

**The present crisis of the European Union.**  
**Causes, consequences and potential developments**  
*The problematics' exposure*

**A. Historical background**

- a. The post-war political climate: to prevent future war through mutual economic dependence
- b. The EU core established by 6 countries with comparable economic development and similar political structures in 1957
- c. An integrating impact of the threat from the Soviet bloc until 1989

**B. Insufficiencies in governance**

- a. The absence of strategic decision making capacity of the European Commission, Parliament, and Council, which should call attention of politicians to emerging or future challenges, threats - as well as opportunities
- b. The inappropriate application of the “snowball approach” to institutional changes (Jacques Delors' concept: to make EU a cyclist unable to dismount)
- c. The lack of necessary financial resources (1 % of GDP) accompanied with a weak political support at the level of Member States to achieve declared political objectives

**C. Crucial wrong decisions**

- a. To launch common monetary policy (Euro) without common fiscal policy
- b. The enlargement executed as a political big bang - despite huge cultural differences between the Old and the New Member States – since 2004
- c. The neglected issue of common security (failing attempts to establish the European military corps)

**D. Absent decision:** To create a popular, visible, comprehensive and accepted link between Brussels and European citizenry in issues of everyday life, without mediation via national political class

**E. Present situation: a complex crisis consisting of several mutually dependent partial crises**

- a. The uncontrolled migration, generating rise of political extremism and authoritarianism
- b. The European “troika” (European Commission, European Central Bank, and International Monetary Fund) are rolling democratic decision making procedures at national level
- c. Brexit (with some Member States considering to follow suit)
- d. An inconsistent engagement in Ukraine, associated with deteriorated relations to Russia
- e. The rising indebtedness of the majority of the EU Member States
- f. The decreasing legitimacy of the process of European integration in general and the EU in particular in the eyes of European citizens

**F. Scenarios of future developments**

- a. Disintegration: very low probability due to institutional path dependency, and many associated strong political, social and economic interests
- b. Further integration: very low probability due to **A. - E.** above
- c. Muddling through: most probable, but unclear. A two-speed EU (more integrated core with dependent periphery)? Regional partition? A move toward intergovernmentalism?