

# Political Issues and Social Policy in the E.U.

*Professor John Wilton*

## Lecture 10

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

# Political Issues and Social Policy in the E.U. Lecture 10

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

# Political Issues and Social Policy in the E.U.

## Lecture 10

### 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 1/3<sup>rd</sup> 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'  
= 3<sup>rd</sup> 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