

The European Union Faced with a New Systemic Challenge

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The EU Dilemma: Federation or Confederation of States

ACCORDING TO Wikipedia, a confederation is a union of independent states or autonomous territorial units, set up on the basis of an international agreement, by which the conditions of association of the states are determined, as well as their functioning. The confederations are formed, as a rule, in order to jointly solve critical issues, such as defense, foreign affairs, foreign trade, and the single currency. A confederation, in modern political terms, is usually limited to a permanent union of sovereign states, having common positions and actions in the relations with other states. The internal relations between the members of a confederation vary to a great extent. Also, the relation between the member states and the central government, as well as the distribution of powers between the component states, are highly variable. The European Union is from this point of

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view a confederation of states, the same as the US or Switzerland. While in the case of the aforementioned countries this thing is expressly stipulated in their Constitutions, no European Treaty—from the Treaty of Rome of 1957 to the Treaty of Nice of 2001—does stipulate that the EU is a confederation of states.

From the beginning of the second decade of the previous century, when V. I. Lenin wrote his famous article “The United States of Europe,” until the present date, i.e. for almost 100 years, none of the EU ideologists (meaning all those who have described and presented over the years projects of European unification) could foresee where the EU is heading: towards a federation of historical regions (as this is what most European states are at present: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Great Britain, Holland, Romania, Spain, Hungary) or a confederation of states (according to the US model or that of the former Soviet Union). The fact that this ideological dilemma was not solved, for almost 100 years and more pressingly for the past 65 years, can lead to the dissolution on the aforementioned levels of the respective idea—which I actually consider as being the EU’s great dilemma.

Thus several maps showing the Europe of the year 2035, initially published in 2012 in Russia, have drawn the attention of specialists, not only as apparent cartographic fantasies meant to reflect the dreams of the former and the current Russian empire. By 2035, Russia will have annexed not only Crimea, but also the Donbass region (currently disputed by the forces of Kiev and the pro-Russian separatists). The Kremlin will have also absorbed the territories held by the former Tsarist Empire, the so-called NovoRossia, stretching into what is now southern Ukraine, reaching Transnistria, and completely cutting off the Ukraine’s access to the sea.

It is doubtful that these maps represent the current plan of Vladimir Putin: “experts in Geopolitics” have drawn the maps based on the information from “open sources” from the research institutes, as well as based on the previous writings of Alvin Toffler, Zbigniew Brzezinski or Samuel Huntington. These maps could rather be interpreted as a reflection of both the aspirations and the frustrations of the Russian countries, or at least of a segment of the public opinion. The maps in question present a Western Europe more fragmented in 2035, following a moral degradation and the economic failure of the idea of European Union.

The great European states will be affected by secession. After the separation of Great Britain and that of Catalonia, as a result of the already announced referenda, Northern Ireland will integrate into the Republic of Ireland (Eire), so the United Kingdom will remain only with England and Wales. Then will come the declaration of independence of the Basque Country, while Spain will prove to be a confederation of regions. France will lose territories as well, according to the

experts' forecast, either in favor of the Basque Region, or following the effective loss of Corsica, but also of Alsace and Lorraine, the provinces always disputed with Germany. At the same time, in the South of France, most probably with the capital in Marseille, an independent state will rise, named the "Arab Piedmont" by the experts. Belgium will be divided between Flanders, united with the Netherlands, and Wallonia, which will become part of France.

Until 2035, Russia will extend its domination upon all the territories in which there is an ethnic Russian majority. Thus, Belarus will become a mere republic of the Russian Federation, whereas the Baltic States will lose parts of their territory in favor of Moscow. Ukraine will also become a province of Russia. In order to compensate for the loss of a part of Transylvania, Romania will reunite with the current Republic of Moldova (without Transnistria) and with Northern Bukovina. On the other hand, Bulgaria will be "punished" by Turkey, which shall occupy a large area around the port of Burgas, where a great part of the numerous Turkish minority will take up residence. In the Caucasus, Georgia will pay dearly for the current overtures to the West. The country will be practically cut in two by a corridor linking Armenia to the Russian allies. Thereafter, Georgia will lose the current separatist republic of Abkhazia, which will be annexed by Moscow.

"You may wonder as much as you like," *Foreign Policy* concluded. "No matter how ridiculous these scenarios might seem now, comparative to the way in which the picture was in 2012, the situation seems to move in this direction..."

The Treaty of Nice—the Beginning of the End of the European Union

THE TREATY of Nice modified all preceding treaties signed by the member states, as well as the related acts; it was signed by the EU member states heads of states and governments on 20 February 2001, and it entered into force after the conclusion of its ratification by the member states, on 1 February 2003. The Treaty of Nice marked a new step in preparing the enlargement of the Union with countries from the central, eastern, Mediterranean and Baltic regions of Europe.

The Treaty of Nice brought changes in the organization and functioning of all European institutions: the European Parliament, the European Council, the European Commission, the Court of Justice and the Court of Auditors, as well as the two consultative community bodies, the Economic and Social Committee (ECOSOC) and the Committee of the Regions (COR). The changes are as follows:

Changes related to the European Parliament. By the Treaty the role of co-legislator of the European Parliament was consolidated. A new juridical base was created with the aim of enabling the European Council to regulate the functioning of political parties at European level. Having in mind the EU enlargement, the Treaty has limited the maximum number of European deputies to 732.

Changes related to the European Council. In a Union that will one day comprise 30 member states, a unanimous agreement will be very difficult to reach, there being a risk of deadlock in EU actions. It was thus necessary that this reform should reduce the number of situations in which member states can use their veto. Thus, the Treaty of Nice allows for a qualified majority on the decisions to be adopted for approximately 30 dispositions, previously governed by the rule of unanimity. In what concerns the community policies, approximately 12 dispositions allow for decision making with a qualified majority. Reference is being made here to decisions in the field of civil judicial cooperation, and in the field of commercial agreements regarding services or intellectual property.

Changes related to the European Commission. After the accession to the Union of the other 12 states (the wave of 10 states of May 2004, plus Bulgaria and Romania on 1 January 2007), the Treaty of Nice provided for the functioning of the European Commission with 33 members. Then, since 2009, each member state has had a single commissioner in the European Commission.

The Treaty of Nice has consolidated the powers of the president of the Commission as an indispensable measure for ensuring the coherence of a board extended to over 20 members. The President of the Commission decides the distribution of portfolios and can reshuffle the commissioners' responsibilities, also having the right to ask for the resignation of a commissioner, which has to be approved, nevertheless, by the plenum of the Commission.

Changes related to the Court of Justice. Taking into account the overload of cases to be solved, and the fact that the number is on the increase after the accession of new members, a situation that would have led to great delays in solving the cases, the Treaty of Nice has distributed more efficiently the competences between the Court and the Court of First Instance. The possibility of creating jurisdictional chambers, specialized in certain areas, was also foreseen.

According to the Treaty of Nice, given the enlarged Union, the Court of Justice shall number as many judges as EU member states. In order to avoid the summoning of the plenum, the Treaty stipulates the possibility of a meeting of the Court within a Great Chamber, made of 13 judges.

Changes related to the Court of Auditors. The Treaty states that this institution must be made up of a representative of each member state. The appointment of members is validated by the European Council, with a qualified majority, for a 6 year term.

The Court of Auditors can create Chambers for the adoption of certain categories of reports or notices. The Court and the national control institutions are invited to improve the cooperation by creating a contact committee with the presidents of the national institutions.

Changes related to the Economic and Social Committee. The Treaty stipulates that this institution should be made up of the representatives of various categories of the organized civil society. The number of members was limited to 350, which makes it possible to keep the current number of members for each state.

Changes related to the Committee of the Regions. The number of its members was limited to 350. The Treaty of Nice also requires that Committee members have a mandate from the whole collectivity they represent or are politically accountable to it.

Important changes brought in other fields. In the mechanism of consolidated cooperation, the Amsterdam Treaty set rigorous conditions that limited the practical possibilities of resorting to it. With the aim of making this mechanism more operational, the Treaty of Nice eliminated the possibility that each member state could express its veto upon the setting in of a consolidated cooperation. The minimum number of members required for the setting up of such a cooperation was set at 8, and allowances were made for the possibility of initiating a consolidated cooperation in the field of the common foreign and security policy (CFSP), but not in the field of defense.

In what concerns the problems of the fundamental human rights and liberties, the Treaty of Nice stipulates that, by a majority of four-fifths of the members of the European Council, after the congruent notice (counsel) of the European Parliament and after hearing the member state concerned, the Council can state whether there is a clear risk of severe breach by a member state of the fundamental human rights and liberties on which the Union is grounded. In such a situation, the Council can address proper recommendations to the state concerned. The right of initiative for such a decision pertains to a third of states, to the Commission or the European Parliament.

It was also at Nice that the Charter of fundamental rights of the Union was proclaimed. The Charter stipulates an ensemble of civil, political, economic and social rights of the European citizens, grouped into six categories: dignity, freedom, equality, solidarity, citizenship and justice. These rights are grounded on the fundamental rights and liberties stipulated by the ECHR and based on the traditions of the EU countries.

The Treaty of Nice has in its annex a Declaration on the future of the Union. On this occasion, it was also decided to summon a Convention on the future of Europe which would formulate alternative solutions to the questions on the future of Europe. The main task was that of drafting a constitutional text starting

from the following premises: a) the simplification of the treaties by regrouping the fundamental dispositions of the four EU Treaties into a single one, which must be more clearly worded and more intelligible for citizens; b) delineating the competences at the level of the Union or of the member states, ensuring a better way for the various levels of legislative and administrative action to complement one another in a more efficient way; c) the status of the Charter of fundamental rights (incorporating it into the future European Constitution); d) the role of the national parliaments in the European architecture; e) the new dimensions of the common foreign and security policy (CFSP).

Romania's representatives at the Convention on the future of Europe put forward a series of collective rights, which are meant to be recognized alongside the common individual rights of the local or cultural communities. A very important proposal concerned the necessity that in the future, the European Union would adhere to the European Convention of Human Rights, adopted by the Council of Europe, which institutes the first mechanism of protection for human rights at regional level by means of the European Court of Human Rights.

Replacing the Revised Lisbon Strategy with the Strategy 2020

IN 2005, halfway through the period foreseen for the EU to surpass the most competitive economy of the world (the USA), the EU leaders realized that the Lisbon Agenda (the revised Lisbon Strategy) was not reflected in the daily lives of the people and that it was not well known by the European citizens. They, like any other citizens, wish for a few simple and clear things: to work, to start their own business, to offer a better education to their children, quality services, decent pensions, access to the new technologies and, last but not least, to find a symbiosis between family and professional life.

The European Commission recommended that closer attention be paid to several fields, of utmost importance being scientific research, technology, the development of trade based on regional agreements, the digital market, education, the reform of the labor market, and social protection. Each member state of the Union had to develop and to put into practice a national program of reforms, over a period of three to five years. These were to be put into practice between the years 2006 and 2010, in order to comply with the objectives of the revised Lisbon Strategy. The intention was to ensure a strong European influence upon national policies, as well as a dimension concerning the European legislation standards, so that the national governments and the European in-

stitutions would go through the same stages. The reason was a simple one: the experts noticed that the US economy was approximately 20 years ahead of that of the EU, according to a critical report of the Eurochambres (the Group of the Chambers of Commerce) issued at the beginning of 2005. The liberalization of economic regulations was asked, as well as an increase in the funds destined to research, in order to stimulate development and to prevent a deepening of the gap between the EU and the US. The EU had to create the single market, where capital and labor would circulate freely, to abstain from passing new laws that would hinder the businesses and to ensure (and provide) generous funding for R&D activities.

It was for this purpose that the body called the Lisbon Council was set up. This was a think-tank consisting of a group of initiative of Brussels citizens and lobbying groups of young entrepreneurs. Addressing this ad hoc Council, in mid-March 2005, the ex-president of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, underlined the need to create a “Europe of opportunities,” since the single market “is not a truly dynamic market in the sense of providing opportunities.” He admitted that the first Lisbon Strategy (2001–2005) “has suffered because of a multitude of actions with no priority, which lacked co-ordination and the clear separation of responsibilities among the various actors involved.” The European Commission had three priorities on its agenda: to turn Europe into a more attractive place to invest and to work; to use innovation and knowledge in order to foster economic growth; to create more numerous and better jobs. In order to make Europe more attractive, the Commission had to make the EU single market function better. This had to be done by way of three actions: a) a better implementation of the EU laws and better regulations; b) a more strict implementation of competition policies; c) finalizing the internal market, that of services.

The President of the European Commission defended the single market of services and the “principle of the country of origin.” He repeatedly underlined the economic advantages of opening the services market and announced the launching by the Commission of a study related to the costs of a “non-Lisbon” strategy. One of the old EU member states did not completely adapt to enlargement. According to José Manuel Barroso, “they are ready to accept the free movement of goods, but not also the free movement of persons and services . . . The Commission does not exist in order to protect the interests of the EU-15.” In order to promote knowledge and innovation in view of the development of the EU in general, the president of the European Commission mentioned the plans of his team to create two “innovation poles” at regional and local level, a European Institute for Technology and a European Research Area. He performed a revision of the state aid regime in the EU, for R&D, expressing the hope for

a rapid agreement to be concluded with regard to the Community Patent; he also mentioned that he had invited the European winners of the Nobel Prize to discuss these matters with the Commission: “When it comes to research, the researchers can provide us better ideas than bureaucrats.” In order to create more and better jobs, the European Commission had to improve the mobility and adaptability of workers and to modernize the labor markets as well as the social protection systems: “Each country must find its own way to reform in the light of the actual situation and of traditions. The EU should avoid the large (exhaustive) procedures and the wrong harmonization attempts.”

The Belgian premier of that time, Guy Verhofstadt, was one of the politicians who was in serious doubt about the proposals of the European Commission of re-launching the Lisbon Agenda. In a memorandum sent to the colleagues from the other EU member states, also in March 2005, he put forward a series of alternative ideas with regard to the modality of turning the EU into the most competitive knowledge-based society in the world until 2010. Guy Verhofstadt was of the opinion that, along with the national action plans proposed by the Commission on the occasion of its partial evaluation, there should be a strategy at European level: “If we rely only on the national action plans, we can be confronted with a phenomenon of social and fiscal dumping, since competition between the action plans shall thus appear.” The Belgian prime minister also had doubts about the efficiency of the “open method of coordination,” in what concerns the goals of the revised Lisbon Strategy. Hence his plea for a European strategy with a genuine method. He gave the example of other great European projects, such as the Euro, that had the Stability and Development Pact as its main driving force: “It is only with the national action plans, the role of the European Commission is [...] under question.” Guy Verhofstadt proposed the setting up of a “Convergence Code,” with minimum and maximum values, in what concerns particular economic and social matters of utmost importance, such as the flexibility of the labor market and/or the fiscal pressure on private companies. The “Convergence Code” would have left a lot of room for action to member states in order to define their own policies, contrary to the “philosophy” underlying the Stability and Development Pact, which was much more rigorous.

Among those who criticized the revised Lisbon Strategy there was also the president of the European Socialist Party, Poul Nyrup Rasmussen. This is what he essentially thought: “Once with the reforms we impose, we must create jobs. If we don’t do this, the people shall not support us”; and he added further on, that “if one does not have people on one’s side, one can talk on end about competitiveness.” Nyrup Rasmussen impetuously urged Barroso to put an end to the confusion related to the revised Lisbon Agenda. Barroso’s answer came at

once: the Lisbon Agenda has not yet yielded sufficient jobs and development, because of the “successful defending of the established interests to the detriment of society on the whole.” That is why the battle for the Lisbon Agenda was not a battle between the Left and/or the Right, but between “modernizers and reactionaries” (José Manuel Barroso).

Further on, the problems that Europe and its economies were confronted with were significant throughout the economic crisis started in 2007. The EU had to face a tougher economic competition in a more and more globalized world. Apart from the challenges posed by the United States and Japan, the developing economies grouped into BRICS, especially China and India, had progressed more rapidly in the period of time in discussion. At the same time, in the EU, processes such as population aging, the inflexible regulations and the increased costs were followed by low levels of economic growth, of productivity and job creation.

Europe was not able to counteract these challenges in the past 5 years (2011–2015). Being limited by the decision-making procedures and by the lack of involvement on the part of the political leaders, the progress towards the Lisbon or revised Lisbon objectives was insignificant. As such, the EU constantly lost competitiveness, economic welfare and workplaces. The European leaders must now remedy this situation, which can no longer be sustained, placing the economy ahead of all priorities.

The chambers of commerce from the EU member states have requested in vain the creation by the Europeans of 10 million new workplaces, until the year 2010. A sound and healthy economic structure had to constitute the precondition of maintaining the validity of the social models and of the European environmental standards. In spite of the lack of visible results, the business environment remained committed to the objectives of the revised Lisbon Strategy. The alternative—the Strategy Europe 2020 was created. Now, the Chambers of Commerce and the member states governments must offer their entire support for Europe to become yet again an economic leader. With an environment supporting the companies, which provides flexible and adaptable labor markets that encourage investments, we are of opinion that the European economy will be revitalized. However, this requires a genuine ambition and commitment in order to excel in everything we do. The European leaders must fulfil this possibility of turning Europe’s economy into an absolute priority, this being the only guarantee that the provisions of the EU Strategy 2020, valid for the decade 2011–2020, would be re-analyzed.

The New European Regional Groupings

THE PREVIOUS decades have been marked by the continuity and the appearance inside the EU of group(ing)s of countries according to the regional criterion, almost as it happened less than a century ago, when, during the interwar years (between the two world wars that strongly marked the previous century), new regional groupings appeared. Nowadays we are confronted with structured regional entities, called the Visegrád Group, the Craiova Group, the Normandy Group, or the Process of Cooperation of South-East Europe, the Euro-region of the Danube, a.o., which prove, should it still be necessary, that the national and regional values can exceed, in certain conditions, the European ones.

Tomáš Sedláček, a Czech economist, philosopher and academic, has reviewed the current problems of Europe and of capitalism in general, drawing attention to the fact that “times with zero interest are times with a lack of trust in the future” and that the current Western social systems are built on the dangerous illusion of the continuous economic growth. It is not capitalism in itself, but the capitalism “of growth” that is in crisis, Sedláček asserted at the Financial Summit for Central and Eastern Europe, organized in Vienna by the online economic publication Portfolio.hu from Hungary.

Tomáš Sedláček is of the opinion that Europe can view the actual migration towards our continent as a blessing. Sedláček has explained that the Eurozone has been confronted with four major crises since its formation: the credit crisis that started in 2007, that of the Greek debt (2013), the war in Ukraine (2014) and the refugee crisis (2015). Nevertheless, none of these crises was solved, although Europe managed to a certain extent to overcome them. In what migration is concerned, according to the economist, it is obvious that the solution does not consist in allocating funds for each migrant accepted by a EU member state. The current situation in Europe is, perhaps, similar to that of the USA in 2007, when the US “wanted” higher economic growth and a lower unemployment rate. “There is not enough demand and the policies created in order to artificially cover the lack of demand were exhausted,” Sedláček said.

An example of the change of paradigm in which Juncker, the current president of the European Commission, started his term of office is that of administering a budget of the Union which in absolute values is comparable to that of the previous years. Nevertheless, the expectations and challenges to which the Union is subjected from the inside as well as from the outside are much higher. Moreover, the post-accession expectations of the countries that entered the EU after 2004 are high, and the pressure of the migratory flux at the borders of the Union is also at a high level.

Unfortunately, for the first time in many years of existence, the Union is marked by a lack of predictability in the strategic planning related to the events

under way in its Eastern and Southern neighborhood, this having a major impact upon the expenses that are not comprised within the budget. This endangers the infrastructure and cohesion projects, so long awaited in the Central and East-European countries.

As a *force-majeure* measure, the Juncker Commission has envisaged a program of attracting an investment fund of around 350 billion Euro from the area of economic interest of the great companies, which should be stimulated by launching economic projects of interest, relying on the lever effect generated by a guarantee fund of the Union of around 5 billion Euro. At the very moment this analysis is made, the project is still in the discussion stage, at the level of principles, procedures and other bureaucratic aspects with which the Union has started to struggle within a state of chronic disease. Probably they were also adopted as a protective measure, given the increasingly numerous and vocal requests of some member states that have lost their patience.

Conclusions

THE SYSTEMIC crisis the EU is currently undergoing is not actually a mere consequence of the crisis of the years 2008–2014. The current system crisis is amplified by the insufficiency of the Union's financial sources, at a time when a solution to this crisis and the involvement in finding solutions for the crises in the vicinity of the EU require such a thing, but also concrete intervention instruments other than the diplomatic means and the influence the EU has in various decision-making structures of certain regional or global organizations.

The crisis in North Africa, a region situated in the southern vicinity of the Union, requires a direct intervention, assumed by the respective actors, with real support for the creation of democratic regimes. Unfortunately, this has not happened. On the contrary, the joy of the “Arab Spring” has turned into sorrow in the form of the “Arab Winter,” with a serious regional impact, both in Algeria, Libya, Tunisia, Egypt, as well as in the Saharan region, turned into a free corridor for the weapons and drugs funneled towards the areas controlled by terrorist groupings from the Middle East.

The interventions in the region, instead of being under the aegis of the Union, were direct and punctual interventions of the member states having a direct interest in the area: France directly intervened in Mali or Algeria, Italy intervened in Libya, and Great Britain in Egypt. This is actually a return to the old areas of influence from before the dismantlement of the colonial empires.

The crisis in Syria, also in the vicinity of the EU, is another story, with interests involving “heavy” players seeking to control a major strategic point of the Middle

East, Syria being a big country, with a millenary history, at a crossroads between the East and the West, having access to the Mediterranean, located in the vicinity of major oilfields, and close to another conflict area that has become historically chronic, Israel and Palestine. It is hard to say who would gain in such situations, but it is certain that it would be the ones making pragmatic decisions in real time, with very few bureaucratic—and in some cases democratic—procedures.

The crisis in Ukraine began right after the fall of the USSR, when Russia decided, within a strategy specific to the Russian school of diplomacy, to tenaciously pursue its aim of recovering its historical area of influence and not only. To this strategic step made by Russia after 1996, having well-defined stages, the European Union replied with the project of the Eastern Partnership, which was actually thought of with the aim of turning the governments of the 6 ex-Soviet republics (Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan) towards the values of European democracy, with the perspective of concluding Association Agreements with the EU, with mutual economic benefits and moreover with the ambiguous prospect of accepting the start of the accession negotiations at an unspecified date. The Project was launched in 2008 after several summits, the most important of which was in Vilnius in 2013. Two countries which have signed the Association Agreement, i.e. Georgia and Moldova, remain in the project, while the others are within Russia's area of influence. The EU seems incapable to make a strategic political decision regarding their acceptance within the EU family, considering that the financial efforts will be considerable, and the conflict with Russia, thus amplified, will be hard to balance.

What characterizes the current EU common foreign and security policy is the quasi-total dependence on NATO from the point of view of global security and the almost total dependence on the economic stability of the main European economic players: Germany, France, the Netherlands, and Great Britain (in conjunction with the USA).

The migrant crisis has brought to light an aspect that seems to be critical at a time when one of the basic principles of the EU's existence is the solidarity in the decisions concerning the common interest of the Union. It is for the first time that the Commission has worked out a set of decisions concerning the predictable solution to this issue, so that at any time each member state and the Union would know what has to be done. However, in the Framework Regulations that also set the formula to be applied in the calculation of migrant quotas for each state, the explanatory Note stipulates that Britain, Ireland, and Denmark shall have distinct positions as to the framework regulations.

Such an approach represents a major departure from the Union's common principles, and consequently some states such as Poland, Slovakia, Romania, a.o. have been reserved as to such an approach.

All these realities combine with the economic crisis experienced by the majority of EU member states on the southern border of the Union, with the failure of the Lisbon Agenda, with difficulties in applying certain European policies, such as those in the fields of finance and taxation, of human resources, of political reform, with the difficulties in reaching the work parameters set for the EU Strategy 2020, which can become a new Lisbon Agenda in what concerns the non-fulfilment of the stated objectives. Therefore, the systemic crisis of the EU is not a conjunctural, but an essential one, underlying the entire community system. □

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Abstract

The European Union Faced with a New Systemic Challenge

Any material or spiritual entity has a graphical evolution explained by “Gauss’ bell.” We consider that the European Union (EU) has entered an irrefutable downward trend, facing decline in the evolution of the system, and it is in the phase of exhausting its institutions, which can no longer deal with the dynamic of national and specific EU values. In 2015, there was an increase in the importance of national concepts in the EU member states, in which national values are identified to the detriment of the specific values of a union of states which could not define its political option in order to function either as a federation or confederation of states. The EU is a unique experiment in history, wherein, therefore, the main actors want to be strong, but independent in decision-making. Within history, such a thing has enjoyed but a temporary success.

Keywords

European Union, federation, confederation, regional groupings