



FUTURE OF EUROPE OBSERVER

SOLIDARITY

28 EU voices

Ludger Kühnhardt	1
Simona Beretta	2
Ryszard Rapacki	2
Dirk Rochtus	2
Maja Bučar	3
Bruno Oliveira Martins	4
Magdaléna Vášáryová	4
Gabriela Carmen Pascariu	4
Tamara Čapeta	5
Matti Wiberg	5
Tatjana Muravska	5
Aksel Kirch	6
Jérôme Joubert	6
Andreas Theophanous	6
Sonja Puntischer-Riekmann	7
Brigid Laffan	7
Juliana Popova	7
Pol Morillas	8
Stephen Calleya	9
Šarūnas Liekis	9
Kalyпсо Nicolaïdis	9
Loukas Tsoukalis	10
Daniel Tarschys	10
Pavel Pšejja	10
András Inotai	11
Mario Hirsch	11
Henri de Waele	11
Søren Dosenrode	12

The

Future of Europe Observer

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A de facto solidarity

With the Treaty of Maastricht (1991), the European Union established the principle of subsidiarity which originates from Christian social theology and ethics.

Subsidiarity has been well established as a criterion for legitimizing European integration patterns. The idea that European unity can only be guaranteed if the diversity of Europe is firmly respected, has become a benchmark for critically judging the usefulness of European solutions over national, regional, or even communal ones.

Today, solidarity is the key principle which can lead the European Union out of its current crisis of legitimacy. Rather than being an obscure term corresponding with variations of moral hazards, solidarity is a two-way street: a process of give-and-take that needs to be permanently justified when applied to specific situations. Solidarity is required from those who need to comply with jointly recognized EU norms and policies. Likewise,

however, those who need help can expect solidarity from those who are stronger. Like legitimacy and efficiency, the principles of subsidiarity and solidarity depend upon each other. Only together, can subsidiarity – local solutions to local problems – and solidarity – union responses to union challenges – become the parameters to help overcome the current EU crisis of legitimacy.

This is the normative key to deciphering the current state of the European Union. It requires nothing more than re-activating what Robert Schuman called for in his famous speech on May 9th, 1951 to build a better Europe: „a de facto solidarity“.

*“Europe will not be made all at once, or according to a single plan. It will be built through concrete achievements which first create a de facto solidarity.”**

*«L'Europe ne se fera pas d'un coup, ni dans une construction d'ensemble: elle se fera par des réalisations concrètes créant d'abord une solidarité de fait.»**

*The Schuman Declaration - 9 May 1950

In 2013, the EU finds itself again at this crossroads of deeds that express solidarity to facilitate union.

Ludger Kühnhardt is Managing Director of ZEI and Professor at the Institute for Political Science and Sociology in Bonn/Germany.



Interdependence calls for solidarity

My view of European solidarity is a combination of three dimensions: one, a realistic historical perspective on what it is to be European; two, a clear awareness of the various dimensions of actual European interdependence; three, and most relevant, the determination to assume all the responsibilities that follow from interdependence.

The first dimension grounds the commonality of European peoples' destiny, which made it possible to make peace among former enemies in 1945 and to reunite countries with contrasting political systems after 1989.

The second dimension calls for research and debate in order to understand European interdependence and its dynamics, in a fast changing world. Multi-disciplinary, non-technocratic European studies make solidarity a reasonable option.

I am well aware that the third dimension of solidarity can be costly, as tensions inevitably arise in sharing costs. Yet, assuming the responsibilities of interdependence is first of all a matter of solidarity as reciprocal justice, not as optional expression of benevolence.



Simona Beretta is Professor of International Economics in Milan/Italy.

From “Solidarity” to (European) solidarity

As a Pole, I will refer to the inspiration offered by the „Solidarity movement in 1980-81 which contributed to the implosion of socialism in Central Europe, and culminated in the establishment of the first non-communist government in Poland and the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989. The main lessons that seem useful while (re)interpreting the idea of European solidarity in the times of crisis boil down to three points: (i) core values as a driver of European solidarity, (ii) a common threat or challenge as the clue of a united and solidary Europe and (iii) unity in diversity. Points (i) and (ii) suggest that we need both positive and negative incentives. The former entails the core values (e.g. peace, security and sustainable development) that we all share, irrespective of national or individual cognitive differences. The latter can be seen in the erosion of Europe's competitiveness in a global environment and economic importance shifting towards the Pacific rim. The final lesson to learn is that European unity (around shared values or/and common challenges) can be perfectly compatible with a large degree of diversity.



Ryszard Rapacki is Professor of Economics in Warsaw/Poland.

Solidarity through double ‚R‘

Just like in any nation state with federated entities one will find regional differences of a cultural and economic kind in a federal EU, e.g. between southern and northern nation states. This has even led some circles to think about the construction of a ‘Latin bloc’ between France, Italy and Spain as a regionally limited tool of solidarity on a cultural base. Others want to surpass regional fragmentation by creating a European state in which financial solidarity would be transported from the national to the supranational level. Such a ‘European Republic’ however, would be too big and too anonymous to create solidarity among the ‘citizens of Europe’.

Rather, the nation states with their closeness to the citizen should be redefined as federated states in a system which is characterized by competence delimitation. Solidarity is best guaranteed by the two R's, meaning the possibility for these ‘bricks’ to compete with each other within a European framework (Responsibility) and the will of the citizens to be open to each other's cultures (Respect).



Dirk Rochtus is Senior lecturer at the Lessius University College in Antwerp/Belgium.

Final Ceremony of the Master of European Studies Class of 2013 with the President of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz

On June 14, 2013, the international ZEI Master of European Studies program celebrated the Class of 2013 in a ceremony with Martin Schulz, the President of the European Parliament, as guest speaker.

ZEI Managing Director Prof. Dr. Ludger Kühnhardt welcomed the more than 100 guests at ZEI.

The Lord Mayor of the city of Bonn, Jürgen Nimptsch, underlined the important contribution of ZEI to the international character of the city.

In his keynote speech, President Schulz discussed his concern about the shrinking support of citizens for the EU. More and more people, the

President of the European Parliament said, abandoned their commitment for Europe:

“The EU, in my eyes, is threatened.“

Closer cooperation across borders as well as strong common institutions are essential. It is not necessary to edit the Lisbon Treaty, but existing resources needed to be better utilized, Schulz said.

The President of the European Parliament congratulated the ZEI fellows of the Class of 2013, from 17 different nationalities worldwide and encouraged them to embark on a committed career in the service of Europe and its global partnerships.



EU solidarity. A precondition for our common future

European solidarity means that we stick to the saying: »One for all, all for one«. What is happening in one member state, has an impact on all the others- we may not feel it directly in our daily routine, but sooner or later we are going to be affected by the good or the bad within the EU community.

No one can pretend that they can do it alone and do it better! The EU should look back on its history and realize that only as a community, based on principles of solidarity, mutual respect and fairness can we prosper and enjoy a peaceful life for current and future generations. If a sufficient number of EU citizens share these values, there is no need to fear for our future.

But if we close ourselves off in nationalistic cocoon, we will not only lose our economic prosperity, but our social values as well. So solidarity is one of the most important principles of any community, and the EU in particular!



Maja Bučar is Vice Dean for Research and Post-Graduate Studies in Ljubljana/Slovenia.

The idea of solidarity

Emerging from the ashes of World War II. as a perpetual peace project, the European integration process is rooted in the idea of solidarity. The idea of Europe developed and expanded through dynamics of expansion and inclusion, where new members were admitted to the EU club in consecutive waves. The new member states adopted the *acquis communautaire*, but they also expected that this package of obligations would come wrapped in a promise of ethical compromise. In this sense, what the current EU crisis has been revealed is that solidarity is an ethical and political term only. It is neither compulsory nor obligatory. The current European delusion affects different countries in different ways. This should not be a problem for the notion of solidarity because solidarity does not require fully shared understandings or fully shared experiences. The crisis in Europe poses a real problem to the whole idea of Europe because the current lack of solidarity is (un)ethical and political. When ethics and politics fail in Europe, it is not only the notion of solidarity that is at stake. It is the very core of the European project that fails.



Bruno Oliveira Martins is Research Fellow at IPRIS in Lisbon/Portugal.

Basic Value

The Slovak society was for many centuries a small-town agrarian society which was helped by the solidarity of big families. This fact is still present and has both positive and negative effects in the 21st Century. In order to achieve electoral success, some electoral forces promoted Slovakia's membership in the EU as a source of money, without explaining the existence of systematic and ultraistic solidarity between developed European countries and new members. Slovakia today is full of signs stating that the new water purifier, roads and city squares are paid for by EU funds. My political party SDKU-DS therefore used our election manifest to emphasize the moral importance of solidarity and European values. This is crucial, not only for building a relationship between Slovak citizens and the EU during the ongoing integration process, but also internally in Slovakia. A failure to appreciate European solidarity could increase group and state egotism and the inability to feel solidarity with Balkan countries or the Ukraine. Not in vain is there the saying in Slovakia: "with bread you can divide it easily, a private pool – hardly."



Magdaléna Vášaryová is the Honorary Chair of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association (SFPA).

Building EU solidarity together

Paraphrasing Malraux, we can say that "Europe of 21st century will be solidary or will not be at all". Unity in diversity, the key to the EU's future, can only be created within an environmental solidarity. Yet, it is important to understand that solidarity must be perceived as a process and not as a state of facts, as an endless construction reaching the deepest stimuli of our thinking and action. Solidarity can be built with wisdom and patience; the wisdom to understand and accept that although we are different, only together can we secure the future for us and for the next generation; the wisdom to understand that unity must "come down" from the high sphere of philosophy and policy into people's everyday life, in our way of thinking, feeling and relating to each other; to consider „ourselves a purpose for us and a means for others”, to overcome the excessive materialism of our existence. At the same time, we must have the patience to build solidarity step by step, through early education, mutual acquaintance, dialogue, communication, tolerance, ethics and cooperation.



Gabriela Carmen Pascariu is Director at the Center for European Studies in Iasi/Romania.

Solidarity in Europe

Even though the word ‚solidarity‘ is often used in political discourse, especially since the crisis in Europe began, there is no common meaning behind the concept. The concept has, however, important normative potential, having in mind that the Lisbon Treaty mentions the term ‚solidarity‘ in several provisions, including its opening Article 2 TEU, in which EU is described as society in which solidarity prevails. I see solidarity as a willingness of someone to share somebody else’s burden, notwithstanding the motives. This is obviously something that happens in bailout situations. However, the relevant normative question is: should solidarity be imposed in Europe as an obligation of states? Implying at the same time, the correlative rights of other states, before European citizens develop not a legal, but rather a moral, sense of Europe-wide solidarity. It is possible that EU citizenship and the notion of mutual trust will help solidarity to develop into a legal concept which promotes integration. The Court of Justice, however, does not seem prepared, for the time being, to use it, as the recent Pringle case has shown.



Tamara Capeta is Professor of EU law and Jean Monnet Chair in Zagreb/Croatia.

Solidarity Clause is no Santa Claus

Using resources optimally is a bigger challenge for the EU than lack of resources. We in Europe are in this together. This is what our solidarity is based on. We have mutual obligations toward each other. We don’t know who will need help tomorrow; it could be the ones helping now. Solidarity cannot be asymmetric, it must be mutual. Help must be in the interest of the helper. Were all in the same boat, but it can’t be that some do all the work and some just adjust their chairs on the sun deck. Everyone has to do his fair share. The current mechanistic solidarity becomes organic only if we can guarantee that the union’s internal cohesion and division of labor benefits us all. This sadly is not the case now. We have too many free riders who enjoy the fruits without contributing correspondingly. The point of solidarity is not to subsidize irresponsible behavior. The EU has no future as just a redistributive union. If we transfer resources in one direction only, from north to south, we’ll get as an unintended negative consequence a breakdown of solidarity – and the whole EU.



Matti Wiberg is Professor for Political Science in Turku/Finland.

Involving citizens in the EU integration process

It is time to move the EU forward through the will of the people and not wait for top down decisions from politicians. The citizens were given by the Treaties substantial tools to move the EU forward through the European Parliament (EP) and the European Citizen Initiative (ECI). The 2014 European elections are looming; the very poor turnout in Croatia (21%) should provide the necessary electroshock. Citizen’ participation has been declining with every EP election, 46% in 2004 and only 43% in 2009 (Latvia being an exception – 41% in 2004 and 54% in 2009); it is essential to avoid EP elections being perceived by voters as secondary. Mobilizing for an increased turnout is essential to provide the EP with a solid legitimacy and to thus strengthen its voice among the EU Institutions. European citizens, through social media, should take a leading role. Through the ECI citizens can also express their demand for an increased strengthening of the EU – the need to collect signatures in the majority of the EU MS creates the necessity to work across borders for the common goal - a EU where the voice of the people is heard and counts.



Tatjana Muravska is Director of the Center for European and Transition Studies in Riga/Latvia.

Broad future vision and solidarity through European studies

The tie that has connected us to Europe for centuries has been common historical, cultural and economic context between Estonia and other parts of Europe. In legends we can go back to year 1197 when Estonians first went to raid Sigtuna which was the first capital city of ancient Sweden. The Viking era memories are no longer the only significant link to Europe, however, there is no better historical and cultural context where Estonia would organically belong to.

European studies and research has become an autonomous subject only in the last few decades and is a special mix of contemporary and future predictions of European history, culture and economics, integrated into study concepts and research ideas about this large region. Starting with an introduction to the history and philosophical approaches about joining Europe and ending with highly-modern concepts of international economics and foreign policy. Specialists would be prepared as “cultural ambassadors” of Estonia.



Aksel Kirch is Professor for European Studies in Tallinn/Estonia.

Solidarity. The best way to be stronger

Solidarity is the big missing something in the European Union because solidarity has essentially an external dimension. Tools for internal solidarity may exist, but they are mainly a sum of projects financed by FEDER for example. The European Union has been built ignoring the rest of the world. Solidarity has in French the root “solide” that means strong. Solidarity is just the best way to be strong in the today’s world, it is a shield to external threats and an arm for external opportunities. Solidarity, between states has many dimensions: it is a mix of insurance and assistance. First, solidarity means that it is impossible for external players to play one state against another. Second, it takes the form of assistance to the weakest when they can’t overcome their difficulties themselves. Third it is help from the group when an adverse shock affects one of the members. Solidarity is neither an investment nor a cost advantage calculation. It is a mindful attitude based on the sentiment that the links are too strong to allow one state to save himself without saving all the others. The literature gives us a vision of what the solidarity attitude is, the three “mousquetaires” maxim : “un pour tous , tous pour un”.



Jérôme Joubert is Professor for Economics in Avignon/France.

On European Solidarity. A view from Cyprus

The EU faces several pressing problems. The way the debt crisis, unemployment and social cohesion are dealt with has led to growing frustrations. Key economic problems in the European South are mostly endogenous. And the architecture of the Eurozone itself has intensified them. This has not been understood by Germany which remains adamant in its fundamental austerity objectives despite the high social cost.

The Troika decisions on Cyprus have pushed the country from a recession into a depression. The damage in economic terms is huge – comparable to the 1974 fallout from the Turkish invasion and occupation of 37,4% of its territory. The euphoria that existed in Cyprus before accession to the EU has deteriorated dramatically, turning into deep bitterness.

The EU is a union of peoples and states not just of markets. Although the principle of solidarity has been mostly theoretical it could never have been contemplated that economic issues would come to undermine that spirit, let alone generate such hostility against a small member state. This has taken the Union back some years.



Andreas Theophanous is President of the Center for European and International Affairs in Nicosia/Cyprus.

Solidarité de fait

Robert Schuman had defined the European integration project as the construction of a “solidarité de fait” through procedures of cooperation under the aegis of supranational institutions. The current crisis is putting solidarity to the test. Indeed, we are witnessing a staggering questioning of solidarity in creditor as well as debtor member states. However, if the Union is to survive and prosper solidarity becomes a paramount issue. It implies first and foremost abiding by commitments already taken. This basic rule of solidarity requires all EU member states to respect the debt and deficit ceilings enshrined in EU law, but at the same time to work on the correction of socio-economic imbalances between rich and poor countries. The latter point is highly controversial. Yet the crisis has shown that if European solidarity – a recurring term in the Treaty of Lisbon - is at all meaningful the concept of a Transfer Union can hardly be shunned lest Europeans jeopardise six decades of integration.



Sonja Puntscher-Riekmann is Head of the Centre of European Union Studies in Salzburg/Austria.

What does European solidarity mean to me?

Solidarity is a very powerful word with connotations of commonality and cohesion; its antonym is discord. Solidarity as a practice is most developed and embedded within the Union’s member states through domestic welfare systems. The Union’s commitment to solidarity beyond the state was strengthened by the Single European Act provisions on ‘economic and social cohesion’. The growth of the structural funds provided Europe’s poorer regions and states with vital support as they sought to catch-up with the core economies. The euro crisis has placed great strain on solidarity within the euro area. The creditor countries want to minimise the risks to tax payers’ money whereas the debtor states are caught in a vicious cycle of recession and unemployment. The euro area is characterized by a deep cleavage between north and south. The politics of interdependence in the euro area require a level of solidarity beyond what has been available in the past. Put simply, European solidarity for me is the development, within the EU but more particularly the euro area, of a recognition of mutual interdependence and vulnerability and the policies that flow from that.



Brigid Laffan is Professor of European Politics in Dublin/Ireland.

Solidarity unites European citizens

For me, as a representative of the Bulgarian academic community, European solidarity means mutual understanding and cooperation between educational institutions in Europe in our joint efforts for modernization and internationalization of higher education. But solidarity is a much broader concept. Nowadays, in the situation of economic and social crisis, we need European solidarity more than ever because, as Jacques Delors says, solidarity unites European citizens. Through solidarity and working together we can overcome the negative consequences of the crises facing the continent. However, it is important to say that solidarity only grows stronger with consequent responsibility by the states and citizens and requires respective levels of discipline and commitment on all sides. With its efforts for a stable financial system, the Bulgarian government demonstrates an understanding of the interdependence between solidarity and responsibility. Despite the fact that the ordinary citizens of the country are experiencing difficult times nowadays they will never give up their support for the European integration project.



Juliana Popova is Vice rector of the University of Ruse/Bulgaria.

Citizens and the project of a political union must come back on the European agenda

Since its inception, the European project has used economic tools to achieve political results. Diplomacy trumped war thanks to the seeds of political union established by the European Coal and Steel Community. Today, however, the management of the economic crisis has transformed the EU “from a voluntary association of equal states into a creditor-debtor relationship from which there is no easy escape”, as George Soros has put it. In southern Europe, the EU is seen as the cause behind social pain and unemployment, instead of the source of welfare and progress it represented in the past. Current economic policies are perceived as a major threat to the European cooperation project, hampering the prospects for solidarity among the peoples and countries of Europe. European solidarity needs to put politics and citizens back to the centre of the European project, turning the economy into, again, a tool for a political union and bringing democratic legitimacy back on the European agenda.



Pol Morillas is Head of Euro-med Policies at the IEMed in Barcelona/Spain.

Solidarity vs. individualism in 2030 – Expectations and preferences*

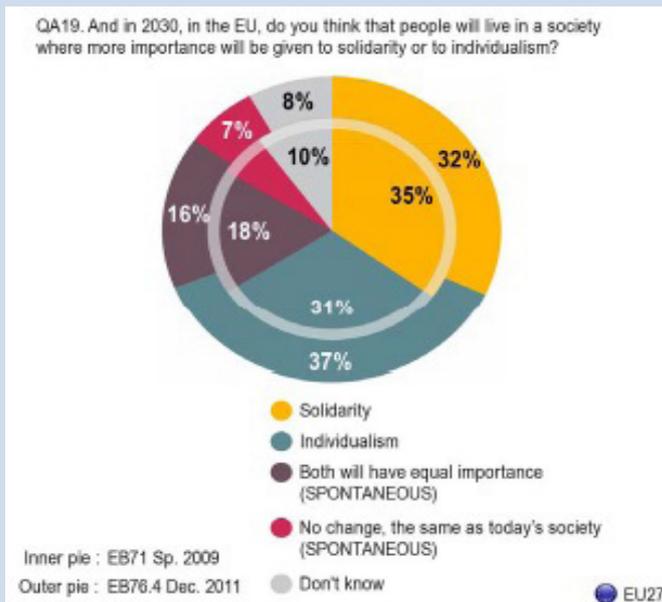
- There is a tendency to believe that individualism will prevail over solidarity –

Asked to indicate what kind of society the EU will be in 2030, Europeans now expect that more importance will be given to individualism (37%) than to solidarity (32%) 22 . Compared to spring 2009, the balance between the two has shifted: at that time, more respondents expected solidarity to be more important in society in the future (35% vs. 31%). A further 16% (-2) spontaneously suggest that in 2030 solidarity and individualism will be of equal importance. Finally, less than one in ten (7%; -1) thinks there will be ‘no change, the same as today’s society’. Less than one in ten respondents was unable to answer this question (8%; -2)

- In twelve Member States, the balance is firmly in favour of ‘individualism’. -

This point of view is most common in Cyprus where 63% believe that in 2030 people will live in a society where more importance is given to individualism. An outright majority also agrees in France (59%), Belgium (58%), the Netherlands (56%), Luxembourg (55%), Sweden (54%) and Denmark (50%). Conversely, an outright majority of citizens in Estonia (54%) and Finland (53%) believe that solidarity will be given more importance in 2030, and this is the prevailing opinion in eight further countries. In four countries respondents say that solidarity and individualism will be equally important in the future: Bulgaria (37%), Austria (36%), Italy (35%) and Germany (32%). More tellingly, the results show that since 2009 there has been a marked shift of ten points or more towards individualism in eight Member States, led by Belgium (58%; +23), Luxembourg (55%; +20) and Portugal (42%; +20). The UK is the only country showing a shift of that magnitude towards solidarity (45%; +10).

*Excerpt of the Special Eurobarometer 379 „Future of Europe“ (2012), pp. 47-48.



Solidarity in action

The principle of solidarity is a major pillar upon which the founding fathers of the European Union sought to create a peaceful and prosperous Europe after centuries of conflict. Successive enlargements of the EU has resulted in a more complex web of relations at a political, economic and cultural level. Effective management of this increased complexity will only be possible if one maintains the principle of solidarity at the heart of EU endeavours.

The multitude of challenges we are facing at a societal level in Europe demands a collective and concerted action. If the EU wants to be a relevant actor in twenty first century relations it must lead by example. The EU must practice what it preaches when it comes to solidarity. How can expressions of EU solidarity with peoples half way around the world or even in its immediate neighbourhoods like that of the Mediterranean be regarded as credible if the EU is not able to address its own members states' concerns!



Stephen Calleya is Director of the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies at the University of Malta.

Solidarity and civil society

Before speaking about the EU integration process and involving citizens in different countries we should take greater care of the capacity of countries to recognize and accommodate minority culture, identity and political interests. There is a danger that under present day economic hardships, populist and xenophobic trends in the countries' policies may try to prevail. We see the signs of this recent widespread and dangerous trend already in the west and in the east of the Continent. The fragmentation of the citizenry may become increasingly profound with no shared sense of belonging, trust, and no common interests. This risk can be mitigated only through the processual integration. Integration in the EU countries entails integration of the states that meet the responsibilities, including respect to human rights and ensuring good and effective governance through multi-actor processes of mutual engagement that foster a shared and inclusive sense of belonging at national and international level. Therefore, the states should carefully adopt policies to build a civil society including all citizens of multiple creeds.



Šarūnas Liekis is Dean of the Faculty of Political Science and Diplomacy in Kaunas/Lithuania.

Solidarity in the EU. Pure self-interest or ideal community?

Solidarity is located somewhere in between the notion of pure self-interest and ideal community, because surely no such comprehensive loyalty is required to invoke the notion of solidarity between members of a group. What does this tell us about the existence or absence of solidarity in the European Union? Member states have come to define their interests to ensure long-term stability in their relationship rather than seeking the highest possible economic benefit for various powerful national constituencies in the short term. This is consistent with saying that there is nothing more than a commonality of interest. But there are also aspects of the European Union that seem to transcend the realm of self-interest and to come (at least a little) closer to the ideal of community, e.g. the treaty of the European Union speaks of an 'ever closer union'. This might not be quite the same as a pledge of full-scale economic solidarity, but the implication is that member states see themselves as part-taking in something that is more than a convenient tool to realise self-interest.



Kalypso Nicolaidis is Professor of International Relations in Oxford/Great Britain.

Solidarity with measure and conditions attached

The introduction of an EU component of benefits paid to those who have become unemployed because of the crisis would be a good example of solidarity as part of a broader economic strategy to deal with an extremely difficult, and indeed dangerous, situation in Europe. Conditionality attached to the provision of such benefits should be designed with the aim of preventing moral hazard. Even better perhaps would be the use of EU funds to create new jobs in times of high unemployment, especially among young people. Such measures would have a redistributive and counter-cyclical effect in the context of monetary union. They would also serve as a political message addressed to those who feel left out of a Europe without borders: a good example of *intégration solidaire*. Solidarity with good measure, linked to common projects and with conditions attached, is the best we can hope for at present. We should make good use of it.



Loukas Tsoukalis is President of ELIAMEP in Athen/Greece.

Cohesion policy needed for a cultural turn?

Nations are imagined communities, we have learnt from Benedict Anderson. If the EU is to function as an efficient framework for political cooperation, it must be perceived in a similar way. Yet we are still very far from this sense of togetherness. Cohesion policy could help us approach this goal, and probably does. By devoting around one third of the EU budget to assisting the periphery, the Union engages in the same inclusive strategy as the member states do on their own turfs. No advanced political system can survive without welfare provisions and a measure of redistribution. But whatever other good purposes they serve, the structural programmes do not seem that successful in attaining genuine European cohesion, if understood as a spirit of community and shared concerns. Currently the distrust and the mounting tensions among different Member countries are all too obvious. So is the rise of xenophobia. *Fatta l'Italia, ora bisogna fare gli Italiani*, said d'Azeglio. Making Europeans requires not only sound economic policies but also bold investments in culture, research and transnational human contacts.



Daniel Tarschys is Professor (ret.) of Political Science in Stockholm/Sweden.

European solidarity, or solidarity of Europe?

The contemporary Europe emerged out of post-war chaos and found its way towards a peaceful political environment and high living standards by means of solidarity – internal, shared by the (West) European states, and external, epitomized in the assistance provided by the United States. Solidarity, however, both necessitates and is based on responsibility. Despite economic problems and growing disparity among the EU states, we should not forget that all of us Europeans still rank amongst the most free and prosperous members of global community. If solidarity remains closed within the confines of Europe, we will become isolated in a golden cage. Europe needs to stretch out its hands and help those who are less lucky than us. Primarily, Europe must seek any means to assist those who are oppressed anywhere in the world, and must proactively aspire to give these people a chance to share the freedom we have enjoyed in Europe. Yes, we also need to continually stick to the principles of solidarity within the EU, but to be true examples of solidarity, we simply must take our responsibility to the rest of the world seriously and do our utmost to make other people as free as we are. Then, and only then, can we speak about solidarity and Europe as twin concepts.



Pavel Pšejja is Assistant Professor at the Department of IR and European Studies in Brno/Czech Republic.

Solidarity as an anchor of sustainable democracy

Over decades, solidarity used to be a key pillar of European integration and of successful functioning of the social welfare state. In the last years, however, we have experienced less commitment to solidarity in most European societies and policy-making circles. This change is partly due to globalization leading to income and welfare polarization, and particularly to the negative impact of the global financial, economic and social crisis which strengthened the inward-looking mentality of most European societies. No doubt that the practice of several member countries and selected social groups based on one-sided benefits („free lunch“), has contributed to lower solidarity feeling. In periods of crisis, such as today, European integration and societies need a new and enhanced form of solidarity based on a two-way approach; focusing on achieving the basic goals of the EU and actively participating in building a 21st century European community. Not less importantly, solidarity and social cohesion have to slow down (although hardly being able to stop) the fragmentation of a broadly interpreted „middle class“, the long-term guarantee of democracy and democratic institutions.



András Inotai is General Director of the Institute for World Economics in Budapest/Hungary.

The Twilight of European Solidarity

Solidarity inspired European integration from the start: a community of destiny with improved internal cohesion thanks to transfers. The recent crisis took a heavy toll on solidarity. Confronted with financial constraints, some member states got cold feet about generosity. The idea of EMU as a permanent transfer union runs into trouble. The sovereign debt crisis asks for strict fiscal discipline, which strains social cohesion. The readiness to correct the shortcomings of EMU is vanishing at a time when more solidarity as a genuine cooperative effort would be required. Governments should explain to their constituencies that this is not a waste of tax payers' money, but in their best self-interest. The dispute on MFF showed a resurgence of old demons with the sterile debate between net contributors and net receivers. The reinvention of European solidarity as enlightened self-interest is indispensable for the legitimacy and acceptance of the project. Shared sacrifices in the interest of common goals are the best remedy against nationalistic egoism and the only sensible answer to globalisation.



Mario Hirsch is Senior Research Fellow at the LIEIS in Luxembourg/Luxembourg.

Solidarity Recomposed. European Fiscal Integration to Counter Economic Inequality

Despite the ongoing crisis, there is still more than enough wealth on the European continent; yet it has not been divided equally. True solidarity calls for a balanced redistribution of means. Contrary to what the neo-liberal agenda would dictate, the last thing the EU needs right now is heavier tax competition. Rather, a zero-tolerance ought to be instituted at the national as well as the supranational level for so-called 'off-shoring' and other fiscal evasion techniques. If all societal actors were to contribute their fair share, everyone stands to gain. Poverty might even be eradicated altogether, as long as policy-makers show the stamina to push it that far. In fact, most political leaders in Europe know already that a banking union represents merely a first step, and that a genuine EMU ultimately requires fiscal integration. Against the public carping about such federalist templates, citizens should be made to see that such a recomposed model of solidarity is not a menace; instead, the creation of a level playing field here offers a measured response to reduce the gap between the haves and have-nots in the EU.



Henri de Waele is Senior Lecturer in EU Law in Nijmegen/Netherlands.

Solidarity. A sign of statehood

Solidarity has something to do with a union of interests and sympathies among members of a group. Shared interests are not enough to create solidarity, solidarity is more; it involves a 'human touch'. And one does not find 'solidarity' among states; states have interests not friends. Solidarity thrives inside the state. Thus it does not make sense to discuss European solidarity, unless the EU is a state or a statelike entity. But the EU does live up to mainstream political science definitions of statehood, although north-European politicians do not like this. This explains why the German bailout of Greece has been accepted although grudgingly by the German population; it is not only a question of saving the Euro but also the German economy. There is this little 'extra', solidarity which indicates that the EU has moved from being purely interest driven to something more. But of course it always helps if ones act of solidarity pays off in a material way, and there is a long way to go to a situation where a person from Jutland shows the same solidaritiy with a Sicilian as with a person from Funen.



Søren Dosenrode is Professor of International Politics & Jean Monnet Chair in Aalborg/Denmark.

THE CENTER FOR EUROPEAN INTEGRATION STUDIES (ZEI)

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Center for European Integration Studies
Walter-Flex-Strasse 3
53113 Bonn
Germany

Editor: Thorsten Kim Schreiweis
tkschreiweis@uni-bonn.de

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