

EU In The Globalization Context

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Abstract

The globalization is a complex phenomenon with implications of both geopolitical and institutional nature. The evolution of the globalization process as well as the involvement of the local, regional, state and international level institutions into it determine a thorough analysis of the place and role of national institutions in a globalized and globalizing world.

The international structures and the national institutional structures must find those mechanisms of adapting to the challenges of a so complex process, with influences on the international order, and Romania must assume its position within the international system. In the international relationships, an important role is taken by the trans-Atlantic dialogue and intra-European co-operation. The majority of globalization definitions indicates the fact that it is a multi-cause process which has as a result the fact that events occurring in a part of the world have consequences more and more ample on the societies and issued in other parts of the world.

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1. Introduction

Society's expansion at the world level confirms social development, due to the economic, political and cultural interdependencies between states and groups of states, which derive from this expansion. In other order of ideas, in the last decades, the nation-state, beyond its essential claim, that of national sovereignty appears placed in a subsidiary plane of history.

The unfavourable historical circumstances blocked the unification process, the ideal of building a united Europe not being materialized by the politicians, the only achievements being partial and temporary, made by coercion, due to personal ambitions and the thirst for power. Also, there were coalitions and systems of alliances established

in the form of diplomatic or military combinations, but they were targeting the subordination of some before others, and not equality between parties, as would have been the natural follow-up.

However, the European idea was not novelty at the end of the Second World War. The formula “United States of Europe” was launched since October 1942, by British Prime-Minister Winston Churchill, in a memorandum, in which he spoke about a new world order. It was then reflected in the Atlantic Charter in year 1941, which comprises the common strategy for organizing the world following the war. The same British statesman revisits the idea of a united Europe in 1946, in a Conference held within the University of Zurich. European cooperation will develop, however, on three stages and three different levels military and diplomatic, economic – by creating the European Organization for Economic Cooperation – EOEC – having the Marshall Plan as initial support, following the signing of the Paris Treaty on April 16th, 1948, as well as at the political and parliamentary level, through the creation, on May 5th, 1949, of the Council of Europe, the first European organization with political and cultural vocation, with its headquarters in Strasbourg. The European Communities represent the result of concluding treaties between the sovereign national states, at the level of their authorized representatives, who underwent negotiations in this sense. Any European state may join the European Union, according to an own accession procedure, valid and possible to follow by all European states.

2. The European Union objectives and competences

The European Communities, as specialized organizations, have economic vocation, at least in their incipient stage, although the target it a political vocation. They emerged on the grounds of the search for new economic development solutions, because, in the context of Europe post-second World War, all types of existing organizations were sectoral organizations, specific to the military (NATO), economic (OECD) and political (Council of Europe) fields and did not have the capacity to ensure the focus of the economic development of Western European states and, thus, to ensure proper unitary policies in the economic field. Thus, all three Communities were grounded on solid economic basis, which generated throughout the years mutual interests and increased interdependency, which means communitarian solidarity. Although through the goal targeted, they lean towards the political field, primordial still remains the economic purpose, namely the Common Market.

From the legal point of view, the European Communities are integrated economic associations, where the Common Market represents a unique geographic area, result of the mutual joining of the national geographic areas, which merge as a unitary whole. To this common geographic space apply the rules of the convention, rules implicitly deriving from the rules of market economy. Thus, the Common Market represents the consequence of eliminating national customs barriers and their replacement with a common customs rate, thus allowing the free travel of products within the common geographic space. Also, the direct or indirect own producers’ protection measures or state subsidies were forbidden, also forbidding any measures to limit competition and,

implicitly, the Common Market, by removing all discriminations of public or private nature, grounded on nationality or citizenship.

The EU structure, as conceived by the Treaty, is based on three pillars: the European Community – with the Common Market and the Economic and Monetary Union; CFSP (Common Foreign and Security Policy) and Internal affairs and justice.

The European Union objectives are: the promotion of economic and social progress, balanced and sustainable, by creating the space without internal borders, by strengthening economic and social cohesion and by establishing an economic and monetary union including in time a single currency; the assertion of identity on the international stage, especially by putting into practice a common defense policy, which could lead to a common defence; the strengthening of the protection of the member states' citizens' rights and interests, by establishing a citizenship of the Union; the maintaining and development of the Union as an area of freedom, security and justice, within which the persons' freedom of movement would be ensured, together with the adequate measures of foreign border, asylum, immigration control, as well as in the matter of crime prevention and the fight against this phenomenon; the full maintenance of the community *acquis* and its development in order to examine to what extent would a review of the cooperation policies and forms established through this treaty would be necessary, in view of ensuring the efficacy of the communitarian mechanisms and institutions.

The principles on which the EU is grounded are: freedom and democracy; respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; the state of law; respect of the national identity of the member states.

Until now, the European political order was based on the fundamental principle of state sovereignty and national self-determination – principle derived from the fact that Europe is a continent constituted of different peoples, having their own cultures, languages and history. In this sense, the main adversary against the success of European federalism seems to be an insurmountable one, precisely because it pertains to Europe's essence and particularity: the diversity and heterogeneity of the European space. Not few are those who believe that this diversity is a reality beyond which one cannot go and whose disregard could prove extremely dangerous. People from different cultures may live under the same economic umbrella, even if they have a bloody common history, but this does not necessarily imply a just as good cohabitation in the modified form if a veritable federation, which to cover and decide in all fields of vital importance for the composing nations.

It is becoming increasingly more obvious that the economic dimension is a determinant one, so that its success should mould the conscience of the European heterogeneity in the sense of the mental abandonment of the aspects differentiating the European Union peoples and determine the surpassing of the problems regarding the belonging to an own culture and history.

The European construction is characterized by a single institutional architecture. The Member States transfer part of their sovereign powers to certain common institutions created through the founding treaties, with the successive modifications, having as finality the assurance of the democratic participation of the member states to the Union's decisional process. The functioning of the European Union is currently ensured by five

institutions with duties at the community level: the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council of Ministers, in short, the Council, the European Council, as self-sustaining institution, and the Court of Justice.

The exercising of competences is based on the principle of subsidiarity and the principle of proportionality. The competence categories are also established: exclusive competences, competences common with the member states and of coordination. The exclusive competences are exercised in the fields of economic policy and policy for the occupation of the work force in the member states, of foreign policy and common security and defence policy, of the monetary policy, for the states that adopted the Euro, of the customs commercial policy, of the customs union, of the conservation of the biological resources of the sea, within the fishery policy, as well as for the conclusion of international agreements. The common competence fields are: the internal market, the freedom, security and justice space, agriculture and fishery, transport and trans-European networks, energy, social policy, economic, social and territorial cohesion, environment, consumer protection and public health. Also, the Union may initiate support, coordination or complementary actions in fields such as industry, protection and improvement of human health, education, professional training, youth, sport, culture and civil protection.

Europe continues to be in a period of transformations, the ratification and perspective of entering into effect of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe having a decisive role for the European institutional construction and, in the end, for the future of the continent.

3. European Union and globalization

Globalization represents a new concept widely embraced starting with the 1990's, which describes an ample process, unravelled on the three mentioned levels. The conceptual definition of globalization owes very much to Ronald Robertson, who defines the process, from the sociological perspective, as follows: “Globalization, conceptually, refers both to the compression of the world, and to the intensification of consciousness of the world as an entirety, both to the concrete global interdependence and to the consciousness over the global whole in the 20th century”. We can no longer speak of society in the context in which the world become irrevocably pluralist, fragmented into a multitude of autonomous units, but in economic, political and socio-cultural inter-relations. Although some recent theories are still focused on the idea of one or several power centres (as in the case of Samuel Huntington's multi-centre conception), post-modernity imposes a non-centric perspective.

Three large ideas become fundamental in this context: liberalization in the economy, democratization in politics and universalization in culture. When we refer to globalization, we mainly refer to the economic aspect, or to the economic field of globalization, which is guided by the idea of the global market. Economic globalization ceased being a simple abstraction; on the contrary, it has become a fact which we feel in the everyday life and it involves two other fields: the political, in whose centre there may be located the concept of global politics, and global culturalization, based on the idea of a global culture. The inter-relations existing between these three fields, the fact that they

mutually imply each other, imposes once more the underlining of the need of the idea that the globalization process must be understood in the terms of multi-cause logic. Thus, unlike the classical theories, other important factors are brought to light, which would determine the evolution of the globalization process.

As process occurring at present, the globalization phenomenon must be understood and explained. At a first level, it is a matter of active globalization, which presupposes two-way relations being established mutually between states or groups of states which have relatively the same economic, political or cultural strength. It is not essential, for such mutual relations to occur, that the states between which they are created are equal exclusively with respect to the economic strength. This is because the economic influence of a state may be counter-balanced by the cultural or political influence of another state. This makes certain regions of the globe much more involved in the global processes than others, and some nation-states or groups of states much better integrated in the global order than others. At the second level, we refer to passive globalization, which means the existence of one-way relations between states or groups of states between which there are visible differences of economic, political or cultural nature. Thus a discrepancy occurs between the states or groups of states imposing certain values and those that can do nothing but receive these values.

The European Union had an important role in strengthening and supporting this economic competitiveness in the multi-cause logic of globalization. Due to the EU the framework was created for Germany to be reunited without threatening the rest of Europe. Both institutions created the framework for thousands of official meetings, where those in charge of making decision on which peace or war depended were able to get to know each other. In comparison with the past, at present, the quality and stability of political relations are without precedent.

Today, the European Union is the most developed example of a post-modern system and it represents security through transparency and transparency through interdependence. The EU is more a transnational system than a supra-national one, a voluntary association of states and not their subordination before a central power. In reality, the dream of a single European state comes from other eras and is based on the presumption that the states are inherently dangerous and the only method to calm the anarchy of nations is to impose integration upon them.

The globalization process involves, first of all, economic systematization, then international relations between the states, at the political level, and, not lastly, the emergence of a global culture or conscience. However, in an era of diversity and axiological pluralism, we can speak of a culture own to a world seen as a single space in which a global culture would presuppose, before anything, at least the diminishing of the importance of particular cultures and, therefore, of the communitarian identity of different nations.

However, as indicated above, economic globalization is in continuous inter-connections with what we called political globalization and cultural globalization. It is not a matter of a necessary interdependence because it can be agreed that economic globalization can no longer be placed under a question mark, since international organisms such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund regulate the world financial market, together, of course, with different multi- and trans-national

companies. This means that, at the global level, the economic relations no longer fall under internationalism, but in the context of trans-nationalism. We return to saying that trans-national economic relations are those “ordinary interactions which exceed the national borders, in which at least one actor is not the state or does not operate in the name of a national government or of an intergovernmental organization”.

One of the most important topics of the post-Nice agenda is the role of national Parliaments in the future European structure. This topic presupposes the “examining of the political system of the European Union in the broad sense and seeking the ways to strengthen the role of national parliaments in the different stages of the decision-making process at the community level”. Discussions with respect to the position of the parliament imply the considering problematic of democratic legitimacy of political decisions at the European level and the manner in which it can actually be achieved. The consolidation of the parliamentary dimension, both at the national and at the European level is destined to bring consistent contribution to the democratic legitimacy of the political decision-making process.

The debate regarding the role of national parliaments in enlarged Europe presupposes the approach of three dimensions, namely: the role of national parliaments in the context of the clear distinction of competences between the Union – community level and the member states – national level, according to the principle of subsidiarity; the place of the national parliaments in the institutional architecture of the European Union; the constitutional role of the national parliaments in monitoring and controlling the executives regarding the decisions with European relevance and the transposing of the community legislation.

The processes accompanying globalization, especially the integration of markets – goods, services and especially financial – and the progress of communications, as well as the emergence of strong non-state actors, first of all multi-national companies, determine a strong pressure on the nation-states and cause the erosion of traditional societal cohesion factors on which they count. At the same time, globalization causes denationalization, defined as an extension of the social spaces, which is constituted of dense transactions beyond the national borders. These cross-border transactions create problems for national governance for the simple reason that the social space which must be governed is no longer national.

Social transactions refer to situations when goods, services, capital (in the field of economy), threats (military), pollutants (environment), signals (communications) or persons (mobility) are exchanged or produced in common. Lately, the number of cross-border social transactions has increased compared to those performed within the national territory, amplifying international interdependence. The most significant developments refer to the globalization of the financial markets, to the global environmental hazards, Internet and organized crime. The common trait of all these recent developments is that they are connected rather by the integrated production of goods and assets than the simple exchange of goods, beyond the national borders.

The European Union developed, during the last decades, into a new type of political system, with important consequences on democracy and governance in the member states. The case of the European Union is a particular one, but, probably, the most relevant, of a more complex problematic, defined by the manner in which

internationalization affects governance and democracy. The correct balance was found between, on the one hand, the necessary international cooperation and the common decision-making and, on the other hand, to an equal extent, the necessary respect for national integrity, where citizens, as well as national or local institutions, have a clear role to play.

Within the European Union, a dynamic multi-level system developed. Without a doubt, the Europeanization of the economy is more advanced. This means that the possibility of capital owners to freely move throughout the entire European Union coerces national governments in their economic policy. The constraints of the national policies determined by the international environment are relatively much stronger than they were decades ago. Economic Europeanization is achieved and institutionalized by the rapid development of a European economic legislation.

For the European Union, as a political entity, a problem is the fact that citizens of member states do not have full confidence in the Union's political processes. There is the need to cope with an issue that has become increasingly obvious: the complexity and internationalization of problems have led to a situation in which people's trust in democracy seems to diminish, because they feel the decisions are taken too far away from them. The problem of the parliamentary control, of the European-level decisions is even more present in the context in which, although the European Parliament gained wider strengths in the control of the European Commission, the Council is not the subject of such control, at the institutional or community level. This could become a field within the European Union's institutional structuring in which the national parliaments could play a larger role.

We consider that the natural response, but not the only one, to the problems indicated is the use, as efficient as possible, of the national parliament. The national parliaments are involved in several ways in the configuration of the national policies derived from international decision-making, such as the ratification of international treaties and of conventions signed by governments, the assignment of financial means at the disposal of governments; the execution of legislation as a consequence of international agreements etc. However, the enlargement must not be performed to the detriment of the deepening of the European integration, reason for which we consider just as important the actions meant to guarantee the continuity of the Union's force and coherence, according to the fundamental principles of the European reconstruction and its objectives of political, economic and social nature, which to harmoniously combine a common economic and social space with a more visible and stronger political union on the international stage. At the same time, an enlarged Union does not mean only an increased number of states, but also a higher degree of heterogeneity. Europe is a continent of diversity and cultural multi-laterality. However, the European Union's strength and "charm" were based precisely on its extraordinary ability to create unity from diversity. In the context of the current enlargement, the institutional expansion of the European Union is inevitable, a process which will involve both initiatives of constitutional order, and re-arranging and developments in the institutional field.

Conclusions

A series of conclusions regarding the place and role of the institutional system from the perspective of national security in a globalizing external environment resulted: the globalization phenomenon shall involve more and more states, with benefic effects especially on the field of the economy, diplomacy, human rights and consolidation of community and national security; the international bodies shall proceed to consolidate their role and their cooperation with the national ones shall increase, deciding together on the practical modalities to strengthen the global and national security. The crisis management has become an important component of the strategies of international bodies; the national security policy is a process implying drawing up, decision-making process, implementation and assessment. Its drawing up must be transparent and participating; the security interests of Romania are based on the values assumed and promoted by the Romanian society, the final objective is to provide prosperity, protection and safety to its members, as well as the state stability and continuity; the organization and working of public administration authorities at central and local level as well as the professional structures playing a role in the implementation of National security Strategy of Romania must be based on the compliance with the principles of full legality, political equidistance, objectivity and impartiality.

To all member states, hence to Romania, also, there must be guaranteed the preservation and the possibility of affirming the national identity, the certainty that it will not “dissolve” in a “supra-state” entity, regardless of the coordinates on which it will develop. More exactly, the European Union as a more visible economic and political actor at the international level must not inevitably become a supra-state entity. The exercise of the national identity is the main factor for mobilizing the national energies in achieving certain fundamental strategic objectives in the context of the European integration process. The citizens of all constitutive states must have the feeling of belonging to an entity with common values.

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