

## Enlargement of the European Union - a contribution to establishing a zone of peace, security, development and prosperity throughout Europe

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The project of the European integration started ambitiously, in 1951, in Paris, as a federal political and economic construction, but soon the political elements were put aside and the project continued after the pattern of a classical economic integration process. The Maastricht Treaty, in 1992, re-introduced the political elements into the construction, which since got consistency in establishing a zone of peace, security, development and prosperity, first of all inside the EU, but also irradiating outside, in the proximity and even further.

The European Union faces a paradoxical situation: **inside**, it is criticized and even rejected by a large part of the population, while **outside** it continues to constitute an attraction for many countries and people not only from Europe, but from the entire world. An immediate example, in the **positive** sense, could be the strong commitment and the strenuous efforts of the countries belonging to the Western Balkans to meet the necessary criteria to join the European Union; also the large figures of the migration flows towards the EU countries. Examples in the **negative** sense could be the deepening sentiments of skepticism among the EU citizens in most of the countries; the results (negative) of the referendums for the approval of the Constitutional Treaty in Netherlands and France.

### Why such a paradoxical situation?

It is a stubborn reality now that the European Union, since its inception in 1951, gained immensely both by its deepening and by its enlargement, so that it became an intrinsic part of everyone's life to such an extent, that everyone now thinks that both good and bad things are coming compulsorily from the European Union. Consequently, the Union is criticized and even **blamed for what it is not** and has not done, while it is **not praised** and even not thanked **for what it really is!**

### First CBM

If we go at the start-up of the integration process, we could notice that the founding fathers of the European integration, just immediately after the Second World War, were primarily preoccupied by finding a lasting solution to the problems of peace and war on our continent and less concerned by political, economic, social or monetary problems. Robert Schumann

put it directly: “World peace cannot be safeguarded without the making of creative efforts proportionate to the dangers which threaten it” and “the coming together of the nations of Europe requires the elimination of the age-old opposition of France and Germany. Any action taken must in the first place concern these two countries”. He was aware that “Europe will not be made all at once, or according to a single plan”, but “it will be built through concrete achievements which first create a de facto solidarity” So it was done, we could say now, that the first integration structure – the European Community of Coal and Steel - was a “peace and confidence building measure”.

### **The economic dimension**

The years following the establishment of the European Community of Coal and Steel witnessed some efforts and initiatives to build on the political aspects, including military and defense, but some nationalistic sentiments and concerns became suddenly stronger than the will to continue and the political dimension of the postwar European construction was put aside for an undetermined period.

The relaunching of the integration process will be done by the foreign ministers’ meeting in Messina, in June 1955, where “the six” adopted “the principle of a new community, founded on a common industrial market”. The Benelux states appreciated, in a famous now memorandum, that there should be continued “the establishment of a united Europe, through the development of common institutions, the progressive fusion of the national economies, the creation of a big common market and the progressive harmonization of their social policies”<sup>1</sup>

From now on and more precisely with the signing of the two treaties of Rome, on 25 March 1957, the European integration process **embarked decisively on the economic road.**

Many experts are trying to present now the inception of the integration process on our continent as a phenomenon induced by the process of globalization. It is good to remember that in this specific case, the theory did not precede the practice and in the early 1950’s the term of “integration” was even not yet invented. According to some experts, the term of

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<sup>1</sup> Pascal Fontaine – Constructia europeana de la 1945 pana in zilele noastre (The European construction since 1945 till our days), Institutul European, Iasi, 1998, page 13

“international economic integration” has “a relatively short history”, being “an aspect of the international economic sciences that got a growing importance in the last four decades”<sup>2</sup>

In fact, only after the treaties of Rome the scientists started to wonder and study these new developments on the European continent as possible new concepts and processes. The most comprehensive theory is due to **Bela Balassa**, who in his book “The theory of International Integration”, published in 1962, distinguished five main forms of integration (from the simple to the complex): **free trade zone** (1), **custom union** (2), **common market** (3), economic union and total economic integration. Almost 30 years later, **Ali M. El-Agraa**, in “The Economics of the European Union” (published in 1994) goes further and develop the theory in the sense that the last two forms, the “economic union” and the “total economic integration”, are put together under the “**economic and monetary union**” (4) and a fifth stage is added, namely that of the “**political union**” (5). The approach done by Ali M. El-Agraa seems to be generally accepted as one of the most pertinent phasing of the integration process and we shall refer to it when speaking about integration.

The five stages could be easily noticed in the case of the European Union taking as milestones the main treaties of the Union:

- **The Paris Treaty** (1951) establishing the European Community of Coal and Steel led also to the establishment of a **sectoral free trade** area among the participants
- **The Treaties of Rome** (1957) established a **custom union**
- **The Single European Act** (1986) achieved the objective of the **single/common market**
- **The Maastricht Treaty** (1992) opened the way to the implementation of the **economic and monetary union**
- **The Maastricht Treaty** (1992) went further and formalized the first **elements of the political union**, by establishing the three pillars construction, where the “economic and monetary union” represented the communitised pillar, while the “common foreign and security policy” and the “cooperation in the field of justice and home affairs were supposed to represent the exclusive domains of the intergovernmental cooperation action. The Maastricht Treaty put also, very “softly”, the problem of the EU enlargement, namely towards the Central and East-European countries.

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<sup>2</sup> Ali M. El-Agraa – The Economics of the European Community, Fourth Edition, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1994, page 1

We shall not enter into details now. But let us notice however that each form of integration described above should be seen only as a process that does not end when passing over to a new phase. A comment should be done also to emphasize the added value represented by the European Union, in the sense that while all other integrationist exercises (and they are many, on all continents!) represent only arrangements of free trade area, custom union or common market, the European Union continues to be based on **Schumann's plan**, which provided for "the establishment of an **authority independent from the governments**, but whose decisions will be binding for the states"<sup>3</sup>.

Such a distinctive feature, considered by Loukas Tsoukalis as "revolutionary for the international relations"<sup>4</sup>, proves that "there is a clear discontinuity, in terms of intensity of the economic interaction and taking of common decisions, between the European system and the rest of the world"<sup>5</sup>.

### **The good and the bad – first round**

Let us summarize now what has been done, good and bad, since 1951 – the Paris Treaty till 1992 – the Maastricht Treaty, as the Maastricht Treaty marks the point when the spiral comes back to the initial point (and objective) – the political construction.

The summary is positive. Let's hear President José Manuel Barroso: "In the beginning, the goal of the EU was to promote peace and a higher standard of living. It has been stunningly successful at this. Not only has it reconciled ancient adversaries, it has also extended its zone of peace, stability and prosperity to every corner of our continent, through enlargement"<sup>6</sup>.

First of all, no more wars on the continent. The former enemies – France and Germany - became the driving force of the community. Despite the numerous comebacks and deceptions, the often incomplete progresses, one cannot ignore or minimize what has been finally done by compromises not always successful, by big initiatives, often fallen and a lot of great hopes, only partially satisfied. The Community itself enlarges from 6 members in

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<sup>3</sup> Pascal Fontaine – Constructia europeana de la 1945 pana in zilele noastre (The European construction since 1945 till our days), Institutul European, Iasi, 1998, page 9

<sup>4</sup> Ibidem, page 10

<sup>5</sup> Loukas Tsoukalis – Noua economie europeana revizuita (The New European Economy Revisited), Arc 2000 Publishing House, Romania, page 3

<sup>6</sup> José Manuel Barroso: Voting for prosperity, progress and peace, 4 June 2009; European Voice

1951, at 9 members in 1973 (first enlargement: Denmark, Ireland and UK), 10 members in 1979 (second enlargement – Greece), and 12 members in 1985 (third enlargement – Portugal and Spain). The free trade area was developed into a custom union and the elements of the economic union were piling up quickly, so that, with the help also of Completing the Internal Market: White Paper from the Commission to the European Council (Milan, 28-29 June 1985) and the Single European Act (1986 – the first serious revision of the Rome Treaties), the single market was completed on 1 January 1993.

### **The political dimension comes back**

The Maastricht Treaty reintroduced the political element in the equation.

Not with wording of Schumann’s Declaration<sup>7</sup> and not even at the level of the Paris Treaty of 1951 (in the sense of a federal construction).

But it provided many elements of a political construction, first of all under the form of the three pillars construction:



We shall not speak here about **the first pillar** – the European economic and monetary union, i.e. the last stage before passing to the political union, in the scheme presented by Ali M. El-Agraa.

For the first time, the member countries agreed to develop **a common foreign and security policy (the second pillar)** and, as Javier Solana put it: “we have made significant progress in the last 10 years in building the beginnings of a credible foreign policy”<sup>8</sup>. And further on: “This is impressive, given where we come from. Essentially, the EU was set up to abolish

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<sup>7</sup> Schumann’s Declaration of 9 May 1950 considered the European Community of Coal and Steel as “a first step in the federation of Europe” and “the first concrete foundation of a European federation indispensable to the preservation of peace”.

<sup>8</sup> Ditchley Foundation annual lecture by Javier SOLANA, EU High Representative for the CFSP: "Europe's global role - what next steps?" Oxfordshire, 11 July 2009

foreign policy between the Member States. Our political weight - long our Achilles heel - has increased. We are working closely with the US, UN and NATO. The trend is up, even if we are not always moving as fast as I would like”.

We do not share Mr. Solana’s enthusiasm about what has been done in this special domain, previously an exclusive domain of individual states’ action, but we must recognize that the European Union is acting now everywhere, where it is necessary, in order to influence policies violating international law or human rights, or policies disrespectful of the rule of law or democratic principles. To that respect, the EU has even designed sanctions of a diplomatic or economic nature. Also, the EU is also a leading international actor in the fight against illicit accumulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons.

The common foreign and security policy was coupled with a **common security and defense policy**, aiming to strengthen the EU's external ability to act through the development of civilian and military capabilities in conflict prevention and crisis management. We quote again Mr. Solana, who thinks that the “European defense has been a big part of the progress we have made. When we started, the comprehensive nature of our conceptual approach was ahead of its time. We are now present on three continents with a wide range of missions. From Kosovo to Afghanistan. In the Middle East and off the coast of Somalia”<sup>9</sup>.

Finally, **the third pillar** was constituted originally by the cooperation in the field of justice and home affairs. But the things developed faster than was initially thought about, so that the Amsterdam Treaty has to transfer the policy on asylum, migration and judicial co-operation in civil matters to the Community pillar as the member countries were obliged to face together the pressure and the problems engendered by the large flows of immigrants. So, the third pillar remained responsible only with the “police and judicial co-operation in criminal matters”. However, the name of “cooperation in the field of justice and home affairs” is still used to cover the third pillar and the transferred domains, which are treated altogether by the ministers of justice and home affairs.

### **Area of freedom, security and justice**

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<sup>9</sup> Ditchley Foundation annual lecture by Javier SOLANA, EU High Representative for the CFSP: "Europe's global role - what next steps?" Oxfordshire, 11 July 2009

The area of freedom, security and justice was defined **by the Treaty of Amsterdam** with a view to ensuring the free movement of persons and offering a high level of protection to citizens. Consequently, it has to cover policy areas ranging from the management of the European Union's external borders to judicial cooperation in civil matters and police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters, including also asylum, immigration and the fight against crime (terrorism, organized crime, trafficking in human beings, drugs, etc.).

Nevertheless, we have to recognize that the emphasis on this particular domain is not just because democracy and prosperity are good and reasonable things, but mainly because a dynamic but stable order in Europe is vital not only for the continent, but for the peace and order of the whole world.

From its very beginning, European integration has been firmly rooted in a shared commitment to **freedom based on human rights, democratic institutions and the rule of law**, values that proved necessary for securing peace and developing prosperity in the European Union and serve also as a cornerstone for enlarging the Union.

But the series of tragical events occurred after the Treaty of Amsterdam gave new content and new dimensions to the activities covered by the area of freedom, security and justice. The aftermath of the terrorist attacks in the US on 11 September 2001 saw significant developments in EU justice and home affairs activity. And the terrorist bombings in Madrid in March 2004 and London in July 2005 underlined the need for effective coordinated action. Member states have been pressed into acting together to combat a perceived terrorist threat.

In 2008, the Barroso Commission established four key strategic areas which are prosperity, solidarity, security and freedom, together with migration management and a stronger role for the EU in the world.

The European Union has already put in place the **major ingredients** of a shared area of prosperity and peace: a single market, economic and monetary union, and the capacity to take on global political and economic challenges. The challenge now is to ensure that **freedom**, which includes the right to move freely throughout the Union, can be enjoyed in conditions of security and justice accessible to all.

This freedom should not, however, be regarded as the exclusive preserve of the Unions own citizens. It would be in contradiction with Europe's traditions to deny such freedom to those whose circumstances lead them justifiably to seek access to our territory. This in turn requires the Union to develop **common policies on asylum and immigration**, while taking into account the need for a consistent control of external borders to stop illegal immigration and to combat those who organize it and commit related international crimes.

Since the entry into force of the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1999, a large number of common measures have been adopted in the areas of asylum and immigration, as the Community and the member states share the competence to legislate in those areas. Nevertheless, national authorities keep an important role and are continuously adopting new national measures, which may in some cases have an impact on other member states or on the EU as a whole.

**Integration of third-country nationals** is an important factor in ensuring the full benefits from immigration. It has become a priority area for the EU and a common framework for integration is being developed following a distinctive European approach.

The enjoyment of freedom requires a **genuine area of justice**, where people can approach courts and authorities in any Member State as easily as in their own. Criminals must find no way of exploiting differences in the judicial systems of Member States. Judgments and decisions should be respected and enforced throughout the Union, while safeguarding the basic legal certainty of people and economic operators. Better compatibility and more convergence between the legal systems of Member States must be achieved.

People have the right to expect the Union to address the threat to their freedom and legal rights posed by serious crime. To counter these threats, a common effort is needed to prevent and **fight crime and criminal organizations** throughout the Union. The joint mobilization of police and judicial resources is needed to guarantee that there is no hiding place for criminals or the proceeds of crime within the Union.

The area of freedom, security and justice should be based on the principles of **transparency and democratic control**. The EU must develop an open dialogue with civil society on the aims and principles of this area in order to strengthen citizens' acceptance and support. In order to maintain confidence in authorities, common standards on the integrity of authorities should be developed.

The European Union also develops a capacity to act and be regarded as a **significant partner on the international scene**, by closely cooperating with partner countries and international organizations, like the Council of Europe, OSCE, OECD and the United Nations.

In November 2004, five years on from Tampere, EU leaders adopted the Hague program designed to "strengthen freedom, security and justice in the EU". The program, which runs from 2005 to 2010, set the objectives to be implemented to achieve the common goals. In particular, it moved decision-making from unanimity among member states to qualified majority voting in most areas of the justice and home affairs field. This was hoped to speed up the policy-making process considerably and mark the start of a new phase.

### **The area of peace – some geopolitical considerations**

The fundamental goals of any EU policy should be stability, security, and prosperity. What we need is a Europe whose economies are growing, whose democratic institutions are solid and enjoy popular respect, and whose peoples look to the future with energy, commitment, optimism and self-reliance. But those goals are not a given, they do not turn into reality only by simply defining them as such. They should be put into practice by a strenuous effort, by an articulating policy, by the partnership of all member states and in close cooperation with countries and institutions abroad, by allotting the necessary ways and means for that purpose:

In 1993, Max Singer and Aaron Wildavsky developed the theory that the world is dividing and will remain divided, over the long term, into two camps, which those authors called the "**zones of peace**" and the "**zones of turmoil**"<sup>10</sup>.

The **zones of peace** are regions that enjoy democratic governance and an overall level of prosperity that prevents or at least minimizes widespread, chronic suffering. What gives zones of peace their full significance, however, is peace: military conflict within and among them has become virtually inconceivable. As a result, growth and democracy within these zones are reasonably safe. The European Union satisfies these requirements

The **zones of turmoil**, by contrast, are regions where war at all levels, from organized urban violence to international conflict, is not only plausible but endemic. And from the prevalence of armed conflict, or the constant threat of violence, flow the instability, insecurity, and

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<sup>10</sup> Max Singer and Aaron Wildavsky, *The Real World Order: Zones of Peace, Zones of Turmoil* (Chatham, N.J.: Chatham House Publishers, 1993)

absence of a reliable institutional order that in turn make economic growth and democracy impossible.

Citizens of the zones of peace have an immediate interest in preventing the conflict in the zones of turmoil from spilling over and bringing damage and destruction to their own societies.

The most ambitious project would be, in the medium and long term, to convert some or all of the zones of turmoil into zones of peace and hence to democracy and affluence. In this task, a Europe anchored firmly within its own zone of peace is an important, indeed vital, asset; having also the capacity to grow and improve their ability to encourage peace and reduce misery in the zones of turmoil.

The European zone of peace lies, at its eastern and southern borders, next to zones of turmoil, situation that makes imperious to it to deter instability in the zones of turmoil from disrupting peace in Europe. The efforts to extend peace into these regions, peace understood in the widest sense as including legal order, stability, and an atmosphere conducive to long-term investment, productivity, and prosperity, is not unreasonable, because zones of turmoil closest to zones of peace are always the easiest to influence.

Expanding Europe's zone of peace into the former Soviet empire and into North Africa and the Middle East is the regional task corresponding to the global task of first protecting and then extending zones of peace. The best way to begin this long-term process of pacifying the zone of turmoil to Europe's east has been by a measured and consistent expansion of NATO and the European Union (EU).

“Europe cannot feel secure unless the citizens in the bordering countries live a decent life: having good job opportunities in their own countries would prevent them from taking Europe as a work “paradise”, where all their dreams can come true”<sup>11</sup>. Europe has well understood this reality, and its recent policy of good neighborhood with the surrounding countries is the proof. However, in order to reach the desired goals in a reasonable time frame, the Union should invest more human, political and financial resources.

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<sup>11</sup> Eberhard Rhein, Advisor at the European Policy Centre, Brussels, Excerpts from Cahiers Euromed, 2005

## **EU enlargement**

Last decade of the XX century and beginning of the new millennium were dominated by the imperative of the EU enlargement, as the dismantlement of communism in the Central and East-European countries was accompanied by the strong orientation and political commitment of the new authorities to join the political, economic and military structures of Western Europe, first of all NATO and the European Union, so that the passed divisions between East and West to be overcome and East and West countries to be finally reunited under a common umbrella.

EU enlargement process after 1989 represented the main element initiating and catalyzing all debates and activities devoted within this period to the European construction. The intergovernmental conferences following the Maastricht Treaty, signed in February 1992, and the new treaties of Amsterdam and Nice, gave more substantial answers to the numerous problems related to the largest enlargement in the EU history.

**The fourth enlargement** took place in 1995 in the habitual manner. Austria, Finland and Sweden joined the European Union before the now famous Copenhagen criteria to become active and applicable.

**The fifth wave** of EU enlargement, which eventually included Romania, took longer and was the most extensive one throughout the history of the European integration, with 12 countries joining the Union in two phases: 10 countries on the first of May 2005 and two countries on the first of January 2007. (Some people are now speaking about the fifth and sixth waves, a way of thinking against the decisions adopted by the EU supreme body – the European Council!)

With this huge wave, the enlargement process has not come to an end but it will continue to build up with new candidates, as we already see: the agenda already covers the Western Balkans and Turkey, in different stages of the process, which have been given the perspective of becoming EU members *on the basis of the already agreed principles and conditions*. It is worth keeping this in mind, as **now as before**, among the candidate countries there is a concern and even a fear that the EU access criteria will be changed to be made tougher if not impossible to be fulfilled!

The prevailing opinion at that time considered that “enlargement was the most ambitious project assumed by the European Union”, representing “the reunification of the entire European continent, divided following the Second World War. Previous enlargements took place in a divided Europe, but this one helps the fulfillment of the founding fathers’ dream: to achieve a united and free Europe<sup>12</sup>” (See also Schuman’s Declaration of 9 May 1950). “One

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<sup>12</sup> Wim Kok – Enlarging the European Union: Achievements and Challenges. Report to the European Commission, Robert Schuman Center for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, Florence, 26 March 2003, pag.9

should not forget that enlargement has historically represented Europe's greatest contribution to peace, security, and democracy”<sup>13</sup>.

The spirit of Europe reunification, even if blurring somewhat – what we have to recognize -, continues anyway to be present in the official thinking and debates in the EU and encourages the desire of other European states, as those pertaining to the Western Balkans, to persevere on the road towards full EU membership.

The Final Declaration of the European Council in Athens, in April 2004, when the accession treaties were signed with 10 of 12 countries of CEE, mentioned it clearly: “This Union represents our joint decision to put an end to centuries of confrontation and to overcome the former divisions of our continent. This Union represents our common will to build a new future, based on cooperation, respect of diversities and mutual understanding. Our Union represents a collective project: a project to share our future as a community of values”<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> Yannis Valinakis in interview with Vassiliki Nicoloulia – The Way to a European Ithaka; in The Bridge Magazine

<sup>14</sup> Final act of Plenipotentiaries Meeting in Athens, Greece, on April 16, 2003, pag.11