

Economic, Political and Social Identity in the European Union

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Lecture 4

**New Institutionalism,
Behaviouralism, and an E.U.
Identity**



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1. Theory of New Institutionalism and its utility in analysis of the construction of an E.U. identity.
2. Theory of Behaviouralism and its relationship to analysis of the construction of an E.U. identity



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1. NEW INSTITUTIONALISM

- grew out of greater concentration on attempting to understand the role of institutions in human behaviour
- institutions govern the behaviour of men and women, giving rise to determinate results, i.e. policy outputs or social outcomes



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- Institutions shape and inform politics, which in turn influences ideological beliefs, values, and social and economic developments
- Institutions provide symbols, rituals and rules so that people can interpret the choices they have and decide between them – choices ‘framed’ through values.



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Three main variants of New Institutional theory:

1. Historical institutionalism
2. Rational choice institutionalism
3. Sociological institutionalism



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Sociological institutionalism

- institutions are crucial mediators, both between the individual and the world at large (society itself) and between different individuals.
- institutions allow individual citizens to make sense of what they, and others, do – give us rules, norms, customs and values that shape and influence the pattern of everyday life.



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Importance of institutions for outcomes in society derive from *intrinsic* or *extrinsic* aspects:

- the *intrinsic* importance of institutions in their own right – their existence and consequent ‘institutional’ effect on society in promoting their self-interest, reflecting their self-image;
- or, their *extrinsic* effect – the resultant consequences upon society of the operations of institutions



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BEHAVIOURALISM

Talcott Parsons, *The Social System* (1951) – linked the behaviour of individuals and groups in societies to the social system and social structures in societies

- all societies constituted a social system, within which operated a number of sub-systems
- normal state of any social system was one of *equilibrium* – system always adjusted itself to restore state of *equilibrium*



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Talcott Parsons' *structural functionalism* theory:

1. *pattern-maintenance function* (managing tension within the system) performed by its cultural sub-system;
2. *adaptation or distributive function* performed by the economic sub-system;
3. *integration function* (co-ordinating inter-relationships between members of system) performed by legal and regulatory sub-system;
4. *goal-attainment function* (mobilising people and resources to achieve collective ends) performed by political sub-system



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Structural functionalism theory and an E.U. citizen identity?

1. E.U. institutions promoting the *pattern-maintenance function* to develop an E.U. 'cultural identity' alongside/complimentary to, national and regional cultures – manage tension between E.U. and national identity?
2. *Integration function* of an E.U. social system assist development of E.U. identity by co-ordinating inter-relationships between members of the system through E.U. legal and regulatory sub-system?

