

Political Issues and Social Policy in the E.U.

Professor John Wilton

Lecture 10

**Regions and the E.U. policy
process**

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1. The importance and growth of E.U. regionalism
2. What do we mean by E.U. regional policy;
3. The development of E.U. regional policy

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1. The importance and growth of E.U. regionalism

-in E.U. concepts of *regionalism* and *integration* linked to concept of *subsidiarity*

- increased pressure on nation-state;

1. internal

2. external

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- 1985 Council of European Regions
- 1993 Committee of the Regions
(established in the Maastricht
Treaty)

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2. What do we mean by E.U. regional policy

- aim of E.U. regional policy is to promote *solidarity*
 - produce *cohesion* in E.U.
- 254 regions, 450 million people

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- entire territories of 10 new Member States of May 2004 designated as falling within *Objective 1* of E.U. Structural Funds
- two-thirds of new E.U. citizens from 2004 accessions live in regions with GDP per head of less than half average GDP of all 25 E.U. states

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E.U. Regional funds:

1. The Structural Funds

- a) European Regional Development Fund;
- b) European Social Fund;
- c) Financial Instrument for Fisheries
Guidance;
- d) European Agricultural Guidance and
Guarantee Fund.

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94% of Structural Funds for 2000-2006 was concentrated on 3 objectives;

Objective 1: Helping regions whose development was lagging behind to catch up;

Objective 2: Supporting economic and social conversion in industrial, rural, urban or fisheries dependent areas facing structural difficulties

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Objective 3: Modernising systems of training and promoting employment.

2. The Cohesion Fund

- assist least prosperous E.U. countries
i.e. 10 newly acceded 2004 Member States, plus Greece, Spain, Portugal and (until end of 2003) Ireland

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1. The development of E.U. regional policy

1957 – Treaty of Rome – “ensure harmonious development by reducing the differences existing among the various regions and the backwardness of the less favoured regions”.

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1958 – European Social Fund set up

*1975 – European Regional
Development Fund created*

*1986 – Single European Act lays basis
for cohesion policy*

*1992 – Maastricht Treaty designates
cohesion as one of E.U. main
objectives*

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1993 (Dec.) Edinburgh E.U. Council

meeting allocates 1/3rd of E.U. budget
1994-99 to cohesion policy

2000 (Dec.) Nice E.U. Council meeting

adds social inclusion and poverty
reduction strategy to cohesion policy

2001 (June) Gothenburg E.U. Council

meeting adds environmental protection
emphasis to cohesion policy

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2004 (Feb.) European Commission adopted
'A new partnership for cohesion in the
enlarged Union: convergence,
competitiveness, co-operation'
= 3rd report on economic and social
cohesion

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Described E.U. vision of cohesion policy for period 2007-2013, and priorities as:

- **Convergence:** support employment growth and job creation in Member States and least developed regions;
- **Regional competitiveness and employment:** anticipate and encourage the change;

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3. European territorial co-operation: ensure harmonious and balanced development throughout the entire Union

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Policy for development of 7 Czech Regions:
“Infrastructure” Operational Programme for
the 2004-2006 period, within Objective 1
framework:

Priority 1: Modernisation and development
of transport infrastructure of national
importance;

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Priority 2: Reducing the negative
environmental impacts of transport;

Priority 3: Environmental infrastructure
improvement