

## INTRODUCTION

The monograph *The Future of the European Union* as well as the publication that precedes it *European Integration – Conditions, Essence and Consequences* have been compiled as part of the project “Quo vadis Unio? a racja stanu Polski” under the DI-ALOG research programme between 2019 and 2023. It is the result of contributions by Europeanists, political scientists, lawyers, economists, cultural scholars and historians who study the issues of European integration. The content presented in both publications reflects the research outcomes and views of the individual authors. The first of these publications was designed as an attempt to summarise the integration process to date and its legal and institutional dimension, which is the contemporary European Union. The publication “The Future of the European Union” consists of five parts: “The Concepts of Reforms of the European Union”, “Future Modernization of the EU Institutional System”, “Selected EU Policies – Development Prospects”, “The European Union – External Determinants of Further Development”, “The Perspectives on the Theoretical Dimension of European Studies”.

Part I “The Concepts of Reforms of the European Union” is intended as a presentation of selected reform concepts. Thus, a political and ideological perspective is applied here, outlining liberal and left-wing (Rafał Riedel) as well as right-wing (Bogdan Szlachta) and social (Anna Nędział) strategies. It shows the dramatic nature of this division and the diverse location of the views that fill these concepts, especially with regard to such notions as the sovereignty of member states, the formula for democratic mechanisms in the political system of the European Union, and the scope of competences of national and supranational structures. This chapter also outlines the visions of integration development strategies in EU concepts (Józef Fiszer) as well as national concepts (Tomasz Grzegorz Grosse, Paweł Turczyński, Konstanty Adam Wojtaszczyk). A special place is given to the perspectives and views on the territorial expansion of the European Union (Olga Barbur-ska, Adam Szymański).

Part II of the monograph provides a platform for analysing future changes in the institutional system. It presents the potential limits of modernisation (Anna Wier-zchowska), the place of institutions in the modernised European Union (Jacek Knopek, Malwina Ewa Kołodziejczak), the positions of interest groups in EU member states (Jarosław Filip Czub) and institutional balance as a premise for the future development of European integration (Danuta Kabat-Rudnicka). The future of the European Union’s institutional system is confronted with the dynamics presented by other integration actors.

Part III “Selected EU Policies – Development Prospects” provides a platform for the interpretation of new solutions in the field of energy and climate policy (Krzysztof Tomaszewski, Kamil Jaworski). It also addresses the persistent EU dilemma: the prospects for European social policy, also in the context of the balance between eco-

conomic and social goals of the European Community (Włodzimierz Anioł, Tomasz Kubin). It also shows important elements of the health policies of European states (Kinga Zdunek).

Part IV “The European Union – External Determinants of Further Development” provides a venue for the presentation of the growing importance of international factors in achieving integration goals. The following topics are discussed in this context: relations between the European Union and the United States (Bohdan Szklarski), the future of the European Union’s eastern policy (Maciej Raś), Ukraine in the EU – opportunities, barriers, challenges (Yuexin Lu, Ilya-Francisk Chudov, Jakub Krystek), the influence of the European Union on the political systems of Central Asian states (Paweł Stawarz).

Part V “Perspectives on the Theoretical Dimension of European Studies” is a specific record of discussion on new research challenges that arise from the perspectives of modernising the European integration processes (Wojciech Gagattek).

We hope that the issues raised in this monograph will be of interest to potential readers, especially academics and students interested in European integration issues. Insight into these issues may also be useful to government officials and NGO activists, as well as to a wide audience interested in European issues. These objectives may be more achievable after reading both of these monographs dedicated to European integration issues.

*Konstanty Adam Wojtaszczyk  
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Józef M. FISZER

## EU CONCEPTS FOR REFORMS OF THE UNION AND ITS POSITION FOR A FUTURE INTEGRATION IN EUROPE

**Abstract:** This article is devoted to the position of the European Union authorities and its main bodies on the reforms necessary for the Union to become a driving force in the further process of European integration. Its aim is to analyze the current EU condition and outline the prospects for its development. The main bodies of the Union, inter alia The Commission and the European Parliament and the European Council have in recent years reported a wide range of EU “recovery” strategies and proposals but few have been implemented. The European Union is still drifting and losing its authority on the international scene, and European integration is in decline. In this study, I put a few theses, hypotheses and research questions to which I am trying to give comprehensive answers. One of these also concerns the great enlargement of the EU in 2004, and the other one introducing the single currency – the euro.

### INTRODUCTION

When I write “EU concepts for reforms of the Union” I mean various projects and positions on this matter that have been presented in recent years by its main bodies, especially the European Commission and the European Parliament. Together with the European Council and the Council of the EU, they are responsible not only for the functioning of the Union, but also for the integration of Europe today and in the future. There are already many different projects, reform concepts, strategies, declarations and proposals for the “recovery” of the EU, more or less elaborate, realistic or futurological. However, few of them have been implemented. This is also, in my opinion, the cause of the EU’s weakness and the source of its numerous crises and problems.

The aim of this study is to present the European Union today, i.e. 15 years after the great enlargement in 2004, and to outline its future in the light of various EU documents on EU reforms and its prospects. The subject of this study is therefore to analyse the current condition of the EU, i.e. the political, social and economic condition, and to discuss its perspectives in the 21st century, with a particular emphasis on the opportunities and threats for this unprecedented project.

In this study, I present several controversial theses and hypotheses, including that the EU, 15 years after the great enlargement, in many respects is a completely different Union than the one which Poland joined together with nine other countries on 1 May 2004. Another thesis is that the enlargement of the EU by 10 new states, including eight countries of the former Soviet bloc, was a mistake. The EU was not sufficiently prepared for such an unprecedented enlargement. It was determined more by political and international reasons and did not take into account the social and economic realities in these countries. After the premature adoption by the European Union of a common

Rafał RIEDEL

## PERSPECTIVES OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION IN THE LIGHT OF LIBERAL AND LEFTIST CONCEPTS

**Abstract:** The European Union does not function in an axiological “vacuum”, nonetheless it is difficult to point to its clearly left-wing or right-wing character. Throughout its history of development, first as a Community and then as the EU, it has evolved under the influence of left-wing and right-wing thoughts. Among its “founding fathers” and outstanding figures who left their mark on its development, one can find the Christian Democrats, Liberals and Socialists. The EU, whether understood as a community of interests, a common market, a legal community or otherwise, is embedded in a set of shared values and ideals. This chapter provides some insights into the progressive conceptualizations in relation to the future of the European integration project.

### INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

In the considerations on the perspectives of European integration in the light of liberal and leftist concepts, it is impossible not to refer to the European axiological-normative order. The European Union (EU) does not function in an axiological “vacuum (Pikuła, 2015), at the same time it is difficult to point to its clearly left-wing or right-wing character. Throughout its history of development, first as a Community and then as the EU, it has evolved under the influence of left-wing and right-wing thoughts. Among its “founding fathers” and outstanding figures who left their mark on its development, one can find the Christian Democrats, Liberals and Socialists. The EU, whether understood as a community of interests, a common market, a legal community or otherwise, is embedded in a set of shared values and ideals. They are enshrined in EU treaties as well as in documents such as the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Decisive in this respect is primarily Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), which states: “1) The Union’s aim is to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its peoples; 2) The Union offers its citizens an area of freedom, security and justice without internal frontiers; 3) (...) It shall work for the sustainable development of Europe based on balanced economic growth and price stability, a highly competitive social market economy, aiming at full employment and social progress, and a high level of protection and improvement of the quality of the environment. It shall promote scientific and technical advance. It shall combat social exclusion and discrimination, and shall promote social justice and protection, equality between women and men, solidarity between generations and the protection of the rights of the child (...)”. Such a catalog of values, norms and ideals could undoubtedly be signed by both social democrats and liberals or Christian Democrats. This indubitably proves the universalistic and pluralistic character of the axionormative foundations of the integration project in Europe.

Anna NĘDZIAK

## NO, I AM NOT EUROPEAN: EUROPEAN IDENTITY IN TIMES OF AN INTEGRATION CRISIS

“The basis of the unity of Europe is the idea of the Christian community, European culture and civilisation” [translation]

Konrad Adenauer

“(…) if Europe does not have its soul, it does not define itself culturally, it will not be Europe. And if it will only be a political or economic community, it will absolutely not fulfil its task” [translation]

Jacques Delors

“Europe has never existed. One must genuinely create Europe”

Jean Monnet

**Abstract:** In this paper “No, I Am Not European: European Identity in Times of an Integration Crisis,” the significance of European identity within the context of European integration is explored. The author acknowledges the importance of identity in determining one’s sense of belonging to a state, organization, or social group, including the European Union (EU).

The text introduces five scenarios proposed by the European Commission, each presenting varying degrees of cooperation and integration, serving as potential pathways for the EU’s future development.

The author, expressing concern about the EU’s future, emphasizes the necessity of cultivating a strong European identity. Effective communication with citizens, regarding the EU’s actions, capabilities, and limitations, is deemed crucial.

### INTRODUCTION

The value of European identity has recently gained importance in the context of European integration. There was also a feeling that a sense of European identity is essential for the legitimacy of the European Union (EU). Various forms of crises that the Union is struggling with, such as the financial crisis of the euro area, migration, geopolitical, Brexit – also put the feeling of belonging to the community of citizens to the test. This encourages reflection on the concept of European integration and how it will function in the future. The combination of European identity and the crisis, which can be identified in the evolution of European integration since the turn of the 1960s and 1970s, allows one to look for an answer to the question – what exactly does the EU need a European identity for?

When looking for an answer to the above question, one must first determine what exactly a European identity is. It is difficult to obtain an unambiguous definition in this matter as well. Under this concept we can find phenomena that relate to various orders

Bogdan SZLACHTA

## RIGHT-WING POLITICAL SPECTRUM AND THE PERSPECTIVE OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

**Abstract:** The dominance of distinction between liberal and populist supporters of democracy means that “right-wing” concepts of European integration are often perceived as “anti-system” and “anti-European”. The alliance of liberal and leftist ways of thinking in Europe in recent decades was supposed to weaken the “class struggle” and strengthen the association of privacy with individual rights, which were threatened by national differences and their particular order, as well as the universalist claims of Christianity. Criticism of nation states as the main actors of the integrating Europe, reluctant to “European values” interpreted by liberal-left elites, supporters of “universalist ethics”, referring to God or human nature, as well as the long-term emerging identities of communities rather than collections of individuals who were to implement their own life projects, multiplied during this period. The text presents the arguments put forward by defenders of universalist ethicists, nation states and community identities, often recognized by “right-wing populists” who threaten the integration process.

I have written a text dealing with right-wing political spectrum presenting perspectives of European integration as a historian of Western political thought; as such, however, I shall underline at the beginning that the term “right-wing” is at the least ambiguous, if not useless today, since one knows that the main axis of the dispute over the future of Europe is to occur – as recently shown by the Oxford professor of European studies Jan Zielonka (2018) – between the positions of “liberals” and “populists”. This bipartite concept adopted by many journalists (not only the mainstream ones) and numerous European politicians, does not take into account the right-wing on either side. However, this text is juxtaposed with a text presenting selected “non-rightist” left-wing and liberal concepts, which may seem bizarre to a researcher of the history of political thought, because it loses distinctions considering socialist tendencies on the one hand, liberal in the middle, and conservative on the other (taking into account Christian Democratic approach). The association of what is left-wing with what is liberal seems peculiar not only because of the tension between what was associated with socialist or social-democratic approaches and what was associated with concepts exposing the “moment of individual freedom” associated with private property that was to be attacked by socialist critics. Not taking into account the clear differentiation of the liberal tradition.<sup>1</sup> it is more and more often accepted, also in the political science literature, that on the one hand there are left-wing and liberal emancipatory approaches, and on the other,

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<sup>1</sup> In this tradition, it is customary to distinguish approaches sometimes called rationalist (whose supporters are to refer to the rights or rights of individuals, even if they are deprived of both social and cultural contexts, and not only political ones), utilitarian (leading to the recognition of the principle of the majority of the measure of deciding about norms binding all citizens) and evolutionist (referring not so much to the law protecting the rights/rights and principles of the majority, but to the order preceding the will of the legislator, formed in the long term).

Paweł TURCZYŃSKI

## POLISH CONCEPTS OF MODERNISATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

**Abstract:** Poland has been a member of the European Union for almost 20 years. During this period, the EU underwent profound changes: some of them were implemented according to previously prepared projects, while others consisted in the EU overcoming unexpected crises that could call into question its cohesion. The vision of the EU created and created by Poland has also evolved. Because in the international arena the state is represented primarily by its organs – so the Polish vision of the EU was shaped successively by the governments of “post-communists” from the SLD (in the years 2004–2005), “conservatives” from PiS (in the years 2005–2007), “liberals” from PO (in the years 2007–2015) and again PiS (from 2015).

### INTRODUCTION

Poland has been a member of the European Union for over 15 years. During this time, the EU has undergone profound transformations – some of them were implemented according to previously prepared projects, and some consisted in overcoming unexpected crises in the EU that could question its cohesion. The vision of the EU created by Poland has also evolved. Since the state is represented in the international arena primarily by its organs, the Polish vision of the EU was shaped successively by the governments of “post-communists” from the Democratic Left Alliance Party [pol. *Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej*, SLD] (in 2004–2005), “conservatives” from the Law and Justice Party [pol. *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*, PiS] (in 2005–2007), “liberals” from the Civic Platform Party [pol. *Platforma Obywatelska*, PO] (in 2007–2015) and the Law and Justice Party again (from 2015).

### THE DEMOCRATIC LEFT ALLIANCE’S CONCEPTS (2004–2005)

By joining the EU on 1 May 2004, Poland joined a structure that was soon to be transformed. Negotiations on the EU Constitutional Treaty, which started on 1 February 2003, were just about to end, and some aspects of the Treaty were considered unfavourable by Poland. Most often, attention was paid to the fact that in the new decision-making procedure to be introduced by the European Constitution, the voting power of individual states in the EU Council was to be more closely related to their demographic potential – for Poland this meant a significant reduction in voting power compared to the previous regulations – the Treaty of Nice (Orzechowski, Verheugen, 2009, pp. 167–168).<sup>1</sup> Another, unfavourable provision of the “Euroconstitution” which

<sup>1</sup> On 18 September 2003 Jan M. Rokita, one of the leaders of the Civic Platform Party at the time, called for a strong opposition to the proposed provision, with the words “Nice or death”.

Konstanty Adam WOJTASZCZYK

## EUROPEAN INTEGRATION STRATEGIES AND DIVISIONS ON THE POLISH POLITICAL SCENE

**Abstract:** The chapter gives an initial outline of the differences between the most important parties in Poland. Throughout the chapter, European political strategies are brought to bear on concrete dilemmas of political choice faced by Polish political parties. Their European strategies are very important for the place of Poland in the EU.

### EUROPEAN ISSUES ON THE POLISH POLITICAL SCENE

The political scene in democratic Poland has undergone dynamic changes after 1989, evolving from a system of multi-party fragmentation at the beginning of the systemic transformation to a stabilised system with two dominant parties, which gradually took shape from the late 1990s and was strengthened in the first two decades of the 21st century, with the Civic Platform and Law and Justice becoming the dominant parties. Junior partners included the Polish People's Party (PSL) in coalition with the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) and in the liberal-popular coalition (PO-PSL), and then United Poland in the right-wing coalition (PiS-SP).

European issues and particularly relations between Poland and the European Union have been the subject of public discourse since 1989. Throughout the entire period, the focus of the dialogue has shifted, as has the degree of interest of political parties in these issues.

The topics of debate have evolved in the context of the different determinants and aspects of our country's membership in the European Union, as well as the Community's development problems.

Various policy platforms predominantly focused on the following issues:

- The years 1989–1991/94 were a period when Poland first normalised its relations with the European Communities and then signed the Association Agreement in 1991, which entered into force in 1994. Various political factions were emerging and expanding, but their positions were not well developed. Views that advocated bringing the country closer to the European Communities (European Union) were clearly dominant. Disapproval for this course of action was less pronounced. It surfaced around the Union of Real Politics and Janusz Korwin Mikke, some national parties, and the Christian National Union and the Confederation of Independent Poland to some extent. The largest parties, particularly those in the centre (the Democratic Union, the Liberal-Democratic Congress) and on the left (the Democratic Left Alliance and the Labour Union) were pro-European.

Pro-European strategies were justified as a “return to Europe” that would benefit the country, with the vision of growth and prosperity, the rationalisation of economic



Tomasz Grzegorz GROSSE

## THE “INTEGRATION ENGINE” UNDER THE FRENCH LEADERSHIP

**Abstract:** The aim of the study is to present the French vision of the future of the EU, as well as the unconventional method by which President Emmanuel Macron pushed his ideas. Many of his initiatives ran into serious difficulties – the dissatisfaction of other EU Member States and external powers. The French proposals were in line with the traditional approach of the country’s elite to integration, as well as with the local institutions of state capitalism, the solutions of which were to be passed on to the rest of the member states. This approach was therefore strongly linked to French political culture, strategy and national interests. Nevertheless, I hypothesize that Paris’ demands were not always rational for the entire EU, and were not always beneficial for the stability and development of European integration.

### INTRODUCTION

The aim of this article is to analyse the French-German leadership, sometimes referred to as the “integration engine” (Krotz, Schild, 2013). Indeed, it has had the greatest influence on the directions of integration over the years. I focus on the post-Brexit period, i.e. shortly after the British public’s decision to leave the European Union (EU) in 2016. The “integration engine” clearly came under the influence of the French President in this period. This was related to Emmanuel Macron’s dynamic governing style, in which he sought to impose his ideas for the future of integration on his partners. Angela Merkel’s political style was far more subdued, even withdrawn and conciliatory as far as possible. There was also another reason for the disparity between the two parties in terms of their political commitment. The German Chancellor’s political base was getting weaker with each election and Merkel herself decided to give up party leadership and was preparing to retire.

Merkel usually responded to various French initiatives after a long pause for thought, sometimes approving them or more often modifying them to suit German interests. On other issues, she sought to water down Macron’s ideas, delay or even defuse them, usually with the help of other member states which shared Germany’s views. The German side rarely put forward its own initiatives that would have been difficult for the French government to accept and thus push it into defensive positions. Using selected examples, I will try to show how France set the tone for the discussion on the future of the EU, and how German politicians responded to this.

One of the basic premises of France’s European integration strategy was the Franco-German reconciliation. After the German defeat in World War II, France approached this reconciliation as a much stronger partner. Over time, however, its potential weakened vis-à-vis its eastern neighbour, especially in economic terms. After the reunification of Germany, the geopolitical situation swung decisively in Berlin’s favour. Therefore,

Olga BARBURSKA

## THE EUROPEAN UNION'S ENLARGEMENT PROSPECTS: A VIABLE PROJECT OR AN ABANDONED IDEA?

**Abstract:** The purpose of this chapter is to assess the prospects for continuing the processes of expanding the membership of the European Union. For this purpose, the basic reasons why the EU's membership is so attractive to many countries were indicated first. The course of previous enlargements has also been outlined, including in particular the great enlargement to the East in 2004–2013. Then, an analysis of the current situation was made, presenting the basic conditions and positions on the idea of further enlargement presented, on the one hand, by the EU itself, and on the other – by the countries currently aspiring to membership. This required the characterization of two groups of such countries, located in the broadly understood areas of Eastern Europe and the Balkans (focusing on case studies of Ukraine and Turkey). All this made it possible to indicate the general prospects for further enlargement of the European Union.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The European Union's ability to increase its membership and thus its territorial area is not a unique feature for the EU as a global actor. Other supranational organisations can expand their membership as well, while the other key actors in international relations, namely countries, can enlarge their territories in different ways, most often by armed conquest or peaceful annexation – in modern times, see Russia's seizure of Crimea in 2014 or Germany's reunification in 1990. (On the other hand, there are probably more instances of aspirations for secession than for annexation these days, just to cite the cases of Kosovo, Sudan, Catalonia or Scotland).

From its very beginning, the European Union (and previously the European Communities) has existed, as if by default, with an inherent possibility of increasing the number of its members and territory; this was even somewhat of a necessity due to the intense promotion of the idea of European unity. This prospect is envisaged by Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), which grants the right to apply for accession to any European country that respects democratic values. As a result, first the European Communities and then the European Union increased their membership no fewer than seven times between 1973 and 2013. This means that they have always possessed a high degree of attractiveness that continues to draw new countries.

It should be emphasized that this attractiveness results not only from the EU's enormous economic potential, which makes it one of the leading industrial, trade and investment powers in the entire world. Suffice it to say that the EU's aggregate GDP is comparable to the US and China (Zajączkowski, 2014). The European Union's attractiveness also, or perhaps primarily, stems from the adoption of a specific political philosophy that combines elements of pragmatism (emphasised by the school of political

Adam SZYMAŃSKI

## PROSPECTS OF THE EU ENLARGEMENT

**Abstract:** The enlargement of the European Union was a major process developing in the European Communities/Union over decades, forming one of the two elements of the EU enlargement/deepening of European integration dichotomy. However, after the admission of Bulgaria and Romania to the EU in 2007, the so called “enlargement fatigue” emerged and the whole process slowed down, losing its significance for the EU members facing multiple crisis in the Union. The current candidate countries – i.e. Turkey and the Western Balkan states have been facing a more demanding process since 2005–2006 based on a modified enlargement strategy taking into consideration the capacity of the EU to admit new members. The prospects for admission of the aforementioned states to the EU vary from case to case but the future of the enlargement seems to be uncertain and ambiguous in all cases.

This chapter is an attempt to answer the key question about the future of the EU enlargement in such an ambiguous situation characterised by both interdependence between the EU and candidate countries as well as the increasing politicisation of the relationship. As the prediction relies on a network of contemporary determinants of EU enlargement, the key method is extrapolation, i.e. making conclusions on the future development of events and processes on the basis of what has happened so far.

The chapter conclusion is that the current set of determinants of the EU enlargement seem to be not favourable for the continuation of admission of new member states. The difficult situation of the EU afflicted by multiple crises and disintegration coincides with the phenomena dysfunctional for the democratisation and consolidation of system of market economy in the candidate countries. This gives a lot of arguments to the EU member states opposing the continuation of the process and taking into consideration the negative public opinion. Moreover, it gives the floor to third countries which are slowly becoming more attractive at least for some candidates to the EU membership. However, it does not mean that we cannot expect the admission of any new member states to the EU in the future. Despite many obstacles it is still possible for the EU to continue the enlargement because the substantial part of the European decision-makers still recognise the significance of the process for both the EU and candidates, particularly in the face of the war in Ukraine.

However, the enlargement must be adjusted to the current determinants and take into consideration the existing objections. It means that new elements should be added to the characteristics of the process to date. It will be then not only long and gradual but also far from uniform for all candidates, in accordance with the differentiation – increasingly stronger in the EU. The frontrunners from the Balkan region can count on the continuation of the current shape of the pre-accession process. However, the EU should consider offering, in medium term, to such countries as Turkey or Bosnia and Herzegovina a modified, functional model of relationship acceptable for the EU and its members and beneficial for the candidates, putting the formal membership on the back burner for the time being. This scenario would prove that the differentiated integration is not a failure to integrate in a uniform way and does not mean confining certain states to a “second-class” status.

## INTRODUCTION

The enlargement of the European Union (EU), defined as a gradual process which begins in advance of the formal accession, with the opening of the membership perspective, followed by the pre-accession process, membership negotiations, leading up to the

Anna WIERZCHOWSKA

# PROSPECTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

**Abstract:** Exploring the institutional future of the EU has always accompanied reflections on the integration process, due to the fundamental importance of structures and bodies in the development of this undertaking.

The approach to these considerations can take into account traditional theories, including theories of institutionalism, but other methods can also be used, referring to the increasing complexity of contemporary systems. Combining several research tools may be an interesting look. In the proposed article, these are: speculative complex time, the concept of complex adaptive systems and the concept of resilience.

Based on the assumed methodological grid, the starting point for reading the future of the integration process and its institutional system is the present, not their experiences resulting from decisions made in the past. Therefore, it is important to correctly and unfalsifiedly decode current events, so as to forecast development on their basis.

Therefore, taking into account the described scheme and the reality of integration, it can be concluded that the currently implemented post-Lisbon policy is likely to be driven by the intergovernmental logic of the development of the EU political system. On the other hand, due to the high degree of complexity of inter-institutional relations, the simple assumption of moving towards the growing importance of member states does not have to be the only verifiable option.

## 1. METHODOLOGICAL AND THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY

In order to answer questions about the future and development prospects, it is necessary to select appropriate research tools, given the specific determinants of the discourse conducted. This is because in this case we do not deal with facts and related developments, but we can only presume them on the basis of known trends and previous experience. The structuring of the methodological workshop is therefore particularly important when it comes to predictive scenarios for the development of the EU institutional system.

The overall methodological and theoretical framework of the study will be to adopt the speculative time complex approach (with regard to the thread of the future) and complex adaptive systems including resilience mechanisms (in the area of the systemic realities of the European integration process). In addition, with regard to the institutions themselves, the concept of multi-level governance will be used, with a particular reference to the supranational and intergovernmental levels.

Reflection on predicting future developments and the passage of time was undertaken as early as in the ancient times. Aristotle, the author of the *Metaphysics*, when attempting to understand the issue, explained that the past is a present that no longer

Jacek KNOPEK  
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## THE ROLE OF INSTITUTIONS IN THE FUTURE POLITICAL AND SYSTEMIC SHAPE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

**Abstract:** The aim of this article is to attempt to define the role of institutions in the future constitutional shape of the European Union. The hitherto established hierarchy of the institutional system of the European Union has been the consequence of compromises which have led to the formation of unusual relationships between its bodies. It would now be necessary to give this structure the right scope of powers and competences, based on bodies, institutions and agencies. In particular, the EU security system, which today should be an essential part of deeper European integration, needs to be reformed. Without this integration, individual European states will not be able to compete with other global powers.

### INTRODUCTION

The pan-European institutional system is inextricably linked to the process of integration of the old continent. This process became active after World War II and was fully institutionalised. Due to the fact that its structure was defined in the area of well-established state systems, it took a form not found in any of the Member States. By extending the integration to political-military, economic-financial and socio-cultural aspects, a structure of multi-level influence and cooperation was created on the old continent, shaping the political system of the European Union over time (Doliwa-Klepacka, Doliwa-Klepacki, 2009).

This study aims to define the role of EU institutions in the future structure of the European Union. During its long-term development, this initiative has developed a diverse organisational structure that cannot be compared with any other built both in the past and in the present. This structure is therefore pioneering, resulting from the functioning of European countries and international organisations, a product of European political thought, meetings of ministerial institutions of the pan-European forum and established customs successively introduced by significant personalities or groups of political influence. Institutional and political initiatives initiated in this way into the institutional system of the European Union and further developed, resulted in a constant need for reforms and modifications from the very beginning. Some of the competencies of the organs were doubled, others were not able to influence each other, and others could not use their competencies to influence the institutional system. Hence, the question of the role of the EU institutions in the future political system of the European Union is still valid.

The literature on the institutional system of the European Union is abundant, hence the selection of it for the analysis of the issue was a real challenge of a technical nature.

Danuta KABAT-RUDNICKA

## POST-CRISIS INSTITUTIONAL BALANCE AND DEMOCRATIC LEGITIMACY AS FACTORS CONDITIONING THE DIRECTION OF CHANGES IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

**Abstract:** While change is inherent in the European Union, it does not change the fact that any change to the institutional “puzzle” upsets the delicate balance – the specific rules of the game – a problem which emerged when countermeasures were taken to deal with the financial and economic crisis. This, in turn, raises the question of how this change affected the democratic legitimacy of the Union’s actions.

The purpose of this article is to verify the thesis that actions aimed at counteracting the effects of the financial crisis not only upset the institutional balance but also further highlighted the problem of legitimising the Union’s actions. The remedy for this can be seen in supplementing the majority, representative models of democracy with non-majoritarian, non-party forms, and due to the fact that democratic legitimacy should be ensured at the same level at which actions are taken, it would be desirable to increase the powers of the European Parliament – the body elected by and representing European Union citizens.

### INTRODUCTION

The last decade has been marked by numerous crises that also affected the European Union (EU). The crises had their origins outside the EU, such as the migration crisis (in the case of Syria and North Africa) and the financial crisis (begun in the United States), as well as within the EU itself. The latter should be linked to its functioning, governance, and expansion of the scope of matters dealt with at the EU level, as well as the depletion of the power of ideas and goals that have so far guided the building of a common Europe. It turns out that maintaining peace in Europe is no longer a sufficient reason for the existence and further development of the EU, and the over 70-year time of peace marked by the end of the Cold War, the reunification of Germany, the fall of communism in Central and Eastern Europe and the passing away of witnesses of war events, created the illusion that war in Europe was a closed chapter to which there is no return as an instrument of politics, which we could experience recently in connection with Russia’s aggression in Ukraine and the war on the eastern fringes of the EU.

The financial crisis has deepened the divisions between the North and the South, grouping on one side countries that advocate greater financial discipline (such as Germany or the Netherlands), and on the other side those favouring increased budget transfers (as in the case of France). Brexit, in turn, as an expression of a sovereign decision made in the wake of a nationwide referendum, confirms the declining attractiveness of the idea of European integration, and the fact that the Union no longer attracts with its

## THE PROSPECTS FOR THE PLACE AND ROLE OF INTEREST GROUPS IN THE MEMBER STATES OF THE MODERNISING EUROPEAN UNION

**Abstract:** The article presents the concepts of development and the role of interest groups in the Member States of the modernizing European Union from a theoretical, normative and functional perspective. The concepts and assumptions contained in the article are presented in a condensed manner and take into account the directions of development of interest groups in the European Union. The article analyzes the physical impact of independent phenomena on the functioning of interest groups in the European Union, which is i.e. verification of the assumptions of development and the role of interest groups in the Member States of the modernizing European Union. The above analyzed research material from a theoretical perspective shows the real role to which the functioning of sectoral interest groups in the European Union boils down. In addition, depending on the approach in the article, we can distinguish various functions performed and prospective within the decision-making system. Sophisticated forms of influence are also defined, which reflect the actions taken mainly by sectoral interest groups at national and European level. The main research problem in the article is the verification of the direction of development and the place of sectoral interest groups in the modernizing European Union. The key research questions are: to what extent will sectoral interest groups become central to decision-making at European level? What will be the role of interest groups in the implementation process in the perspective of sophisticated research theories? What kind of functions will be performed by sectoral interest groups in a modernizing European Union?

The first interest groups became active in the European arena with the development of the European Communities (EC) in the 1950s (Traktat, 1952), starting mainly in the agrarian, coal and steel sectors (Dylus, 2005, pp. 13–14). The 1950s were difficult for the fledgling lobbying activities carried out by interest groups, as there was stagnation in various industries in the post-war period as a result of World War II. However, despite the grave economic situation in the Old Continent, Europe had to be rebuilt from devastation caused by World War II. European interest groups became one of the unifying links in Europe and, since the early 1950s, have contributed to the intensive integration of the European Union (EU) states and played an important role in the legislative process (Mazey, Richardson, 1993, p. 5; more extensively: Czub, 2018, pp. 89–125).

### THE STATE OF RESEARCH

Up to now, the main areas of research on interest groups examined by various researchers have mainly been analyses of how stakeholders (interest groups) function within different political systems, whether at global, EU or national levels. In addition, researchers have analysed individual interest groups rather than the physical impact of independent phenomena such as the concepts of development and the role of interest

Krzysztof TOMASZEWSKI

## THE FUTURE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION IN THE FIELD OF ENERGY AND CLIMATE

**Abstract:** The European Union is a world leader in climate and environmental protection. Ambitious goals in this regard are set out in the European Green Deal strategy presented in 2019. Its basic premise is the energy transition towards a zero-carbon economy. Such a direction is not only desirable from the perspective of sustainable development, but also expected by the public of member states. At the same time, it should be emphasized that the effective implementation of this strategy is not an easy task and requires a number of adaptation measures in various areas of the modern economy. The text presents the most important challenges facing the European Union in the coming decades in the context of the implementation of the strategy for a zero-carbon economy. They concern the political, economic, as well as social and technological spheres.

The climate change that occurred in the 20th century, in particular global warming, made climate protection and the associated issues of energy production the subject of worldwide debate. Today they are on the political and economic agendas of most countries in the world as well as international organisations – both global, such as the United Nations, and regional, such as the European Union (hereinafter: the EU) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. World leaders are aware that without appropriate steps in this area, without cooperation, without a strategy, it will be difficult to halt negative changes in the environment and thus implement the principles of sustainable development (Harashuk et al., 2020).

The European Union has been engaged in climate protection activities for many years. Efforts in this regard are made under the so-called energy and climate policy (Mrozowska, 2016; Communication COM/2010/639; Communication COM/2013/169). Its objectives are regularly updated and amended to reflect technological progress and global megatrends (Deloitte, 2016). According to the European Commission (hereinafter: the EC), the priority objective of the EU's energy and climate policy is to achieve the so-called climate neutrality by 2050 (Communication COM/2019/640). In order to achieve this task, it is necessary to take steps in political, legislative and financial dimensions.

The aim of this text is to take a dialectical view of the future of the EU's energy and climate policy in the context of the political, economic and social realities faced by the member states. The hypothesis is that for the EU to maintain its position as a global leader in climate protection, it is necessary to effectively implement the assumptions of the European Green Deal (Communication COM/2019/640).

The fundamental research question that needs to be asked is: are there real possibilities for realising these ambitious plans? There is no doubt that the burden of the energy transition will be shouldered by the member states. It will depend primarily on their commitment and economic capabilities to what extent the EU will achieve its goals (Gawlik, Mokrzycki, 2019).



Kamil JAWORSKI

## CLIMATE POLICY AS A KEY DIMENSION OF THE DEBATE ON THE FUTURE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** During the past two decades, climate policy has gained a lot of importance in the European Union. In this article, I try to explain what the EU climate policy is, how it has developed and how its architecture has changed. I also mention the risks associated with pursuing an ambitious EU climate policy. Furthermore, I describe the latest trends in the development of EU climate policy and explain what are its implications for institutional, financial and identity dimension of the European integration. I conclude the article with the conclusion that the growing importance of climate policy and the challenges related to its implementation will have significant implications for the future of the whole EU.

### Introduction

The problem of the systemic reform and directions of changes taking place in the EU is most often discussed in terms of historical or institutional approaches, or a combination of both. Taking up the issues of EU reform in such a manner has its rational justification. Thanks to them, it is possible to treat the problem as a whole, determining the quintessence of the problem of European integration, the reasons for initiating, deepening or slowing down this process. Such views also allow for a broader picture of the rules of functioning of the European Union (EU) as a whole. This is reflected in the analysis of the functioning of the EU in terms of the division of competences between the EU institutions and its Member States, as well as the dependencies and tensions resulting from the clash of the Community and intergovernmental approaches. Such a take on the issues of the systemic reform necessarily focuses on institutional reforms resulting from treaty changes and political practice.

A different approach in discussing the issue of EU reform is to analyse this problem through the prism of the demands of a given Member State or even a specific political leader. From this perspective, the issue of analysing the EU's systemic reform and future directions of its development can be tackled by analysing, for example, the German vision of European integration or discussing the objectives of the European policy pursued by one of the contemporary leaders (e.g. Charles de Gaulle).

However, a slightly different approach to the problem of analysing the directions of the EU reform and its future development can be proposed. Such an alternative approach to this topic may be an attempt to present it through the prism of one of the policies which is implemented at the EU level. Climate policy seems to be a particularly relevant analytical area in this context. This policy, contrary to the assumptions

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<sup>1</sup> The article reflects my views, not the institution where I work.

Włodzimierz ANIOŁ

## THE FUTURE OF EUROPEAN SOCIAL POLICY

**Abstract:** This chapter is devoted to the future role of the European Union in social policy. The author asks the question whether, and if so, to what extent, the competences and decisions in the area of social security, employee regulations, health care, migrations etc. might and should be transferred to the EU level.

In accordance with the provisions of the present European treaties, most of the issues included in this sphere remain in the group of shared or divided competences, exercised jointly by the Union and its Member States. In practice, metaphorically speaking, three main tools are used in the EU social policy: Pen (political declarations and standards), Sword (law enforcement) and Purse (financial distribution). At the same time, the EU Member States are becoming more and more semi-sovereign welfare states.

The author argues that the still insufficiently advanced development of the EU social policy results, most of all, from the current lack or deficit of some European demos, which can be briefly called “Euros”. And that a special role in building a Social Union might be played by the euro zone, because in order for the euro to survive, the economic and monetary union should be imposed with further hoops of the banking, fiscal, budget, social and political union.

More careful observation of the integration processes taking place within the European Union suggests that the sources of many ailments and crisis phenomena in its area – migration, security, budget and tax issues, employee regulations, social rights – are still largely the responsibility of the Member States, while when other domains that are relatively better and more efficiently functioning (internal market, competition, environmental protection, etc.) are to a much greater degree communitarianised, they are covered by the activities of EU structures. No wonder then that the following questions are asked: Should not the competences and decisions also in the first group of issues be transferred to the EU level? If so, how far should joint European responsibility for these matters extend?

So far, social policy has been implemented in the Old Continent in very different national and regional varieties, i.e. within various models of the welfare state or welfare regimes. Therefore, the following questions remain valid on this occasion: To what extent is the EU’s convergent interference with national institutional systems, political cultures, traditions and social habits possible and justified? Should Brussels suggest, not to mention impose, some models of everyday life, e.g. in employment relations, educational activity or family relations?

### I. SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMBALANCE IN THE INTEGRATION PROCESS

The European Union is inhabited today by less than 7% of the world’s population, while its share in the world exports of processed products and in the global GDP reach-

Kinga ZDUNEK

## CONTEXTUAL TRIGGERS OF CHILD-CENTRED HEALTH POLICY IN EUROPE

**Abstract:** Health policy formulation and implementation do not occur in isolation; instead, they are deeply intertwined with the broader societal context. Initiatives undertaken as a part of health policy are not only directed to the population but also driven by the population. Attention should also be focused not only on policy content but also the actors involved, processes affecting the development and implementation of the change and the context within which policy is created. The Models Of Child Health Appraised (MOCHA) project was assessing the varied patterns of children's primary care in Europe, and identifying the optimum models. One strand is looking at societal views of key issues, generating the data presented in this work.

The method was a hybrid qualitative approach linking data-driven, inductive perspective with elements of deductive coding. The MOCHA project had an experienced child health agent in each of the 30 countries; research questions are raised by the researchers, validated by an independent Expert Advisory Board, and issued to country agents.

A questionnaire designed as a semi-structured survey instrument asked agents to identify strong public and professional discussions related to child health services in their countries between July 2016 and mid-December 2016.

The stages were as follow: collecting data, pre-reviewing data, incorporating the data into qualitative analysis software, coding the data, categorizing the data, and constructing the scheme for identified processes or elements. The constant comparative approach was applied.

Representatives of 24 countries responded and 71 cases characterizing different areas of public concerns of European countries were described. Two groups of interdependent factors were identified that trigger the onset or exacerbation of the public concerns about the quality or appropriateness of children's healthcare: internal and external factors.

Civil society has views on the content and quality of children's healthcare. These views matter because it is society's service, and because political policy makers respond to pressures. This study identifies issues which are of concern to the public and often need a constructive response from politicians and policy makers to address service quality.

### INTRODUCTION

Health policy defines health goals and identifies decisions, plans and actions to be taken in order to achieve these goals (WHO, 2021). Viewed in this way, health policy elaborates the values on which it is based, defines a vision for the future that helps to set priorities, and also facilitates the setting of goals and milestones in the short and medium term (WHO, 2021).

Health policy formulation and implementation do not occur in isolation; instead, they are deeply intertwined with the broader societal context. Buse, Walt and Mays (2005) define context through the prism of systemic factors, understood as political, economic and social factors at both national and international levels that influence health policy. Leichter (1979) writes about context in situational, structural, cultural

Tomasz KUBIN

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BUDGETARY INSTRUMENT FOR CONVERGENCE AND COMPETITIVENESS (BICC) FOR THE FUTURE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION. POLITICAL ASPECTS**

**Abstract:** In response to the economic crisis after 2008, the European Union embarked on a very deep reform of the Economic and Monetary Union, which is intended to prevent future problems. One such reform is the Budgetary Instrument for Convergence and Competitiveness (BICC), commonly known as the “Eurozone budget”. It would be intended for euro area countries and, on a voluntary basis, for countries belonging to the Exchange Rate Mechanism II.

In February 2020, the Eurogroup agreed on the need to consider working out an intergovernmental agreement that would set out the details of the BICC, so the future of the BICC is an open question. The possible creation of a separate source of financing, available only to the euro area states, is very significant both in the theoretical (in the context of such issues as the political economy of European integration or fiscal federalism) and in the practical dimension (political and economic aspects of BICC for the functioning of the EU). Therefore, the content of the article is to identify the most important political implications of the creation of the BICC and to briefly analyze them.

### **INTRODUCTION**

In response to the post-2008 economic crisis, the European Union (EU) took steps to provide short-term financial assistance to the hardest-hit member states. The EU also embarked on a very profound reform of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) to prevent the emergence of future problems similar to those experienced after 2008. One such reform is the agreement on the creation of a budgetary instrument for convergence and competitiveness (BICC), commonly referred to as the “Eurozone budget”. It would cover the Eurozone countries and, on a voluntary basis, the countries of the Exchange Rate Mechanism II (ERM II).

The outbreak of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic in 2020 and the efforts taken by countries to contain it immediately triggered a very serious economic crisis. It will only be possible to fully assess its depth and impact once the pandemic has subsided. However, as early as in spring 2020, EU leaders reached an agreement, adopted at the European Council meeting of 17-21 July 2020 (European Council, 2020b), to set up a Next Generation EU (NGEU) assistance fund, financed by bond issues to be repaid by 31.12.2058 at the latest with funds from the EU budget.

Taking into account the fact that the NGEU will total up to €750 billion and that the debt will be incurred by the European Commission (EC) on behalf of the EU for the first time in its history, its establishment is an unprecedented event, which diminishes the importance of the BICC. All the more so as, considering the arrangements to

Bohdan SZKLARSKI

## THE FUTURE OF EU-US RELATIONS IN 2020 (AND BEYOND)

**Abstract:** The article concerns the relationship between the European Union and the United States in 2020 and beyond. The specificity of the activities of the US authorities during the presidency of Donald Trump was indicated. Predictions concerning the future relations between the Union and the United States are also presented, taking into account the risks that are expected in relation to the discussed phenomenon.

The future of EU-American relations is uncertain. In the third year of the Trump administration such statements sound like a cliché. Analyses of such kind proliferate no matter which aspect of American presence in the global arena we touch – whether we talk about the form of conducting foreign affairs security alliance building, trading arms, doing diplomacy, and projecting force or which region we look from East and Central Asia, through the Middle East to Central America. Uncertainty, ambiguity, insecurity, risk, threat or jeopardy are terms often heard from people who have made studying or practicing international relations their profession.

The situation is no different when it comes to EU – American relations. Three years ago that dimension of relations would be neatly incorporated into the term Euroatlantic relations. The term signified a lot more than geographical axis. It signified common axiological roots, common interests and shared view of the world. In 2020 such assumptions are not proper anymore. While the relations definitely soured on many dimensions it would be premature to call them dead.

The argument is going to start with the analysis of the patterns of thinking seemingly revealed by Donald Trump's policies then we are going to examine the relations across the Atlantic in the last decade to highlight the diversity of channels along which they take place on regular basis, eventually we are going to briefly scrutinize the developments in the last three years to capture the specificity of Trump's approach to Europe. Against this background we are going to draw conclusions regarding the possible nature of future relations between the EU and USA.

The tensions in the transatlantic relations over the Iran nuclear program treaty, the Syrian withdrawal, NATO funding, and trade wars (to name just the key issues) make us all focus on the changes emanating from the Oval Office. It makes us also overlook the existence of the forces of continuity which keep the Euroatlantic relations going strong. The goal of this chapter is to examine the interplay between the themes of continuity and change in Trans-Atlantic relations in order to anticipate what might be coming in the near future. The real question is whether the tendencies initiated by Trump may continue beyond the end of his term when he no longer occupies the Oval Office, no matter whether it happens in 2020 or four years later.

Maciej RAŚ

## THE FUTURE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION'S EASTERN POLICY

**Abstract:** The author's objective is to present the most relevant, in subjective terms, determinants of the development of the "eastern dimension" of the European Union interactions and the "authorial" scenarios for the evolution of the EU's relations with its eastern neighbours.

The determinants, which can be both objective and subjective, of the development of the EU's eastern policy can be divided into three categories, taking into account their sources: determinants shaped essentially on the side of the EU and its member states, determinants that originate mainly on the side of this policy's addressee countries, or determinants that originate from outside these actors.

The four presented scenarios are the author's proposals: "Partnership based on the community of values", "Pragmatic partnership", "Stagnation and wait-and-see", and "Division of Europe". They have been devised depending on the development of the situation in the countries of the EU's eastern neighbourhood. The importance of the following issues is highlighted within each of them: the relationship between values and interests in EU policy; the impact on EU security policy and the shaping of the European order; the nature of economic relations; the essence of social contacts.

The proposed scenarios refer to the EU's eastern policy as a whole. Varying paces and directions of the transformation of this policy's individual addressee countries may result in the fulfilment of different variants with regard to different countries. The main point of reference is still the Russian Federation, whose policy will largely determine both the policy of the EU itself and that of the other European post-Soviet republics in the foreseeable future.

### INTRODUCTION

The eastern policy of the European Union (EU) is one of the most important directions of external interactions of the Community and some of its member states (see e.g. Hilz, 2020). Assuming that the policy is addressed to the Russian Federation (Russia) and the Eastern European and South Caucasus countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine), it can be concluded that the effects of its implementation largely determine the shape of the European order in political and economic terms, as well as the extent of Western influence. Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus are located at the EU's frontiers and the countries and societies in the two regions are for the most part culturally and civilisationally close to the EU countries, especially those in Central Europe and the Balkans. In spite of this, there are significant and wide-ranging (political, social and economic) differences in development between the EU and its eastern neighbours, which means that the addressees of the EU's eastern policy have little prospect of EU membership in the foreseeable perspective. The post-Soviet space has also become an object of active policy of the Russian Federation, which treats it as its own "natural" sphere of influence ("privileged interests"). This, in turn, makes the "common neighbourhood" area one of the primary sources of crisis in the EU's and the West's relations with Russia.

Yuexin LU  
Ilya-Francisk CHUDOV  
Jakub KRYSTEK

## UKRAINE'S EU FUTURE – OPPORTUNITIES, BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES

**Abstract:** Ukraine's future in the EU is a frequently discussed topic. This article aims to explore the opportunities, obstacles and challenges in Ukraine's integration with the EU, based on the current cooperation structures, the state of state institutions and the reactions of the international community. The study used a research method consisting in analyzing the content of available literature, reports, opinions and media sources.

### INTRODUCTION

The idea of establishing a nation-state and limiting Russia's influence has long existed in Ukraine. According to Likarchuk (2019, p. 43), the concept of interdependence with Europe can be traced back to the proclamation of a "return to Europe" by former Eastern Bloc countries in 1990 (Kaminskyy, 2021), Ukraine's independence and the collapse of the USSR 1991. The signing of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Communities and Ukraine in 1994 can be considered the beginning of the EU-Ukraine relations (Zheltovskyy, 2021, p. 59).

Yet as recently as February 24, 2022, the political tsunami triggered by the Russian invasion has fundamentally changed the European security framework. Following the eruption of the war Ukraine quickly submitted its application for EU membership. Soon after, in June, the European Commission officially recognized Ukraine's vision of joining the EU and granted it candidate status, bringing Ukraine one step closer to EU membership (European Commission, 2022a).

This has reignited the debate on Ukraine's EU future. Based on the current framework of cooperation between the EU and Ukraine, Ukraine's internal situation, and the responses in the international community, this article aims to explore the opportunities, obstacles, and challenges for Ukraine's integration into the EU. The primary research method used in this article is content analysis based on available literature, reports, opinions, and media sources.

To provide an informative perspective of Ukraine's EU future, the article will address three aspects: a) A general review of Ukraine's reforms since 2014, as well as its political and social environment; b) A cost-benefit analysis of the prospect of accepting Ukraine and its considerations for further integration from the EU perspective; c) A description of the current stances of EU nations on Ukraine's accession as well as the driving forces behind them.

Paweł STAWARZ

## THE EUROPEAN UNION'S IMPACT ON THE POLITICAL SYSTEMS OF THE CENTRAL ASIAN STATES

**Abstract:** The article discusses the issue of relations between the European Union and the states of Central Asia from the perspective of the impact of the activities of the indicated structure on changes in the political systems of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan. The author pointed out the formal effects, mainly related to changes in the legal provisions of the discussed states made under the influence of the EU's activity, while analyzing the real effects of the EU's eastern policy in the field of systemic changes in the Central Asian states. On this basis, the achievements of the European Union in the discussed area were prioritized - it was indicated which states have made the greatest transformation and which have carried out the least changes. The author also pointed out the factors that have a positive and negative impact on both sides of the EU-Central Asian relations in terms of the EU's impact on the political changes in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan. The article refers to the existing relations between the EU and the states of Central Asia and the predictions for the future.

### INTRODUCTION

This article examines the European Union's relations with the countries of Central Asia in the context of the impact of these ties on the political systems of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan. Typically, researchers from various academic disciplines, when they refer to this region, focus on the European Union, studying it from the point of view of its internal mechanisms of operation and, less frequently, from the perspective of its external actions, but mainly with regard to their impact on the EU, particularly the possible benefits that the EU and its member states may gain as a result of relations with a given country, region or international organisation. Far more modest research results can be seen in the case of Kazakhstan and especially the other Central Asian states. An even greater deficit is observed with regard to a holistic view of the region. In addition, it should be pointed out that publications mainly deal with the characteristics of the political systems of these countries and (albeit to a lesser extent), their internal and external policies. Therefore, as we can see, research that combines many of these elements – to which this article refers – concerning the impact of EU policy on the political systems of the Central Asian states is even more scarce in Polish as well as European and global science. However, these facts do not mean that the discussed issues are insignificant. Quite the contrary. Central Asia, from a geopolitical point of view, is of strategic importance, which, especially now as many paradigms in international politics are shifting following Russia's full-scale attack on Ukraine, is relevant and even crucial for a significant number of actors in international relations. This is also, and perhaps primarily, true for the EU and its member states,



Wojciech GAGATEK

## **THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES OF EUROPEAN STUDIES AFTER A DECADE OF CRISES IN THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Abstract:** This text presents selected issues which, according to the author, are currently the most important development trends in European Studies (ES) as a research area. To do this, it is necessary to assess their condition. Therefore, the first part of this article summarizes how ES was characterized until the 2010s. Moving on to the next decade, the considerations concern the above-mentioned main challenge, i.e. the theoretical and conceptual explanation of the phenomenon of economic and financial crisis, leaving other types of crises for a separate study. The last part presents the key methodological and identity challenges of European studies, which, in the author's opinion, deserve special attention.

European studies as a research area have faced two key challenges in the last decade. On the one hand, a series of crises, their results, and the way in which they were addressed have called into question the usefulness of leading theories of European integration. This is especially related to the growing Eurosceptic and disintegrative tendencies in Europe, and generally to the processes of politicising European integration. On the other hand, European studies as a research area and as a community of researchers struggled with a number of questions about its own identity, the most visible of which were the status of European studies as a research area, its professionalisation, the transition to the mainstream of individual disciplines, but also criticism from post-positivists.

In the article, I would like to focus on the selected issues which, in my opinion, constitute the most important development trends in European studies as a research area. To do this, their condition must be assessed. Therefore, in the first part of the article, I will synthetically present how European studies were characterised up to 2010. Moving to the next decade, the considerations will concern the above-mentioned main challenge, i.e. the theoretical and conceptual explanation of the phenomenon of the economic and financial crisis, leaving other types of crisis for a separate study (Gagatek, 2018a). In the last part, I will present the key methodological and identity challenges of European studies which, in my opinion, deserve special attention.

### **STATUS OF EUROPEAN STUDIES AS A THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FIELD UNTIL 2010**

How can the state of European studies up to 2010 be characterised? One frequently used approach was to look at the issue from a disciplinary perspective (Egan et al., 2010; Gagateg, 2012; Wojtaszczyk, Jakubowski, 2010b). As a detailed system of