

## The European Union: A Citizen's Guide

*An exploration and analysis of the regulation and practices of citizens' initiatives in eleven European democracies and the EU. The contributors to this volume shed light on how citizens' initiatives influence patterns of political agenda-setting in representative democracies and how they can contribute to participatory democracy.*

*The European Union seems incapable of undertaking economic reforms and defining its place in the world. Public apathy towards the EU is also increasing, as citizens feel isolated from the institutions in Brussels and see no way to influence European level decisions. Taking a diagnosis and cure approach to the EU's difficulties, Simon Hix tackles these problems with distinct clarity and open-mindedness. What the EU needs, Hix contends, is more open political competition. This would promote policy innovation, foster coalitions across the institutions, provide incentives for the media to cover developments in Brussels, and enable citizens to identify who governs in the EU and to take sides in policy debates. The EU is ready for this new challenge. The institutional reforms since the 1990s have transformed the EU into a more competitive polity, and political battles and coalitions are developing inside and between the European Parliament, the Council, and the Commission. This emerging politics should be more central to the Brussels policy process, with clearer coalitions and identifiable winners and losers, at least in the short term. The risks are low because the EU has multiple checks-and-balances. Yet, the potential benefits are high, as more open politics could enable the EU to overcome policy gridlock, rebuild public support, and reduce the democratic deficit. This indispensable book will be of great interest to students of the European politics, scholars, policy makers and anyone concerned with the future of the European Union.*

*The European Union: A Citizen's Guide*Penguin UK

*This book unveils the significant impact of the European integration process on the political thinking of European citizens. With close attention to the interrelation between social and political divisions, it shows that an integrated Europe promotes consensus but also propagates growing dissent among its citizens, with both objective inequalities and the subjective perception of these inequalities fuelling political dissent. Based on original data sets developed from two EU-funded projects across eight and nine European countries, the volume demonstrates the important role played by the social structure of European social space in conditioning political attitudes and preferences. It shows, in particular, that Europeans are highly sensitive to unequal living conditions between European countries, thus affecting their political support of national politics and the European Union. As such, it will appeal to scholars of sociology and politics with interests in Europe and the European Union, European integration and political sociology.*

*It's Your Data – Take Control*

*Migration and Mobility in the European Union*

*Empowerment and Disempowerment of the European Citizen*

*What Next for the EU?*

*Serving the European Union*

*The European Union and You*

*European Citizenship and Identity Outside of the European Union*

Although EU citizenship may appear to be a straightforward and unproblematic matter – each citizen of a Member State is a citizen of the Union – there are in fact situations in which EU citizenship status can become a thorny issue, at times even determining the outcome of a case. Because the rights automatically recognized with nationality most clearly involve the fundamental right of moving and residing freely, the case law relating freedom of movement with EU citizenship status is extensive and reaches into many areas of practice at every level. Prompted by the declaration of 2013 as the ‘Year of Citizens’, the author of this book offers a detailed analysis of the rationales underlying the development of the EU citizenship concept, the directives and regulations that define citizen status, and the cases that have so far worked to clarify the meaning and limits of such status, all with particular attention to the obstacles that still come between the actual exercise of rights in everyday life. The multifarious issues raised include the following: the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the EU citizen’s status; changes introduced by the Treaty of Lisbon; limitations on Member States with regard to granting and revoking nationality; participation of EU citizens in the decision making processes governing the EU; right to recourse to the European Ombudsman; right of access to documents; registration at a host Member State’s competent public offices; limitations of entry due to reasons of public policy, public security, and public health; procedural safeguards in the case of measures limiting freedom of movement; the condition of migrant workers; restrictions to freedom of movement for employment in the public sector; and the condition of family members of EU citizens. An appendix gathers legislative documents most often cited in the case law. Closely examining the various institutions concerned, case law (Member State as well as Court of Justice), and legislative innovations, the author concentrates on identifying and overcoming those obstacles that still prevent full enjoyment of EU citizenship rights. While the clear demarcation of issues will be of especial practical value in anti-discrimination cases, legal academics and jurists will appreciate the book’s signal new contribution to a classic theme of the European Union.

The power of the European Parliament has been steadily and visibly increasing in recent years. This arises from EU treaty changes and from the fact that more and more decisions are being made at the European level. At the same time, however, the already low rate of turnout in European elections has actually been declining. This powerful new study examines a seemingly paradoxical situation which has raised deep concern about the democratic deficit in the European Union. The authors analyse the concepts of participation, democracy, and legitimacy and their applicability at the European level and develop a typology of voter participation and abstention in the European context. Combining extensive new data from specially commissioned surveys in all 1994 member states with a searching review of the existing evidence, they provide a comprehensive account of the legitimacy of the European Union and examine the images of the European Parliament, citizens experiences of the 1994 campaign and their perceptions of the parties and the candidates. In an analysis that challenges existing interpretations, the institutional, demographic, and attitudinal sources of participation and abstention are fully explored. The study concludes by considering how participation and democratic representation might be enhanced, acknowledging forthrightly the obstacles and inherent limits that such efforts are likely to face.

This book studies the normative intersection between integration, immigration and nationality in the European Union (EU). It examines the relationship between integration and the legal frameworks of admission, stay and access to nationality by third country nationals at national and European levels. Integration is being subject to multifaceted processes transforming its traditional policy and legal settings, as well as its classical theoretical premises and approaches. The Europeanisation of immigration policy has provoked the emergence of distinctive European approaches on integration. The legal elements of integration are being developed through two parallel settings: the EU Framework on Integration and European immigration law. These venues constitute two of the main pillars upon which the common EU immigration policy is being constructed, and their nexus raises several elements in need of reflection and study. This book examines the processes through which integration becomes a norm in nationality and immigration law and policy at the national and EU levels, and the implications of these processes for the legal status of third country nationals and the overall coherency of the common EU immigration policy.

Master's Thesis from the year 2014 in the subject Sociology - Culture, Technology, Peoples / Nations, grade: 2.0, University of Heidelberg (Institute of Sociology), language: English, abstract: The European Union's growing range of competences increases the degree of required societal support among the member states' citizens. This study intends to 'map' national attitudes towards the EU and to deduct their political implications. Therefore, the concepts of i) identification with the EU and ii) support of the EU are combined within a matrix of four ideal types: the 'EU-Enthusiast', the 'EU-Pragmatic', the 'sceptical EU-Idealist', and the 'EU-Opponent'/'EU-Non-affected'. In this master thesis it is claimed that the population share of the two 'mixed' ideal types - mostly neglected in the literature - provide essential insight into national attitude towards the EU: 'sceptical EU-Idealists' identify themselves as citizens of the EU but are critical towards its politics; on the other hand, 'EU-Pragmatics' support the EU's politics but do not identify with its institutions or its community.

Citizens' Attachment from Maastricht Treaty to Crisis

Citizens' Reactions to European Integration Compared

Enraged Citizens, European Peace and Democratic Deficits

A Citizen's Guide to Data Protection in the EU

Constituent Power in the European Union

A Mini-guide to Services for Citizens

A Commentary

The EU Citizenship Directive defines the right of free movement for citizens of the European Economic Area. It applies to EU citizens and their family members who move to another Member State. This might at first seem like a straightforward definition, but immediately questions arise. Whodetermines if a person is an EU citizen at all? What about dual citizens of two 'third State'? What is the position of EU citizens who move to one Member State, and then return to their home Member State?This book provides a comprehensive commentary of the EU's Citizens' Directive tracing the evolution of the Directive's provisions, placing each article in its historical and legislative context. Special emphasis is placed on highlighting the key provisions so as to permit a global appreciation of the system of free movement rights to which the Directive gives effect. Each provision is annotated containing a detailed analysis of the case-law of the Court of Justice as well as of related measures impacting upon the Directive'sinterpretation including European Commission reports and guidelines on the Directive's relevant case law since the first edition, and has been expanded to include detailed discussion of rights of EU and UK citizens after Brexit in the withdrawal agreement.

The essential Pelican introduction to the European Union - its history, its politics, and its role today. 'Europe' refers to the European Union. At the centre of a seemingly never-ending crisis, the EU remains a black box, closed to public understanding. Is it a state? An empire? Is Europe ruled by Germany or by European bureaucrats? Does a single integration? And should the EU have been awarded the Nobel peace prize in 2012? Critics tell us the EU undermines democracy. Are they right? In this provocative volume, political scientist Chris Bickerton provides an answer to all these key questions and more at a time when understanding what the EU is and what it does is more important than ever before.

This book is concerned with the two-pronged question of how the relationship between citizens, the state and EU institutions has changed, and how direct democratic participation can be improved in a multi-layered Union.

Exploring a key aspect of European integration, this clear and thoughtful book considers the remarkable experiment with common rights and citizenship in the EU. Explaining this innovation—why states cede their sovereignty and eradicate or redefine the boundaries of the political community by including “foreigners”—Willem Maas analyzes the development of European citizenship. More than simply a free trade market, the goal of building a community among peoples—creating European citizens—has informed European integration since its origins. The author argues that its success or failure will not only determine the future of Europe but provide lessons for political integration elsewhere.

Citizens' Initiatives in Europe

Overlooking Europe

Participation, Democracy, and Legitimacy

Citizens' Support for the European Union

Public Opinion and Social Inequalities in Comparative and Relational Perspective

The Myth of a Citizens' Union

John Pinder and Simon Usherwood explain the EU in plain readable English. They show how and why it has developed, how the institutions work, and what it does - from the single market to the euro, and from agriculture to the environment.

In the spirit of Jean Monnet's desire to "Continue, continue, there is no future for the people of Europe other than in union", this volume analyses the process of European construction, paving a road to the United States of Europe. It focuses on the challenges and issues the Union is currently facing, from illegal migration, to the refugee crisis, fake news, populism, insecurity, the Eastern Partnership, and the COVID-19 pandemic. For the European Union's citizens, security was, is, and will remain a top priority. The book is part of a constructivist approach with a dynamic perspective on the political, social, economic, military and societal, where the actors and the system structure are interconnected. It will appeal to students, professors, researchers, stakeholders, politicians, and specialists on international relations and security studies, as well as the general public interested in the evolution of the European Union, today's challenges and tomorrow's opportunities.

This book shines new light on the political system of the European Union (EU) by focusing on civic resources as a keystone of the EU's ability to sustain. Less-tangible resources such as trust, solidarity, mutual recognition and citizens' social and political participation have been, until now, largely ignored in the research on European integration. Due to the fundamental changes to the EU in recent years and the challenges ahead, European citizens have become increasingly critical of a long-lasting unification process in Europe. This volume theoretically and empirically examines how the European citizens themselves may contribute to the long-term effectiveness, legitimacy and endurance of the EU. This book aims to examine the issues associated with the utilization of civic resources by the EU, and the ability of European citizens to develop transnational civic resources. Expert contributors in the field develop a framework to understand and explore the potential of citizens in the uncertain future of the EU. Civic Resources and the Future of the European Union will be of interest to students and scholars of European Politics and European Union Studies.

The importance of services in the EU economy has increased exponentially in the last decades as have the number and scope of EU rules, both those liberalising the provision of services and those protecting their recipients or consumers - the passengers, patients, viewers and bank depositors. However, these consumers, in their capacity as citizens, are increasingly disillusioned with the EU and its institutions. This book, written by practitioners, academics and advocates before the European Court, reflects on these developments, examining rules in numerous service sectors, from the capping of roaming call charges upheld in the Vodafone decision, through health care, to the requirement for air carriers to care for and compensate passengers approved in the generous Sturgeon judgment. The Court's positive approach may have been guided by a desire to consolidate the notion of EU citizenship, a status introduced, but without clear content, at Maastricht. The book therefore considers whether these uniform, EU-wide, consumer rights may not form an important component of such European citizenship. The Commission's proposal to make 2013 European Year of Citizens seems to favour such a view.

People and Parliament in the European Union

The Political Attitudes of Divided European Citizens

In Search of the Perfect Citizen?

Citizens First

The European Union and Its Citizens

More Unity and More Diversity

Explaining European Identity Formation

This book offers a comprehensive analysis of the determinants of EU support between 2006 and 2015, and of electoral behavior during the European Parliament elections. In light of the Eurozone financial and debt crisis, it also examines how political and economic turbulences have affected EU citizens' stance on democracy and their support for EU institutions. It explores measures taken in the context of the Euro crisis management and the reactions of EU citizens, in order to shed new light on the determinants and developments of EU support. The author highlights the heterogeneity of the developments between the member states and identifies social, political, and economic factors of the crisis that have changed the ways citizens form their political attitudes towards the EU. The book delivers a profound account of the Euro crisis, integrating approaches from political economy, psychology, sociology, and public opinion research. It will appeal to scholars and anyone interested in learning more about the declining citizen support in the EU and the heterogeneous developments in the member states, which may significantly endanger the long-term existence of the European Union.

"This book brings together academics as well as practitioners to give a forward-looking, holistic view of the realities of EU citizen participation across the spectrum of participatory opportunities"--

This work examines the European Union as mandated by the Maastricht Treaty. Using both empirical and theoretical perspectives, the author reviews such timely issues as the environment and the new regionalism, the politics of policy-making in the European Union, cross-border employment issues, as well as social and cultural considerations. These are issues that take on increasing importance in an integrating Europe--for the new Euro-citizens, for the national governments, and of course, for the European Union itself. How the Community handles these issues, and the processes and politics that will develop around them, will determine the Europolity of the future and are elucidated here by a European expert.

Authors names reversed on previous editions.

Europe Outside Europe?

Citizen Participation in Democratic Europe

The European Union's Biggest Enlargement

Civic Resources and the Future of the European Union

The EU Citizenship Directive: a Commentary

What's Wrong with the Europe Union and How to Fix It

People on the Move

Pre-financial crisis, EU citizens were 'overlooking' Europe ignoring it in favour of globalisation, economic flows, and crises of political corruption. Innovative focus group methods allow an analysis of citizens' reactions, and demonstrate how euroscepticism is a red herring, instead articulating an indifference to and ambivalence about Europe.

This book critically engages with the concept of European identity and citizenship, and the role of the European Union in diaspora, membership and emigration policies. It presents original research on European governance of emigration and citizenship and considers European integration in a global context. It questions whether there can be a European diaspora outside the European Union, if European governance of emigration is possible, and whether the EU can or should govern its diasporas in the global era. By engaging with concepts of European citizenship, diaspora and identity, the author examines the weak meaning of Europe for EU nationals living abroad and finds that European public spaces, present and sustained within the European Union territory, are largely not exported outside of it. Equal treatment and equal rights become empty concepts for Europeans leaving the European Union as they lose their European citizenship. This book will be of key interest to scholars and students of European Union politics, European studies, migration studies, American and Canadian studies, and the sociology of migration.

This edited collection contributes to studies of intra-EU migration and mobility, welfare, and European social citizenship by focusing on transnational labour movements from new to the old EU member states (Hungary – Austria, Bulgaria – Germany, Poland – UK and Estonia – Sweden). The volume provides a comparative analysis of formal organization and mobile individuals' use of European social security coordination, which involves mobile Europeans' access to and portability of social security rights from the sending to the receiving country (and back). The book discloses the selectivity criteria of welfare provision in four areas (unemployment, family benefits, health insurance, and pensions) that lay at heart of European cross-border social security governance. It also identifies specific discourses of belonging (gendered, ethnicized/racialized and class-related images of 'Us' and 'Them') that frame the institutional selectivity by constructing images of mobile EU citizens' 'deserving' or 'non-deserving' social membership. The collection offers a detailed examination of inequality experienced by mobile EU citizens from the new EU countries encounter while accessing and porting social security rights across borders. It will be of interest to a wide range of social science and interdisciplinary researchers, students, and practitioners as well as those interested in intra-EU migration and mobility, social security, European social citizenship, and transnational studies.

Sergio Fabbrini argues that the European Union (EU) is made up of states pursuing different aims, rather than simply moving in the same direction at different speeds. He describes the alternative perspectives on the EU (an economic community, an intergovernmental union, and a parliamentary union), that led to multiple compromises in its structure and shows how the Euro crisis has called them into question. The book argues that a new European political order is necessary to deal with the consequences of the crisis, based on an institutional differentiation between the EU member states interested only in market co-operation and those advancing towards a genuine economic and monetary union. Such a differentiation would allow the latter group to become a political union, conceptualised as a compound union of states and citizens, while preserving a revised framework of a single market in which both groups of states can participate.

Citizenship Rights and Freedom of Movement in the European Union

Living in Another Country of the European Union: [Useful Addresses in Ireland].

EU Citizens' Transnational Social Security in Regulations, Discourses and Experiences

A Citizen's Guide to the Institutions of the European Union

Guide to the European Citizens' Initiative

The EU Citizenship Directive

The Intersection Between Integration, Immigration, and Nationality in the EU

This collection of essays engages with a central theme in scholarship on EU citizenship – the emancipation of certain citizens, the alienation of others – and seeks to expand its horizons to interrogate whether similar debates and trends can be identified in other fields of European integration. The focus of the book is distinctly citizen focused. It delivers the potential for the opening out of analysis of the implications of European citizenship beyond the parameters of Articles 18-25 TFEU and beyond the disciplinary confines of legal analysis alone. The book construes 'EU citizenship' in its broadest sense, and explores the extent to which the European citizen is, or indeed is not, genuinely at the heart of EU law and policy-making. Within the broader theme of empowerment and disempowerment, the contributors reflect on a range of cross-cutting themes; for example, the extent to which channels of citizen participation (can) inform EU policy-making in a 'bottom-up' sense; or whether the EU is a catalyst for the construction of new spaces and new identities.

The 2004 enlargement of the European Union finally heals the rift opened up by the East-West confrontation and the Cold War. The newcomers from central and eastern Europe, together with Malta and Cyprus, are legitimate members whose peoples share the same goals of democracy, liberty and prosperity as other EU citizens. They have met the strict criteria for joining the Union. Enlargement will stimulate economic growth in EU countries both new and old for the benefit of all. The integration process is already well under way. Even before formal accession, the EU opened its markets to exports from the newcomers, who also benefited from the Unions assistance programmes. Enlargement has raised concerns among citizens from existing and new member states, but there are adequate responses to meet them. An EU of 25 will create new relationships with its neighbours and the wider world.

What makes people identify with Europe? To answer this question, this book analyzes the development and determinants of a common European identity among EU citizens from the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 to the recent financial and economic crisis. The author examines citizens' identification with Europe for all EU member states, and systematically explores the theoretical and empirical implications of two turning points in the recent history of EU integration, namely the EU's enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe in 2004/2007 and the financial and economic crisis that started in 2008. The book integrates theoretical approaches to European identity in sociology, social-psychology and EU public opinion research in a comprehensive model for explaining individual identification with Europe. The empirical analysis employs a multilevel framework to systematically assess the influence of individual characteristics and the political, economic, and social context on citizens' feelings of identity. The long analysis period spanning from 1992 to the present allows inferences to be drawn about the long-term developments in the sources of European identification as well as the immediate impact of EU enlargement and the crisis on the determinants of European identification.

The euro crisis, rising Euroscepticism, and Brexit have once again highlighted the European Union's unresolved legitimacy deficit. Increasingly, citizens claim to have been illegitimately excluded from decisions about the future of European integration. Movements such as DiEM25 call into question the authority of the states as the 'masters of the treaties'. At the same time, political theory's debate about the EU has become ever more academic. The discipline is preoccupied with the production and refinement of abstract models of democratic constitutionalism whose connection to real politics is thin. This book seeks to develop a new approach to EU legitimacy by reorienting the debate from the question of how the supranational polity should ideally be organized to the question of who is entitled to make that decision and how. To that end, it reformulates the classical notion of constituent power for the context of European integration. This account challenges conventional theoretical assumptions regarding the EU's ultimate source of legitimacy and enables political theory to put to the test the claims of those who challenge the established mode of EU constitutional politics.

China and the European Union

The Social Agenda

Creating European Citizens

The European Union: A Very Short Introduction

The European Union: A Citizen's Guide

Empirical Analyses of Political Attitudes and Electoral Behavior During the EU Crisis

Which European Union?

Immigration tops the list of challenges of greatest concern to European Union citizens. Such movement of people pose major challenges for policymakers. EU countries must integrate immigrants while managing often distorted public perceptions of immigration. This Blueprint offers an in-depth study that contributes to the evidence base.

This book provides a framework for comparing EU citizenship and US citizenship as standards of equality. If we wish to understand the legal development of the citizenship of the European Union and its relationship to the nationalities of the member states, it is helpful to examine the history of United States citizenship and, in particular, to elaborate a theory of 'duplex' citizenships found in federal orders. In such a citizenship, each person's citizenship is necessarily 'layered' with the citizenship or nationality of a (member) state. The question this book answers is: how does federal citizenship, as a claim to equality, affect the relationship between the (member) state and its national of citizenship? Because the book places equality, not allegiance to a sovereign at the center of its analysis of citizenship, it manages to escape traditional analyses of the EU that measure it by the standard of a sovereign state. The text presents a coherent account of the development of EU citizenship and EU civil rights for those who wish to understand their continuing development in the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union. Scholars and legal practitioners of EU law will find novel insights in this book into how EU citizenship works, in order to be able to grasp the direction in which it will continue to develop. And it may be of great interest to American scholars of law and political science who wish to understand one aspect of how the EU works as a constitutional order, not merely as an order of international law, by comparison to their own history. Jeremy Bierbach is an attorney at Franssen Advocaten in Amsterdam. He holds a Ph.D. in European constitutional law from the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

The European citizens' initiative enables one million EU citizens from at least seven EU countries to call on the European Commission to propose legislation on matters where the EU has competence to legislate. It is a right that is enshrined in the EU treaties. The rules and procedures governing the citizens' initiative are set out in an EU regulation adopted by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union in February 2011.

The European Union is China's largest trading partner, and Chinese views of the EU are of crucial importance in shaping how the relationship will develop in the future, especially as the new Chinese leadership takes power. This book presents the findings of an extensive research project into the views of both elite groups, in government, business, academia, media and social activists, and the Chinese public towards Europe and the European Union. It considers attitudes on a wide range of subjects, and reaches a number of interesting, encouraging conclusions. These include the fact that as Chinese people's knowledge of, and travel to, Europe becomes more extensive, Chinese attitudes towards Europe become more positive; that Chinese people have a high regard for European culture and a high degree of trust in Europeans; though there are significant differences between different Chinese groups concerning controversial issues in the China-EU relationship. Overall, the book concludes that the Chinese public opinion supports a strong bilateral relation.

Direct Democracy in the EU

From Theory to Practice

Procedures and Consequences of Agenda-Setting by Citizens

Or, Why the Democracy Given to Us Must Become One We Fight for

Services and the EU Citizen

The European Union

Boundaries of European Social Citizenship

*The EU Citizenship Directive defines the right of free movement for citizens of the European Economic Area. It applies to EU citizens and their family members who move to another Member State. This might at first seem like a straightforward definition, but immediately questions arise. Who determines if a person is an EU citizen at all? What about dual citizens of two Member States, or of one Member State and a non-Member State (a 'third State')? What is the position of EU citizens who move to one Member State, and then return to their home Member State? This book provides a comprehensive commentary of the EU's Citizens' Directive tracing the evolution of the Directive's provisions, placing each article in its historical and legislative context. Special emphasis is placed on highlighting the connections and interactions between the Directive's constituent provisions so as to permit a global appreciation of the system of free movement rights to which the Directive gives effect. Each provision is annotated containing a detailed analysis of the case-law of the Court of Justice as well as of related measures impacting upon the Directive's interpretation including European Commission reports and guidelines on the Directive's implementation. The authors have drawn on their combined experience in academia, practice and the EU institutions to provide an engaging and critical account of the Citizenship Directive, approaching it directly from an EU law perspective.*

*In March 2010, Robert Menasse went to Brussels to begin researching a novel about the European Union. Instead of producing a work of fiction, however, his extended stay in Brussels resulted in *The European Courier*, a text in which he examines the European community from its beginnings in the transnational "Montanunion" (European Coal and Steel Community, 1951) to the current "financial crisis" of the European Union. In the course of his analysis, Menasse focuses on the institutional structures and forces that work to advance—or obstruct—the European project and its goal of a truly postnational European democracy. Given the internal tensions among the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the European Council, Menasse argues that what is frequently misunderstood as a financial crisis is, in fact, a political one. As Menasse claims in *The European Courier*, "Either the Europe of nation-states will perish or the project of transcending the nation-states will."*

*The European Union in the Age of (In)Security*

*15 Countries: 370 Million Citizens: A Union of Peace, Freedom and Solidarity*

*Europe after the Euro Crisis*

*Frontiers of Equality in the Development of EU and US Citizenship*

*Mapping attitudes towards the European Union. A comparative analysis among European citizens of 27 member states*

*A Very Short Introduction*