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Nota di contenuto	The process that led to the establishment of the European Union -- The 2002-2003 European Convention and the 2004 constitutional treaty and its failed ratification -- From the constitutional treaty to the Lisbon Treaty -- The difficult ratification of the Lisbon Treaty -- The structure of the Lisbon Treaty -- Values and objectives -- Delimitation and clarification of the EU competences -- Basic principles -- The legal personality of the EU -- Variable geometry -- Legislative and non-legislative procedures and acts -- Procedures for the revision of the treaties -- Withdrawal of a member state from the EU -- The European parliament -- The national parliaments -- The citizens' initiative and other possibilities for the citizens to influence decisions of the EU -- The judgment of 30 June 2009 of the German constitutional court and the issue of the democratic legitimacy of the EU -- The origins of the EU Charter of fundamental rights -- The Charter of fundamental rights

as referred to in the Lisbon Treaty -- The protocol on the application of the Charter to Poland and the United Kingdom -- The accession of the EU to the European Convention for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms -- A short history of justice and home affairs in the EU -- The abolition of the third pillar and the other changes made by the Lisbon Treaty -- Variable geometry in the area of freedom, security, and justice -- The European Council -- The Council -- The Commission -- The Court of Justice -- Changes to other institutions and bodies -- Relations between institutions and the interinstitutional balance -- External affairs before the Lisbon Treaty -- The high representative of the union for foreign affairs and security policy -- The European external action service -- The common foreign and security policy -- Security and defence -- Other sectors of external affairs, including trade policy -- The EU budget -- European monetary union and the Euro zone -- The internal market and free competition -- Social policy -- Services of general interest -- Agriculture, energy, health and other internal affairs.

Sommario/riassunto

Given the controversies and difficulties which preceded the coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty, it is easy to forget that the Treaty is a complex legal document in need of detailed analysis for its impact to be fully understood. Jean-Claude Piris, the Director General of the Legal Service of the Council of the European Union, provides such an analysis, looking at the historical and political contexts of the Treaty, its impact on the democratic framework of the EU and its provisions in relation to substantive law. Impartial legal analysis of the EU's functions, its powers and the treaties which govern it make this the seminal text on the most significant recent development in EU law.
