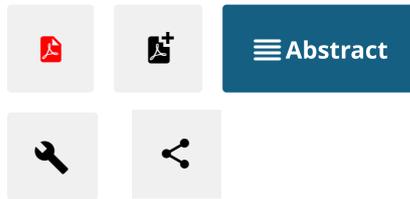




# How to Make a Market: Reflections on the Attempt to Create a Single Market in the European Union

Neil Fligstein and Iona Mara-Drita

[≡ More](#)

## Abstract

Theories about institution-building episodes emphasize either rational or social and cultural elements. Our research on the Single Market Program (SMP) of the European Union (EU) shows that both elements are part of the process. When the EU was caught in a stalemate, the European Commission devised the SMP. The commission worked within the constraints of existing institutional arrangements, provided a "cultural frame," and helped create an elite social movement. This examination of the SMP legislation, using an institutional approach to the sociology of markets, shows how the commission was able to do this by trading off the interests of important state and corporate actors.

[Download PDF](#)

[Accessibility](#)

[Open access at Chicago](#)

[Permissions](#)

[Statement of Publication Ethics](#)

[Diversity and Inclusion at the University of Chicago](#)

[Contact us](#)

[Terms and Conditions](#)

[Privacy Notice](#)

[Media and advertising requests](#)



© 2025 The University of Chicago and other publishing partners. All rights reserved, including rights for text and data mining and training of artificial intelligence technologies or similar technologies.