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## BOOK REVIEW: THE DIPLOMACY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Lukáš Podstata\*

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PAJTINKA, E. 2023. *Diplomacia Európskej Únie [The Diplomacy of the European Union]*. Bratislava: PAMIKO, 2023. 185 pp. ISBN 978-80-85660-15-9.

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**Erik Pajtinka** is among the leading figures in the field of international relations and diplomacy. The main focus of the author's publication, *Diplomacy of the European Union*, is the area of contemporary theory and practice of diplomacy, with an emphasis on economic, cultural, or military diplomacy. It is necessary to mention that **Erik Pajtinka** bases his information on knowledge gained during foreign internships in Vienna, Budapest, The Hague and elsewhere. **Pajtinka** is not only the author of the scientific monograph *Diplomacy of the European Union*, but his other significant publications include the *Dictionary of Diplomacy*, published in 2013, as well as *Fundamentals of the Theory and Practice of Diplomacy*. This monograph was published in 2015, and its second revised edition was released in 2024. *Fundamentals of the Theory and Practice of Diplomacy* is used as a university textbook.

In 2023 **Erik Pajtinka** published a very important work titled *Diplomacy of the European Union*. Although readers may think that the 169-page length is brief and does not cover all substantive aspects, the opposite is true. In the publication, **Pajtinka** chronologically explains all the relevant contexts within the European Union. The book is designed so that the reader acquires historical context and that led to the present structure of the EU diplomatic corps. The issue of the European Union is very important, and this publication provides a clear perspective on the subject.

The main goal of this publication is to comprehensively introduce the reader to the functioning of EU diplomatic institutions and the related practical diplomatic

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activities of the EU today. Another aim of the publication is to assess the current functioning of EU diplomatic institutions and to determine their potential or limitations for future operations. The publication is divided into six main chapters, an introduction and a conclusion. In the introduction, the author highlights the concept of diplomacy and its importance. He then analyses the significance and main tasks of EU diplomacy, aiming to evaluate the functioning of EU diplomatic bodies and describe their principal activities.

The first chapter focuses on the historical development of diplomatic institutions before the introduction of the Lisbon Treaty. The author concentrates on the origins of today's European Union. Historical facts and developments are defined from the 1950s and 1960s, when the first fragments of the European Community appeared. The author places particular emphasis on describing the functionality and responsibilities during the development of institutions, their cooperation within the organization, and with other actors. This chapter also describes the development and establishment of the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) and GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade), the predecessor of today's WTO (World Trade Organization). The first chapter also mentions the historical development and initial mission of the European Community's foreign missions, which obtained diplomatic status and expanded their influence worldwide. For example, the establishment of delegations with diplomatic status in developed countries such as Japan or Canada is cited. All these missions did not merely have diplomatic status but evolved into more traditional diplomatic missions. Other historical events discussed focus on the functioning and responsibilities of missions. The author points out that all these missions were managed by the Directorate-General for External Relations and the Directorate-General for Development.

The second chapter examines the process of creating the EEAS (European External Action Service), which provides diplomatic services for today's European Union. In this chapter, the author describes the founding process, which dates to 2007 after the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty. It defines the powers and involvement of EU member states. The main decision-making process on the issue was held by the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the Council of the European Union. The main emphasis within each institution was to maximize its influence over the EEAS. The final form of the EEAS was adopted on June 26, 2010, and the chapter further addresses the development and placement of the EEAS, with its symbolic milestone dated to February 2012, when the EEAS established its main headquarters in Brussels.

The third chapter of *Diplomacy of the European Union* aims to familiarize readers with the structure and organization of the EEAS. The author describes the agenda assigned to individual members of the institution and defines the highest representative of the EEAS, the Secretary-General. The third chapter also discusses the roles and responsibilities of diplomatic positions, assistants, and other staff. It also examines functions that are only temporary or held by national experts.

The fourth chapter emphasizes the description of EU missions. The focus is on the division between bilateral and multilateral cooperation of the European Union. The main difference is that bilateral cooperation can be considered equivalent to diplomatic missions, while multilateral cooperation of designated organizations can be defined as the equivalent of permanent diplomatic missions. The specific role of EU representation is also mentioned, which, in its missions, can operate in non-sovereign areas where it may be defined as a consulate. However, the author notes in the fourth chapter that both bilateral and multilateral cooperation can be permanent or temporary missions. However, such missions do not have official status by law. Only states can have official status and international organizations cannot. Nevertheless, EU diplomatic missions, whether bilateral or multilateral, may take advantage of privileges such as immunities and rights. In such cases, these privileges must be legally addressed and contractually defined between the EU and the relevant state actors. Lastly, the fourth chapter describes the functioning of diplomatic missions. In the case of a bilateral mission, the main tasks are gathering and analysing information in the host country, representing the EU and its values, overseeing the proper management of entrusted financial resources, and so on. The main objectives in the multilateral case are very similar to those of bilateral missions. Other activities include solving problems in international organizations or coordinating diplomatic activities within the EU, where representatives of the states concerned are present.

The penultimate, fifth chapter deals with the issue of diplomatic representatives who are not directly involved in the EEAS but play a very important role in EU diplomacy. Like the EEAS and its missions, these representatives are divided into two categories based on the origin of their mandate. The first category consists of European Special Representatives with a territorial mandate and European Representatives with a defined assignment. The second category covers specific topics addressed within their mandate, such as political or other issues within the given area. These representatives are often

sent to volatile regions such as Kosovo, the Persian Gulf, and so on. Both categories are directly subordinate to the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, informally referred to as the EU's foreign minister.

The final, sixth chapter discusses the functions and organization of permanent diplomatic missions and diplomats from third countries accredited to the European Union. The publication notes that, thanks to its diplomatic engagement, the European Union has become a very important player in diplomacy in recent years, also because it has its own diplomatic corps. As a result, the EU is becoming a unique diplomatic actor. The functioning of the diplomatic corps is very similar to that of a sovereign state, for example, in the appointment of the head of a diplomatic mission accredited by the European Union.

The publication *Diplomacy of the European Union* is well-written and is not focused on the functioning of the European Union itself. It specializes in the historical development, function, and goals of EU diplomacy, which is productive in this area. The publication can be considered educational and deals in great depth with the subject matter.