience from an international relations approach must therefore be reassessed in the light of these new trends. The basic assumption about the specific nature of the EU as an international actor that has been put forward by the regional integration literature is still valid but must be put into perspective. If one can still argue that the EU provides a specific model of governance, one cannot evaluate the significance of that model, either internally or externally, without taking into account the importance of the USA in the structuring of the international scene, as well as the resistance at the level of the citizen against the EU community-building process.

VI The Content of this Volume

The following articles seek to address some of the issues mentioned in this introduction. The influence and significance of the EU model of governance is examined from three different sites of international relations, and therefore from the point of view of three different types of international actors: (1) the

European region and EU candidates as well as new Member States; (2) the global scene and global governance actors, and; (3) the interregional scene and regions of the world. In other words, the model of governance through which the EU exercises its international influence can be analysed at three levels: through the enlargement process (the power of induction), the regulation of globalization, and interregional relations which can be understood as a model of IR per se referring to multipolarity and the promotion of cooperation within a specific region.

Ben Rosamond's introduction provides the conceptual background to the other contributions, examining the issue of how to represent the EU as an actor in world politics. While the article acknowledges that the external representation of the EU is hard to determine, he advocates an open-minded broadly constructivist framework to examine how the EU represents itself in the world, and how it is perceived by the other actors in global governance and world politics – rather than simply thinking about what kind of actor the EU is or what kind of model it represents.

Stephan Leibfried and Dieter Wolf begin by asking if Europe may be the victim of globalization. They address their inquiry through a historical look at the transformation processes that occurred at the level of the nation state, where the dynamics of liberalization, privatization and individualization produced a shift of public tasks and functions from the state as provider to multiple providers (institutions and actors in both the public and the private sphere). The contemporary state has certain characteristics: Territorial, Rule-of-law, Democratic, and Interventionist (identified in the acronym TRUDI), which has evolved and adapted under the conditions of globalization. Their argument is that the EU constitutes part of the 'post-national constellation', itself contributing to the unravelling of the state, and which places limits upon national sovereignty. They go further to suggest that we have witnessed a regional reconfiguration of the state at the European level – there is a European TRUDI, which is in their view neither a substitute for the state nor a European federal state.

Olivier Costa and François Foret share similar concerns to Ben Rosamond, but their argument is developed along different lines. One of these concerns is how to present the totality of the European polity – which they think can be done in reference to the consociational model of politics. For the authors, the consociational model offers a comprehensive focus on the different elements: the institutional structure and decision-making, the distinctive conditions that gave rise to the emergence of the European Union, and the special relationship between elites, citizens, and the political sphere. However, what makes the model work in Europe (to the extent that it does) may not be sufficient for an effective application elsewhere in the world. Political values, they argue, need to be underpinned by a secularization of values.

Frédéric Charillon addresses the emergence of a European security regime, detailing the shift in political attitudes since the early 1990s when the EU leaders had to think more carefully how to deal with the 'other' Europe, and the change in the post-cold war security order where the USA was no longer willing to act as security guarantor for the European continent. Even the concept of security has changed, from possession, i.e., controlling new territories or resources, to milieu goals, i.e., providing a safe environment. In the face of the US position vis-a-vis the international war on terrorism, there was room for a European alternative. Charillon is wary about saying the European leaders have created a substantive security system – the glaring lack of military capability is an obvious obstacle – but he suggests that a regime of sorts is evolving. There remains the question of how effective the EU can be in its guise as a normative power in a world dominated by the USA as a superpower.

Bjorn Hettne and Fredrik Soderbaum examine the EU's foreign policy relations as partial external governance, starting with a consideration of the notion of 'actorness'. Two kinds of external identity and power projection are highlighted – the notion of the EU as a civilian power (pursuing a norm-driven foreign policy underpinned by the values of the Union) and soft imperialism, which they describe as the use of soft power clothed in asymmetrical dialogue and the imposition or strategic use of norms and conditionalities for the purposes of self-interest rather than the creation of a genuine interregional dialogue. The extent to which EU interregionalism can enable it to develop as a global actor, and to shape international governance depends upon a number of factors, not least of which is the extent to which EU values can be considered universal and not just part of the European experience.

Christian Joerges addresses the specific case of trade, and raises a number of issues that are central to contemporary academic debates and current policy considerations in international governance. The European Union has succeeded in reconciling the inevitable tensions between the objective of European (international) trade and those of national regulatory policies, in the introduction of the simple but effective principle of mutual recognition – in a decision made by the European Court of Justice in 1979, the *Cassis de Dijon* ruling. In essence, where there is a conflict between states with different regulatory regimes, regulatory differences among states should be balanced in accordance with the free movement of goods. He discusses the conflict-of-laws approach which seeks to establish rules of compatibility, rather than to replace national law with transnational substantive law – in a discussion that has broader implications for the operation of international governance in general, as well as for possible routes towards the deepening of regional integration elsewhere in the world. Joerges draws parallels between the EU

and the WTO, and assesses the turn to scientific evidence in the handling of trade disputes.

   Richard Higgott states the *problématique* in terms of how best to reshape the structures of global governance in the twenty-first century. Part of this challenge stems from the differing perceptions on world politics and global governance held by Europe and the USA. Higgott asks whether the USA is in fact becoming the 'selfish hegemon', unwilling to compromise the national interest for the sake of enhanced international cooperation through the formal channels of global governance. If this is the case, he argues, then the rest of the world has to look towards alternatives if they seek a balance between capturing the benefits of globalization and managing the costs of increased international competition and interdependence.

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This edition opens a debate on the role of Europe in the world, and the issue of how the European Union acts in global governance. It raises the question as to whether there is a distinctive mode of EU external governance, and to what degree the EU governance model is extended or replicated. The contributors bring different disciplinary approaches to answer the various questions and, while the broad thematic line of enquiry runs through each and all of the articles presented here, there is clearly a representation of different and quite critical positions. It is obvious that, like the work-in-progress nature of the European integration project, the issue of European governance in the broader context of the global governance system remains as an important challenge to the task of defining both Europe's role in the world, and the 'fit' within international/global governance systems – a challenge that has yet to be taken up by both the academic and policy communities.