The Dilemma of Widening and Deepening of the EU
Frank R. Pfetsch

Summary
1. The wider Union ‘Can it work?’ is the question I have been asking from the beginning. The answer is that with the decisions taken in Nice (being the actual situation) it can work, but badly and differently than foreseen by integrationist protagonists. The EU will change its structures significantly, its “esprit communautaire,” its identity. With the enlargement, the Union has become a looser entity with less coherence and maybe with less efficiency. Heterogeneity will increase; identity will be challenged, especially with Turkey’s membership. The Union can gain more of its original spirit through federalism, through internal flexibility and external differentiated enlargement, through enforcing the elements of community identity building etc.

2. Widening and deepening can be mutually exclusive processes. It is a chewing-gum effect: the more you pull the more it loses substance. It is a contradiction between two objectives as Jacques Delors has written: “On ne peut conférer à une ensemble très vaste autant de compétences qu’à un espace restreint.... Comment, parallèlement à cet élargissement, construire la fédération des nations européennes... ? Les deux projets sont-ils compatibles dans le même cadre ? Je ne le crois pas. Et pourtant je me refuse à sacrifier l’un à l’autre.” - „One cannot transfer to a larger ensemble the same amount of competences than to a more restraint space. How to construct a federation of European nations parallel to the enlargement? The two projects are they compatible within the same frame? I don’t think so. But I refuse to scarify one against the other.” - (Delors 1998 :171).

The greater heterogeneity and diversity makes the consensus finding and decision making processes more difficult. The European Union with 27 and more states has become another Union than it was before as a Union of six. The increasing discrepancy in income between the states makes integration more difficult.

3. Widening and deepening are competitive objectives (finalités): governments wanting a loose and detached union like Great Brittan, Denmark, Finland, Sweden favour enlargement; governments wishing an integrated and more coherent union like the Benelux, Ireland, Italy, Portugal favour deepening; other governments like Germany, France, Spain, Greece favour, on the whole, both at the same time. But it seems that the process of integration has reached a point of saturation and for the time being an end.
4. Alternative consequences of deepening and widening: Political Union or Free Trade Area, Political Community or Intergovernmental Organization? The European Union has to be seen as a completely new type of regionally integrated political entity. It is composed of democratic states that joint voluntarily and have transferred national power to a central organ. It is, thus, completely different to all existing nation state dominated arrangements in past European history. This complex political system composed of intergovernemental and communitarian elements is, by its very nature, vulnerable and its historical development shows ups and downs at the same time. At the time of writing (2006), Europe is standing at a crossroads: What should and could be the “finalité” of European Union? National governments divert on this important question. Will the Union, recently enlarged by ten, subsequently by twelve or more states, be able to function politically? The question of Turkey’s admission has heated up the discussion about European identity and finality. Should it become ‘an ever closer Union’ as some want it or should it become ‘an ever wider Union’ as others see it? There are mixed answers: On the one hand, the Union with the decisions taken in Nice has prepared itself adequately for enlargement, but the politicians’ long hesitation showed that the political system thus created will hardly be capable of effectively working and that more modifications will be required.

5. The Constitutional Treaty approved in 2004 by the Council and adopted by 18 countries has taken into account some of these necessities, though not as much as the integrationists had hoped. The EU will decisively change its structures, its “esprit communautaire,” and its identity. The Convention’s work for a constitution proposes a European President and a European Foreign Minister together with several improvements regarding the efficiency of the decision-making processes as well as with respect to the demarcation of competences. Depending on further decisions by the member states, one can see if the parallelism of broadening and deepening will continue and will characterize the Union’s development in the first decade of the new millennium.

6. There are mainly two considerations that give hope that the community spirit will prevail. On the one hand, it could be shown historically that the widening and deepening processes so far did not exclude each other; on the contrary, with almost each step of enlargement the community has became more integrated. The other is that the integration process seems to have reached a point of no return. “Die Karawane zieht weiter”, as Helmut Kohl used to say.
According to a bicycle metaphor; in order to get on, one has to step on the pedals – if you stop the bicycle will fall. Thanks to this, the community has been so far successful in overcoming various obstacles in the past. Can this be the case in the future as well? I have many doubts.

7. The major challenges for the European Union consist of the following points:

• The Union must find solutions to the urgent problems facing most of the 27 countries such as unemployment, security, social welfare, immigration, harmonization between the economic and the social. This has to do with the governance capacity of the Union.

• The Union must develop schemes for more effective decision-making especially in the field of foreign and security policy, federalism, differentiated enlargement, enhanced cooperation.

• The Union must find a more precise balance between the competences of the Union and the member states (subsidiarity).

• Finally, the Union must be open towards its citizens according to Jean Monnet’s principle: “Nous ne coalisons pas des Etats, nous unissons des homes” - “We are not building coalitions of states, but we are uniting people.”
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At this particular historical point in time the European project has reached a turning point. The enthusiasm of the first years of integration, or of the years of the Single European Act and the Maastricht treaty, no longer exists. The Nice process, as well as that of Amsterdam and Brussels, has shown a tendency towards re-nationalization. Moreover, the negative referenda of the last ten years in Denmark, Ireland, France, and the Netherlands are indicative of a growing concern with the EU’s legitimacy, despite its enlargement in 2004 in size and quality. The decisions concerning institutional reform show a kind of atomization that questions the degree of integration reached so far, and, simultaneously, digresses from the process of deepening the Union.

This contribution deals with the consequences for the European Union after the enlargement that took place in 2004. What will this widening, with altogether ten countries, mean for the deepening of the European Union as a political entity? Can the Union work with about 30 members? In order to discuss this issue I proceed from the more general to the more specific. I first discuss both concepts, that of widening and that of deepening; then I analyze the positions of the German government regarding these and other European issues. The question of the Turkish entry into the Union will demonstrate these issues as a crucial question. My conclusions mark my skeptical view concerning the effects of the enlargement process on the internal constitution of the political system.

What is the meaning of deepening and widening?

Three processes can take different shapes: Building up, meaning legitimization from the bottom up, from the governed to those who govern, and a joint pooling of sovereignty. Alternatively, building down, which stresses legitimization through output production, through welfare, as well as through security. Finally, building across, which takes place on an intra- and transnational level, or through communalities, regions, and nations.

As such, deepening and widening are in a strained relation, indicating two poles of the democratic constituency: Effectivity and participation. Whereas participation refers to the democratic principle of citizens being involved in the political process, effectivity refers to the output oriented legitimacy effects of the political system. It means government for the people and government by the people. My main thesis is that both principles might be mutually exclusive and contradictory, and it seems that this tendency has been reinforced by the enlargement process; widening means, therefore, weakening.
Deepening means the process of further integration towards “an ever closer union.” It means the transformation of the EU into a kind of federal state, the strengthening of the common institutional organisms, enforcing the European identity and further legitimization of the political system away from intergovernmentalism towards supranationalism, which does not mean a super state but a state with common institutions and common decision-making mechanisms in selected policy fields. In the course of its development, the EU has made progress in almost each stage of its development from an economic community to a political union. Deepening, then, means the transfer of competency from the nation states to central organisms in Brussels. However, the limits are clearly delineated. The subsidiarity principle laid down in various EU documents (most recently in the constitutional treaty) does not allow the establishment of a central state since competences are being distributed according to the ability and necessities of each level of the multilevel European system. The ultimate aim of deepening is a political union.

Widening, on the other hand, means the process of bringing more members into the Union, in other words, extending the Union toward the East (Turkey, Western Balkans) and the South (some Maghreb states). Opting for enlargement is based, first and foremost, on geopolitical and institutional considerations. It means a totally different political system than that envisaged by the proponents of the deepening strategy.

In the debate on widening versus deepening of the integration process, three different patterns appear in the German debate: On the one hand, there is the concept of a “core Europe” (“Kerneuropa”) proposed by the German Christian Democrats Wolfgang Schäuble and Karl Lamers (and supported by other politicians in the EU); on the other hand, there is the concept of “strategic Europe” proposed by the former German Foreign Minister of the Green party, Joschka Fischer, which is based on geopolitical considerations. The new strategic dimension – the Treaty on a Constitution for Europe speaks of “structured cooperation” – deviates from a third pattern, which is the cultural or political Europe favored, for example, by the former Chancellor Helmut Schmidt that is oriented towards governance considerations; a close political community based on identifiable cultural patterns.

In the European discourse, three strategies are being discussed: preference for widening first, preference for deepening first, widening and deepening simultaneously. Each of these strategies can be attributed to one or the other country of the EU: Great Britain, Poland or Czech Republic clearly prefer widening; some of the founding countries of the EU, like Belgium or Luxemburg, favor deepening; and Germany or France desire to see both strategies being
employed simultaneously. What are the features that characterize the latest (2004) widening process?

**Facts on the enlargement**

Nine observations describe the actual situation:

(1) The fourth wave of enlargement has re-united Europe after the end of the East-West conflict. As Robert Schuman claimed: “Nous devons faire l’Europe non seulement dans l’intérêt des peuples libres, mais pour pouvoir y recueillir les peuples de l’Est qui, délivrés des sujétions qu’ils ont subies jusqu’à présent, nous demanderaient leur adhésion et notre appui moral”. - We have to create a Europe which is not only in the interest of the free peoples, but also in order to welcome the peoples from the East who – after having been liberated from the restraints they had to endure – will ask us for entry and our moral support -.

(2) This enlargement has been made possible by two events: the revolutions of 1989 with the breakdown of communism, and the end of the Cold War.

(3) The 12 countries joining the EU dispose of a per capita income inferior to the EU 15. The difference between the richest and the poorest country in the EU-15 is 1 (Portugal) to 3 (Luxembourg); in the EU-27 it is 1 (Bulgaria) to almost 8 (Luxembourg): see Table 1. This ratio does not fulfil Nye’s condition for successful integration.

(4) Enlargement means an increase in population of 21, 5%, increase in territory of 25, 6%, but an increase in National Product (GNP) of only 11, 3%: see Table 1. But it also means more diversity, more security and stability, and that the geopolitical centre has shifted to the East.

(5) In the economic field, the prevailing philosophy is liberalism or neo-liberalism. Together with globalization, Europeanization brought immense economic wealth, technological progress, and social welfare; but at the same time, and as a result perhaps of these processes, it also brought social problems such as unemployment, a growing discrepancy between social strata, and so on. Economic policy and social policy have to go together, and have to converge in a “soziale Marktwirtschaft” (social economy).

(6) During the process of transition Western and Eastern Europe have known two different historical experiences; The West has abandoned nationalism and became increasingly open towards transnational schemes; the East has given up internationalism and found a new identification in national schemes. This, however, did not prevent the Eastern countries from constructive contributions.

(7) Europe advances at a slow pace, but continually. Progress is often accompanied by failures and the periods of implementing a project are sometimes longer than originally
planned. Visions of Europe evidently require more time than pragmatic conceived steps. The Union experienced more than 40 years of enlargement, more than 30 years of building an Economic and Monetary Union, and more than 50 years of constitution building.

TABLE 1: TOPOGRAPHIC, DEMOGRAPHIC, AND ECONOMIC INDICATORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>size in km²</th>
<th>population in Mio.</th>
<th>Unemployment rate, in %</th>
<th>Inflation in % before year 2005</th>
<th>GDP per capita, PPS</th>
<th>BIP, PPS, in billion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>30518</td>
<td>10,445</td>
<td>8,4</td>
<td>2,5</td>
<td>27600</td>
<td>288,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>357030</td>
<td>82,500</td>
<td>9,5</td>
<td>1,9</td>
<td>25700</td>
<td>2121,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>131626</td>
<td>11,075</td>
<td>9,8</td>
<td>3,5</td>
<td>19200</td>
<td>213,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>504790</td>
<td>43,038</td>
<td>9,2</td>
<td>3,4</td>
<td>23100</td>
<td>1002,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>543964</td>
<td>60,561</td>
<td>9,5</td>
<td>1,9</td>
<td>25500</td>
<td>1600,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>70273</td>
<td>4,109</td>
<td>4,3</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>32100</td>
<td>133,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>301333</td>
<td>58,462</td>
<td>7,7</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>24100</td>
<td>1409,0</td>
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<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>2586</td>
<td>0,455</td>
<td>4,5</td>
<td>3,8</td>
<td>58000</td>
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<td>16,305</td>
<td>4,7</td>
<td>1,5</td>
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<td>471,8</td>
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<td>8,206</td>
<td>5,2</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>28900</td>
<td>237,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
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<td>10,529</td>
<td>7,6</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>16700</td>
<td>176,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>304529</td>
<td>5,236</td>
<td>8,4</td>
<td>0,8</td>
<td>26200</td>
<td>137,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
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<td>9,011</td>
<td>7,8</td>
<td>0,8</td>
<td>26900</td>
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<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>243820</td>
<td>60,034</td>
<td>4,7</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>27000</td>
<td>1624,9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EU 15 Total | 3,154,136   | 385383             | Average 7,1          | Average 2,1                      | Average 25400       | Total 9,842,5       |
| Czech Republic | 78860      | 10,220             | 7,9                   | 1,6                             | 17100               | 174,8               |
| Estonia     | 45228       | 1,347              | 7,9                   | 4,1                             | 13400               | 18,1                |
| Cyprus      | 9251        | 0,749              | 5,3                   | 2,0                             | 19500               | 14,8                |
| Latvia      | 64589       | 2,306              | 8,9                   | 6,9                             | 11000               | 25,4                |
| Lithuania   | 65300       | 3,425              | 8,3                   | 2,7                             | 12200               | 41,6                |
| Hungary     | 93029       | 10,097             | 7,2                   | 3,5                             | 14300               | 143,8               |
| Malta       | 316         | 0,403              | 7,3                   | 2,5                             | 16200               | 6,5                 |
| Poland      | 312685      | 38,174             | 17,7                  | 2,2                             | 11700               | 422,3               |
| Slovenia    | 20273       | 1,998              | 6,5                   | 2,5                             | 18700               | 35,8                |
| Slovakia    | 49035       | 5,385              | 16,3                  | 2,8                             | 12900               | 64,6                |

The ten new countries Total | 738566 | 86,227 | Average 9,33 | Average 3,08 | Average 14680 | Total 947,7 |

Increase from 15 to 25 | 23,4 % | 19,23% | 9,90 % |

EU 25 Total | 3.892,702 | 459488 | 8,7 | 2,2 | 23400 | 10,817 |

Bulgaria | 238,391 | 7,761 | 10,1 | 5,0 | 7500 | 58,2 |

Romania | 110,993 | 21,659 | 7,7 | 9,1 | 8100 | 176,0 |

EU 27 Total | 4.242,086 | 490,901 | 8,1 | 2,9 | 21626 | 11,090,2 |

Increase from 25 to 27 | 8,98% | 6,38% | 2,16% |

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/comm/eurostat

(8) The institutional system of supranationality and intergovernmentalism has proven itself to be quite robust and resistant against crises. The driving forces of integration; the Commission, the Parliament, and the Court have led the Union to a point of no return.
Countries that prefer the enlargement of the Union have a specific view on the shape the EU should have. Some of these countries use the enlargement of the EU in order to prevent the Union from becoming an ever closer union; in other words, to preserve, as much as possible, national rights and competences, and in this respect, widening means weakening indeed. Internal effects should be reached by external strategies. On the contrary, those countries wanting a closer political union are more hesitant as to the widening process. Deepening is their first choice.

The deepening process: Effectivity versus Representativity.

Obstacles: Size, discrepancies, loss of identity.

The widening and deepening dilemma can be substantiated with the problematic of effectivity and representativity that are the two core principles of democratic government that might show contradictions and mutual exclusiveness. The deepening process can be measured by participation, which means the inclusion of citizens into the political process; effectivity has to do with the capacity of governments to produce outcomes for the people. Participation, on the one hand, can hinder effectivity since effectivity can be achieved with less participation. Participation, on the other hand, can lead to more durable solutions. It seems that the enlargement processes of the last decades have reinforced participation and weakened effectivity.

Accumulated scientific knowledge might help to identify deficiencies that arise from the various enlargement processes in the past. The sociology of groups, political geography, as well as economic and political history can contribute to the problem of European governance.

I envision deficits arising from an ever wider union in three fields: there are, first of all, the difficulties arising from the greater number of member states and the consequences for the size and shape of decision-making bodies; secondly, the discrepancy in welfare between the member countries; and, thirdly, the identity of the union that might be weakened by the inclusion of too many new members.

The optimal size of decision-making bodies

The theory of decision making in political assemblies tells us that size is a crucial factor for effective decision-making. Derived from organizational theory and empirical observations we can establish a number of hypotheses:

An increasing number of members in a group makes the group more heterogeneous and may lead to two effects: either consensus-building breaks down or new structures will arise.
We can test this hypothesis (see Thomas & Fink 1963) by studying the different EU-assemblies in the course of the enlargement of the EC from 6 to 9, 9 to 12, and finally 12 to 15 members. The more the Community expanded in scope and membership, the more it became heterogeneous and negotiations more bounded by the circumspection of many participants (Wallace/Wallace 1996:33).

With increasing numbers of actors there is also the chance that more issues will be put on the EC/EU agenda as compared to a national agenda (Cobb and Elder 1983). In other words, each enlargement brought new dimensions and areas of activity (see Granell 1995:137). The first enlargement brought in a more democratic perspective and a new world dimension with its transatlantic relations. With the second enlargement new social and cohesive orientations were brought to bear with Latin American links. The third wave of enlargement emphasized environmental and social aspects and opened an outlook to Third World countries as well as towards the East with expectations of the fourth round of enlargements. These expansions enlarged the policy issues, and, as noted by Peters, “the presence of alternatives is an important characteristic of agenda-setting in the EC” (Peters 1994:18). As various issues become increasingly important, the more there is a necessity to find an organizational frame in the form of a Directorate General (DG), a committee or otherwise. Thus, the committees of the European Parliament reflect the DGs in the Commission.

As more actors enter the scene, as in the enlargement of the EC/EU, one finds a greater diversity of interests being pursued. Each country brings in its own interests and wants them to be pursued. With an increase in number an assembly becomes more heterogeneous and the windows of opportunities for agreements become narrower (Wallace/Wallace 1996:33). Hence, with unanimity in important policy fields, the time needed to achieve consensus increases. It can be said that the amount of time spent on discussions of issues increases with the increase of member countries in the EU.  

The bigger the assembly, the more it becomes organizationally differentiated (committees, subcommittees).

A day-to-day observation can illustrate this hypothesis. By inviting people for dinner and sitting around a table, one can observe that conversation among all the guests is possible as long as there are no more than about eight guests (see Olson 1971:52-55). If there are more than ten or fifteen (Pfetsch 1999: 198), then the discussion takes place among three or four sitting next to each other. The concept of differentiated enlargement and its practise are an answer to these findings (see below).
The higher the number of participants, the higher the costs of producing consensus (internal costs), and the less are the disadvantages for the individual voter (external risks).

The first statement refers to more or less organizational circumstances: the more participants there are, the more time is needed to produce consensus and, consequently, the more costly is the production process of results. Internal costs comprise such costs as bargaining and influence costs, implementation and monitoring costs, information costs etc. (Cornett & Caporaso 1994:226). As to the external risks (Sartori 1984:85), there is a tendency that results produced by a small group of insiders, leaving out important politicians and people who are affected by the decisions taken, will not be accepted and, consequently, may not last long (see Buchanan & Tullock 1962:45). Amendments are the result of such restricted decision-making processes.

The search for securing equal representation and keeping the assemblies small is evident in the construction of various EU organs. Unanimity voting, qualified majority voting, as well as the introduction of the rotation system in the Council of Ministers, follow along these lines. The troika-solution enlarges the mandate of each country in the political process. Because of the fear of larger states of losing control of the decision-making bodies, the provision was introduced that one of the bigger countries must be represented, and arguments be put forward, in the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) to restrain the scope and the authority of the community arenas. On the other hand, because of the fear of losing equal rights and weights, the smaller countries are against any concentration of office holders in EU organs. Other mechanisms to secure equal conditions of life are the structural and the coherence funds meant to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor.

Disadvantages for an individual actor would arise if he were victim of a “tyranny of the majority” (Alexis de Tocqueville). This, however, rarely happens because of the voting rules expressed in the treaty and the voting practice in EU organs. As a rule in practice, decisions are taken on a consensual basis, even in cases where majority voting would be possible. It is part of the community spirit not to vote down a country by pushing through a decision with the majority rule.

Nye’s theory of symmetry or Economic Equality

Joseph S. Nye (1971:77-79) has proposed some rules for the conditions of the functioning of an integration process. He suggests that in developed regions a relatively high degree of integration can be achieved without too large a difference between the entities that integrate. He calculated a ratio of 5:1 for the relationship between the richest and the poorest based on their GNP. Among less developed countries, only those integration schemes reach
trade integration over 20 per cent for which the ratio between the largest and the smallest measured in GNP is less than 2.5:1.

Based on these considerations, the ‘old’ EU with the 15 member states has a ratio of 81:1 between the largest (Germany) and the smallest (Luxembourg) country based on absolute figures for GNP (2005). However, if we take the per capita income then the ratio for the richest (Luxembourg) and the poorest (Portugal) is only 3:1 for the EU15 countries (see Table 1). The “new” EU with 27 member states provides a different picture. In absolute figures for GNP the ratio between the largest (Germany) and the smallest (Malta) is more than 300:1. With the figures for per capita income for Luxembourg and Bulgaria the ratio is about 8:1. With both indicators, the discrepancies between the largest (richest) and the smallest (poorest) will be doubled. Even if we consider the wealth indicator per capita income, the enlargement will reach the upper limit especially when Turkey will join the Union. Thus, the prospects for the economic equality of the units will deteriorate.

Loss of identity

“The Document on a European Identity” which was passed by the EC foreign ministers in 1973 can be seen as a preliminary official document. This “Declaration on European Identity” aims at the detailed designation through a common position in international arenas and/or in reference to the national identities of the member states. The centre of European identity is “the common heritage, its own interests, the particular responsibility [of the Community]” as well as the recognition of the responsibility of the EC by “the already achieved level of cohesion in contrast to the rest of the world”. Further on, it says (Bulletin 1973):

The Europe of the Nine is aware that, as it unites, it takes on new institutional obligations. European unification is not directed against anyone, nor is it inspired by a desire for power. On the contrary, the Nine are convinced that their union will benefit the whole international community since it will constitute an Element of equilibrium and a basis for co-operation with all countries, whatever their size, culture or social system. The Nine intend to play an active role in world affairs and thus to contribute, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, to ensuring that international relations have a more just basis, that the independence and equality of states are better preserved, that prosperity is more equitably shared, and that the security of each country is more effectively guaranteed. In pursuit of these objectives the Nine should progressively define common positions in the sphere of foreign policy.

The dynamics of the European integration process, to which the third part of the document is dedicated, mentions the evolutionary character of European identity:

The European identity will evolve as a function of the dynamic of the construction of a united Europe. In their external relations, the Nine propose progressively to undertake the definition of their identity in relation to other countries or groups of countries. The hope in so doing is that they will strengthen their own cohesion and contribute to the framing of a
genuinely European foreign policy. They are convinced that building up this policy will help them to tackle with confidence and realism further stages in the construction of a united Europe thus making the proposed transformation of the whole complex of their relations into a European Union easier.

At present, the treaties of the EU that concentrate on European identity refer to two aspects: Firstly, the above-mentioned international identity which should create a feeling of community within Europe; and secondly, the national identity. What is so far missing is the conceptionalization of the European identity from inside Europe. The former French Premier Lionel Jospin tried to fill this gap in his speech on May 28, 2001. He came out in favour of the defence of “our savoir vivre” and he meant with it “an own way of acting, to defend freedom, to fight inequality and discrimination, to organise industrial relations, to guarantee access to education and medical treatment and to shape the times.” Furthermore, he said that Europe is more than a market and that Europe stands for a model of society with its own history. “Europe,” Jospin continued, “is a civilisation that has a specific geographic meaning, a common history, an integrated economy, a human society and different cultures that form a common civilisation at the same time.” In this sense, the “Charter of European Identity” identifies Europe as a community of common destiny, values, living standards, economic and social policies, and responsibilities. Václav Havel characterizes the European Union as follows: “The European Union is based on a large set of values, with roots in antiquity and in Christianity which have evolved over 2000 years into what we recognize today as the foundations of modern democracy, the rule of law, and civil society.”

With respect to the development of a European political culture and identity five elements which cover institutional as well as cultural factors can be identified: a) the European heritage of common values, b) complementary and supplementary national cultures, c) common institutions, d) a common foreign and security policy, and finally, e) a federal political system which combines variety with unity (Pfetsch 2000: 32-38). This effort to define Europe as an affair of common concern has been counteracted by national egoism. By way of education these factors can be reinforced.

Summing up the above mentioned obstacles one can enumerate three main findings:

1. The optimal size of members in a committee is between 8 and 15. As a consequence, the 27 members of the Council and the Commission are above the minimum of effective decision-making.

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1 “The aim of European unification is to realize, test, develop and safeguard these values. They are rooted in common legal principles acknowledging the freedom of the individual and social responsibility. Fundamental European values are based on tolerance, humanity and fraternity.”

2 ibid.
2. The bigger a group, the higher the probability of differentiation and the formation of sub-groups. The idea of a «Europe à plusieurs vitesses», «à géométrie variable», «l’Europe à la carte», «l’Europe constituée de plusieurs cercles», le «noyau européen» «Kerneuropa» is situated on that line.

3. A precondition for successful integration is that income disparities are not too large. Joseph S. Nye has suggested that the disparity between the richest and the poorest should not transcend the ratio of 1 to 5. Europe of the 15 is below; Europe of the 27 is above.

**Three solutions to overcome the deficiencies of widening and deepening**

I can see two strategies to overcome the actual problematic; internal federalism and harmonization between the economic and the social, and outside differentiated enlargement.

**Federalism**

The only model we know that brings together unity and diversity is a federal model. Three different meanings go with the term federation: a) the Anglo-Saxon model which centres around the federal government; b) the German or Swiss model with competences at different levels (subsidiarity); and c) the international federation model with independent states.

Political rhetoric by leading politicians such as Schröder, Rau or Delors, Chirac and Jospin avoid the term ‘federalism’ in their public statements if possible. Only the late German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer has used the term in his speech at the Humboldt-University on May 12, 2000 – but the speech was declared as being private. All other contributors talk about a “federation of nation states.” It seems that the public rhetoric is dominated by a battle of words because every contribution develops ideas which describe the core of federalism, namely the distribution of power between the different levels. With regard to the design of the federal principle, today’s leading European politicians fall short of the concepts of the founding fathers of the European project. Thus, the former French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman spoke at that ground-breaking inaugural speech more than 50 years ago on May 9, 1950 about the “European federation,” and the *spiritus rector* of the European project, Jean Monnet, pleaded that “the European states should join in a federation.”

It can be observed within various European discourses, i.e. meetings of ministers, chief executives, or even within academic circles that this model has very few supporters mainly due to different understandings, misunderstandings and even fears. It has to do with
the fact that federalism in the Anglo-Saxon world means exactly the opposite of what is meant by the wording on the European continent. It does not mean centralization but decentralization. Enlightened discourse is necessary in order to communicate the real meaning of this concept.

Three functions of a federal system are constitutive: representation, compensation and innovation. With respect to the European Union these three principles can be found in status nascendi:

- As to the *representation function*: The European Union presents itself as a community that possesses diplomatic representation, presence at international book fairs, the promotion of the common currency and numerous symbols such as a flag, an anthem, license plates, passports, citizenship etc.

- As to the *compensation function*: With distributive policies the European Union tries to compensate for the discrepancy between rich and poor and between developed and underdeveloped regions. The “Structural Funds,” the “Cohesion Fund,” the “European Social Fund,” the “European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund” and the “European Regional Development Fund,” all these funds serve to offset weaknesses and to increase opportunities in life. The “PHARE”-programme in support of the states of Central and Eastern Europe and the stabilisation pact for the Balkans are conceived in the same spirit, namely to equalize economic and political discrepancies between the EU countries and those of the Central and Eastern European countries.

- As to the *innovation function*: Most notable is the European Space Agency (ESA) which is an innovative European project in the area of high technology and which is not, admittedly, limited to member states of the EU; likewise, the projects in the area of transportation can be subsumed here as well as numerous European programmes in the fields of culture and education. These include the Leonardo da Vinci programme for vocational training, the Jean Monnet programme for education at European universities, the Socrates programme (including the Erasmus programme) for student exchange, the Tempus programme for cooperation between universities with Middle and Eastern European states, the programme “Culture 2000” which includes the former Kaleidoscope programme in the artistic area, the Ariane programme for the translation of literary works, and the Raphael programme for cultural European heritage, the MEDIA programme in the audio-visual area like European cinema. All these programmes serve to increase and support the communal spirit of the people in the member states.
All these points prove, among other things, that the EU in its contemporary shape is already a federal construction.

**Bringing together the economic and the social**

In the economic field, the prevailing philosophy is liberalism or neo-liberalism. In liberalizing the markets this economic model brought immense economic wealth, technological progress and social welfare; but, at the same time, and as a result also social problems (unemployment, growing discrepancy between social strata). It is a kind of vicious circle: Increased competition from outside (globalization) and inside (Europeanization) put pressure on the entrepreneurs; they, as a reaction, reduced their labour force (rationalization) which means substituting labour for capital. The unemployed demanded support from the various individual states and they, as a consequence, run into deficits in their budgets with reductions in their social services. In other words, the individual national states have to take the burden from international and regional processes with the consequent strains on the social policies. As a logical consequence, those who initiate liberalization should be responsible also for the social effects. The European Union as one of the initiators must take over more of the burden in the social field. Economic policy and social policy have to go together and have to converge in “soziale Marktwirtschaft,” also in the European Union.

**Internal flexibility and external differentiated enlargement**

The concepts of internal flexibility and of differentiated enlargement are an answer to the above mentioned findings regarding the theories of group decision. Already the Amsterdam Treaty contains provisions for increased cooperation (also referred to as flexibility). Closer cooperation must be in line with the main objectives of the Union. Closer cooperation could, for example, be facilitated by genuine majority decisions. The idea of flexible cooperation was introduced in the constitutional treaty in Article 17, where it says that if “the constitution has not provided the necessary powers, the Council of Ministers … shall take the appropriate measures.”

The concept of differentiated enlargement is the other answer to theoretical findings. It already exists inside and outside the European Union. Enhanced cooperation between member states means a strategy that allows some of the members to achieve the objectives of the Union without necessarily including all of the members. In 1985, the Schengen agreement was ratified by 13 countries with the exception of Ireland and Great Britain, the Economic and Currency Union only by 12, the Social Charter by originally 14 etc. This means that the
15 EU countries could not agree among themselves upon various issues. On the other hand, there are networks in the field of culture and higher education. The example of Jean Monnet chairs may illustrate the intensive collaboration. The plans of some governments at the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) to reduce the number of commissioners and strengthen the Presidency of the Council is one strategy to overcome further differentiation and, as a consequence, inefficiency.

As far as enlargement is concerned, the Merkel government proposes a “privilegierte Partnerschaft.” This strategy means that, beyond the institutional settings, there are a variety of associational schemes that allow countries to be linked to the EU without necessarily being part of the institutions. These schemes allow non-European countries to become a part, although a looser part, of the EU. There are associational schemes, customs unions, dialogues, permanent meetings and conferences, agreements etc., in short rapprochements at different levels and in different policy fields. Countries need not become integrated into the institutional framework of the EU in order to become part of Western civilization. Thus, for example, Turkey may be a member of a customs union, but not a member of the political union.

Conclusions

I would like to sum up my considerations with seven points:

1. The wider Union ‘Can it work?’ is the question I have been asking from the beginning. The answer is that with the decisions taken in Nice (being the actual situation) it can work, but badly and differently than foreseen by integrationist protagonists. The EU will change its structures significantly, its “esprit communautaire,” its identity. With the enlargement, the Union has become a looser entity with less coherence and maybe with less efficiency. Heterogeneity will increase; identity will be challenged, especially with Turkey’s membership. The Union can gain more of its original spirit through federalism, through internal flexibility and external differentiated enlargement, through enforcing the elements of community identity building etc.

2. Widening and deepening can be mutually exclusive processes. It is a chewing-gum effect: the more you pull the more it loses substance. It is a contradiction between two objectives as Jacques Delors has written: “On ne peut conférer à une ensemble très vaste autant de compétences qu’à un espace restreint.... Comment, parallèlement à cet élargissement, construire la fédération des nations européennes... ? Les deux projets sont-ils compatibles
One cannot transfer to a larger ensemble the same amount of competences than to a more restraint space. How to construct a federation of European nations parallel to the enlargement? The two projects are they compatible within the same frame? I don’t think so. But I refuse to scarify one against the other.” - (Delors 1998:171).

The greater heterogeneity and diversity makes the consensus finding and decision making processes more difficult. The European Union with 25 and more states has become another Union than it was before as a Union of six. The increasing discrepancy in income between the states makes integration more difficult.

3. Widening and deepening are competitive objectives (finalités): governments wanting a loose and detached union like Great Brittan, Denmark, Finland, Sweden favour enlargement; governments wishing an integrated and more coherent union like the Benelux, Ireland, Italy, Portugal favour deepening; other governments like Germany, France, Spain, Greece favour, on the whole, both at the same time. But it seems that the process of integration has reached a point of saturation and for the time being an end.

4. Alternative consequences of deepening and widening: Political Union or Free Trade Area, Political Community or Intergovernmental Organization? The European Union has to be seen as a completely new type of regionally integrated political entity. It is composed of democratic states that joint voluntarily and have transferred national power to a central organ. It is, thus, completely different to all existing nation state dominated arrangements in past European history. This complex political system composed of intergovernemental and communitarian elements is, by its very nature, vulnerable and its historical development shows ups and downs at the same time. At the time of writing (2007), Europe is standing at a crossroad: What should and could be the “finalité” of European Union? National governments divert on this important question. Will the Union, recently enlarged by ten, subsequently by twelve or more states, be able to function politically? The question of Turkey’s admission has heated up the discussion about European identity and finality. Should it become ‘an ever closer Union’ as some want it or should it become ‘an ever wider Union’ as others see it? There are mixed answers: On the one hand, the Union with the decisions taken in Nice has prepared itself adequately for enlargement, but the politicians’ long hesitation showed that the political system thus created will hardly be capable of effectively working and that more modifications will be required.
5. The Constitutional Treaty approved in 2004 by the Council and adopted by 18 countries has taken into account some of these necessities, though not as much as the integrationists had hoped. The EU will decisively change its structures, its “esprit communautaire,” and its identity. The Convention’s work for a constitution proposes a European President and a European Foreign Minister together with several improvements regarding the efficiency of the decision-making processes as well as with respect to the demarcation of competences. Depending on further decisions by the member states, one can see if the parallelism of broadening and deepening will continue and will characterize the Union’s development in the first decade of the new millennium.

6. There are mainly two considerations that give hope that the community spirit will prevail. On the one hand, it could be shown historically that the widening and deepening processes so far did not exclude each other; on the contrary, with almost each step of enlargement the community has became more integrated. The other is that the integration process seems to have reached a point of no return. “Die Karawane zieht weiter“, as Helmut Kohl used to say. According to a bicycle metaphor; in order to get on, one has to step on the pedals – if you stop the bicycle will fall. Thanks to this, the community has been so far successful in overcoming various obstacles in the past. Can this be the case in the future as well? I have many doubts.

7. The major challenges for the European Union consist of the following points:
   • The Union must find solutions to the urgent problems facing most of the 27 countries such as unemployment, security, social welfare, immigration, harmonization between the economic and the social. This has to do with the governance capacity of the Union.
   • The Union must develop schemes for more effective decision-making especially in the field of foreign and security policy, federalism, differentiated enlargement, enhanced cooperation.
   • The Union must find a more precise balance between the competences of the Union and the member states (subsidiarity).
   • Finally, the Union must be open towards its citizens according to Jean Monnet’s principle: “Nous ne coalisons pas des Etats, nous unissons des homes” - “We are not building coalitions of states, but we are uniting people.”
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