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Handbook on the European Union

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ABBREVIATIONS AND GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Abbreviations
Glossary of terms
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INTRODUCTION

Copies of the former editions of the Handbook on the European Union published in English, French, Hungarian and Slovak have made their way to the bookshelves of many readers wishing to know more about European integration. Much to my delight, it has proved to be useful for politicians, public officials, journalists, students and even the general public. The Handbook, promoted and disseminated among others by the European Commission and the Hungarian Parliament, has become a standard part of the curriculum in many universities and colleges. The English and Slovak editions were published with the financial assistance of the European Commission while, for the first French edition, I am grateful for the support of the French Institute.

This book aims to assist the work of practitioners dealing with the EU in their daily work, but hopefully it can also serve as a course book in its own right. I wanted to compile a book that could meet the expectations of all those interested in European integration from the legal, economic or political perspective. By attempting to incorporate all of these three aspects, I have aimed to provide a comprehensive view of the European Union, to help readers understand the motives of EU actions and decisions, the reasons behind the achievements and potential failures of integration, and the future direction of the EU.

During the writing of this book, I have been able to draw inspiration from my experience as a lecturer at universities, colleges and EU training courses in several countries inside and outside the EU for public officials, journalists, teachers, entrepreneurs and students, whose questions and feedback keep me in touch with real needs, in particular in respect of those areas of European integration which are the most obscure to the average reader. That may be one of the reasons why the book has become such a popular reference book for people preparing for recruitment competitions (concours) of the EU institutions.

The Handbook aims to help readers consolidate their understanding of the ins and outs of how the European Union functions and provide a solid foundation for future experts in European affairs. The book devotes special attention to the most topical and controversial issues, therefore each chapter is thoroughly revised and updated before a new edition is published to reflect the latest development in European integration.⁷

The main novelty of this fourth edition in English is that it describes how the Union functions with the Treaty reforms now in effect. With about 18 months having passed since the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, it is now possible to see more clearly what impact the new Treaty has had on the daily operation of the EU. The book also sets out recent policy reforms from the Union's response to the financial and economic crisis to farm policy reforms, from the EU assuming an increased international role to its dynamically evolving energy policy. This book is meant for those who wish to deepen their knowledge of the functioning of the European Union and ongoing policy debates, who want to have an overview of the EU's institutional and legal architecture, who seek a clear explanation to why European integration remains so obscure and complicated. The Handbook aims to present the latest trends and developments in all policy areas from justice and home affairs to economic and monetary policy, from culture to public health, from social policy to the environment, from foreign policy to trade.

The Handbook is divided into four main parts. Part One provides a comprehensive introduction to the history and evolution of the European Union as well as the legal, institutional, decision-making and budgetary arrangements underpinning the EU's functioning. Part Two focuses on the general framework, objectives and functioning of the Union's internal policies, while Part Three does the same for external policies. Part Four is devoted to the issue of enlargement. These

four parts are followed by a Glossary of Terms, containing brief definitions of 400 key concepts, which will hopefully be a useful guide to EU terminology and may even serve as a stand-alone pocket reference book. In order to ensure that searching the Glossary is fast and user-friendly, terms that have an entry of their own are printed in italics in the text of the definitions.

I am grateful to Reka Somssich and Tamas Szamado, who have proofread the present and previous Hungarian editions. I owe special thanks to Ros and Tom Glaser, whose immense help and devotion in proofreading the consecutive English editions was instrumental to the publishing of this volume. Special acknowledgements go to the translator Peter Szucs, for his meticulous work.

I genuinely hope that this book will prove to be useful in disseminating information about European integration and will thereby contribute to a better understanding of the opportunities that the European Union has to offer.

The author