

Preface

This book is about an important event in European integration, namely the Maastricht Treaty, which was finalized at the meeting of the European Council in Maastricht in December 1991 and signed in the same Dutch city in February 1992. Before the Treaty was finalized it had been negotiated in two parallel Intergovernmental Conferences (IGC), one dealing with Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the other with Political Union. In the end, all the agreed reforms were put into one new Treaty which revises the earlier Treaties of the European Communities and gives the Community two new pillars, one on Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and one on cooperation in justice and home affairs. The European Community pillar, which includes EMU, the abovementioned two new pillars, and some common provisions, establish the new European Union.

Our interest in these new developments starts from a consideration of the Community's capacity to act internationally. However, the CFSP aspect of the Treaty is linked in such a way with other aspects of the Treaty that this book tries to cover the political aspects in more general terms, with particular emphasis on the question of the democratic deficit, efficiency of the institutions and extension of Community competences. Although the political aspects are also strongly linked with EMU, we have not covered EMU in great detail. It is the negotiations of the second IGC on Political Union that we have tried to follow and analyze.

The book starts by providing a general overview of the negotiations and by taking a look at aspects of foreign and security policy. Then chapters follow on the policies of the twelve Member States which were the major actors in the IGC. These chapters endeavour to outline and explain the national positions by placing them in a historical perspective and by analyzing current domestic politics. Towards the end of the book, chapters have been included on the Commission and the European Parliament, which played – or tried to play – important roles in the process. We have concluded with two chapters attempting to explain and evaluate the Maastricht Treaty.

A considerable effort has been made to publish this book relatively

soon after the event and it should therefore be seen in this light. We hope it will encourage more scholarship on European integration. For this reason the documentary section in the annexes to the book should be seen as being of considerable importance; these annexes contain the major proposals made by the different actors during the IGC.

The editors would like to thank the contributors, who are all either associated with the European Institute of Public Administration in Maastricht (NL) or who spent some time there while working on their chapters. First drafts of most of the chapters were discussed at a seminar in Maastricht a couple of days after the Maastricht Summit in December 1991.

We would also like to express our appreciation to EIPA's supporting staff, first of all our linguists Pat Arpino and Chris Dart who turned our varied English into a common and, we believe, very readable standard. For the work of type-setting and lay-out, we thank Denise Grew and we are grateful for the work of Veerle Deckmyn in coordinating the publication. We would also like to thank Marnix Evers and Matthieu Snijders for their assistance with the annexes, Rudy Van Lent for scanning the documents and general assistance with automation, and Angeline Portier, Winnie Janssen and many of their colleagues for their secretarial assistance.

Last but not least, we appreciate the support and encouragement provided by EIPA's Director-General, Spyros A. Pappas.

Maastricht, April 1992

Finn Laursen and Sophie Vanhoonacker