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**European Integration and
the Process of Globalization**

Ionuț Ștefan¹

Abstract: The phenomenon of European integration may be analyzed in a theoretical interconditionality with the general phenomenon of globalization. Both aspects of the contemporary society are complex; therefore, they must be analyzed from several perspectives. Globalization, as a general phenomenon, concerns the entire human race and may be understood by several coordinates: economic, social, political, cultural, military, etc. The complexity of this phenomenon introduces certain contradictory aspects as well. The European integration is a phenomenon which mainly concerns the states located in the European geographical area and which explicitly manifested the desire to be integrated into the European Union. The European construction represents a recent mechanism, which requires permanent revisions, lest it should end up in failure. The two concepts, federalism versus intergovernmentalism, seem to outline the general context of the theoretical discussions concerning the sustainable development of the European Union. The common policies of the European Union represent the main instruments by which this mechanism defines today in the general context of globalization.

Keywords: globalization; European integration; common policies of the European Union; nation-state; European governing.

1. Introduction

“*The European idea is the idea of the economic and political unification of Europe*” (Bobică, 2008, p. 11). Thus, the European integration becomes an active and reflexive process, involving the inclusion of a part of a whole and the embedment and harmonization thereof with the general view. This concept seeks to respect the freedom for democracy, equality, affiliation, dignity, tolerance, integrity, protection, and solidarity among the EU member states and not only. In the contemporary world, this unity may constitute a harmonious blending of the economic, political, social, and cultural principles.

Starting from Enrique Baron Crespo’s statement, the President of the European Parliament during 1989 – 1992, who said that “*...we must answer the acceleration of the continental history with the acceleration of the community history...*”, it may be said that the acceleration of the world history must receive a European answer. In this case, “*the creation of a united Europe will be a continuous process, which started in the 50’s and has not yet come to an end.*” (Bobică, 2008, p. 80).

Under these terms, the observation of the conscious actions of the masses, of the peoples, presently becomes a decisive factor, lying at the foot of mankind’s hope for the instauration of a world of peace, prosperity, and justice. In conclusion, the countries belonging to the EU represent the forces able to determine the victory of reason and of what is right.

¹ Senior Lecturer, PhD, “Danubius” University of Galati, Romania. Address: 3 Galati Blvd, Galati 800654, Romania, Tel.: +40372 361 102. Corresponding author: ionut.stefan@univ-danubius.ro.

1.1. The Globalization Concept

Globalization is a multidimensional process which rapidly and deeply transforms the national and global activities, but also the interactions among the social players. The changes accomplished impact on all aspects of human life. Its speed, width, and character differ function to the dimension in which it develops: economic, political, social, cultural, military, etc. Although there is no “universal” definition of globalization, it is generally regarded as a process in which the barriers hindering the international flows of goods, services, capital, money, and information are eroded and even eliminated. At present, there is a fierce debate on the width and length of this process. Some specialists, such as John Gray, state that globalization represents an epochal transformation of capitalism, which has already been accomplished, being inevitable and irreversible. Others, such as Paul Hirst or Graham Thompson, claim that the width of globalization is exaggerated and that we are not dealing with a phenomenon, but with an acceleration of the internationalization process of capitalism and the market. Such comparisons are hard to make because of the complexity of the statistical data which must be gathered.

These acceptations are contrasted by the one perceiving the current globalization as a second wave of the process, on the whole, which has no precedent judging by its characteristics and the number of countries involved. Anthony Giddens describes globalization as “not new, but revolutionary” and proves that it is a multifaceted process, with various - often contradictory - aspects. On the whole, globalization may be defined from the perspective of three main theories: a) the theory of the world system, b) the theory of the world political organization, and c) the theory of world culture. According to the theory of the world system, globalization is a process, completed in the 20th century, by which the capitalist system was spread on the globe. Since this world system kept some of its main characteristics along the centuries, it may be stated that globalization is not a new phenomenon. The beginning of the 21st century finds the economy of the capitalist world in crisis; therefore, according to the most important promoter of this theory, Immanuel Wallerstein, the current ideological celebration of the so-called globalization is nothing more than the “swan song” of the world system. The explanation is that, in the 20th century, the world system reached its geographical limits, by expanding the capitalist markets and the state system to all the regions of the world. At the same time, it witnessed the consolidation of the USA as a unique superpower, while the new states and communist regimes improved their economic status, and the system intrinsically stayed polarized. Wallerstein calls this transformation “the transition period”. The new economic crises can no longer be solved by exploiting the markets. The economic decline will give rise to conflicts at the very center of the system, and the system will reach a critical point. As long as this chaotic transition does not lead to the configuration of a more democratic world, the “capitalist globalization” will vanish.

In the perspective of the theory of the world political organization, globalization is the enlargement and adoption of the world culture. Starting with the second half of the 19th century, a rational, institutional, and cultural world order took shape, consisting of patterns applicable at a global level, which configure individual states, organizations, and identities. The conceptions on progress, sovereignty, rights, etc. got to have a greater authority, structuring the actions of states and individuals and providing a common framework for the international disputes. At the end of the 20th century, the world culture crystallized as a constitutive element of the world society, a set of universally valid prescriptions. This culture became a common heritage, institutionalized all over the globe and supported by many transnational groups. However, it does not meet the general consensus, so the implementation of the global patterns will not lead to the configuration of a homogenous world, on the

contrary, it may well give rise to conflicts. In the acceptance of the theory of the world culture, globalization refers to the “compression” of the world and the consolidation of the vision thereof as a whole. The promoters of this theory believe that, at the end of the 20th century or even sooner, globalization turned the world order into an issue. Everyone must answer reflexively the difficult situation created by the new order, which leads to creating contradictory visions of the world. For example, there are specialists who believe that the world is an assembly of distinct communities and underline the importance of the existing differences, while others consider that the world develops according to a unique pattern, encompassing the interests of humanity as a whole. In this compressed world, comparing and confronting the visions thereof may lead to the burst out of a cultural conflict, in which the religious traditions play a key part, providing the supreme motivation for supporting a certain vision (for instance, the resurgences of the fundamentalist groups). Hence, a globalized world is integrated, but not harmonious, it is a unique, but diverse place, a construct of shared visions, but fragmentation-prone. (Jinga, Popescu, 2000, p. 123).

Globalization has certain effects of economic, political, social (demographic, cultural, religious), military, and ecological nature, which involve various risks and benefits. Understanding these aspects is especially important as the interactions among them may be destructive and may pose new risks, dangers, and threats to security. As for the dimensions of globalization, the economic and the cultural ones have the greatest impact on mankind. In order to ensure security, in the vision of the UNO, the economic and social development and observing the human rights are the key and interrelated elements. The debates concerning development evolved around two schools of thought: one which considers that development or its absence is, mainly, a consequence of the action of the national forces, and the other which, while admitting the importance of these factors, brings to the foreground the international ones, which tend to endanger or to perpetuate the existing inequalities. In this context, the UNO specialists identified the three main asymmetries of the global world, having a major impact on the global security status: 1) The extreme concentration of the technical and technological advancements in the developed countries, as a main source of their economic growth. We are talking about the concentration not only of the scientific research, but also of the productive industries related to the technological change (those industries representing the dynamic components of the global commercial flows and of the structure of international production and which benefit of the largest funds for innovation). The technical progress in the developed countries, meaning the “core”, sends growing pulses to the less developed or developing countries, meaning “peripheral”, through four main channels: the derived demand for raw materials; the relocation to the developing countries of the production sectors, considered “mature” in the developed countries; the technological transfer in itself, including the technologies embedded in the production equipment; the possible participation of the developing countries in the most dynamic production sectors. 2) It is obvious that the availability of the economic opportunities for the developing countries continues to be extensively determined by their stance in the international hierarchy, and this situation represents one of the most important implications of the discrepancies identified in the world economy. Certainly, the technical progress is distributed from the core through the abovementioned channels, but this transfer continues to be relatively low and irregular, and its benefits are unequally assigned to the developing countries. 3) The high macroeconomic vulnerability of the developing countries to external impacts. The existing macroeconomic discrepancies are attributed both to the fact that the international currencies belong to the developed countries, and to the pro-cyclic nature of the capital flows to the developing countries. This pattern is determined by the perception concerning the high level of risk characterizing the markets in the developing countries, undergoing financial cycles during which the stages marked by an appetite for risk alternate with the ones targeting the quality of goods. The effect of these factors is

the acute macroeconomic discrepancy. 4) The contrast between the high level of mobility of capital and the international mobility of labor, especially unqualified labor. This discrepancy is believed to be specific of the third wave of globalization, as it has not been noticed during the first one, where the production factor is highly mobile, or during the second one, where both factors are characterized by a low mobility. (Bărbulescu, 2001, pp. 45-74)

1.2. The Contradictory Consequences of Globalization

Hence, in the developed countries, globalization led to a much more efficient distribution of resources, which triggered a substantial increase of income. However, the statistics concerning the poorer regions, where the population growth rate is high and where the environment undergoes constant degradation and the epidemics spread, proves that globalization also has negative effects. There have been debates concerning the fact that this process exacerbates poverty in various corners of the world. Thus, the ability of the economic globalization to create security matters is obvious. At the end of the '90's, many countries were faced with an economic downturn because of the speed, volatility, and sudden withdrawals of financial capital. The Asian financial crisis is a classical example thereof. Its effects affected the entire region and also fueled the intensification of the tensions and instability in Indonesia, which ultimately led to the UNO intervening in Eastern Timor. Furthermore, the unequal distribution of the direct foreign investments in the developing world intensifies the gap of income, both between the developed countries and the developing ones, and among the latter.

It is obvious that the sudden change of the level and distribution of income inside the states, but also among these ones, may negatively impact the political balance. As a general rule, globalization offers more economic chances to the elites and the middle class. If the income is massively distributed to these social classes, and corruption is one of the contributing factors, the government may lose its validity, as it happened approximately five years ago in Indonesia. The effect is dramatic, if the government deliberately isolates its citizens from globalization and restricts the free flow of information. The adequate examples are the protest movements of the Chinese and Iranian students and traders. The social tensions threatening the political balance and cohesion of the community are closely related to other forms of insecurity, rooted in globalization. Globalization confers new features to conflict. The fuel behind these conflicts is the global traffic of arms, involving new political players in various corners of the world. During the power void right prior to the Cold War, several military companies and mercenary armies started to offer their services to various governments and corporations, severely threatening human security.

The issue of the so-called rogue states also stems from globalization. Features of this process, such as the access to information and the communication technology, the mobility of individuals and assets, the emergence of new markets offering scientific expertise and weaponry, the maturation of the dual technologies and the commercial pressures to access a certain market, eased the activity of the "rascal" states and organizations. This feature appears because globalization seems to threaten the ability of those states to support their traditional national power. Globalization reduces the ability of the states to maintain their monopoly of information and the use of force, strengthens the permeability of borders, and allows the non-state players to gather capital uncontrollably. Therefore, the globalization process seems to increase the opportunities of the "rascal" states (rogue states), along with decreasing the ability of the democratic ones to defend themselves. In the political field, globalization brings another sort of modifications as well. The policies used to be and still are the responsibility of the national political systems, and the national governments used to be and still are responsible for ensuring the

security of their citizens. Together with strengthening globalization, the political activity more and more develops at an international level, through the agency of various integrated political structures, such as the European Union, or of certain intergovernmental organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund. At the same time, the political activity may transcend the national borders by global movements and non-governmental organizations. The organizations of the civil society act globally, forming alliances with foreign organizations, using the global communication systems and lobbying directly in front of the international organizations, without the agency of their national governments.

The cultural dimension of globalization is also extremely important. The popular culture facilitated learning English, which became a language of international communication, easing and accelerating the global flow of ideas. Despite all this, the elites in the countries with a weak national identity or a recently formed one, which adopted foreign cultural practices, especially American, started to fear that their own cultural identity will erode to disappearance. At the same time, globalization consolidated the acknowledgement of the fact that in the case of the traditional cultures as well, there is the danger of extinction, although the ones having the ability to borrow and adapt foreign influences do much better when faced with the development of this process.

Globalization facilitates the expansion of religious ideas. The power of religious values and institutions helped people in many regions of the world hold on before the insecurity state associated with the decline of the traditional authority and the rapid economic changes specific of globalization. Many specialists state that, most of the times, the so-called religious violence is, actually, a political rebuff of globalization. This process undoubtedly accelerates the rebirth of the cultural and religious identities. The phenomenon of globalization itself is a cause of the increase of the transnational criminality and terrorism, as it heightens the economic inequalities, which determines the predisposition of the state or non-state players to participate in such forms of criminal action. At the same time, globalization contributed to the intensification of these antisocial activities both by accelerating the flows of individuals, assets, and information, and by conferring an international dimension to corruption. Globalization speeds up the rhythm of integration, but it also provides an environment prone to disintegration or fragmentation tendencies. Thus, globalization creates a new context for the formal or informal exercise of the national power. The regional and international institutions, the non-state players (especially the transnational corporations and the non-governmental organizations) and even the local governments use some instruments of globalization to lessen the monopoly of the nation-state of power. A part of power is transferred upon the international scene, a second part upon the local level, and another part is used by the NGOs and corporations to influence the national policies. The specialists note that in Europe, Latin America, and Asia, the regional economic agreements become dominant expressions of the relations among states, conferring structures at this level a “geopolitical” personality. Globalization also leads to the appearance of new international regulations and extends the role and status of such organizations as the United Nations Organization and the World Trade Organization. Hence, new instruments for regulating the economic, political, or security conflicts are created. However, outside the transatlantic community, such regional security arrangements develop much slower and there is the danger to remain informal and too flexible to have a strong normative character. (Bărbulescu, 2006, pp. 34-79).

Globalization does not remove the traditional geopolitical concerns. The national governments and various non-state players are motivated not only by the economic gain, but there are still many political conflicts concerning territory, boundaries, military competition, resources, cultural and ethnical differences. Globalization sometimes lessens these tensions, but, in many cases, it heightens them. For example, the globalization of finances determines the integration of the world economy,

while the worsening of the geopolitical issues may lead to regional fragmentation. In the absence of a bipolar political confrontation, the political and regional security issues occur as independent or, at the most, having a low impact upon the evolution of other regions. On the one hand, this situation reduces the danger that the regional tensions trigger a global conflict, as a characteristic of the Cold War period, and, on the other hand, it deepens the instability in those regions. Globalization is about to turn, from a multidimensional phenomenon and historical process, into a complex interdisciplinary science, with its own subject of study, categorical and methodological apparatus. Although, on the whole, globalization manifests at various levels: economic, political, social, cultural, ecological, etc., being a transnational, global phenomenon, which implies a double process of integration, disintegration, and gradual reintegration of the states, we shall further on examine the main effects of globalization at a political and identitarian-cultural level, putting aside such global matters as: economy, ecology, demography, poverty, terrorism, etc. (Gorincioi, 2004, p. 97). “Globalization” is a relatively new term, widely used in these past years in the political and scientific literature. The term “globalization” was introduced into the scientific use by the American researcher T. Levitt in 1983. In an article published in the “Harvard Business Review” magazine, he defined by this term “the phenomenon of the merger of the markets of specific goods, produced by large corporations”. This term gained its future development and popularity thanks to the works of the consultant to the Harvard Business School, the Japanese K. Ohne, who published in 1990 the book *World Without Boundaries*. He stated that the economic nationalism of some states had become absurd, and that the “global companies” are the actors evolving at the economic scale. (Gorincioi, 2004, p. 97).

The literature offers a wide range of definitions, conceptual data of globalization. But the determination of the concept of “globalization” gains a restricted meaning, as it is defined based on the analysis of the processes taking place either in politics, or in economy or the social sphere. Even more, several meanings of the one and the same term of “globalization” appeared, rendering more than one aspect of this phenomenon. Based on this, at a restricted level of the scientific knowledge, one’s own image of globalization is elaborated, which leads to the fragmentation of the issue range and makes highlighting the basic tendencies of the world development impossible.

Other values, such as the definition of “globalization”, are set in the political field. We underline the fact that an emphasis of the interdependence of the national and global politics takes place, which characterizes the development of the international relations at world level. Thus, in the opinion of Great Britain’s former minister of international development, K. Short, globalization means “the increase of the interdependence of the contemporary world, which reflects in the spreading of the global norms and values, of democracy, and of global treaties, including the international treaties concerning the environment and the protection of human rights.”¹ From the point of view of the science of international relations, B. Bady underlines a more complex feature of globalization, stating that: “globalization is a historical process, which developed over several centuries, originates in the homogenization of the world, of life based on common principles, general values, traditions, and universal rules of conduct. Globalization must be defined as being the acknowledgement of an ever greater interdependence among states, the result of which is the limitation of the national sovereignty, under the influence of various new players in the international arena - transnational structures, global companies, religious groups, etc.” (Bady, 1998, p. 50).

¹ Short, K. *Eliminating World Poverty: Making Globalization Work for the Poor*. White Paper on the International Development presented to Parliament by Secretary of State for International Development by command of Her Majesty. II December 2000, source: <http://www.globalization.gov.uk>, accessed on December 15th, 2013, p. 145.

Another American scientist, F. Buell, characterizing the global transformations at the current stage, believes that the globalization processes must be regarded as a new stage of capitalism, also called “late or disorganized capitalism”. (Buell, 1994, pp. 258-262). This type of globalization is characterized by a deep advance, integration, and post-modern hyper-development of the world. In the author’s vision, the actual globalization process must not be regarded unilaterally, as this would mean understanding it as the formation of a unique global system (albeit heterogeneous), very sensitive to the “turmoil in the farthest enclaves”, or as a “highly decentralized, interactive” and unstable system. Some American researchers concerned about the justification of the hegemony of the US see in globalization a path to elaborate the rules of the game to attract the states in the new world order. This purpose mainly explains the huge efforts of the globalists in some states and international organizations to promote world-wide democracy. Unlike the American groundswell, the French scientists L. Perillier and J.-J. Tur define globalization as “the whole of ideas and actions expressing the solidarity of the people on the globe, in their tendency to create common laws and institutions, based on the respect for pluriculturalism and national uniqueness” (Perillier, 1977, p. 6). They admit that the globalists propose to identify new international political organizations, which would lead to the transfer of a certain national sovereignty upon a global federal authority, capable of solving those issues endangering human existence. At the same time, three schools of thought may be identified within the debate concerning the globalization process, which try to understand and explain this phenomenon from a different perspective. The hyperglobalists, such as Ohme, who claim that the contemporary globalization defines a new era where all the peoples are more and more subjected to the penalties of the market. The skeptics, on the contrary, argue that globalization is, essentially, a myth which hides the reality of an international economy more and more divided in three major regional blocks where the reasonable governments stay very strong (Hirst and Thompson). The transformativists are convinced that globalization is a central driving force of the rapid social, political, and economic changes reconfiguring world order (Giddens, Rosenau). (Held, McGree, Goldbatt, Perraton, 2004, pp. 26-34).

Like any other social-political process, globalization triggers an ambiguous reaction of the public opinion. The Russian scholar A. Utkin suggests highlighting three main points of view on globalization – a revolutionary, evolutionist, and skeptical approach. The adepts of the revolutionary approach see in globalization the source of the future prosperity, reconciliation, unique rules for all, the path of survival, of raising the life standard, social stability, political importance, elimination of the submission stimulus of the neighboring states. In this new era, the traditional nation-states lose their power, since all the peoples and all the basic principles are subjected to the global market space. The adepts of the evolutionist approach consider the current form of globalization unprecedented. This direction claims from the state a gradual adaptation to a less stable, interdependent world. Globalization is a powerful force which transforms the world, a force responsible for the mass evolution of societies and economies, for the change of leadership forms and the whole world order. It gradually erases the differences between the internal and external issues, state and foreign. Globalization is a lengthy process, marked by contradictions, confirmed by conjectural changes.

According to the opinion of the evolutionists, the world divides into rich and poor countries, and this separation will be quite clear, however, there will be no second or third world, but this stratification will be more complicated. The sovereign states keep their control over their territories, but, in parallel with the national sovereignty, the influence area of the international organizations will expand. The approach above denies the disappearance status of the state; the change of status takes place slowly, gradually, but permanently along the whole history of mankind. The representatives of the third approach, which are usually called skeptics, consider globalization a myth, aimed at concealing the

confrontational reality of the development of the international economy. The market forces are never loose, but depend on the regulatory norms of the national governments. Thus, globalization supposes the gradual merger of the national economies into a unique world system, the creation of the unique world economy, of the unique world community which goes beyond the boundaries of the national states.

Despite certain principled differences, related to the cultural, social, and economic differences within the global system, these models share certain common features, specific to globalization: a) The increase of the global economic interdependence: the intensification of the exchanges of assets and the increase of the mobility of the population are the result of the development of the informational technologies and communications; b) The diversification of the power centers, the democratization of the international relations, and the appearance of new challenges for peace and national and international security, etc.; c) The diversification of the international players as a result of the decrease of the capacity of the national states and of assigning some of their functions to their non-state players: the transnational and multinational companies, the international non-governmental organizations, some informal pressure groups, etc.; d) The strengthening of the cooperation and interaction of the international players with a view to preventing and mutually solving the major global issues affecting the security of each individual player.

According to the scientific estimates, globalization on liberal principles leads to the “tossing” at the edge of civilization of a considerable amount of the population in many countries in the world. Most of the population in many non-occidental countries has a dramatic fate – marginalization, unemployment. The famous Senegalese scientist, Samir Amin, states that, to the extent of the inclusion in the liberal globalization system of 40% of Russia’s population, 50-70% of Morocco, Alger, Tunis, Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Turkey, Iran, Brazil, Mexico’s population, 70-80% of China and India’s population, practically the entire population of the countries in Tropical Africa, the Caribbean Basin, the Occidental Asia will find themselves in the situation of “spare labor army”, meaning the situation of the unemployed and outcasts.

Antiglobalism appeared as a reaction to the danger of globalization. It cannot be doubted that antiglobalism, in the civilizational plane, is, in the first instance, the “negative” reaction of the Western civilization faced with the global historical situation and the obvious tendencies of its development. Some scientists consider that the predecessors of the antiglobalist movements are the national liberation separatist army (Mexico), which opposed the agreements concerning free trade ratified by the US, Canada, Mexico (North American Free Trade Agreement, NAFTA) and entered into force on January 1st, 1994. In the summer of 1996, in the Chiapas state in Mexico, the first international meeting of the organizations opposing the performance of the agreement concerning free trade and the adherence of other countries in Latin America apart from Mexico took place. The essence of antiglobalism, according to the opinion of the Byelorussian researcher V. Sacovici, “manifests by the protests against the various aspects of life in globalization – the ingravescence of the social issues and social inequality, the market fundamentalism and global competition, the lack of attention to the issues of the developing countries, the degradation of the environment.” We have to note that the antiglobalist movement, reuniting individuals belonging to various social groups, is practically the sole mass movement opposing the fundamental causes of terrorism – cultural and social-economic. We may consider the Asian and Latin-American financial crises in 1997/98 leaving millions of people in sheer poverty a chronological mark of the beginning of the antiglobalist movement. (Jinga, Popescu, 2000, p. 88).

1.3. The European Answer to the Mondialization Tendencies of the Economic Life

The main objective of the community industrial policy is strengthening EU's competitiveness at an international level and providing the purchasing countries with goods and services of a superior quality and at affordable prices, along with showing concern for the protection of the environment. Initially, upon signing the Treaty of Rome in 1957, it was considered that the existence of the community market would automatically equal, by its mechanisms, the industrial production and its marketing. At the beginning of the '80's, it became necessary to review this strategic orientation following the ever fiercer competition developed by the large foreign companies, including American and Japanese. Without making a deduction of its policy concerning competition, the EU started to show concern for the formulation of an industrial policy able to stimulate partnerships among the European companies and to promote cooperation in the field of scientific research, in order to enhance competitiveness on the world market in the long run.

In 1994, the European Commission formulated the following four priority actions meant to enhance the competitiveness of EU's industry: a) improving the regulating context; b) ensuring an efficient competition; c) promoting the investments in key sectors; d) developing the industrial cooperation. The priority fields of the community research-development programs are considered by the EU to be: the technology of information and communication, the industrial technology and the technology of materials, the environment, energy, human resources, and their mobility. It is estimated that a special part is played by the protection of the intellectual property, by the system of patents, which allows companies to recover the investments made in research and development. The instruments of the community industrial policy, without being defined by precise norms, interfere with those of other common EU policies: the commercial policies, the policy of competition, social benefits, the appropriateness of products and the access to various markets. The EU policy concerning competition proved to be an important factor of the enhancement of the industrial competitiveness, and is generally against mergers, which distort and annihilate free competition. Consistently promoting the aforementioned actions and measures, the European Union does it trusting and considering that industry will continue to constitute a basic branch of economy. Upon elaborating its policy and development strategy, the EU takes into consideration the endowment of the member states with production factors, the dimensions of its market, the import and export necessities, as well as the economic efficiency and the contemporary technical progress.

The issue fundamental to any society, both at world level, and at integrational or national level used and continues to be food security. In order to provide the population with the necessary nourishment, the six founding states of the European Union agreed upon the creation of a common market for agricultural produces, provided that a common agricultural policy of guaranteeing the necessary food supply against reasonable prices for the buyers be promoted. The common agricultural policy of the EU was formulated in Article 39 of the Treaty of Rome (1957). The following three main determinants were placed at the foot of the common agricultural policy (CAP): a) creating a single market of agricultural produces circulating freely and at the same prices in the member states; b) introducing the notion of community preference and its compulsory obeisance by all the member states and their citizens; the content of this notion is that in the trade with agricultural produces, the community produces are preferred, the buyers outside the EU being compelled to accept an overprice; c) the financial solidarity of the EU member states, meaning that they participate together in the constitution of CAP resources and expenses as a whole; (Stiglitz, 2008, p.111). During the last decade, however, the reform of the common agricultural policy became unavoidable. By guaranteeing a high level of the production costs, CAP favored the accumulation of exaggerated surpluses for the main

agricultural productions, such as grains, beef, and milk. On the one side, the technical advancements in agriculture allowed producers to substantially increase their yields, while the mutations occurring in the tastes and preferences of the consumers determined a decrease of the demand. In this situation, the Community was compelled to allocate more and more money to the export of the surpluses to the world market for subsidized prices. Thus, the result was an increase of the budgetary expenses of the CAP without a matching increase of the income of farmers. The importance of the common agricultural policy of the EU reduced, in time, for other reasons as well. Thus, part of its attributions in the field of rural development were taken over by the social and regional policies, and the creation of the unique market of industrial goods and services took over, at its turn, a whole range of community activities which used to constitute the objective of the CAP.

One of the fundamental values of the EU was and still is the social, historical, and cultural diversity of the regions composing it. It bestows upon the citizens of the Union a much deeper sense of identity – a feeling which increasingly manifests in Germany, France, and Spain. From the perspective of the consolidation of the Economic and Monetary Union, the intensification of the regional cohesion becomes a fundamental condition. In order to reach this objective, the policy for regional development and cohesion was conceived and promoted, the importance of which increased with the number of the EU member states. The objectives of the policy for regional development and cohesion cover several directions. Objective no. 1 stipulates that the less developed regions worthy of attention be the ones whose GNP per citizen represents less than 75% of the community average. Nine EU member states have such regions. We are talking about ultra-peripheral regions (the French departments of the Azores, Madera, and the Canary Islands). At the same time, Objective no. 1 includes the least populated regions in Finland and Sweden, which may benefit of special assistance by virtue of the adherence treaties in 1995. A special support program was elaborated under the incidence of this objective in order to support the peace process in Northern Ireland. This program, called PEACE, was foreseen for a period of 5 years and with an amount of 500 million euros, out of which 100 million for the account of the project completed in Ireland. Almost 70% of the total expenses are assigned to the less developed regions. Objective no. 2 seeks to remove the less developed regions out of the crisis affecting them and to promote the economic growth and employment. The regions targeted by this objective benefit of assistance in order to solve the issues related to their declining activities. These regions generally know a high unemployment rate because the industries the situation of which strongly deteriorates use a high manpower mass. This objective comprises 18% at the most of the population of the Union, meaning 10% in the industrial areas and the service areas, 5% in the rural areas, 2% in the urban areas, and 1% in the fishing areas.

Objective no. 3 is meant for educating, training, and promoting employment, meaning supporting the population to adapt and prepare for change. This objective serves as reference framework for any community strategy of developing human resources, meaning any type of action targeting the elevation of the professional competence of the citizens. It contributes, among others, to elaborating a new European strategy of employment and various action plans in the field, promoted by each community state within the common actions of creating new work places.

In order to implement its policy of regional cohesion and development, the EU uses the following four sources of financing, known as structural funds. a) the European Regional Development Fund (**ERDF**), meant for the most underprivileged regions, targets the productive investments, infrastructure, and the development of the small and medium-sized companies; b) the Social European Fund (**SEF**) focuses on the professional training and integration, the creation of new work places, the promotion of the equality of opportunities between men and women, strengthening the educational and

training systems of human resources; c) the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (**EAGGF**) promotes the adaptation of the agricultural structures and the development of the rural dwellings, the support of the small farming households, of the young farmers who start out in the respective form of activity, the association of the small producers and their entrance to the market, the reactivation and preservation of the cultural patrimony of villages; d) the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (**FIFG**) is the most recently created fund and finances the adaptation and modernization of this sector, the fishing fleet and the fish breeders, the protection of marine areas, the processing and selling of fish products. These funds cannot completely eliminate the discrepancies between nations, but they may still contribute to their diminishing. As noted from the above, there is the tendency to include the problems of the environment in the community agricultural policy. However, another tendency took shape in the last period, namely treating the environment separately, as an important, autonomous matter. The following are significant in this respect: a) first of all, by the Single European Act in 1987 and then by the Maastricht Treaty (1992), the community institutions were credited with an enhanced competence in the environment field. This was determined both by internal reasons, and by the acknowledgement of the transfrontier dimension of the environment issue; b) at the same time, the Amsterdam Treaty (1999) mentions, among the priorities of the policy of the European Union, the sustainable development and its ecological component. (Cociuban, 2002, pp. 45-87).

Important juridical acts fundamentally focus on the removal of the emanations causing acid rains, the establishment of some security norms for the bathing waters along the beaches in the EU member states. At the end of 1992, the EU adopted a special action program in the field, called "Towards a sustainable development", within which the EU does not strictly deal with the environmental protection, but this matter is approached in the larger context of the future scheme of economic growth. The policies adopted by the European Union are not restricted to the aforementioned ones, but may also include the energy policy, the transportation policy, the trade policy, the policy in the field of scientific and technological research, the social policy, the policy in the field of external affairs and security.

If we refer to the actors of the European construction, we notice the same two features, unity and diversity: a unity given by the juridical and institutional context in which it operates, and a diversity of the role, function, interests, and power it exerts. The institutional architecture is one of the defining elements of the European Union, a unique institutional system, which finds no correspondence at national or international level. It is a true challenge to describe the structure, functioning, and manner in which the supranational, national, regional, and local institutions interact with other bodies, which represent the citizens' interests (political parties, manager associations, worker unions, NGOs or interest groups). (Delumeanu, 1999, p. 25).

It may be said that the European institutions have tried to keep up with the expansion and consolidation process of the Union; their number increased (upon the entering into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the European Council and the Central European Bank were awarded the status of institution), and their competences expanded (an example being the evolution of the Parliament from a purely consultative role, to precise attributions in the decision-making process). One of the objectives of the Constitutional Treaty and the Lisbon Treaty was making the institutional framework more proficient. This does not mean that there no longer are criticisms referring to the democratic imbalance and suspicions concerning the manner the Commission and work groups related to the Council and Commission represent the supranational interests, taking into account the fact that their members continue to be elected by the member states, or the manner in which the Presidency of the Council

manages to deal with the desire to defend the national interest, along with its duty to coordinate the “whole”, to reach an agreement, which should target the supranational European interest. (Weiler, 2009, pp. 134-156).

There are contradictory opinions concerning the role of the national state in the current European system. On the one side, there are the ones saying that the role of the state has changed. The state gave up part of its sovereignty to some supranational institutions and even accepts to be monitored and controlled by these ones. On the other hand, there are the ones claiming that there are only a few fields (customs union, competition, monetary and commercial policy or the protection of the marine biological resources) in which the Union substitutes for the member states, depriving them of their decisional power. In the other fields, the Union only completes and coordinates the action of the states or facilitates the compromise, its constraining power being limited. The state is still the lead actor, even within the European Union, being represented at all levels of power and in all fields. Even the commissaries, the judges at the European Court of Justice, the members of the Central Bank, of the Committee of Regions or the Economic one, and the European parliamentarians, are all sensitive to the national realities and interests, as they have either been appointed by the governments, or enlisted in national party records. The Union considers that the European political parties are an important element of democracy and of the creation of a European consciousness. There are also voices who claim the opposite, that we are dealing with a democratic deficit of the national parties, that these ones have not undergone a process of adaptation to the European integration, that they have not developed new rules and internal structures, in order to call the members activating in the European institutions to account. It all starts from the fact that the European issues and choices are considered “second rank”, some sort of external policy, which only appear tangentially in the national electioneering. Not playing the part of tutor in the European problems, or the one of binder between the citizens and the European Union, the political parties let the public opinion structure itself or be influenced by another important actor on the European stage, the mass-media, holding a double part: informational and formative. It is known that the manner in which the journalists decide to present a piece of information, to hyphen certain aspects, while neglecting or omitting others, greatly influences the individuals’ perception and attitude towards a certain topic. Yet, most European citizens admit that the favorite informational source concerning the European integration is the media.

More recent actors on the European stage are the regions and organizations of the civil society. The ‘80’s and the ‘90’s, by promoting the cohesion policy and the principles of subsidization and proportionality, determined a higher transfer of competences towards the regional level and an acknowledgement of its importance, from an economic, political, and cultural point of view. If the “Europe of regions” seems to be an accepted notion, the purpose of which is understood by most citizens, things are a little different concerning the organizations of the civil society. The first issue encountered in the attempt to present the role, structure, or influence held by the civil society in the European Union is that there is no clear definition of the organizations of the civil society in the official records of the Union. However, they are credited with easing an open political dialogue among all the parties involved or affected by a certain political decision, thus contributing to the reduction of the democratic deficit and to the legitimization of the decisional process within the Union. At their turn, they need access and credibility before the actors, who define and implement the policies; they need to inform the institutions of their political interests and preferences.

The institutional context, resources, organization of the group, and strategic choices determine the access and influence degree; then the interests they represent may be public or private, national or international. Thus, the controversies related to the transparency of the decision-making process

appeared, owing to the doubtfulness concerning the influence of the interest groups and experts in the whole legislative European process: from establishing the agenda and formulating the policy, to ratification and implementation. Although the European leaders have tried to create a set of rules (by the White and Green Papers, the Code of Conduct or the electronic record), in order to ensure that the influence and contribution of the representatives of the interest groups to the legislative process is a positive and constructive one, the discussions concerning the manner to monitor and regulate this access, without restricting the exchange of information, stay open. The debates concerning the democratic deficit and the rules that should govern the decisional process within the Union continue. In a European context in which the interactions among the players are characterized both by competition, and by collaboration, the desire of all the representatives of the public or private interests, local, national, or supranational, seems to be the enhancement of legitimacy and of the influence power that they exert at a European level.

In conclusion, we could say that the European governance is an approach which attempts to reunite the various perspectives concerning the complexity, diversity, and dynamism of the interactions among a variety of players. Both the vertical dimension, the interactions among the players located at different territorial levels (supranational, national, regional, and local), and the horizontal one, the network in which the role of the non-state players is ever greater, are taken into consideration. Attention is not focused on the integration process itself, but on the issues it poses (efficiency, legitimacy, sustainability) and its functioning principle (negotiations, decision making, implementation, creation of new partnerships, etc.), and an important remark would be that promoting the new forms of governance is not the responsibility of the European institutions or the Commission alone, but of all the levels of public, private, or civil society authority.

It is precisely this network of relations which determined in the last years the appearance of the two complementary phenomena: globalization and fragmentation, integration and differentiation. On the one hand, people have the feeling that they belong to some transnational communities and long for the material benefits of a world economy, but, on the other hand, there is the fear of losing the collective identity, the traditional values. Identity is usually built around history, traditions, the common language and ethnicity. But when these elements present a great diversity, what could the European identity be built upon and does the European Union really need an identity? It seems that for the European leaders, even from the '70's, the creation of the European identity has become an objective, and since then we may track history and the evolution of this concept and discourse. A change of mentalities and of our perspective of history was suggested. Actually, identity is built by continuous interactions, being a process which includes lifelong construction and reconstruction, under the influence of time, space, political climate, or norms, and the community is the idea that we have of it and the meaning we assign to it. This means that the ideas associated with the notion of identity may stay the same, but their meaning changes with time. An example in this respect is the idea of "diversity", which, in the '70's, was considered a possible hindrance to the European integration, being currently seen as an asset and a source of stimulation of creativity at European level.

The least trusting ones in the ability of this union concept are those European citizens who claim that the invocation of the community and identity appears precisely when they are lacking, when one cannot talk of the feelings of cohesion and holism. Then, a strong European identity would not be a functional precondition of the democratic governance of the European Union concerning the common policies. Since the European citizens are aware that there is a European economic and juridical space, which influences their lives more and more (most of them considering that this aspect is a positive

one), it means that some form of identity has already appeared, “weak”, but enough for the democratic institutions to function.

The new European identity is based on the principles of solidarity and cohesion, promoted by the regional policy. The Regional European Policy is one of the Union’s most important policies, its purpose being to promote a harmonious development from a territorial, economic, and social point of view. Trying to attenuate the discrepancies, which multiplied after the expansions in 2004 and 2007, the policy presents several basic traits. First of all, the financial resources of the regional policy are substantial, representing almost a third of the Union’s budget. Second, the regional policy is an important redistributive policy. Third, an important feature of this policy is the concept of partnership, based on which the players at the community, national, regional, and local levels are involved in various stages of the process. Moreover, the regional policy is based on four fundamental principles: concentration of the resources on objectives of utmost importance, planning of programs, partnership, and added value. Finally, we may say that the recent reports, concerning the economic and social cohesion within the European Union, show a remission of the discrepancies among regions and members states, an improvement of the budgetary deficit and of the economic growth rate. Nevertheless, there are still considerable interregional differences and therefore it is necessary that continuous efforts be made to reach the targets of the Lisbon Strategy (also known as the Lisbon Agenda or Lisbon Process). It is imperative that the community players, especially the European Commission, devise a long-term strategy, able to cope with the future global challenges (2013-2020), and that the regional players find the specific solutions to their problems. (Cociuban, 2002, p. 68).

Returning to the idea of unity in diversity, this one may also be applied to the cultural policy in the European countries. The European Union offers certain principles, recommendations, and guidelines, but each member state applies its own pattern of cultural policy, with differences concerning the relations with the other national policies, the centralization degree, the funds allocated from the national budget or the establishment of priorities function to industry. If we are to make a comparison with the regional policy, the cultural policy became a priority on the European agenda only in the ‘90’s, enjoying a much smaller budget - approximately 400 million euros during 2007-2013, as compared to the approximately 350 billion euros allocated to the regional policy for the same period. Some authors claim that, precisely because of this tight budget and the relatively limited competences, the Union cannot have spectacular results in this field.

All of these objectives may be attained only if there is a dialogue and a partnership between the European institutions, member states, civil society, and the professionals in the field of culture – cultural institutions, non-governmental organizations, European networks, foundations, etc., and if creative partnerships are developed between the cultural field and other fields (IT, research, tourism, etc.), in order to consolidate the social and economic impact of the investments in culture and creativity. By the studies conducted on the economy of culture, in general, and on the various initiatives of the European Commission and Council, the importance of the cultural industry and creativity to the economy and competitiveness of the Union was acknowledged. Creativity stimulates innovation and, at the same time, the economic growth, labor and employment, tourism, or the investments in the infrastructure. Moreover, these programs and initiatives impacted people, operators, policies, and cultural practices. Partnerships and networks were created, which continue to function and to bear fruit even after the termination of the financing period; the cultural operators have become more aware of the benefits of the intercultural cooperation; and the number of funds dedicated, for example, to the intercultural dialogue increased, by the development of national co-financing funds. Thus, we may talk of European added value, of an impact both economic and social. It was seen that

poverty may be fought by cultural activities and that social inclusion may be promoted, especially of the underprivileged groups: young unemployed, elders, refugees or disabled individuals, and the role of the European Union is a very important one when it comes to promoting and financing those projects reuniting the objectives of the cultural and social agendas. Besides, a common vision is needed, a long-term strategy, accompanied by initiatives, which should be supported not only by the political leaders, but also by the representatives of the civil society and the media.

2. Conclusions

It was the great transformations marking the evolution of mankind which proved that a system of cooperation and security based on the norms of international law is absolutely necessary. Therefore, the 21st century pleads for a democratic international life, for the consolidation of peace, for the free and independent development of all nations, as well as for the instauration of a new economic and political order. In order to understand the current context of the community policies, it is necessary to see what the issues impacting Europe after WW1 were and what the directions of the European states after WW2 were. By its very structure, the current paper did nothing more than present the risks and benefits of the European integration, as well as the positive and negative effects of the impact of globalization on the European and community principles and policies. Thus, we can realize how important the contribution of the independent economic and social development was – or not, the taking of all natural resources into one's own hands, as well as the opposition to an aggressive policy, a new settlement among the European states. This study shows that the process of European integration still has many opponents, lacking the quality of an accomplished process; however, ensuring the active participation in the solving of all international issues in a transparent and democratic manner, is the responsibility of the states comprising a whole: the European Union.

3. References

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