

*Butterworths European Studies*

# European Political Cooperation

David Allen  
Reinhardt Rummel  
Wolfgang Wessels

## EUROPEAN POLITICAL COOPERATION

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# **European Political Cooperation:**

**Towards a foreign policy for  
Western Europe**

**David Allen, Reinhardt Rummel and  
Wolfgang Wessels**

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# Introduction to the English edition

This book was originally published in German in 1978. It represents the conclusions of a study group on European Political Cooperation convened in Bonn by Wolfgang Wessels at the Institut für Europäische Politik. The study group consisted of researchers from several Community countries and was greatly assisted by contributions from officials in the German Foreign Office and from the Commission of the European Communities. Although the case studies and the conclusions refer to the period from 1970 to 1977 it was felt that together they represent a complete history of the first critical years of this new experiment in European cooperation and that as such they would be of interest despite the passage of time and the developments of new concerns within the framework of European Political Cooperation. It is hoped that the study group will be reconvened in the future to reassess the findings of this volume in the light of recent developments in Europe and the wider international system.

The editor of the English edition would like to thank Jeremy Leaman and Martha Wörsching for their assistance in translating those chapters originally written in German. Particular thanks go to Angela Midworth for typing and correcting the manuscript.

Loughborough

David Allen

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# European Political Cooperation: a new approach to European foreign policy

WOLFGANG WESSELS

## 1.1 Introduction

One can say today that the goals implicit in these texts [the Luxembourg and Copenhagen Reports] have to a large extent been achieved and that the procedures recommended by them have become accepted practice<sup>1</sup>.

The contemporary politics of West European integration is usually described in terms of crises and disappointments. The current achievements of the EEC – the *aquis communautaire* – are seen to be under threat; ambitious programmes which sought to establish an economic and monetary union as well as a European union by the end of the decade have already foundered. Nevertheless, politicians and observers both counter this negative assessment with the successes of West European ‘foreign policy’. They point out as particular advances the Lomé Convention, the common position maintained by the Nine\* at the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), the Euro–Arab Dialogue, the system of EEC agreements with the Magreb and Mashrek states of the Mediterranean area, the Community representation at the Paris Conference on International Economic Cooperation (CIEC), the increasing unanimity of the Nine’s voting behaviour at the UN, as well as a number of declarations by the Nine with reference to the conflict in the Middle East and in Southern Africa. Some observers conclude from such lists that the Community has already in the field of foreign affairs made a qualitative leap into a new phase of integration – a leap that has never been adequately described<sup>2</sup>.

If we look at this assessment more closely two separate strands of European foreign policy can be identified. Apart from the ‘external relations’ of the EEC which are based on the Treaties and shaped by Community institutions, the governments of the Nine member-states of the Community have developed the organization for European Political Cooperation (EPC), within which the foreign ministries work together ‘intergovernmentally’ on the basis of non-binding agreements that do not provide for formal or permanent institutions. The goals of this cooperation are threefold;

\* Until 1981 there were nine countries in the EEC. Greece has now joined the Community and negotiations are taking place for the entry of Spain and Portugal.