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Chapter 1

Theories and Concepts

This chapter explores a range of conceptual issues that impact upon the assessment of the EU’s relationship with the developing world. The first is a recognition that the Union’s conception of development has transformed over time, reflecting the continuing evolution of, and tension between, theoretical models of development. EU development policy is in many ways a reflection of this evolution. But these external models must also be supplemented by an understanding of European integration theory, which can be used to elucidate changing priorities in the Union’s development agenda. Internal debates on the nature and functioning of the EU, coupled with the supranational–intergovernmental dynamics of integration, have played an important role in structuring external engagement, not least that with the developing world. Finally, at a more empirical level, we consider the definition of the ‘developing world’ itself. Myriad competing conceptions of what constitutes the developing world exist, creating a source of tension with the Union’s own development policy, structured as it has been by historical realities more than objective considerations.

The changing vision of development

The historical evolution of EU–ACP relations also reflected a more general reconsideration of the concept of development itself. The changes in the EU approach were influenced by the wider developmental debates that had surfaced since the launch of the EU’s development project, which saw, over time, a fundamental transformation in the European conception of development. Before examining these changes in detail later on in this text, these general tendencies are briefly outlined in this section.

The 1960s Yaoundé Convention conformed to many of the expectations of Modernization Theory of the early development period, informed largely by the goal of allowing the developing
world to catch up with the developed world – a Eurocentric and unilinear formulation involving the emulation of the development trajectories of Northern states (as typified by Rostow’s (1960) well-known five stages of economic growth). Yaoundé thus focused on trade – a source of much-needed foreign exchange – as a mechanism for development, together with technical assistance, training, investment and capital movements, as a means of fostering the progression of francophone African states along the path to development. Accordingly, development was defined in terms of ‘the industrialization of the Associated States and the diversification of their economies, with a view to enabling them to strengthen their economic independence and stability’ (Preamble to the Yaoundé Convention).

This market-centric notion of development, however, came under sustained attack during the late 1960s, as Dependency theorists linked ‘underdevelopment’ with the incorporation of developing countries into the capitalist economy, and questioned whether a focus on external trade and integration into international markets (which characterized European development policy) would in fact narrow the development gap as supporters of the Modernization approach asserted. The experience of the Yaoundé Conventions seems to have vindicated this pessimism. The free trade relationship encapsulated within Yaoundé, rather than altering the historical metropolis–satellite relationship, was regarded by many as further entrenching dependency, leading some to view the convention as merely an extension of French colonial policy.

At the extreme, Dependency Theory advocated a radical break with the capitalist international economy; milder forms, however, led to a push for a renegotiation of the North–South economic relationship with calls for a New International Economic Order (NIEO), a concept that was to become the cause célèbre of developing countries during the 1970s. Intrinsic to this Third Worldist perspective was a demand that international trade be reoriented to: ensure better and more stable prices for commodity exports upon which developing country economies were dependent; provide preferential access to markets in the developed world for emerging industries; and provide greater volumes of economic and technical assistance free of conditions.

It is in the context of Dependency Theory and the NIEO that the Lomé Convention emerged. In its 1971 ‘Memorandum on a Community Policy for Development Co-operation’, an important
precursor to Lomé, the European Commission argued for a future development policy that was ‘the joint responsibility of the developing countries and the industrialized countries’ with relationships based on ‘close co-operation and organized solidarity’, with Europe making ‘its own contribution to the establishment of a more just international order’ (Commission 1971: 8). The first Lomé Convention articulated these ideals and reflected many of the demands of the Third World, with the Commission appearing uniquely willing to ‘buck the trend in international development’ (Arts and Dickson 2004: 1) and respond to the criticisms levelled by Dependency Theory and the NIEO approach. As a reflection of the emphasis on a ‘fairer’ model of cooperation between Europe and the ACP states, the principles of partnership and a contractual approach were stressed, non-reciprocity of preferential market access commitments introduced, and STABEX (Stabilization of Export Earnings Scheme) and subsequently SYSMIN (Stabilization Scheme for Mineral Products) used to address directly the demand for stability in commodity prices. As a result, the Lomé Convention was at that time lauded as a model for development cooperation and North–South relations in general.

By the 1980s, however, the concept of development experienced another transformation. The structural crisis of the 1970s, followed by the Latin American Debt Crisis of the 1980s, underlay the emergence of the neoliberal counter-revolution in development economics, the rise of the Washington Consensus, and their application to the developing world in the form of International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank-led structural adjustment. This new orthodoxy saw the free market once again as the surest path to global development. With the rise of adjustment conditionalities in the development strategies of the dominant international financial institutions, the European Commission was forced to come to terms with the new realities of global development and, prior to Lomé IV, accept that the implementation of neoliberal reforms through the medium of structural adjustment programmes had for developing countries become ‘the sine qua non of their dialogue with the outside world’, and that the only substantive choice now available to them was between an ‘ordered, properly managed adjustment or forced adjustment’ (Frisch and Boidin 1988: 67–8).

Despite initial efforts to develop a uniquely European adjustment support package consistent with Lomé’s ‘partnership’ principle (rather than just paralleling the ‘often dogmatic and too exclusively
economic and financial’ approach of the Bretton Woods institutions (The Courier 1988: 73)), the Commission’s efforts were undermined by a lack of financial resources and the preference of the majority of member states who favoured the World Bank and IMF framework. In the event, Lomé IV reflected the interests of the member states: European adjustment support was explicitly linked with World Bank/IMF programmes. Thus, all recipients of European support became subject to Bretton Woods Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), meaning in practice that Commission programmes provided de facto support only to World Bank and IMF activities (Brown 2004: 23).

The ‘normalizing’ of European development policy was further evident under the final convention which reflected the move within the development community during the 1990s to place greater emphasis on poverty reduction. This had been signposted most prominently in the World Bank’s 1990 World Development Report, and found expression in the European context in the Maastricht Treaty (subsequently Article 208 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union – TFEU – formerly the Treaty Establishing the European Community – TEC) and the Lomé IV mid-term review which required that due account be taken of European development cooperation policy (Article 4), in other words the new Maastricht components of the TEC. While continuing to acknowledge ‘the right of each state to determine its own political, social, cultural and economic policy options’ (Article 2), Lomé IV further brought the European approach closer to the development mainstream by introducing political provisions on the promotion of human rights, good governance and the rule of law.

The Cotonou Agreement reinforced this string of changes, consigning the remaining uniquely European elements of Lomé to history and bringing the EU–ACP relationship closer to the framework of global governance, particularly trade governance under the WTO. Thus the ACP states are now being disaggregated, with the conclusion of WTO-compatible regional EPAs becoming the norm (see Chapter 3). Further, in line with the broader development community, poverty reduction has been highlighted as the ‘central objective’ of EU–ACP cooperation (Article 19), with conditionalities (on democracy, human rights, the rule of law and good governance) being linked to the receipt of assistance, establishing what is seen as being a more integrated approach to poverty. This holistic development approach has been taken even further by linking devel-
Development policy with the CFSP goals of peace-building and conflict prevention (Article 11). Cotonou clearly signalled the closer integration of development within the broader external relations of the EU. This politicization of development has continued in the wake of Cotonou, with Europe also responding to the increased security emphasis of the post-9/11 world by introducing the fight against terrorism and weapons of mass-destruction into the existing Article 11 as a result of the 2005 Review of the Cotonou Agreement (see pp. 84–7). The most recent Lisbon Treaty changes have further underlined this trend with the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy assuming new and substantive responsibilities for development policy.

In summary, there has been considerable evolution in Europe’s approach to development policy since the early days of the Yaoundé Convention. An initial focus on development as economic growth was subsequently transformed into a uniquely European position under Lomé, which sought to address the concerns of the Third World directly. Latterly, however, Europe has returned to the mainstream. While development is now defined in terms of poverty reduction, integration into the global economy has been embraced as the key mechanism in pursuit of this goal. This perspective has also promoted conditionalities specifying inter alia the pursuit of good governance, defined in a manner consistent with the broader development community. These transformations were concretized in the Cotonou Agreement, which also began the process of integrating development policy more closely with EU external relations, arguably leading to a further politicization of development as witnessed under the 2009 Lisbon Treaty.

**Development and integration theory**

While development theory presents a broad conceptual context within which to locate Europe’s development initiatives over the past half-century and more, integration theory – something specific to the European experience – can also be used to interpret and explicate the changing priorities in the EU’s development agenda. Often the EU’s external actions are more the consequences of its own internal integration dynamics than of external realities. A number of other texts emphasize the priority that should be given to integration theory. In *Developments in the European Union* the authors remind us it is vital to contextualize empirical information (whether
policies or decisions) within theoretical and conceptual approaches, so as to understand the ‘facts’ better as well as to assess and develop the nature of integration theory (Cram et al. 1999: 17). In a similar vein, in *Decision-Making in the European Union* the authors distinguish between three levels of theorizing (super-systemic, systemic and sub-systemic) and argue – rightly – that it is important to differentiate between these levels when considering the appropriate choice of theoretical framework (Peterson and Blomberg 1999). Simply, the level of analysis required will determine the usefulness as well as the applicability of each theoretical approach. As the authors argue, ‘a theory which seeks to explain or predict “big decisions”, such as the launch of EMU, should not be judged by how well it explains or predicts a decision to change the way pig carcasses are measured’ (ibid.: 9). Applying this logic here, the usefulness of grand integration theories (such as neo-functionalism, constructivism or intergovernmentalism) in explaining the changing outlines of EU development policy should not be confused with different lower-level approaches that might better explain a specific humanitarian action, ODA or trade concessions.

The general EU literature since the 1990s has been characterized by a renewed interest in these broader integration issues: in this discussion the theories associated primarily with the work of Moravcsik, Marks, Bulmer, Peterson and Wendt are applied to development policy. How far can these general integration theories be used to interpret the EU’s specific policy towards the developing world? Such an approach runs the danger of creating the appearance of coherence; however, the application of a general approach can, through its very generality, create a false impression of cohesion and coherence, where in fact the policy is fragmented and a response to different catalysts.

Liberal intergovernmentalism, at its most basic level, places the state as the key actor in determining EU outcomes. Although its most influential proponent, Moravcsik (1991, 1993, 1995; Moravcsik and Nicolaïdis 1999), specifically circumscribes the applicability of liberal intergovernmentalism to what he calls history or polity-making events, its logic and explanation has been extended by others in an attempt to form a more general grand theory of integration. However, as Sartori (1976) long ago warned, concepts do not automatically ‘travel’ well and the cost of increased stretching is often an unsatisfactory fit between theory and practice. While acknowledging this potential constraint, many of the general
assumptions of intergovernmentalism have direct applicability to theorizing the EU’s development policy. Thus for intergovernmentalists, integration is fundamentally realized through interstate bargaining by rational economically self-interested governments influenced by their domestic settings and is not the outcome of any independent dynamic process or non-state actors. Crudely put, what you see is what you get: states exercise power and therefore all decisions made by the EU must reflect, to some degree, a realpolitik perspective. Typically, outcomes are based on the lowest common denominator. In Europe’s international relations not all states are deemed equal, with France, the United Kingdom (UK) and Germany often the dominant actors; however, the importance of all member states is argued to exceed that of any supranational institution which, for intergovernmentalists, are peripheral and provide an inadequate account of the EU’s grand decisions.

A key question implicit in this examination of the EU’s policy towards the developing world is: who is driving the policy agenda? Liberal intergovernmentalism provides one set of conceptual lenses for intellectualizing this question. The answers it provides are distinct, provocative and possibly mutually exclusive with other integration theories. Whether intuitively appealing, or fundamentally flawed, the importance of intergovernmentalism is that it clearly establishes an extreme explanatory pole against which other theories can be located, compared and contrasted. Thus, an intergovernmentalist perspective towards EU development policy argues that the policy-making process is determined by the member states. In this book we cite many examples that correspond to such an approach. As will be discussed in Chapter 2, historically the introduction of a development focus (through Yaoundé and Lomé) was largely driven by national government concerns (primarily French and British respectively). This was complemented by the emergence of a Latin American policy after the accession of Spain and Portugal (see Chapter 5). Member states were also the primary source for the increased concern for good governance and other aspects of conditionality (Chapter 7). And although Romano Prodi instigated the reform of the Commission, his selection as President of the Commission was a direct response to member state pressures demanding restructuring and more effective policy implementation.

As outlined in Chapter 3, the negotiation of Cotonou provides some of the richest evidence of intergovernmentalism in EU policy-making. Importantly, for any agreement to proceed there had to be
consensus on all points on the EU side. While trade-offs and concessions are the typical mechanism for determining EU policy, this does not undermine the fundamental point that any single state can veto a consensus and prevent it from emerging. Chapter 3 provides a series of examples where the negative role of member states was evident in the constraints imposed upon the negotiating mandate given to the Commission. Agricultural concessions were largely prohibited due to expected member state opposition. The issue of immigration and repatriation was again the result of explicit member state involvement. More positively, the involvement of the UK and Germany was the determining factor in changing the EU position on both debt relief and on the treatment of LDCs. The change in government in the UK was instrumental in finally bringing debt relief within the ACP framework – a policy that previous EU governments had avoided. Similarly, the decision not to extend reciprocal free trade principles to the LDCs was strongly advocated by the UK, Germany and the Netherlands, underlining both the legal and moral authority of member states in determining EU development policy.

The application of liberal intergovernmentalism to development policy reminds us of the primacy of the member states. The 27 determine the broad parameters for the large decisions – such as the ‘Consensus on Development’ or adoption of the MDGs – that set the context for micropolicy choices. Their political will – or at least their collective acquiescence – is required. However, there are also clearly disadvantages in only using such an elite-focused approach to policy-making. The EU institutions are marginalized in such an analysis: in the context of development policy, the omission of the Commission as a significant policy initiator is conceptually unrealistic and misleading, and the European Parliament’s new authority as a full co-legislative power under the Lisbon Treaty means that this supranational institution is set to play a greater development policy role than in the past and that concepts, if they are to remain useful, need to accommodate this changing context.

An alternative theoretical approach– neo-functionalism – has been applied to the integration process since the 1950s and its classical application is best represented by the work of Ernst B. Haas. Generally, neo-functionalism is identified as the opposite theoretical pole to intergovernmentalism; however, the contrast should not be seen as fundamentally antagonistic, but rather that different aspects and actors involved in the integration process are given different
emphases and explanatory power. Peterson and Bomberg (1999: 15) go as far as to state that the two approaches ‘are complementary more than they are competitive’. As theory, intergovernmentalism focuses on process whereas neo-functionalism highlights context. Neo-functionalism does not deny that states are important actors; but it does argue that other supranational actors (such as the Commission, Parliament and the Court) may often be of greater importance in explaining outcomes. In essence, neo-functionalism tends to identify a wider range of actors and a greater complexity of relationships when characterizing integration. What it shares with intergovernmentalism is an aspiration to offer a comprehensive super-systemic-level explanation of the process.

The idea of ‘spillover’ is neo-functionalism’s most celebrated – and controversial – theoretical contribution. For Haas, spillover manifests at least three elements: the functional, the political and the geographical. The logic is straightforward. Neo-functionalism argues that policy sectors and decisions are not isolated or autonomous. Rather they are located within a network, or policy community, and that decisions have repercussions beyond their immediate policy area. Actions that promote deeper integration in one policy area will have implications, consequences and effects upon a number of related policy areas. For example, a decision to create a European single market has influenced more than internal trade barriers. Neo-functionalists would argue that it has necessitated a common response to issues as diverse as citizenship, immigration, trade sanctions and tax harmonization.

Within the development policy context, a neo-functional based analysis would see connections between the EU’s reform of the Lomé Convention and its approach to a CFSP, enlargement as well as trade relations in general. Most obviously, Maastricht provided the possibility – and Lisbon now the reality – for spillover to occur from CFSP to development policy (see p.135). The EBA debates on free market access for all LDCs arguably also display neo-functional characteristics. Having conceded that LDCs should receive special treatment under Cotonou, this policy concession crucially informed the EBA debate. Without any concessions for the ACP LDCs, support for the EBA may not have emerged. In the past, considerable debate has focused on whether this spillover effect is inevitable or ‘automatic’. While most now agree with Keohane and Hoffmann (1990) that any such spillover is usually preceded by an ‘intergovernmental bargain’, only crude intergovernmentalists deny that this
dynamic is evident in the integration process. The idea of spillover merely acknowledges the interrelated nature of policy development within the EU – which can have both positive and negative outcomes.

Some of the most interesting conceptual developments over recent decades are consistent with and build upon a basic neo-functional foundation. Perhaps the most influential is the ‘multi-level governance’ perspective first elaborated by Marks, Hooghe and Blank. They reject a uni-dimensional theoretical framework in favour of a more complex model that identifies a range of actors across different policy levels, characterized by ‘mutual dependence, complementary functions and overlapping competences’ (Marks et al. 1996: 378). Significantly, this approach both incorporates and moderates the intergovernmentalist preoccupation with the central role of the state. The crucial modification is that multi-level governance considers that states (represented through the Council) share decision-making authority with the supranational institutions; consequently, states – while they remain important actors – cannot guarantee desired outcomes and are themselves constrained by domestic interests and influences. In the context of Europe’s external development relations, the recognition of other actors (such as the ACP states and the EU–ACP institutions as well as the Commission and the Parliament) suggests that this policy sector may possibly exhibit an even more extreme form of multi-level governance than that found for internal EU policies (Holland 2000).

Numerous examples of multi-level governance can be found in this book. The most obvious relate to the reform of the Commission and to the Cotonou negotiations covered in Chapters 3 and 4. As noted above, the member states were important in promoting the reform of Commission procedures – but they were not the only actors. The critical report that led to the resignation of the Santer Commission in 1999, pressure from the European Parliament as well as the agenda of the subsequent Prodi Commission were at least of equal importance. A combination of national and supranational factors was at work. The Cotonou negotiations provide an even broader example. Clearly, the Commission was instrumental in setting the parameters for the debate. Although none of the Green Paper options was endorsed without qualification, the focus of the reform debate was in practice set by the Commission and by its resultant guidelines. Had the Commission not signalled a preference for regional FTAs, it is hard to see how this concept would have
emerged at the Council level. Of course, as discussed above, the Council can and did modify the Commission proposals – most notably with respect to separate treatment of LDCs – but overall as demonstrated in Chapter 3 the framework of the Cotonou Agreement and the current EPAs can be traced back to the Commission’s earliest 1996 proposals. The advantage of multi-level governance is that it allows the analysis to accommodate the roles of non-state actors and institutions and as such adds a much-needed layer of conceptual sophistication to a basic intergovernmental theory.

The conceptual roots of multi-level governance can be traced to the earlier work of Bulmer (1983) that was influential in repositioning ‘domestic politics’ as a key variable in explanations of European decision-making. Clearly, too, the approach is sympathetic to the neo-functionalist’s emphasis on supranational institutions, particularly the role of the Commission. At its most incisive, multi-level governance theorizes the enhanced authority of the supranational institutions at the expense of the state and national sovereignty. However, it goes beyond these earlier frameworks to stress the complexity and interacting nature of different policy levels – local, regional, national, transnational and international – that collectively shape integration. This complexity, of course, presents its own methodological challenges, but it is nonetheless a welcome correction to the over-simplification presented in many intergovernmental analyses.

Another approach that is compatible with multi-level governance considers the influence of public policy literature on integration theory, particularly the idea of policy networks (Peterson 1995; Richardson 1996). Simply, this approach argues that general public policy theories derived from national studies can be applied equally successfully to the EU policy process: in that respect they suggest that sui generis theories of integration are unnecessary. For example, agenda management and implementation processes have been used to enrich analyses of EU behaviour. The major contribution of the public policy literature has been at the micro-decision-making level and these approaches are less well able to operate at the level of grand theory. However, the recognition of interlocking policy networks at EU, state and substate levels is consistent with a multi-level governance perspective and helps to challenge further an exclusive reliance of intergovernmental explanations. In relation to development policy, the problems associated with policy implementation or with assessing good governance (as examined in Chapter 7) may best be
dealt with through such network policy theories. As such they may present a useful framework for evaluating the EU’s adoption and implementation of the MDGs, which is the focus of Chapter 8.

Another contemporary development that is consistent with neo-functionalism is ‘new institutionalism’ (see Bulmer 1994; Pierson 1996). Here, the emphasis is on the role of the supranational institutions in shaping the EU agenda, policies and decisions. This approach confronts the intergovernmentalist view that institutions are merely objective agents and not actors with their own motivations and interests. The European Parliament, the Commission and the Court of Justice both effect and are affected by the integration process. Values, norms, the very ‘politics’ of interaction, are used to explain outcomes. A dynamic rather than static view of institutions is assumed which clearly requires an institutional learning capacity. Not only do institutions matter, they evolve, adapt and respond within their contemporary and historical contexts. Of course, this dynamic characteristic reflects the reality of changing political elites (at least within the Commission and Parliament) that can alter the definition of institutional self-interest at any given moment. Consequently, new institutionalism argues that outcomes are rarely optimal: policy gaps and unintended consequences are evident especially where decisions are made within the context of short-term institutional horizons. The potential conflict between the EBA and Cotonou free trade areas to be discussed in Chapter 3 seems a clear example of this dynamic that may be explained by new institutionalism. Historical precedent and timing are identified as crucial limitations: future options are constrained by past decisions and the logic of ‘path dependency’ is influential. Applying these insights to the EU’s development policies again enriches our understanding. For example, it reminds us of the power of the status quo. Innovations must operate within the context of existing policy parameters, and these will inevitably preclude some outcomes and favour others. Similarly, the European Parliament’s desire to participate in the reform debates on Lomé may reflect both a concern with development policy per se, but it may also reflect the wider issues of defining policy competences between competing institutional actors in general. A legal or purely formal understanding of the policy process ignores these vital contexts; but, inevitably, accommodating new institutionalism further adds to the complexity and messy nature of theory building.

The most recent conceptual school that demands consideration
as a potential framework that may help explain EU development policy is constructivism. Constructivism is not itself a ‘grand theory’ of European integration (Christiansen et al. 1999: 530), though attempts have, for example, been made to elucidate a constructivist approach to processes of socialization in Europe (e.g. Checkel 2003). Rather, constructivism offers an ontological perspective that can be applied to the integration process: the world is viewed as social rather than material, and identities and interests are seen as being endogenously constructed through inter-subjective interaction, rather than exogenously given (i.e. the product of domestic pressures alone) (Wendt 1992: 394). Structure and agent, in this view, are mutually constitutive (Giddens 1984).

Constructivism therefore sets out clear challenges to integration theory, most notably concerning the rationalist focus on agents – be they states alone, in the case of liberal intergovernmentalism, or a broader understanding incorporating also supranational institutions, as is the case with neo-functionalism and multi-level governance – recognizing the importance of structure and social learning. Agents, in this view, act according to their own interests, but also according to the rules of the institutions in which they are embedded. And yet constructivism also offers certain overlaps with integration theory, most notably with neo-functionalist assertions concerning, for example, the shift of loyalties to supranational institutions or redefinitions of interest of social and political actors (Ruggie 1998: 862).

A key element of the constructivist approach to European integration, then, is a recognition that integration has had a transformative impact on the state system (Christiansen et al. 1999: 529), which in turn has an impact on integration itself. Constructivist research on European integration therefore focuses on the ways in which norms and expectations are transformed over time, and the way state identities are transformed as a product of interaction within the European space. To go back to the question, raised above in relation to liberal intergovernmentalism, of who sets the policy agenda, constructivism suggests that even if member states are the most important actors, their own interests are constructed and transformed through interaction within this European policy space, implying a gradual Europeanizing of member state interests and policy formation.

In the context of development policy, constructivist approaches might point to the progression of EU policy-making from the
narrowly defined largely instrumental set of policies of its early years – on the provision of food aid or market access – to a more proactive approach pursuing a broader Union interest in its development policy, one centred on the values seen to lie at the heart of the EU itself, such as good governance and improving the quality of life, as discussed in Chapters 7 and 8. In this respect, development policy may increasingly represent a socially constructed set of interests about the correct role of the Union in the world – a Europeanization of development policy. Within such a constructivist approach, of interest is the extent to which processes of social learning will bring member state interests closer, and the extent to which European norms and values penetrate into national polities, thus influencing policy formation at both domestic and European levels, and impacting on the success with which these policies are formed and implemented – the issues of coordination and complementarity.

In summary, the theoretical point being made here is a simple one: theories that are typically used to explain the internal processes of European integration – and even polity-making decisions – may be used with equal validity and relevance for understanding Europe’s external relations. Thus integration theory can offer an appropriate conceptual framework for thinking about the EU’s relations with the developing world. The decisions, non-decisions, policies and programmes both reflect and are informed by this wider integration context. However, as this discussion has outlined, the purpose of theorizing about European integration is not to find a single macro-theory. Rather it is to discriminate between alternative theories depending upon the level of analysis chosen and the nature of the actual empirical case. At different times within this book alternative theories are engaged – intergovernmentalism, neo-functionalism, multi-level governance and so on – in order to shed the greatest light upon specific aspects of EU development policy. Such an inclusive theoretical position – if somewhat frustrating for those seeking simple answers – is the only valid approach.

**Where is the developing world?**

From the EU’s perspective, determining what constitutes the developing world has been complicated rather than simplified by its past reliance on the Lomé Convention as the principal line of demarcation. But the Lomé framework, whilst extensive, never provided a comprehensive approach towards the developing world, and one of
its greatest weaknesses was its somewhat idiosyncratic and incremental nature. For example, consider the following comparison of two countries at the end of the 1990s. Both shared a European colonial legacy; they had comparably poor per capita GDPs; displayed similar low literacy and life expectancy levels; and the external trade patterns for both were based on a limited range of primary products. Both, clearly, were developing countries, arguably amongst the least developed. In this example, however, only one, Angola, was a member of the Lomé Convention, the EU’s then preferred framework for relations with the developing world. The other, Cambodia, remained outside. Similar parallels can be made between Nigeria (a comparatively affluent Lomé state) and India (a developing country outside the Convention), or between Dominica and Vietnam. Out of the 48 LDCs in the world as defined by the United Nations (UN) before 2000, nine were excluded from the fourth Lomé Convention.

These illustrations symbolize a central historical problem – the patchwork nature of the EU’s development policy. A consistent and comprehensive approach had been absent; incrementalism and adhocery spiced with pragmatism and post-colonial angst resulted in Europe’s fragmented and increasingly complex relations with the countries of Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America and the Pacific Island states. Vociferous critics argued that such a status quo was indefensible and questioned whether this geographical diversity required policy pluralism, or if a simple coherent global approach was more appropriate and ultimately more effective in realizing development goals.

Defining the developing world has always been problematic. Which criteria should be applied: ideology, poverty, geography, economic performance, aid or exclusion from the global economy? Obviously, reliance on just a single criterion is inadequate. However, each, at some time, has been utilized as the demarcation between the ‘First’ and ‘Third’ World. Analysis as recent as 1990 defined the Third World as ‘non-European, non-communist and poor’ (O’Neill and Vincent 1990: ix). The tumultuous international events of the 1990s overturned not just communism, but also the simplicity of ideology as a definitional development criterion. The former stability of global political geography dissipated to such an extent that the traditional usage of the term ‘developing country’ is no longer a clearly delineated concept. The variety of nomenclature is revealing: the ‘Third World’, ‘Developing World’, ‘the South’, Theories and Concepts 37
‘under-developed’, ‘non-industrialized’ or even ‘Other World’ have all been applied to the same general category of countries, albeit each with specific inclusions and exclusions. To further complicate matters, just after the birth of the European Community in the late 1950s there were just 83 member countries in the UN. By 1989 this had risen to 156 members and by 2006 to 192, with further expansion likely as, for example, the status of Kosovo, Palestine and South Sudan are settled. Faced with more than one hundred ‘new’ nations, old designations have seemed increasingly redundant.

Until recently, the developing world was defined most simply by identifying geographically what constitutes the First and Second/transitional Worlds – definition by exclusion of the ‘other’. If we accept this proposition the developing world is composed of all states other than those of Western, Central and Eastern Europe, Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States, Japan, Australasia and North America, mirroring a broad North–South divide (the Antipodes excepted). Such simplicity sits uneasily with and of course ignores the new global BRICS framework of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa which collectively covers more than 40 per cent of the world’s population.

An alternative strategy is to work from the bottom up. The 48 LDCs obviously fit the rubric; so too do all the 78 ACP full member states of the 2000 Cotonou Partnership Agreement, the successor to the previous Lomé Conventions. Once the arithmetic encroaches on three figures, choices become open to interpretation. What of the states on Europe’s southern border? Do, perhaps, the economies still in transition of Eastern Europe, or those developing countries on the Mediterranean rim, qualify, particularly after the economic, political and social upheavals of the Arab Spring of 2011? Further afield, is it valid to classify Latin America, China, India and the vast majority of Asia as an undifferentiated developing world category?

What criteria, then, can Europe use to distinguish between the complex and differentiated categories of the developed and developing world? Certainly any crude dichotomy is unsatisfactory. Can statistics provide a reliable guide to this definitional problem? If so, whose statistics should be used: the OECD, the World Bank, the European Union or the third countries themselves?

The World Bank’s World Development Report 2010 uses 2008 gross national income (GNI) per capita statistics as the main criterion for establishing four basic categories of development (covering 211 ‘countries’). These are (World Bank 2010b: 375–6):
TABLE 1.1  ACP LDCs’ Human Development Index, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population (millions)</th>
<th>HDI</th>
<th>HDI ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
<td>67.8</td>
<td>0.239</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>0.261</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burundi</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>0.282</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>0.284</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea-Bissau</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.289</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>0.295</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>0.300</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burkina Faso</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>0.305</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>0.309</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>0.315</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>0.317</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>85.0</td>
<td>0.328</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>0.340</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>0.379</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malawi</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>0.385</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rwanda</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>0.385</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambia</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.390</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>0.395</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>0.398</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djibouti</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.402</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>0.403</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haiti ~</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>0.404</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>0.411</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>0.422</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesotho</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>0.427</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comoros</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.428</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Togo</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>0.428</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauritania</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>0.433</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madagascar</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>0.435</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>0.435</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>São Tomé and Príncipe</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.488</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon Islands ~</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.494</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timor Leste</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.502</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equatorial Guinea</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.538</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eritrea</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiribati ~</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samoa ~</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuvalu ~</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanuatu ~</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n.a. HDI data not available for these countries.
~ Non-African LDC.
+ Population is less than 0.1 million.
TABLE 1.2  Other ACP states’ Human Development Index, 2010

(i) Other non-LDC ACP African countries (15)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population (millions)</th>
<th>HDI</th>
<th>HDI ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>0.140</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>0.397</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>158.3</td>
<td>0.423</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>0.460</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>0.467</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>0.470</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0.489</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swaziland</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.498</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Verde</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.534</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>0.597</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namibia</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0.606</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botswana</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>0.633</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabon</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.648</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauritius</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.701</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seychelles</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) ACP Caribbean countries (15)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population (millions)</th>
<th>HDI</th>
<th>HDI ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haiti*</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>0.404</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.611</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suriname</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.646</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>0.663</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>0.688</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belize</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.694</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.736</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### (ii) ACP Caribbean countries (15)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population (millions)</th>
<th>HDI</th>
<th>HDI ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bahamas</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.784</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbados</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.788</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antigua and Barbuda</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominica</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grenada</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Kitts and Nevis</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Lucia</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Vincent and the Grenadines</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### (iii) ACP Pacific Island countries (14)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population (millions)</th>
<th>HDI</th>
<th>HDI ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>0.431</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon Islands</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.494</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micronesia</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.614</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.669</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonga</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.677</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook Islands</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiribati*</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshall Islands</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nauru</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niue</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palau</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samoa*</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuvalu*</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanuatu*</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n.a. HDI data not available for these countries.
* Includes LDC countries given in Table 1.1.
+ Population is less than 0.1 million.

*Source: UNDP (2010: 143–6, 184–7).*
• Low income (US$975 or less in 2008);
• Lower-middle income (US$976–3,855);
• Upper-middle income (US$3,856–11,906);
• High income (US$11,907 and above).

The analysis identified 43 low-income, 55 lower-middle-income, 46 upper-middle-income and the remaining 67 as high-income economies. The World Bank asserts elsewhere that low- and middle-income economies ‘are sometimes referred to as developing economies’; but whilst the ‘use of the term is convenient ... Classification by income does not necessarily reflect development status’(!) (World Bank 2011).

In the OECD Development Assistance Committee’s 2010 Development Co-operation Report a different but related methodology is adopted. Focusing on just those developing countries that were ODA recipients, four categories were identified, again using the criterion of per capita GNI, though based on 2007 data (OECD-DAC 2010: 271–2):

• Least Developed Countries (LDCs);
• Low-Income Countries (LICs) (per capita GNI less than US$935);
• Lower Middle-Income Countries (LMICs) (US$936–3,705);
• Upper Middle-Income Countries (UMICs) (US$3,706–11,455).

Forty-nine LDCs, 12 LICs, 47 LMICs and 43 UMICs were identified (ibid.: 270).

The Human Development Index (HDI) offers yet another perspective. This United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) approach supplements indices that focus crudely on GNI bases. It employs indicators based on the criteria of longevity (life expectancy), educational level and income per head; whilst still imperfect, many argue that it gives a better assessment of ‘development’ as opposed to poverty. The 2010 HDI Report (UNDP 2010) rank-ordered 169 countries (with 25 further countries unable to be assessed due to insufficient data) and produced some surprising results. For example, the ACP countries of Barbados (42) and Bahamas (43) ranked above EU member states such as Lithuania (44), Latvia (48), Romania (50) and Bulgaria (58), and only just below Portugal (40) and Poland (41). Less surprisingly, all but one country (Afghanistan) ranked below 140 was an ACP member.
(144–7). Of further interest from this HDI perspective is the fact that nine LDCs, five of which fall into the UNDP’s ‘Low Human Development’ category, are not members of the ACP grouping of states. A summary of the HDI for ACP countries and other non-ACP LDC states may be found in Tables 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3.

Faced with this ambiguity, in this book a precise GNP per capita definition of the developing world is avoided in favour of an essentially geographically based interpretation that reflects the reality and actual practice of the EU’s development relations. The developing world is defined as those states covered by the European Union’s key development funding instruments – the EDF and the DCI. In contrast to other EU external-relations budget lines that have been formally merged under the umbrella of the new post-Lisbon Treaty European External Action Service, these are the primary responsibility of DG Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid (DG-DEVCO, formerly DG Development) (see Chapter 4). As such, the developing world is defined in EU terms as the 78 ACP states covered by the EDF, alongside those primarily Asian and Latin American states covered by the DCI. This clearly excludes the states of Central and Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean. While there are clearly developmental aspects to the EU’s relationship with these states,

### Table 1.3

**Non-ACP LDCs’ Human Development Index, 2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population (millions)</th>
<th>HDI</th>
<th>HDI ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>0.349</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>0.428</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yemen</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>0.439</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>0.451</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>164.4</td>
<td>0.469</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>0.494</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laos</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>0.497</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n.a. HDI data not available for these countries.

*Source: UNDP (2010: 143–6, 184–7).*
MAP 1.1 ECHO Field Offices and Key External Relations Funding Instruments (EDF, DCI, ENPI), 2010
they are accorded a ‘privileged relationship’ with the Union stemming from their geographic location. In what is effectively a concentric circles approach to its neighbourhood, these states have either become members of the EU themselves, have been designated as candidates for membership or viewed as potential future candidates, or are seen as part of a broadly conceived European political and economic space. This differs markedly from the more at-arms’ length conception of the states covered by the EDF and DCI. The primary funding instrument for the Eastern European and Mediterranean states is the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) (see Map 1.1).

To conclude, this chapter has provided the necessary theoretical frameworks within which the following empirical chapters can be located. While each chapter can stand individually as a contemporary description of the nature of EU development policy towards specific regions or as thematic examinations of development objectives, the conceptual approaches identified offer an additional explanatory perspective to the analysis. The difficulty in identifying those countries that legitimately constitute the developing world has also been examined, with the EDF and DCI mechanisms used (for the EU at least) to operationalize this definition. With these ideas in hand, we now turn to the substance of contemporary EU development policy.
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