

Julia Lieb/Nicolai von Ondarza/Daniela Schwarzer (eds.)

# The European Union in International Fora

Lessons for the Union's External Representation  
after Lisbon



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Education and Culture DG

## Lifelong Learning Programme

Schriftenreihe des Arbeitskreises  
Europäische Integration e.V.

Band 72

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Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über <http://dnb.d-nb.de> abrufbar.

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data is available in the Internet at <http://dnb.d-nb.de>.

ISBN 978-3-8329-6018-6

1. Auflage 2011

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## Introduction

*Julia Lieb, Nicolai von Ondarza, Daniela Schwarzer*

A recurrent and growing challenge accompanying the development of the European Union (EU) is its fragmented representation on the international scene. In the first decades of European integration traditional areas of security and foreign policy-making were largely excluded from the political framework of the European Communities as issues of war and peace were concentrated on Nato. At the same time, external policies in other fields such as in trade and development cooperation developed step by step within the competences of the European Communities. Two developments reinforced this gradual evolution of the EU's external relations: First, new issues gained salience on the international agenda and new actors appeared. Second, the internal policy-making competences of the European Union were extended over the course of the major treaty revisions and often produced an external dimension.

Today, the scope of external relations of the EU is broad and diverse and the internal complexity has amplified. The Union not only has to deal with the traditionally heterogeneous interests of its Member States. The division of competences and the resulting complex internal policy-making structures have obvious repercussions on the external representation of the EU which differs accordingly between the respective policy fields.

The Treaty of Lisbon represents an important step within a process of reforms adapting the institutional basis of the EU's external representation to the changing global context. The EU's presence in international organisations is not directly affected by these reforms. They may not even bring about significant changes to the EU's representation within international organisations as changes of respective arrangements have been possible long before the Lisbon Treaty entered into force. Yet, the new treaty provisions remove possible legal uncertainties with regard to the formal status of the EU in international institutions and may strengthen proposals to enhance the EU's status.

Based on the conference “The EU in International Fora”<sup>1</sup> organised by Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), Istituto per gli Studi di Politica Internazionale (ISPI) and Arbeitskreis Europäische Integration (AEI) in June 2010 in Berlin, this volume contains a series of comprehensive analyses of the development and structure of the EU’s representation in international fora with the Lisbon Treaty. The main aim is to offer a comprehensive view of the EU’s external representation in policy areas other than the broadly studied fields of traditional foreign, security and defence policy. For the fields of climate and energy policy, trade, economic and finance as well as labour and social policy the contributions provide insights into the EU’s representation in international fora, as well as in areas of formal and informal exchange and negotiations such as international organisations, conferences or meetings. The authors investigate the current state of external representation as a consequence of past developments, assess the relevancy of the reforms of the Lisbon Treaty for these areas and discuss the distinct challenges of each policy field.

### *1 EU external action and the reforms of the Lisbon Treaty*

One of the linchpins of the Lisbon Treaty reforms is the enhancement of the office of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign and Security Policy, held since November 2009 by Catherine Ashton. The new post is constructed to bring together the different institutional strands of external relations within the EU and thereby increase their coherence. To this end, the functions of the former High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy are merged with those of the Vice-President of the European Commission and the Commissioner for External Relations. Additionally, the High Representative takes over the tasks of the rotating Council Presidency chairing the Council for Foreign Affairs, so that the office ideally links the supranational Commission structures with the Member States-dominated Council.

This ‘double-hatting’ of functions establishes the High Representative as a nexus to shape decision-making and ensure coherence in the full spectrum of EU external relations: In Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), Catherine Ashton not only chairs the

1 The conference was organised with the financial support of the European Commission, Forum Ebenhausen and ISPI. Contributions to this volume, which was likewise supported by the European Commission, reflect only the views of the authors. The Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained herein. The editors thank Maya Carr-Hill for her editorial support and Severin Fischer for his advice on the energy and climate section.

decision-making Council for Foreign Affairs, but also enjoys the right of initiative and appoints the chairs of most of the CFSP Council working groups. As a member of the College of Commissioners, the High Representative also has access to those external policies of the Union that are carried out by the Commission. The Treaty explicitly envisions the High Representative to bundle together initiatives of CFSP/CSDP with those of the Commission (Art. 22 (2) TEU). She is also responsible for coordinating with Commissioners in other policy areas with external dimensions such as development, trade, enlargement, neighbourhood policy or humanitarian aid.

The European External Action Service (EEAS) has been created with the Lisbon Treaty in order to support the High Representative in this work. The service brings together officials from the relevant departments of the General Secretariat of the Council and the Commission as well as seconded officials from the Member States (Art. 27 (3) TEU). The EEAS represents an institution *sui generis* located between the Commission and the Council. Under the authority of the High Representative it takes over many, but far from all departments and functions in external policies from those two institutions.<sup>2</sup> Consequently competences and expertise in external policies remain divided between different EU actors and in practice the EU will have to establish a mechanism of coordination and strategic planning. At the same time, there is a need to adapt to the new structures on a case by case basis in individual policy fields.<sup>3</sup>

All in all, in terms of external representation, the Lisbon Treaty poses at least as many new questions as it answers. *Firstly*, despite the abolition of the pillar structure, the underlying differences in competences between EU policy areas remain. CSFP/CSDP remain intergovernmental areas subject to specific rules and procedures. Meanwhile, no single mode of external representation is established for the policy areas falling under shared competences. A fragmented system of external representation varying greatly across and even inside policy areas will therefore continue to be a reality for the EU on the international scene and in international organisations.<sup>4</sup>

The most visible areas of classical foreign and security policy, CSFP and CSDP, are the ones EU Member States have traditionally been most reluctant in transferring competences to the European level. Initially created as the second

2 Council Decision of 26 July 2010 establishing the organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service (2010/427/EU), OJ 2010 L 201/30.

3 Julia Lieb, *Diplomatisches Neuland für die EU. Regelmäßige Evaluierung sichert den Erfolg des Europäischen Auswärtigen Dienstes*, SWP-Aktuell 5 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, February 2011); Julia Lieb, Martin Kremer, "Der Aufbau des Europäischen Auswärtigen Dienstes: Stand und Perspektiven", *integration* 3 (2010): 195-208.

4 Siglinde Gsthöhl, "'Patchwork Power' Europe? The EU's Representation in International Institutions", *European Foreign Affairs Review* 14 (2009): 385-403.

pillar of the European Union with the Maastricht Treaty of the early 1990s, both CFSP and CSDP are still legally and politically separated from other policy areas. The EU Member States retain their full national competence over issues of foreign, security and defence policy. Decision-making on the EU level is therefore conducted within the intergovernmental Council structures, with the EU primarily coordinating the otherwise sovereign Member States, e.g. by issuing joint statements or agreeing common positions in international organisations such as the United Nations.<sup>5</sup>

Almost equally clear cut is the picture in cases where the Union has gained the *exclusive competence* in a policy area,<sup>6</sup> such as trade or competition policy (Art. 2 TFEU). As a logical extension of the common market, both policy areas build upon the economic strength of the Union as the largest economic area of the world and are organised along the lines of supranational decision-making. Being an exclusive competence, only the Union can make international trade agreements. The external representations as well as the negotiations for these agreements are therefore conducted by the Commission. The Union, alongside its Member States, is a direct member of the World Trade Organization (WTO). The Member States, however, remain involved in these negotiations by assisting and supervising the Commission via a committee of representatives and concluding agreements through the Council.<sup>7</sup>

The vast majority of EU policy areas fall under *shared competences*, in which the Member States shall only exercise their competence to the extent that the Union has not exercised it. This concerns for instance agriculture and fishing policy, development cooperation and humanitarian aid, environment and climate change, energy, economics and finance, and parts of labour and social policy. Although most of these areas are primarily of an internal nature, the increasing density of EU legislation and activity has led to an incremental development of an external dimension which varies across policy areas. The external representation of the EU and its Member States in these areas have not been reformed by the Lisbon Treaty, but rather continue to be derived implicitly from internal competences. Based on the doctrine of ‘implied powers’, the EU may act exter-

5 Maximilian Rasch, *The European Union at the United Nations. The Functioning and Coherence of EU External Representation in a State-centric environment* (Leiden et al.: Brill, 2009).

6 As defined in Art. 3 TFEU, the EU has exclusive competences in regards to the customs union, competition, monetary policy for the Euro area Member States, the conservation of marine biological resources as well as trade policy.

7 Rachel Herp Tausendfreund, *The Commission and its Principals. Delegation Theory on a Common European External Trade Policy in the WTO*, RECON Online Working Paper 19 (2009). On the supervision of the Commission by the Trade Committee after the Lisbon Treaty, see Woolcock in this volume.

nally in matters which it regulates internally and can conclude international agreements if they are necessary for its internal legislation.<sup>8</sup> For instance, large parts of the international climate change agenda are closely linked to issues that are covered by EU environment and/or energy regulation.

The EU's representation in these cases varies considerably between purely national competences, where Member States coordinate their positions and this position is represented by the Presidency, and the model of exclusive competences, where the Commission negotiates on behalf or alongside the Member States. This results in considerable variation not only across, but sometimes even within policy areas. For instance, during the climate change negotiations leading up to the summit of Copenhagen in 2009, the EU Member States themselves conducted negotiations, as well as both the Commission and the Presidency.<sup>9</sup> Hence, even after the Lisbon reform, the EU system of external representation remains fragmented, with very different actors representing it abroad all possessing very different competences to exclusively negotiate, speak on behalf of, or simply coordinate, a joint European position.

A further problem is *secondly* that, while the High Representative is both the Vice President of the Commission and Chair of the Council for Foreign Affairs, representative functions are not merged on all political levels. On the highest political level of the heads of state and government, representation continues to be divided between the new President of the European Council representing the EU in matters of CFSP, and the President of the Commission speaking for the Union in other policy areas. As international negotiations are rarely as neatly separated as this institutional design of the EU would require, in international fora such as the G20 or in climate negotiations, the EU is therefore represented on the highest political level by both Presidents.

*Thirdly*, although the High Representative is also Vice-President of the Commission responsible for external relations, this does not encompass all the external activities of the Commission. Quite the contrary, while policy areas such as trade, development cooperation or humanitarian aid are directed by other Commissioners, the portfolio of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was even moved from the High Representative to the Commissioner for Enlargement. The Commissioners for these areas represent the EU externally in international fora (e.g. in the WTO) and are not subordinated to the High Representative. The con-

8 For the doctrine of implied powers and its application in EU external relations, see Peit Eeckhout, *External Relations of the European Union: Legal and Constitutional Foundations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

9 Simon Schunz, *European Union foreign policy and its effects – a longitudinal study of the EU's influence on the United Nations climate change regime (1991-2009)* (Leuven: University of Leuven, Ph.D. dissertation, 2010).

sequences of this continued division in external representation are especially complicated in areas of shared competences, for which the Lisbon Treaty does not specify under which circumstances the Member States continue to represent themselves with a coordinating role for the Union in international fora and under which circumstances representation is delegated to the Commission.

The new institutional structure *fourthly* opens up questions regarding the distribution of external representation competences between the EU institutions and the Member States. While the Lisbon Treaty laid the groundwork for the establishment of the EEAS, it did not specify its exact task and composition, besides the general formula that it should support the High Representative and be composed of personnel from the Commission, the Council Secretariat and the Member States. When the EEAS was set up in late 2010, the more than 130 Commission Delegations were transformed into EU Delegations set to take over the tasks performed by the respective embassies of the rotating Presidency. For instance, the EU Delegation in Geneva is supposed to merge both the representation and coordination of EU interests in international organisations, including the WTO as well as the United Nations' (UN) organisations, agencies and bodies located in Geneva. Yet, the statutes of most international organisations from the United Nations to the International Labour Organization do not allow the EU to obtain full membership, and Member States are keen to ensure that the EEAS does not fundamentally change the competences of the EU in external relations and their own scope of action.

Last but not least, while the Lisbon reforms further focus the EU's attention on the internal structures of its external representation, pressure to adapt is also coming from the outside. Accelerated by the financial crisis, the EU's share of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is shrinking while emerging powers like China, India or Brazil are continuing their growth path. In many international fora, however, the EU Member States enjoy a significant share of the membership with considerable voting power attached to it. For instance, the EU Member States occupy two permanent and normally two to three rotating seats<sup>10</sup> of the fifteen seats in the UN Security Council, although they account for only 7 per cent of the world population. Likewise, four members of the G8 are EU countries and combined the 27 EU Member States wield a voting power of 30.64 per cent on the International Monetary Fund (IMF) board, compared to 16.74 per cent for

10 The ten non-permanent members in the UN Security Council are elected by the UN General Assembly for two-year periods according to regional groupings, with two seats allocated to the Western European Countries and one for the Eastern European Countries, allowing up to three additional non-permanent seats for EU Member States.

the USA and 3.65 per cent for China.<sup>11</sup> The EU and its Member States are therefore under pressure to reduce their plethora of voices to a joint representation or may face the danger of being sidelined at crucial informal negotiation tables.

## *2 Analysing external representation beyond traditional foreign policy*

A wide range of research has been conducted on various aspects of EU foreign policy. Only very recently has the actorness of the Union in international fora attracted attention in areas beyond traditional foreign policy.<sup>12</sup> A set of studies focuses on areas of classical foreign policy – such as the Union’s representation in the UN<sup>13</sup> – or on areas where the EU disposes of a high degree of visibility and capacity to act – e.g. trade policy.<sup>14</sup> Yet, policy fields where the actorness of the Union is less developed or even disputed have not been analysed to the same degree.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, the EU’s fragmented external representation has not been conceptualised until recently. Over the past years and in particular in the context of the institutional reforms of the Lisbon Treaty, research interest in the EU’s re-

- 11 International Monetary Fund Members’ Quotas and Voting Power, <<http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/memdir/members.htm>> (accessed: 12 January 2011).
- 12 With a view to the EU’s overall representation in international organisations see Knud Erik Jørgensen (ed.), *The European Union and International Organizations* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 2ff; see also: Michael Emerson, Rosa Balfour, Tim Corthaut, Jan Wouters, Piotr Maciej Kaczynski, Thomas Renard, *Upgrading the EU’s Role as Global Actor. Institutions, Law and the Restructuring of European Diplomacy* (Brussels: CEPS, 2011).
- 13 E.g. Anne Degrand-Guillaud, “Actors and Mechanisms of EU Coordination at the UN”, *European Foreign Affairs Review* 14 (2009): 405-430; Katie Verlin Laatikainen, Karen E. Smith (eds.), *Intersecting Multilateralism: The European Union at the United Nations* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006); Paul Luif, *EU Cohesion in the UN General Assembly* (Paris: Institute for Security Studies, 2003); Rasch, *The European Union at the United Nations*, see note 5.
- 14 Graïne de Burca, Joanne Scott (eds.), *The EU and the WTO: Legal and Constitutional Issues* (Oxford, 2001); Andreas Dür, Hubert Zimmermann, “The EU in International Trade Negotiations”, *Journal of Common Market Studies* 45, 4 (2007): 771-787; Ole Elgström, Jess Pilegaard, “Imposed Coherence: Negotiating Economic Partnership Agreements”, *Journal of European Integration* 30, 3 (2008): 363-380.
- 15 Notable exceptions are: Lorenzo Bini-Smaghi, “A single EU seat in the International Monetary Fund?”, in *The European Union and International Organizations* ed. Jørgensen, 61-79, see note 12; Marianne Riddervold, “A matter of principle?: EU foreign policy in the International Labour Organization”, *Journal of European Public Policy* 4, 17 (2010): 581-598; Louise van Schaik, “Getting better: the European Union’s performance in the World Health Organization”, *Global Health Europe Research Paper* 1 (2009); Charlotte Bretherton, John Vogler, “The European Union as a Sustainable Development Actor: the Case of External Fisheries Policy”, *Journal of European Integration* 30, 3 (2008): 401-417.



presentation in international fora has increased and has led to more conceptual and institutional studies.<sup>16</sup>

The present volume contributes to this developing academic debate and is at the same time of practical relevance. It adds to the current discussion of the EU's external action after the reforms introduced by the Lisbon Treaty. In analysing structures and procedures of EU representation in international fora, the contributing academics and practitioners explore the advantages and drawbacks of specific models of external action.

International fora are areas of formal and informal exchange (e.g. specialised international organisations, conferences or meetings) as well as negotiations of policy norms and rules. Within these fora, the EU is represented differently, i.e. coordination of common positions, relationship and negotiations with third parties are determined by the EU's internal distribution of competences. Against this background, the chapters of this volume investigate policy fields beyond traditional foreign policy and with diverging degrees of integration.

*Energy and climate* as well as *labour and social* policy fall into the area of shared competences where EU Member States and institutions have to interact closely. The competences in the field of *economics and finance* are fragmented and – in particular regarding external representation – highly disputed between EU and national actors. *Trade* represents a counter-example: The EU commands an exclusive competence and the European Commission is able to speak in international settings for the Union as a whole.

16 Jeroen Capiau, Inge Govare, An Vermeersch, “In-Between Seats: The Participation of the European Union in International Organizations”, *European Foreign Affairs Review* 9, 2 (2004): 155-187; Andreas Dür, Gemma Mateo, Daniel Thomas, “Negotiation theory and the EU: the state of the art”, *Journal of Public Policy* 17, 5 (2010): 613-618; Emerson et al., *Upgrading the EU's Role as Global Actor. Institutions, Law and the Restructuring of European Diplomacy*, see note 12; Gstöhl, “‘Patchwork Power’ Europe?”, see note 4; Knud Erik Jørgensen, “The European Union in Multilateral Diplomacy”, *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 4 (2009): 189-209; Jørgensen, *The European Union and International Organizations*, see note 12; Kissack, Robert, *Pursuing effective multilateralism: the European Union, international organisations and the politics of decision making* (Houndmills et al.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Jan Orbie, *Europe's global role: external policies of the European Union* (Ashgate: Aldershot, 2008); Spyros Blavoukos, Dimitris Bourantonis (eds.), *The EU presence in international organizations* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011); see also the MERCURY project on the EU's contribution to multilateralism”, <<http://www.mercury-fp7.net>> (accessed: 23 January 2010).

The studies in these four policy fields (further described below) are guided by the following set of questions:

- *Origins*: What lessons can be drawn from past experiences of EU external representation in the specific policy field? Under which conditions could the Union become a coherent and efficient international actor?
- *Institutional set-up*: Which reforms have been introduced by the Lisbon Treaty? How have they modified the structures and procedures in the respective area?
- *Perspectives*: How will and how should the EU's external relations develop under the Lisbon Treaty? Is there a case to make a stronger European external representation in the respective policy area?

## 2.1 Energy and climate policy

Energy and climate change policy are two policy areas which fall under shared competences and which have recently seen a profound shift of focus towards their external dimension. As regards energy policy, the increasing dependency of European states on external energy resources, volatile prices and interruptions from energy suppliers have fuelled initiatives for the EU to develop a common European energy policy with a growing external element. This external dependency is particularly prominent regarding the EU's relations with Russia, amplified in recent years by a series of conflicts over gas supply between Russia and important transit countries (Belarus, Ukraine) and the almost complete dependence on Russian supplies of several of the new Eastern European Member States. The prerequisite for speaking with one voice externally in energy policy, however, is a common internal energy market. Although energy policy has gained increasing importance in EU policy since the mid 1990s, only with the Lisbon Treaty was an explicit competence for energy policy first introduced, including ensuring the security of energy supply of the Union (Art. 194 TFEU).<sup>17</sup>

Against the background of the unstable international energy landscape of the twenty-first century and the new competences in the Lisbon Treaty, *Sami Andou-ra* in this volume debates the question of how the EU can deal with the numerous and wide energy issues it faces. Starting with an analysis of the current state of EU external energy policy and its linkages with both internal energy policy as well as foreign and security policy issues, he identifies two core obstacles that have hindered the development of an EU external energy policy so far: The na-

17 Previous actions in EU energy policy were based on provisions concerning the internal market, trans-European networks and/or environment policy.

tional energy markets remain heterogeneous and fragmented and the EU has so far not managed to link the external dimension of policy with its internal dimension and other EU external policies, e.g. CFSP or trade policy. Following this critical assessment of what the EU has achieved so far, Andoura recommends the development of a European Energy Community with an external competence.

Closely related to energy policy is the EU's engagement in international negotiations on climate change. For the conduct of international climate policy, the EU Treaties establish environmental politics as a shared competence, in which the Commission and the Member States act jointly for instance in international conferences on environmental issues, such as the Copenhagen summit of December 2009. This shared competence was introduced with the Single European Act in the 1980s, and since then the Member States have traditionally been represented by the rotating EU Presidency. Politically, climate change provided the EU Member States with an issue to rally around and an area where the EU perceived itself as a global leader. The disappointment with the results of the Copenhagen summit and the perception of being sidelined by the United States, China and other emerging powers therefore raised even more fundamental questions as to how far fragmented EU representation was partly or fully to blame for the negotiation failure.

The question regarding how the EU can adapt its model of representation after the failure of the Copenhagen summit and the entry into force of the Lisbon is addressed by *Simon Schunz* in his contribution on the EU's representation in global climate governance. Based on a critical assessment of its representation arrangements from the early 1990s to 2009, he discusses and evaluates three options for a re-organisation under the new Lisbon Treaty: firstly, a representation through the Commission, secondly, the High Representative and her External Action Service, and thirdly, a combined approach. Schunz argues that a scenario in which EU climate change experts from the Commission and diplomats in the EEAS synergistically join forces provides for the most promising and realistic perspective. It assures EU presence in global climate governance, makes it a more coherent actor, and allows for much-needed reinforced strategic behaviour.

*Antonio Villafranca* and *Antonio Pavanello* meanwhile analyse the changing international governance structures for fighting climate change and the EU's role post-Copenhagen. Over the past 20 years the need for an urgent fight against climate change has led to the creation of a 'semi spontaneous' multilevel governance, whose centrepiece is the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Although this model has been able to deliver results such as the Kyoto Protocol, Villafranca and Pavanello trace the failure of Copenhagen back to inefficiencies and inconsistencies of the current climate change governance model on the global, regional and local level. They therefore propose a shift to a new model of climate change governance relying more on shared in-

ternational leadership with a more prominent role for the G20, the WTO as well as bi- or multilateral agreements. For the EU to successfully promote its interests in such a context, it would have to link its climate change policy strategy in the respective fora and with other policy areas such as its trade or development aid policies.

## 2.2 Trade

In many ways, trade represents a very rare model of the external relations of the European Union led through the supranational institutions. As a logical extension of one of the founding bases of the European project, the common market, the trade in goods has been an exclusive competence of the European Economic Community since 1970, including the ability to set tariffs and to conclude bilateral and multilateral agreements on access to the common market as well as the use of autonomous trade policy instruments to protect the EU economy against dumping or subsidies. Albeit advised and supervised by the Member States through a special committee of national representatives, the Commission today conducts almost all trade negotiations for the Union and its Member States, including the direct representation of the EU within the WTO. Thus, standing in stark contrast to the 'classical' dimensions of foreign and security policy, not only is the representation of EU trade interests through the Commission not contested by the Member States, but the EU is also internationally perceived a leader in multilateral trade negotiations such as the Doha Round or via a network of bilateral trade agreements.

This unusually clear approach was, however, blurred by the expansion of the scope of international trade negotiations. These shifted from the earlier focus on trade in goods to related areas such as trade in services, foreign direct investment or the protection of intellectual property rights. In the latter areas, the Union lacked the exclusive competences it enjoys in trade, and – until Lisbon – had to resort to mixed agreements, under which both Commission and member sit at the table and which have to be concluded both by the Union as a whole as well as the individual Member States.

As analysed by *Stephen Woolcock*, the Lisbon Treaty enhanced the exclusive nature of the Union's competence in trade policy. First, the exclusive competence – and thus the unified representation by the Commission on behalf of the EU – is now extended to all trade in services, the protection of intellectual property rights as well as foreign direct investment. This not only means that mixed agreements are no longer necessary in trade (except if they are part of larger, non-trade related agreements), but also that foreign investment related accords by individual Member States with third countries will eventually have to be

transferred to the EU level. Secondly, the European Parliament's role in trade policy is significantly strengthened, as the framework for trade policy is now set jointly by Parliament and the Council via the ordinary legislative procedure. Even more importantly, all international agreements concerning areas which are decided upon by the ordinary legislative procedure within the Union now require the Parliament's assent upon their conclusion (Art. 218 TFEU), so that effectively all trade agreements have to be accepted by the Parliament. The main control of the Commission's conduct of trade policy, however, continues to lie with the Member States in the Trade Policy Committee. Finally, the Lisbon Treaty stipulates that trade policy is to be conducted in line with the principles and objectives of the EU's external policies as a whole, thereby linking it to the non-economic aims such as the support for democracy, rule of law and human rights, but also its aims in foreign, security or external energy and climate policy.

This new subordination confronts the EU's trade policy with new practical challenges in dealing with its parts, as analysed in *Clara Weinhardt's* contribution on the current state of negotiations on Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs). The EPAs build upon the global network of bilateral and regional trade agreements the EU has concluded since the establishment of its common market, first starting with former Belgian, French and later British colonies, granting them preferred market access in order to maintain close economic relationships. Gradually, the number of preferential or free trade agreements undertaken by the EU extended far beyond the reach of the former close economic relationships of individual EU countries, for instance with recent free trade agreements with Chile (2002), South Africa (1999) or South Korea (2010). In the case of the EPAs that the Commission is negotiating with 70 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, the EU has continuously portrayed itself as a benign actor, using the trade agreements to support developing countries. Yet, as demonstrated by Weinhardt, its partners perceive the EU as pursuing its own economic self interests, and have not yet found common ground with the EU on the EPAs. In light of this critical perception from its external partners, the question of how the EU wants to use its trade policy as part of its overall external policy toolbox becomes more relevant than ever.

### 2.3 Economics and finance

Despite the fact that 17 Member States of the European Union share a single currency and all 27 members are integrated into a common market, the external representation of the European Monetary Union (EMU) and the EU in Economic and Financial Affairs is far from clear-cut, based as it is on a complex and incrementally evolving set of agreements. The rather fragmented representation of

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