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Turner, Barnard

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# The European Union: still “united in diversity”?



The “German Economic Commission” (c. 1947-49) (public domain)

## Barnard Turner

Senior Fellow,  
EU Centre in Singapore

Associate Professor and  
Academic Convenor,  
European Studies,  
National University of  
Singapore

[euctbe@nus.edu.sg](mailto:euctbe@nus.edu.sg)

## ABSTRACT

The present fragility of the European project has reduced the credit given to its considerable achievements, especially in intensifying the bonds across a war-torn continent and, since 1989, across nations divided by the Cold War. Yet while far-sighted economic policies have steered EU unification so far, these policies are under threat by a return in some quarters to more nationalistic sentiments and priorities. Generally these latter currents are seen as negative and divisive, yet, as this paper argues from a longer term historical trajectory and across disciplines usually themselves fractured into social science and humanities faculties, such diversity has been and is still now an asset, and, properly weighted, is the one main strength which the EU has in its recovery from the present crisis which, on the one hand, has specific local causes but which, on the other, cannot properly be considered apart from the cyclical and structural properties of globalisation. The paper then argues that policy makers, stakeholders (that is, both EU populations and the global community) should derive strength and resolve from their consideration of the Union’s motto “united in diversity”.

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## The European Union: still “united in diversity”?

**BARNARD TURNER**

*“An Fortschritt glauben heißt nicht glauben daß ein Fortschritt schon geschehen ist. Das wäre kein Glauben” [“To believe in progress doesn’t mean that there’s already been any progress. That wouldn’t be belief”]. Franz Kafka, Oktavheft G (c. 1917).*

*“The less you exist the more important it is to make a clear impression”. Arthur Miller, Incident at Vichy.*

### Introduction

With the spectre of a deep economic recession haunting Europe and much of the world, the will to empower centralized administrations to deal with its recurrent (and perhaps systemic) problems has been increasingly evident. The oft-heard call is that the European Union (EU) must pull together, and restrain the egregious or the extreme, whether at the national level or among some of its more privileged classes. In the post-2004 phase of EUnification, ratiocination has been reified around themes deemed most pertinent to the continued prosperity of Europeanization<sup>1</sup> as project, and to this end rationalization has been very much the order of the day.

Almost two-thirds of a century ago, in his 1947 “Marshall Plan” speech at Harvard, the US Secretary of State put forward a reasoned solution to the European problem:

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**The views expressed in this working paper are personal views of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the institutions or organisations that they represent, or the views of the EUC.**

<sup>1</sup>Of course, definitions of this abound and sometimes conflict. Johan P. Olsen’s definition can be taken as instructive for the purposes of the present discussion: “Europeanization . . . involves enlarging the territory, developing new institutions of political governance and adapting existing domestic institutions into a larger coherent order, as well as exporting European institutions beyond the region”. Europeanization therefore, like its corollary and antecedent concept, Americanization, has both internal and external dimensions.

The remedy seems to lie in breaking the vicious circle and restoring the confidence of the European people in the economic future of their own countries and of Europe as a whole. The manufacturer and the farmer throughout wide areas must be able and willing to exchange their product for currencies, the continuing value of which is not open to question.

Aside from the demoralizing effect on the world at large and the possibilities of disturbances arising as a result of the desperation of the people concerned, the consequences to the economy of the United States should be apparent to all. It is logical that the United States should do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health in the world, without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace.

(Hindley 1998, p. 53)

While some of this may seem uncannily familiar to those who feel compelled to watch the ongoing Greek financial (and increasingly social) drama, the differences should be apparent too. Now, alongside the US, it is China and some other major trading partners of the EU which abide the appropriate time to act; now, while political stability may be a concern, at least in some member states, this is more generally to be felt at the ballot boxes; and now, while rioting may also be a concern, for the near future at least a war emanating from and extending across Europe is not very likely.

Yet for all the success of post-war western Europe, the reasons for its achievements are over determined and contentious: the relative weightage given to the “European Recovery Plan”, to divergent local conditions, far-sighted social free market thinking in several states (most notably of course in Germany), the European Coal and Steel Community, and, lastly, to exogenous factors (such as the Cold War, and the beginnings of the latest phase of globalization) still offers matters of debate about the successful expansion of six states to twenty-seven (and perhaps soon to some thirty). Not only its motto but also its intractable reality makes the EU a Union in and of diversity.



Such diversity was already foreseeable in the late 1940s, of course, when the Soviet Union opted out of the Marshall Plan and strongly encouraged its partner states to follow suit.<sup>2</sup> While Europe, from the outside, could be seen as united in devastation, the effects of this first note of post-War division can be traced to that diversification still noticeable today, not least in the sentiment of the “solidarity deficit” between the more western and more eastern states, even if in most recent times this “deficit” has been offset by the remarkable rise of certain new member states (NMS) and the declining fortunes of many of the northern Mediterranean littoral states.

In the post-war years, economic integration gathered pace and increasingly shaped itself in the globalization of markets and trade, if not in mindsets and ideological prisms, which, then as now, had some problems accommodating the economic intersections into more culturalist visions. Winston Churchill, in his 1948 Llandudno speech to the Conservative Party, famously envisaged three political circles (the Commonwealth [and still then, for a while at least, the Empire], the Anglophonic world [largely perhaps a way of including the US without conceiving of it as a distinct category] and Europe) which, he opined, if combined would be unassailable in confronting any threats. He intimated as assailant the still not-yet formed Soviet Union, but competitive thinking today might similarly place East Asian

economic might as one of the threats now. Writing about the same time, Karl Jaspers could put together a global vision—the *Achsenzeit* or “axial age”—out of three pivotal cultural movements across Eurasia which were scarcely conscious of each other. The connections and impingements of these circles in the later decades to the present inform self-conceptions of nations and individuals in a much more complex mapping of cultural, social and of course economic inputs and outputs.

In the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, the urgency has appeared pressing, and the potential great, to “think European” as political entity, and this long-held prerogative of emperors and dictators is now assumed by much more benign forces in Brussels. Yet thinking European, a hallmark for the European Commission, is not of course, exclusive to it, nor even very demanding except as in political terms. It is perhaps unjust to criticize the EU administrations for their “deficits” as their main task is as yet to expunge by much more progressive forces of conviction those vestiges of neo-imperialism which might seem to permeate any pan-European project. We should not expect too much of this generation of EU politicians in this regard, nor from them in shaping a new perception which has gelled across many generations and to which change resistance is increasingly apparent. Too often it seems that people are being obliged by some external agency to change their perceptions without being given a palpable concomitant reason, or demonstrable good which might enhance their circumstances; this dichotomy, following Walter Benjamin, is unproductive.<sup>3</sup>

### “United in diversity”: an overview

There is then nothing exceptional about thinking European, as many average Europeans have done this, or even been forced to do this, for generations. Travel and language learning have characterized European life for the past 50 years at least,

<sup>2</sup> The photograph on the cover, from the German Federal Archives, shows the Berlin HQ of the “German Economic Commission” (Deutsche Wirtschaftskommission, DWK), established by the Soviets in 1947 (the same year as US Secretary of State George Marshall’s Harvard speech and slightly earlier than Monnet’s overtures to integration) for the “Occupation Zone” to coordinate several socioeconomic areas, including agriculture, energy and external trade; in 1949, with the founding of the GDR, it became part of the “provisional government.” After use in the years after reunification by the Treuhandanstalt, the agency responsible for privatizing GDR industry, and today named after that agency’s first, assassinated director, the building now houses the German Finance Ministry. The banner to the right can be loosely translated as “Two Year Plan: Jobs and Bread; Marshall Plan: Ruin and Need.”

<sup>3</sup> One cannot change one’s opinions without “getting a hold of one’s circumstances” (“ohne [ihre] Verhältnisse anzugreifen” [Benjamin 1936, p. 364]).



and even if the Cold War placed clear limits on both, and even if both the experiences gained by travel across the EU and Europeans' general linguistic abilities are sometimes exaggerated, young adults in 2011 can begin to think of Europe cohesively in ways unfamiliar to many earlier generations,<sup>4</sup> ways which — following Newton's laws of motion perhaps<sup>5</sup> — will make them more critical of Europeanization as it has come down to them, as it can often be seen as abstruse, technocratic and uninspired. Such a critique is of course not always negative, even, conversely, it may properly be regarded as an impetus to make Europe a better place for all, and thus a welcome sign of a deeper engagement with the project.

With all the emphasis on strategic cohesion, however, that diversity which has always characterized Europe and which is inscribed in the Union's motto ("united in diversity") has been somewhat short-shrifted, with the pressing need absolving the Union of long deliberations. Yet while the motto both makes a "virtue of necessity" (diversity is indeed increasing, not only with the increasing number of member states but with

their several fates and economic trajectories, etc.) and demarcates the ethos of the EU from that of the United States ("*e pluribus unum*" ["from many, one"]), diversity itself, once a good, is now more perceived as a problem, a recalcitrant or recidivist attitude, one to be overcome. Yet such cohesion is politically, economically and socially dilatory, as divergences mark the EU well beyond those most cited and debatable (the "democracy" or "solidarity" deficits, for example). Geography has been destiny across millennia, and regional sub-divisions continue to inscribe themselves into attitudes to the other, be this to a Gypsy encampment, to "the South" or "the North," the Balkans, the Baltic, the Nordic realm, Germanic Europe or the United Kingdom (UK).

The essence of the European spirit is its dialogicity. It may take time for solutions to be constructed and in a volatile international situation with a plethora of independent, exogenous variables; it may seem to a perhaps often sceptical international press that a positive strategy is lacking. Yet such dialogicity does show a strength of the Union, an attendance to a historical legacy that is not easily gainsayed (and not least in the service of the limited strategic policy-oriented thinking of the present, or by the rather short-termist commentary on current headlines which can sometimes substitute for a more comprehensive, longer-term and nuanced but therefore not byte-sized analysis). When the attention to a "single voice" takes precedence over the recognition of diversity, policies often need to be formulated according to a "lowest common denominator" to avoid counter-productive disagreement. Norms are streamlined and nuances painted out. Policy may be more pointed but it is less variegated and therefore less open to alternatives, differences which can of course be of an advantage in any negotiations since the discourse partner may need to muster defences and alternatives to a wider range of proposals. A dichotomy therefore arises between ostensible cooperation which would be more a vehicle for one-sided norms transfer on the one hand and a partnership of equal respect and engagement on the other.

<sup>4</sup> In a 1968 book, Anthony Sampson commented: "The young Europeans may not take the idea of 'making Europe' as seriously as their elders; with no memories of war, the talk of reconciliation is just boring. But they are able to live Europe much more casually, to pick up movements far more quickly, and to have a common aim, at least, in wanting to get rid of the Old Europe. It may not be quite the kind of aim that their parents had in mind [the first figure Sampson talks about in his book is Jean Monnet]; but then nothing in Europe has worked out quite as planned" (244). Forty-plus years on, the "casual" approach is the norm, and in certain respects, 1969 has slipped to "the old Europe". As Goethe writes in Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre (vol 1 cha.

12): "Gewöhnlich zerstreut der Sohn, was der Vater gesammelt hat, sammelt etwas anderes oder auf andere Weise. Kann man jedoch den Enkel, die neue Generation abwarten, so kommen dieselben Neigungen, dieselben Ansichten wieder zum Vorschein" [Usually the son scatters what the father has collected, collects something else or in other ways. If one however can await the grandson, the new generation, so the same inclinations, the same opinion reappear"].

<sup>5</sup> Fear of inertia has often driven the European project (cp. law 1); the net force (ability to do useful work) of the EU is seen as inversely proportional to the number of members (cp. law 2); the greater the impetus for Europeanization, the greater the reaction to it (law 3).





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Even the most recent reassessments of the EU's relations with its neighbours (for example, the Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean [March 2011] and the *New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood* review of the European Neighbourhood Policy [May 2011]) highlight unity over diversity, even though the basics of a "differentiated approach" (Partnership, p. 2) are becoming more evident. The insistence on "unity" over "diversity" can hold the EU, and some of its member states, up to a certain ridicule for its excessive interventionism; the press (and not only in the UK) can stoke the public's bemused, even flabbergasted reaction to the details, as seen in comments over such trivia as cucumbers and the EU/Council of Europe logo ("flag") on national teams' shirts, and so on.

### The EU: a success story of integration and the movement towards cohesion?

And yet for all these diversities, EU integration, if not unnecessarily accelerated or deepened too far, has been a considerable success. If public opinion, in the sense of a positive appreciation of the EU, has not risen much in the past forty years or so, it has not declined either, as it might have been expected to do as the EU deepens ("spills over") to many other socioeconomic sectors and becomes more visible across the sub-continent.<sup>6</sup> More specifically, for all the angst currently in circulation about the eurozone, the currency has given the sub-continent a firm basis from which to face and accept the future. Of the top 20 nations on the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness index for 2011, eight are in the EU. Of the top 10, six are Union countries, three in (Finland, Germany, and the Netherlands) and three

outside (Sweden, Denmark and the UK) the eurozone. If we add Switzerland (number 1) and Norway (number 16), the European subcontinent remains in the vanguard of global competitiveness, with half of the top 20 in Europe.<sup>7</sup>

The talk of Europe's demise appears therefore premature, and the strength of the Union, a hallmark of its conception in the Marshall Fund days, is still its ability to work together and to remain in the global premier league. Economist Intelligence Unit PPP numbers may show that the EU27's share of world GDP might fall from 20.8 per cent in 2007 to 15.6 per cent in 2030, while, conversely, China's might rise from 10.1 per cent to 22.7 per cent (Grant 2010, p. 65). In 2030, the EU's share of the world's population might slip from some 10 per cent in 2007 to some 7 per cent then, while China's might remain stable at around 20-22 per cent. In per capita terms therefore, the EU (and its leading economies) might well still then be leading world contenders. The EU then, and the pseudo-factuality of such forecasting notwithstanding, might still be in the top league. Long-term competitiveness of course remains an issue, for even if richer EU members can help out weaker ones with their debt-related problems, competitiveness differentials persist, even if these are not as yet such a fatal blow to EU prosperity as Martin Feldstein might opine.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Clearly however there is great disparity across the 27 member states with one-third falling into the mid-range of global competitiveness according to the rankings. Yet such is of course also the case with the United States and other federations with which, at least in this respect, the EU could be compared.

<sup>8</sup> Feldstein made the point in an interview at the September 2011 Ambrosetti Forum Villa d'Este in Cernobbio. At the same forum, both he and Hans-Werner Sinn predicted a partial break-up of the eurozone, and Sinn further remarked that a "two-tier" Union was being shaped. While such a layering can perhaps be envisaged (and Sinn's Munich think tank is instrumental in such formulation), such distinctions have been with us for a while, and have been manageable at the national level in member states with "north-south" economic divides. Part of the original, and abiding mission of the EU is to gradually overcome them; that they still exist is of no discredit to the Union, nor therefore a cause for excessive pessimism for the Union

<sup>6</sup> I use this term to refer to the territory covered by the 27 member states and those countries included in their circumference, in distinction both to the EU itself and the other countries, generally to the east of this circumference, which are usually (since Peter the Great) taken as part of Europe the continent in geographical terms. The EU, then, in this estimation and with these definitions, is held to have been of great benefit not only for the member states but also for the region so defined.



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### *The euro: a means of both cohesion and fragility*

The fragility of the euro has been so much in the media eye of late that it is needless here to rehearse the apparent causes. Yet such ambivalence has a lengthy history, and it is surely premature to doom the whole enterprise of EUnification because of the problems of a few years.<sup>9</sup> In March 1998, while Minister President of Niedersachsen and some six months before he was elected German Chancellor, Gerhard Schröder claimed that “the overhasty monetary union has led to a sickly premature birth” [“Die überhastete Währungsunion hat zu einer kränkelnden Frühgeburt geführt”] (Middel 1998). Yet, a few years later, in the Chancellor’s office, he revised his opinion. In December 2001, shortly before the euro entered into circulation, he opined: „Hinter dem Euro steht eine der stärksten Wirtschaften der Welt. Das macht ganz klar, dass an der Stabilität dieser Währung überhaupt nicht gezweifelt werden kann“ [“Behind the euro stands one of the world’s strongest economies. That makes quite clear that there can be no doubt about the stability of this currency”] (“Das wichtigste Gesicht” 2002).

as a whole. Greece may have slipped down the Global Competitiveness Index over the past 8 years, but Poland is doing markedly better and Hungary has turned itself around in a short time. The 2004+ enlargements have perhaps stretched the definition of a rich and poor EU state, and left the weaker pre-2004 states in limbo; add the distinctions of national business cycles, the extremely rapid growth Greece and Spain experienced (which cannot be used as a benchmark for long-term growth), and the inability of a eurozone state to unilaterally devalue its currency (as effectively the eurozone itself could do by buying “safe” currencies until and unless these currencies’ central bankers follow the Swiss example), and the problems currently facing Greece could have been foreseen.

<sup>9</sup> It may seem a little reckless in late 2011 to cast the euro as an example of the EU’s success, but it has been instrumental in the convergence across the EU of economic zones and sectors across regions. Its nominal effective exchange rate (i.e. as measured against 20 major partner currencies) is still at average levels. The rather maligned euro is the world’s second reserve currency, representing some 26 per cent of the world’s holdings, double that of the composite currencies together in the year or so before its introduction.

That, from a vantage point two decades on and at a time when many question Germany’s commitment to the euro, the 1998 pronouncement appears more prescient than the later one, is not to say that it will remain so for even a comparable period of three years from 2011. Calls for Greece to leave the eurozone can be offset against the resounding late September 2011 Bundestag vote in favour of raising financial support for the European Financial Stability Facility.

In December 2001 the euro’s trade weighted value was some 10 per cent under its hypothetical value of March 1998, if somewhat higher than its lowest ever levels of third quarter 2000. By September 2011, it is generally on par with the trade weighted index of early 1999, just after entry level equivalencies to the original national currencies joining the euro were set, and thus has held steady, after increasing egregiously in 2007-08, even while economies with lower per capita GDP (in some cases, significantly so) have entered the europact and even under the strain of the recent financial torque. The USD’s trade weighted index against other leading currencies has of course generally declined over the last decade, so the euro’s relative strength against it is not as revealing as its weightage against the Swiss Franc, clearly an important currency for the euro since the Federation is the EU’s fifth largest trading partner. While the CHF 1.20 to the euro threshold, set in September 2011 by the Swiss National Bank, may seem on the low side for the euro which since its introduction had been trading in the CHF 1.50 range, a rate at about CHF 1-30-1.40 would still be compatible with what might have been expected for the evolution of the Swiss currency, given prevailing CHF-DM exchange rates in the mid late 1990s, and given that presumably weaker economies have progressively been admitted to the eurofold.<sup>10</sup> The September threshold shows that the euro is as yet holding up, even after the almost

<sup>10</sup> A helpful website is at the Sauder School of Business at UBC: <http://fx.sauder.ubc.ca/plot.html>. The CHF has increased of course against other currencies (USD, CAD, SGD), in some cases to a comparable or even greater extent.



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daily dire news from the EU about the financial shape of the eurozone.

### *Convergence through decreasing energy intensity*

Several EU states, older members and new member states (NMS) alike, have made remarkable progress in bringing down the energy intensity of their economies in the past quarter century or so. The UK (London at least) has successfully relaunched itself as a post-industrial site, with the lower energy intensive service sector foregrounded. Germany and Denmark have halved their energy intensity and, essentially post-1989, Hungary and the Czech Republic have followed suit, with Poland and the Slovak Republic being even more successful. (*OECD Factbook* 2010).<sup>11</sup> While there does seem to be at present a threshold for energy intensity (around 0.1 tonne of oil equivalent to produce US\$1,000 of GDP, in year 2000 terms) below which a developed country cannot advance, and which has practically been reached about a third of the EU states, the decline does bode well for Europe's future competitiveness and growth. A primary measure of an economy's sustainability, oil consumption in the EU has remained steady for the past dozen years or so, while it has increased substantially elsewhere (US Energy Information Administration).

### **The frangibility of a technocratic, economistic Union**

However, while such production indicators may argue for a certain cohesion of material input and hence of a narrower range of outputs, not being a true federal state, the EU does not [yet] have the generally agreed mechanisms to help out when bounded (temporally and/or geographically) economic problems arise of a more financial nature. In federated states, such problems as those of Greece at present may be subject to political brinkmanship, but those of an economy which provides only some 2 per cent to the total GDP are unlikely to be considered serious

enough to destabilize the whole federation itself.<sup>12</sup> The problem therefore is structural, rather than budgetary as such.

Bo Stråth (2005, p. 267) has claimed that "there is a discrepancy between the European Union as an economic project and as political and social project". Production indicators, calls for greater competitiveness and other trajectories of "mere" economics enter the lifeblood of the populace only indirectly, as the numbers themselves say little to human experience. Article I-3(2) of the Constitutional Treaty talked of the importance of "free and undistorted competition" as an objective of the Union, even if the Lisbon Treaty toned down this style of neoliberal absolutism (cp. Tortolano and Medhurst 2011).

The pace of integration, and its profiling in the media (and, needless to say, in academia), have been very fast, for all the short-circuits, integration fatigue and pauses for reflection along the way. This pace has been relentlessly kept up as if integration were a means of confronting the spectre of declining influence (a bogeyman of which most Europeans seem blissfully unaware, but which has been constructed as impetus, need and agency for integration) or an exaggerated desire to put the EU, rather than its major players, on the world stage, a desire which in some quarters could be seen as intemperate and self-serving. Thus, as in the theses of Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich or Sergey Karaganov, rapid economic transformation had attempted to deal with haunting spectres from the past without transforming public and "elite" attitudes, so, more generally, Europeanization expunges Europe's own traumas in what an influential mythopoeia of our time would imagine as a post-colonialist, multi-polar (or even apolar) world.

In a September 2011 opinion piece, Karaganov notes three errors which show up the gulf between those who would push on with integration and those who would step on

<sup>11</sup> China is of course another case of remarkable lowering of energy intensity over the period, from high volumes in the early 1980s

<sup>12</sup> Here California is a helpful cross-comparison, even if its contribution to the US economy is some six times that of Greece to the EU.





its brakes. First, a premature drive to a common foreign policy “for which the Europeans were not ready”, and through which influence was to leave the national capitals but which has not been firmly articulated through the responsible EU institution; second, a premature desire to include as much of Europe as feasible, and thus to exert heavy social costs in the new member states, and by which an increased range (widening) has produced more friable structure (less densely packed with firm support across and down the social layers for continued integration); and third, the premature introduction of the euro with the consequences debated at such length in the media (Karaganov 2011). While, as argued above, the last at least of these objections may even today be a little exaggerated (and Karaganov’s own country is a valid example of overcoming a debt crisis), these endeavours have run the risk of loosening the ties that bind, or increasing the components or players in the system without strategizing them, leading then to pockets of inertia and entropy (the inability to do useful work), and thereby introducing system irregularities which, at the very least, take time to discuss away.

Cleavages are therefore perdurable. To present these as a (or worse, the) problem, and to offer etiologies and other heuristic devices to proffer solutions, to see policy optimization responses as if to “hard” bounded (temporally or causally) phenomena, is to reify the “problem situation” (Checkland and Scholes 1999) and to run against dominant strains in both methodological epistemology and basic phenomenology. In one of many claims that show the importance of familiar humanities methods for the new sciences,<sup>13</sup> Checkland and Scholes (1999: A28)

<sup>13</sup> Including of course the social sciences. Cp. “Discursive approaches” to European integration (Wæver, Diez) and approaches through “political myths” (Stråth [“Integration became a buzz word with a high political charge” 263], Bostanci, Jones, Manners [“Europa global” 82]). Yet there is still work to be done: Jones says that in writing about myths he is “outside his comfort zone as a political economist” (2010, p. 90) and Manners expects his readers to agree that it is “strange to begin a consideration of the EU in world politics through reference to Greek mythology” (2010, p. 68); the myth,

opine: “Neither problem situations nor problem types can be classified and made the basis of pigeon holes into which particular examples can be slotted, for one person’s ‘major issue’ or ‘serious problem’ may well be another’s unruffled normality”.<sup>14</sup>

### Diversity across member states and the Union’s response

Such diversity of responses is shown in Table 1, which presents the intersection of the voting patterns at the UN of several pertinent countries with the votes cast by the US over what had now been three US administrations across the two major parties. Readers can come to their own conclusions, but a specific EU profile is hard to measure when it comes to considering the individual countries: Ireland is closer to New Zealand, and Germany to Norway, than to a hypothetical EU average, here tabulated for comparison’s sake. While there has been some convergence to this average, this has to be seen in the general trend towards homogeneity across these nations and to a great extent to the Democratic victory in the 2008 presidential election.

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of course, is that of Europa and the bull. A Confucian “rectification of names,” a profiling of terms like Europe and Asia as fundamental to area studies, social sciences and humanities, seems not strange but critical and essential if clarity is to be achieved in what is still loosely called “European Studies” and even more in that unclassifiable pursuit, “Asian Studies.”

<sup>14</sup> This is not of course a new idea, or one whose import is confined to scientific communities. In the 1915 manifesto on the “Futurist Synthetic Theatre,” Marinetti, Settemelli and Cora argued that, with all the overdetermination of an event, one can never seize (“afferrare”) an event entirely, “with all its causes and consequences, because reality vibrates around us, assailing us with gusts of fragments of events combined with each other, interlaced with each other, confused, entangled, messed up” (“caotizzati”).

**Table 1: Coincidence of UN votes with the US, 2003-2009 (%)**

	2003 [Bush]	2004	2005 [Bush]	2006	2007	2008	2009 [Obama]	Some other political changes
Australia	58.1	56.7	58.1	61.3	55.4	56.9	76.6	2008: Kevin Rudd (Labour from Liberals)
UK	57.1	56.7	55.1	53.2	50.7	56.8	72.1	
France	50.7	54.1	52.8	51.4	49.2	54.2	71.4	
Canada	48.4	50	48.7	54.7	54.7	59.4	80.3	2000-2005: Liberals; 2006-: Conservatives
Germany	47	44.8	44.6	42.7	38.6	43.8	66.1	2002-2006: SPD; 2006-: CDU/CSU
Norway	46.3	42.6	44.7	43.2	37.2	43.2	62.1	
[EU	45.4	45.2	45.3	43.3	40.7	45	63]	
Italy	45.1	43.5	45.7	42.7	39.1	43.8	65.6	
Switzerland	43.1	42.4	43.1	39.7	34.8	39.7	58.3	
Ireland	39.4	41.2	41.3	40.3	36.2	40.5	60	
N.Z.	38.6	40.6	41.3	37.7	31.9	39.2	59.7	
Malta	39.7	40	39.7	38.5	35.7	35.7	35.7	
Turkey	32.4	34.8	36	35.4	30.9	33.3	51.6	
All countries	25.5	23.3	25	23.6	18.3	25.6	64.5	

Sources: Jewish Virtual Library; US Department of State; author's own calculations (for the EU). The consolidated EU figures are of course hypothetical, taking the aggregates of the voting trends for the member states.

Despite such diversity across its constituent states, and the increasing homogeneity of responses to global issues across the “West” (which makes the specific EU response difficult to demarcate), the EU’s External Action Service is attempting to position itself in a role as agenda setter in the name of the world’s largest economy. To this end there is often of course an internal dimension, to get the member states on board and to ensure that public opinion coincides with their objectives, in (rare) cases where national party cleavages would run along pro-/anti-EU lines. In this effort the Service can be seen to sacrifice extensive multilevel dialogue, both with stakeholders and in manner, and thus truncate the intersubjective field in which long-term problems are to be solved. Too often, especially in the external press,<sup>15</sup> “the EU” is hypostatized into a crystalline, monolithic entity, which in some way suits its burgeoning self-reflection as such a corporation. However, in this process, the functions which again in

the popular imagination, the Union serves are often fudged: in ongoing problem situations (and it is not necessarily to the Union’s discredit that it seems to be in continual if not continuous crisis), “the EU” (by which is meant its institutions) appears as “client” and “problem solver” while the “problem owners”—those in the widest range affected by the problem, Alfred Schütz’s *Folgewelt*<sup>16</sup> included—are narrowly conceived as equivalent to the clients (politicians, financiers and the like) (Checkland and Winter 2006, p. 1437). While in some soft systems methodology such an amalgam is defensible, its combination in this context can give the impression that the Union is perpetually solving problems it itself has caused, among which of course is the financial crisis in the eurozone: were member states able to set monetary policy, including exchange rates, etc., the argument goes, the situation might not have been exacerbated.

Yet, just as any dynamic system, which conforms to the norms of the adaptive cycle (Holling 2001; Walker et al 2002), the

<sup>15</sup> Here the ASEF-funded “Perceptions of the EU in East Asia” project is insightful.

<sup>16</sup> That is, the world as we imagine or would like it to be experienced by our successors.



state of present EU economic equilibrium, or of its extensible trajectory, presents to us a complex of variables or intersecting vectors, leading to asymmetric effects across the EU space, at different scalar immensities and cyclicities, such that “EU-wide” problems (and arguably including the present crisis) are infrequent. While there may be some correction downwards to Europe’s economic position as globalization becomes truly widespread (“global”), the Union at present is surely resilient enough to cope with most exogenous shocks, or those of its own devising.<sup>17</sup> Much was made of the slow-down in German GDP growth (to 0.1 per cent q-on-q) in Q2 2011 (to give a 1.4 per cent increase for 1H 2011), yet a longer term view would see not only that price-adjusted values were historically high but that such growth is still holding steady in the ripples of the ongoing crisis;<sup>18</sup> indeed, the low growth must be seen in the context of relatively high growth in 2010 and of a scenario in which the country has enjoyed “integer value” (i.e. 1.0 or more) growth in only four quarters in the past decade (Statistisches Bundesamt Deutschland, “Gross domestic product”). Germany’s export dependency is a source of potential weakness, and its own adaptive capacity should be increased to deal with any downturn in demand for high-end goods. To ward off one foreseeable problem is to leave oneself open to others, and to protect an economic state at any particular moment runs foul both of experience (a short reflection on the inherent volatility of a socioeconomic system) and of an appreciation of the generalizable zero-sum structure of capitalism (again, the

perception<sup>19</sup> overrides the reality), according to which in order for there to be gains a mechanism is to be found to produce losses.

The history of the successive phases of European integration (and there have of course been others, religious, secular, culturalist, benign and aggressive) demonstrates that a phase of expansion is followed by one of contraction or realignment during which the previously acceptable *status quo* is still active in the general imagination. Whether these phasal structures be called (following Holling et al) “adaptive cycles” or (following Victor Turner etc) breaks through a liminal or liminoid state, limits cannot be placed to that period of reflection through which an accommodation to (or indeed rejection of) the new is processed.

The eurozone, a bold political initiative which would produce a state, which is to say a set of bounded, intersecting social, political and economic institutions which is also present as a state of affairs, an *Alltagswelt* [everyday, lived experience world] in Schütz’s terms, cannot dispel its inherent dynamism as a collection of such states (in both senses), the reproduction of which on the higher phase level of national socioeconomic disturbances might have been foreseen even without its construction as part of the cyclicity of capitalist accumulation and dispensation. While of course such disturbances are real and troubling, the very logic which would consider their inevitability would also predict a return to an equilibrium of sorts, even a growth spurt for those parts of the system which can profile themselves in the emergent system which arises in the aftermath. In this scenario, “stress tests” are of habitual occurrence, in fact part of the activity itself. In such socioeconomic systems as banking and finance, just as in social ecological systems, therefore, a short-term, even if relatively frequent disturbance should not obfuscate the view of the underlying trend or cyclicity of flows (inputs, outputs and

<sup>17</sup> As with any “soft system,” however, localized improved resilience (which might even in the EU be seen as national protectionism) can have detrimental effects elsewhere in the system. For example, increasing German disposable income by reducing top-level tax could decrease the fiscal inability to take up a commensurate share of any financial support for more fragile economies.

<sup>18</sup> 1H 2011 German exports grew 14.7 per cent over the already encouraging 1H 2010 figures, with trade balances firmly in the country’s favour (Statistisches Bundesamt Deutschland, “Außenhandel 1. Halbjahr 2011”).

<sup>19</sup> Conversely, of course, one could point to an ideology which sees sustainable development and growth as a win-win situation.



resultant changes) which can be accommodated by a theory attentive to “slowly changing variables and their feedbacks” (Carpenter and Gunderson 2001: 457) into which theoretical horizon such disturbances can be accommodated and for which general planning (along the lines of “lowest regrets” or the Micawber Precept<sup>20</sup>) is generally sufficient to ensure long-term positive growth. While the figures being suggested for an effective eurozone “rescue” are indeed daunting, these should be put in some context: in mid-September 2011 sums amounting to some 2 trillion euros were mooted, with the participation of the IMF; the EU’s annual GDP amounts to some six times that.

*Trends in labour mobility and housing as indicators of embedded social and economic diversity within the EU*

What is good for the EU may not then seem so to its people. While a Special Eurobarometer 337 report on Geographical and Labour market mobility (June 2010) showed that 60 per cent thought that labour mobility was a good thing for European integration, only 36 per cent thought it was good for families. Since of course integration without the “four freedoms” would be unthinkable, the support level is unsurprising (the support does not track preferences for integration itself), but the antipathy to labour mobility demonstrates that personal economic survival is pitted against general “survival” or well-being of the EU as such, if one policy (labour mobility) cannot be adjusted to another (falling fertility rate). Comparing the results of its survey with one held in 2005, Eurobarometer 337 shows that, generally speaking, support for “moving across regions or countries” of the EU had held steady (but only to 48 per cent in the later survey), while people had become less undecided (from 37 per cent to 31 per cent), and apparently those who had made up their mind had come to the opinion that it was “bad” (from 11 to 17 per cent).

The EU — as lived environment and as amalgam of institutions — has a long way to go to make itself family-friendly. While managers, students and the young (under 24, especially males) are the most ready to move to another region or country, other people—that is, the overwhelming majority—express a certain and in some cases decided reluctance to relocate (Eurobarometer 337: 93). Age, gender and education therefore present other cleavages in the assessment of EU value added. With the prevalence towards one-child families (if any [families or children]), females may feel a traditional bind to the parents, while males can indulge a certain *Wanderjahr* or two. Thus ironically one EU policy, freedom of movement (which has generally been considered one of the advantages of the Union), is made easier by that which enhances it, the low fertility rate (itself a complex consequence of social and economic forces), but which itself puts the Union at a disadvantage.

Such a diverse picture is apparent in housing also. Some of the new member states [NMS] have very high home ownership rates, as do several of the countries in the public eye of late (for example Spain [c. 85 per cent] and Portugal), while France, Austria and especially Germany (c. 55 per cent) lag behind (Eurostat 2010b, p. 332; see also Chaney and Emrath 2006 and OECD 2005). The German housing price-to-income ratio is well below the long-term average<sup>21</sup> and nominal house prices there have in anything been slipping for the past decade (*OECD Economic Outlook 2011/1* Statistical Annex: 401) while those in Spain increased some 40 per cent between 2002 and 2006, to deflate rapidly (some 15 per cent between 2007 and 2010) as the crisis arose. In early 2010, Deutsche Bank considered Germany’s house price-to-income ratio “cheap” while Spain’s (as much of western Europe’s) was “elevated” (Deutsche Bank Research: 7). In Purchasing Power Consumption Standards, expected rental returns have been higher in Spain than in Germany (*OECD Economic Outlook 2011/1*,

<sup>20</sup> Advice which, of course, as readers will remember, he failed to keep himself.

<sup>21</sup> 74.9 per cent in 2008 and 76.3 per cent in 2010 (*OECD Economic Outlook 2011/1* Statistical Annex: 402).



but Germans have, and generally use, more disposable income than residents of many European countries (Eurostat 2011; Carlin and Soskice 2009) especially as housing rents have been rising comparably more slowly than other consumer prices (Voigtländer 2010). Loan-to-value mortgage figures mean that this surplus is needed for a mortgage, in the right market conditions. In other conditions, of course, it can be used for other items, including an influx of imported goods which is cited for one reason of the slowdown of German GDP growth in 2Q 2011 (Statistisches Bundesamt Deutschland 2011). Housing loan-to-value percentages have generally been lower in Germany than in many other European countries, so a higher level of savings (and thus, in a sense, of disposable income if buying one's own place is out of the picture) is to be expected. Since rental properties are often of a relatively high standard and other fundamentals are sound, renting is a viable lifestyle option across the socioeconomic range. While such figures may seem of little intrinsic interest to the current paper's argument about attitudinal diversity, they do set such diversity in a precise socio-economic background and go some way to presenting a background reason for the diversity of attitudes to growth, consumer society and public welfare across the member states here mentioned.

### **The Union's abiding problems of entering citizens' hearts and minds**

"Efficacy," in Léopold Sédar Senghor's appraisal, that "virtue of the north," most "characterizes 'Albo-European civilization', but this is an asset which the culture cannot always claim for itself. The echoes of central planning inherent in the Lisbon Treaty (e.g. the EEAS and the new regulations with regard to external trade) would give credence to an ongoing centralization. Yet asymmetries are to persist, most of which are structural: for example, in energy and finance. Such diversity — including the recovery from a downturn — fuels growth, as input (infrastructure, knowledge, material) is restructured across the Union and growth areas appear and,

admittedly, disappear, only to be given more input as the crisis becomes more evident and its aftermath is taken as an opportunity to focus on procedures for sudden (and sometimes too hasty) growth once more. On the other hand, the EU has not been so efficacious in becoming a part of what, following Schütz, might be called the residents' *Umwelt* (except at times negatively, when it is considered intrusive) for all the attention earlier in the century on getting "Europe closer to the people" and to its ecological agendas. At best, it enters the realm of the "they" (not the "us" of the *Umwelt*), the *Mitwelt* alongside but not part of our lives, Heidegger's "das Man".

Public opinion and related data sets are generally ambivalent about the degree to which Europeanization has entered the mindsets of Europeans themselves over the years. Of course, following Newton's third law (loosely, the one about "equal and opposite reactions"), an elite trajectory of such Europeanization might lead to a negativity about it, or might translate into trivial domains, some offshoots of pre-existing national or regional trends, such domains then being unnecessarily taken as demonstration of the effects of such elite Europeanization. Trends from a range of sectors, human interests and lifestyle choices can be assessed to build a composite and thorough picture of diversity across social status, income level and age, and then of course across nations.

Media attention to an issue can prefigure public interest. Even if a concern is unquestionably important in its own terms, it can be pushed out when other issues arise on the front pages. In 1982, *Eurobaromètre 17* (1982, p. 36-7) found that while, in those volatile Cold War times, 67 per cent of the ten Community states thought that the protection of the peace was an cause "sufficiently worthwhile" to "do something about, even if this might involve some risk or giving up other things," and 40 per cent similarly valued the ending of poverty and the maintenance of the freedom of the individual, just over a third (35 per cent) would act in protection of the environment ("Climate change" still meant





global cooling then) and a mere 11 per cent for European unification. While climate change was sore-thumbed as a concern in a 2007 Eurobarometer survey (at 57 per cent, the highest percentage by some 20 points over the second), in 2011 it had slipped to 34 per cent, about par with around half of the issues listed in the survey (*Special Eurobarometer* 365: 14). In the broader term, while a 2 degree rise in global temperatures may precede disaster, an equivalent quantitative decline in Europe's economic ranking — and at present, this is really all it is<sup>22</sup> — is hardly worthy of a strong stance or even much historical attention, at least in the medium term.

### **The potentially debilitating, but coalescing power of globalization through Europeanization**

While the causes of the financial crises, serious though they of course are, seem still within the (albeit exponential) limits predictable of economic volatility, some political commentary takes their effects as of a greater order of magnitude (the logarithms of the Richter scale come here to mind). The rhetoric of competitiveness fuels this anxiety, as many a downturn (or even a serious, but temporally bounded recession) is seen as the beginning of the end of the EU as a project. Fortunately, worst-case scenario planning (as about climate change or budget default scenarios) combines with limited public attention spans (Downes 1972, p. 39<sup>23</sup>) and

high information costs to undermine any such debilitating public concerns. Europeans then might be united more than they are generally aware by the presence of media campaigns, and even if public opinion surveys show that such campaigns are limited in maintaining a singular public awareness.

High on the agenda of such concerns, it might seem, would be globalization, a presence and buzz-word in so much that is deemed newsworthy. In 2005, Eurobarometer 63 found that a small majority of Europeans felt more anxious than optimistic about globalization: 18 per cent of respondents found “globalization” synonymous with “increased competition for national companies” and 38 per cent were concerned about relocation of companies to places where costs were cheaper. Southern economies, some (but by far not all) newer member states and states new and old with larger populations and less developed welfare regimes were more likely to throw a flag on globalization's play. Not surprisingly then, a negative concern was much more voiced in the then “EU15” (40 per cent) than in the “new member states” (26 per cent). France and Belgium seemed particularly anxious, the former recording a 59 per cent of that opinion. In 2009, according to Eurobarometer 72 (published 2010), France remained the most pessimistic about globalization, a full 70 per cent saying that it “*constitue une menace*” for the country (the EU27 average was 42 per cent, one percentage point lower than those who thought globalization “a good opportunity”).

<sup>22</sup> Following data given earlier in this paper.

<sup>23</sup> “Each [problem] suddenly leaps into prominence, remains there for a short time, and then—*though still largely unresolved*—gradually fades from the center of public attention” (Downes 1972 p. 38; my italics). That this “center” is largely politicized is abundantly demonstrable in relation to climate science/speculation, as in the ongoing debate, rekindled in mid-2011 with the publication of CERN (Geneva) data supporting a link between galactic cosmic rays and condensation nucleation (Kirkby et al 2011), and the attendant discussion of a pronouncement by CERN's director that he had asked his colleagues “to present the results clearly but not to interpret them” (that is, to forego the usual Discussion section common to scientific articles) so that the Conseil would not be obliged to enter “that arena, one of high politics, of the climate change discussion” [“Ich habe die Kollegen gebeten, die Ergebnisse klar dazustellen aber nicht zu interpretieren.

Damit würde man sich sofort in die hochpolitische Arena der Klimawandeldiskussion begeben. Man muss sich darüber klar sein, dass es sich bei der Höhenstrahlung nur um einen von sehr vielen Parametern handelt“]. (Welt-Online). A similar tone was struck at the March 2009 Climate Change Congress by Danish PM Anders Fogh Rasmussen (the following month to resign to head NATO), who “gave” the eminent scientists present a “piece of advice,” that they not give policy makers too many “moving targets, because it is already a very, very complicated process. And I need your assistance to push this process in the right direction, and in that respect, I need fixed targets and certain figures, and not too many considerations on uncertainty and risk and things like that” (Kammen 2009).



Here the background of extra-EU merchandise exports is instructive (Eurostat 2010a). In 1995, France enjoyed a 15 per cent of total EU exports, and Germany 26 per cent (Italy, for comparison's sake, had 12.6 per cent). In 2010, Germany's share had increased to 28.09 per cent; France's had slipped to 11.4 per cent and Italy's to 10.7 per cent. While, clearly, one would expect a decline as more member states join, the Eurostat figures accommodate for this by back-tracking member states' export figures before accession also (a slight adjustment is however required for the 2007 accession countries, not reflected in the 1995-2002 data). Germany has in the period experienced perhaps exceptional export-oriented success, but its 10 per cent rise from 1995 to 2010 is only part of the picture, since most countries' figures are rising, France, Italy and the UK being the main exceptions, other countries much in the news recently being flat or with slight declines. Certain countries export extra-EU by a factor much greater than their population as a proportion of the total EU; Germany again is significant here, but Belgium and the Netherlands could also be mentioned. Conversely, there is room for expansion in several countries. It has sometimes been said (and denied) that the success of one EU state in this endeavour is at the (literal) expense of another, but, if structural funds continue to flow in the spirit of solidarity from the "winners" to the "losers," economic infrastructure can be built up in the latter and the figures reflect more equality in the connection between national population size and total GDP (i.e. GDP per capita would be more equal across the EU). As it happens, of course, at present this is not the case.

Europeans have rarely seen Europeanization as a holistic act which would bring together a host of domains. As Zürn and Checkel (2005: 1075) opine, "National-level socialization at times competes with, and often dominates, European processes". Not only this, in this abstract sense, but *Eurobarometer* 74 (2011) shows that, generally speaking, there is a direct correlation between proximity of an issue to the concerns of average people and their

tendency to want national, rather than "joint" (with the EU) decision-making. The nation therefore will remain, literally, closer to their hearts. While a comparison of figures for 2007 and 2010 (pre- and mid-crisis) shows that people are generally becoming aware of the EU-level's importance in fighting inflation, other important issues should still, in people's estimation, be handled nationally. Of the 20 categories listed, of the eight garnering around two-thirds support,<sup>24</sup> three (education, taxation and pensions) fall under the "nationality" column, and four (anti-terrorism research, environmental protection and defence and foreign affairs) under the "joint" column. Another six categories or so are more or less equally divided between the two headings. Taxation and fiscal policy are decidedly in the "nationality" column, with an increase from 65 to 68 per cent from 2007 to end-2010.

While both (and conversely) greater national freedom over monetary policy and more Union-level intervention in the banking sector or national fiscal policies have been advanced as positive solutions to the current financial crisis, it would of course be a simplistic move and a hypostatization to ignore the range of variables which make each country's (and even subnational regions') resilience and exposure to the crisis (or rather, a series of international crises again with different causalities and scalar intensities) unique. For example, the UK banking sector holds more claims on foreign banks than any other EU country, but only around a quarter is formed of claims on other European countries (the norm is about a half). While its offshore claims are some 30 per cent higher than France's (the second ranking European country in this regard), the UK's European claims are only some 60 per cent of France's (Bank of International Settlements June 2011 newsletter statistical annex).<sup>25</sup> Thus Europeanization may be a valid hook to an

<sup>24</sup> That is, those issues about which the population can be said to have reasonably decided views, either for national or united, quasi-federal responses..

<sup>25</sup> "Foreign claims are defined as the sum of [banks'] cross-border claims and local claims of foreign affiliates" (Bank of International Settlements, "Highlights" 11).



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internationalization of one member state's economy, but too narrow to be such a spur to globalization for another's.

### Nationalism still and increasingly evident across the Union

Nationalism is therefore imprinted into the currency, as into the currency of opinion. The 2010 Manifesto of the Spinelli Group<sup>26</sup> and other Euro-focused optimists have confidently asserted that "nationalism is an ideology of the past". Yet a strident assertion is not a proof, and indeed this statement reeks of the counterfactual if assessed according to a basic empiricism. As reflected in Eurobarometer surveys and the like, people seem to like nationalism. In 2002, Eurobarometer 57 asked for people's opinion should the EU be "scrapped". Only 38 per cent said they would be "very sorry", most saying that they would either be indifferent or, a minority but over 10 per cent, saying they would be relieved. Not unexpectedly, Luxembourgers would be the most sorry (but even here around a third took opposing views), followed by the Italians and the Portuguese; as may be expected (although it is really a caricature), the UK led those who would be the least unhappy, but more Finns and Swedes opined that they would either be relieved or indifferent. While of course this does not argue for a return to nationalism itself, when factored against the relative low assessment of membership of the EU in several countries, and the rise of the eurosceptical right in recent years, the context of nationalism is definitely prevalent. Many people still think of the polis as the nation, and think of the nation as the only getter of social good.

In 1982, *Eurobaromètre* 17, striking out in an incipient self-confidence, began to ask what has become a series of related questions about individuals' feeling of European citizenry, and the relation between

national and European identity. The first findings showed a scatter of responses which has become a hallmark of diversity within the unity of the framed question. 16 per cent of those polled across the then 10 member states felt themselves "citizens of Europe"; yet, discounting perhaps the 33 per cent of Luxembourgers which expressed this opinion, and the euphoria of new member, Greece (27 per cent), only Germany (25 per cent) and France (19 per cent) exceeded the average; the German figure is perhaps rather surprising given that one third of its current (2011) territory lay in the opposing Soviet bloc. Still, one might take the wish for the deed accomplished in the following decade. Only 9 per cent of the Irish, 7 per cent of the Brits and, the lowest, 5 per cent of the Dutch expressed a firm commitment to such European citizenship. Yet one can be a cosmopolitan without being a Unionist (or a "Common Marketeer" or "Monnetist"); variously, Churchill, Thatcher and de Gaulle might fit such a profile.

Expanding on this line of inquiry, in 1988, *Eurobaromètre* 29 addressed for perhaps the first time the issue of the complementarity of national and European identity. Just glancing at the tables, one would get the impression that people are favourable to complementarity, even if the results for Denmark, Ireland and the UK (which by then had been members for a decade and a half) run against the perception of complementarity. Ireland is non-committal and Germany and the Netherlands are ambivalent, the new members (Greece from 1981 and Spain and Portugal from 1986) show moderate enthusiasm, slightly less than Belgium's and well below that of France, Italy and (needless perhaps to say) Luxembourg. Yet these somewhat consoling figures need to be examined rather more closely. While what the question negates is fairly clear (most people do not equate Europeanization as a loss of national cultural good), what is being posited is less so. "Complementarity" is derived from the proposition that a "true unification" of Western Europe is "the only way of protecting our national historic,

<sup>26</sup> A manifesto which, of course, pays homage to that written in 1941 on Ventotene by Altiero Spinelli and Ernesto Rossi. While the 2010 document pales in comparison with the urgency and compulsion of this earlier work, it cogently spells out the views of several distinguished European politicians, some academics and others.



cultural identities and our national economic interests against a challenge posed by the great world powers.” Here, although no-one could have foreseen how quickly the period would come to an end, are apparent the fears and tribulations of the Cold War, the view that European values were threatened with annihilation by the Soviet Union on the one hand and with assimilation by the United States on the other (“globalization” was of course still fuzzy in this stereotype).

Such can be seen in the tabulation of support for unification which can be traced using Eurobarometer data back to 1973 (to about 1990). The period 1973-85 is a particularly helpful gauge as only one country, Greece, joined during this period, and the figures at the Community level are remarkably consistent, or even in some respects rising in support of some form of western European unity. In 1973, 30 per cent of those polled said that they were “very much for” unification, and 33 per cent “rather for”; in 1985, the respective figures were 35 per cent and 42 per cent. Yet again other variables cloud the picture. While overall the “don’t knows” fall from 26 per cent in 1973 to 13 per cent in 1985, in several countries in the earlier year the “don’t knows would have it” (i.e. they are the largest group or near it); even in 1985, the DK vote in Denmark was 22 per cent, in Ireland 24 per cent and Greece (four years into membership) 23 per cent. Presenting a pattern consistent in later decades, the percentage saying that their country’s Community membership was of value did not increase (from a relatively unimpressive 56 per cent) from 1973 to 1985, with a greater degree of indifference and a corresponding decrease of those who “didn’t know”. Yet such averaging does not reveal the considerable diversity across the nations, with some characterized by a persistent antipathy to western European unification (in 1985, only 9 per cent of Danes, 24 per cent of the Irish, 30 per cent of the Belgians and 30 per cent of the British gave unqualified support to the project, only 29 per cent of Danes and 37 per cent of Brits saying that their country’s membership was a good thing) and others by high general support (although, with the usual

exception of Luxembourg, the highest percentage “very much for” unification, Italy, reached only 39 per cent).

Eurobaromètre 73 (2010) asked how people saw themselves in the near future with reference to their identity, and revealed that just under half (46 per cent) think of themselves only in terms of their nationality, the outriders, not surprisingly, being the UK and Luxembourg. While one could of course argue that conversely more than half feel in some way attached to Europe, the question does not ask whether they feel attached to the European Union as such; it is surely no great matter, as knowledge of other world regions becomes habitual, to think of oneself as pertaining to one rather than another. If anything, as Table 2 shows, nationalism has risen over the past 20 years.

There are still social division issues to be overcome in general between the post-2004 members and the rest which are not to be reduced to economics and the ability to pay for that upgrading promised and exacted by Europeanization (cp. Böröcz and Sarkar 2005, p. 165-8). There are not, as far as I am aware, support figures at the sub-national levels, but given the variation of GDP per capita incomes not only across states but within them it would not be surprising if support wavered across subnational regions also. Such wavering would be consistent with Marcin Marek Dabrowski’s finding that the “sub-national impact of EU cohesion policy remains uneven and differentiated depending on the actors’ preferences, attitudes and capacity” (Dabrowski 2011). Table 3 shows that nationalist feelings have increased in at least three of the 2004+ ex-“Soviet bloc” NMS.

**Table 2: Historical overview of sentiment of European identity**

Date	(Nationality) only	(Nationality) European	and European (Nationality)	and European only	DK - Don't know
04/1992	38%	48%	6%	4%	4%
11/1993	40%	45%	7%	4%	3%
12/1994	33%	46%	10%	7%	4%
06/1995	37%	45%	8%	6%	3%
12/1995	40%	46%	6%	5%	3%
11/1996	46%	40%	6%	5%	3%
04/1997	45%	40%	6%	5%	4%
05/1998	44%	41%	6%	5%	4%
11/1998	43%	43%	7%	4%	2%
11/1999	45%	42%	6%	4%	3%
06/2000	41%	45%	7%	4%	2%
01/2001	38%	49%	6%	3%	3%
11/2001	44%	44%	6%	3%	3%
11/2003	39.80%	46.90%	7.10%	3.30%	2.90%
04/2004	41%	46%	6%	4%	3%
10/2004	41%	47%	7%	3%	2%
10/2005	41%	48%	7%	2%	2%
06/2010	46%	41%	7%	3%	2%

Source:

[http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/cf/showtable.cfm?keyID=266&nationID=16,&startdate=1992.04&enddate=2010.06](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/cf/showtable.cfm?keyID=266&nationID=16,&startdate=1992.04&enddate=2010.06)
**Table 3: “Nationality only” in selected NMS (percentage)**

	Bulgaria	Lithuania	Poland	Romania
2004	40	53	46	37
2010	51	60	44	50

It is, arguably, the country which has had the greatest economic success in which nationalism seems to have crested. So one might argue that if one progresses with integration, not letting oneself be sidetracked (Monnet’s principle), if one “keeps bugging on” (in Churchill’s words), gradually such nationalism will fade, countervailing the tendencies towards recidivism as external threats are reduced. To have such confidence in the future, and to believe that modest confidence building measures are as crucial as

macroeconomic super-objectives, is timely here.<sup>27</sup>

Whichever way the Union is therefore cut, and whatever its size and composition, support for integration<sup>28</sup> has remained fair to middling across the past four decades, some three quarters of the current lifespan of the current form of Europeanization. Some countries, intrinsically, essentially even, think themselves more European than others, for a

<sup>27</sup> Readers may pick up on the theatrical terms here, deliberately placed as there is often as much drama in the discussion of coming catastrophes as in any production by Stanislavski or of the classical Greek playwrights, more “Brekekekex koax koax” than “ototototototot”. That many pronouncements are sincerely held only makes their delivery that much more Stanislavskian, as role-playing (actorhood) has been successfully internalised.

<sup>28</sup> “Unification” is the focus term for much of the earlier period, as used in previous paragraphs where thus consistent, after which “integration”—a more nebulous term and thus perhaps less imposing—has taken over.





range of over-determined historical and experiential reasons which have not yet—even if it were profitable to do so—been uncovered. Throughout, “‘thick’ cultural identity” is more tenuously interlaced with a “‘thinner’ civic identity,” as Christopher Lord and Erika Harris (2006, p. 190) contend. Weighing for relative population size,<sup>29</sup> or separating larger from smaller states, shows limited differentiation of support levels. There is some general differentiation between “EU15” (i.e. those states which were members pre-2004) and “new member states” (the subsequent 12 states or NMS), and this can be mapped on to a corresponding cleavage between those in the top third of GDP per capita and those in the bottom third (with seven of the bottom nine states in the latter category from the ex-“Eastern bloc” and two-thirds of the original members in the former category).

However, whether we divide by GDP or by pre- and post-2004 membership, there is considerable national variation within each grouping, from 36 per cent to 70 per cent in favour for the top nine by GDP (widening to 29 per cent to 70 per cent if all pre-2004 states are included) and 26 per cent to 62 per cent for the bottom nine (figures for the NMS as a group also fall within this range). Only two states fall within 15 per cent either side of the median for the top nine by GDP, while five fall into such a group for the bottom nine. This suggests that the problems still faced by the NMS and those others whose fortunes have declined of late are comparable, the ways in which the look at the EU are similar, and economics rather than politics dominates public thinking about the value added of the EU. This is not of course surprising, but it does have implications for any policy which would make less tangible issues (“innovation,” broadband, the EU’s external image, climate change, etc.) a bedrock of the public outreach of the EU as a pre-federalizing body. Simplifying then greatly, most upbeat and optimistic about the Union—and this should

come as no surprise either—are the higher socioeconomic brackets, and those with more education (especially those still studying) (*Eurobarometer* 73 [2010], p. 142). The EU is perceived as an object of discussion for these cadres rather than of socioeconomic significance. Whether or not the view of the EU as an elite-driven enterprise is apposite, it certainly appeals to those who would think of themselves as an elite, and this again adds a cleavage to the perception of the EU going forward.

## Conclusion

Diversity is an asset. As in economics, where diversity of business cycles and price fluctuations (for example in stock and commodity markets) can stimulate growth, so the EU thrives by the potential social, political and economic energy latent in this heterogeneity. In any case, it makes no sense to try to reduce diversity, as it is perdurable through the series of convergence moves which would seek to reduce it, indeed is perhaps hardened by such moves. To recognize, however, in the potential of diversity only its presumed catalytic impetus on competitiveness (for there can be no competition without the diversification of input and output) is to hypostatize it for a particular political agenda. Instead, solidarity across diversity is now more than ever acute. As Aleksander Smolar opines, “intra-European redistribution played a key role in the modernization of Ireland, Spain, Portugal, and Greece” (2005, p. 57) and it is this modernization which is under threat as the limits of a renewed distribution are discussed. This solidarity, *pace* Monnet, cannot be granted by institutions, or *pace* Sternberger and Habermas, by “constitutional patriotism” alone. As the 2005 conclusions of the unfortunately overlooked Spiritual and Cultural Dimension of Europe Reflection Group argue, “the intellectual, economic, and political tendencies of recent decades - not least the advance of individualism - have led to an erosion of many forms of social solidarity.” For “when individual solidarity is not there, institutionally-based solidarity is not enough to bring a polity into being” (2005,

<sup>29</sup> Cp. Eurobarometer 32, December 1989: “The figures presented in this document for the Community as a whole are means weighted according to the countries’ respective adult population” (p. ii).



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p. 10). Such solidarity is to be expressed mainly as an attitude, a *habitus*, a helpful, open and pleasant disposition, yet with a firm demeanour and with above all the insight to foreground people in the formulation of policy. As Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk reiterated in his victory remarks after the 2011 elections, “love is more important than power” (“miłość jest ważniejsza od władzy”). Recognizing this, perhaps, would those “desiring a better country”<sup>30</sup> (and, by extension, Union) be appeased.

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<sup>30</sup> That this, those “*desiderantes meliorem patriam*”, the motto of the Order of Canada loosely based on Hebrews 11:14 ff.

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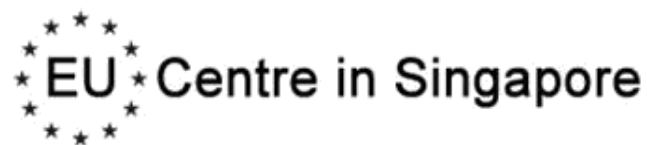


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