

The European Union after the Treaty of Lisbon

By Werner Weidenfeld, Director of the Center for Applied Policy Research at the University of Munich

Europe has reached a turning point in its great project, with the political power machine increasingly confronted by questions over its legitimacy, transparency and leadership architecture. So there exists today a considerable need for reflection and clarification on the functioning of the European Union and its authority.

The three authors of *The European Union after the Treaty of Lisbon* have published a worthy guide to the treaty's tangled policy and legal jungle, and have managed to illustrate the EU's institutional development when laying out its new competences.

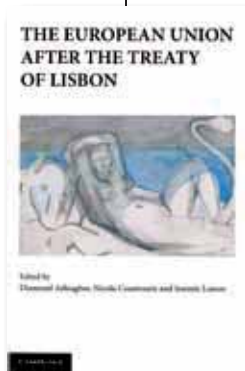
They devote special attention to the European Court of Justice and the European Ombudsman and address a variety of questions regarding European citizenship. On Euro-political issues, the team focuses chiefly on migration and asylum policies, competition regulation, and above all, European foreign and security policy.

Their timely analysis of the European Stability Mechanism highlights the intensive learning process that EU governments and citizens too must contend with. The authors' factual yet unpretentious writing style makes it accessible to a wide range of readers wishing to understand more about the history and future of European identity, and should help to dispel fears and

confusion that are circulating in political and social spheres.

But in no political system does there exist a political rationale without reference to a fundamental consensus and the common interests of society. Europe can tap into this resource of a common political culture to only a limited extent

– there's our long history of conflict, while our experience of collective successes unites Europeans only so much. That means that books like this that objectively analyse European policies makes an important contribution to efforts to define pan-European commonality. ■



The European Union after the Treaty of Lisbon by Diamond Ashiagbor, Nicola Countouris, and Ioannis Lianos, Cambridge University Press, 2012, 333 pp. (ISBN 9781107603240)