

## Further Developments in European Integration and Their Global Influences : Possible Major Changes in Global Geopolitics ?

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1) The deep meaning of the European integration process is the gradual emergence of a historically new kind of political unit, beyond the classical Nation-State. We will discuss the European experience as a political laboratory prefiguring further territorial restructuring worldwide in the long term.

2) In the short-to-medium term, however, the European integration process faces several major challenges :

- the question of the ultimate borders of the Union. The pace of enlargement will dramatically slow down. What are the prospects for such countries as Turkey , Ukraine, but also Montenegro, Macedonia or Serbia to join the EU in the foreseeable future ?

- Although the logics of European integration is, apparently, to reduce the number of major political units altogether, the process itself exerts a paradoxical influence in the opposite direction, as we have seen with the peaceful (Tchekoslovakia) or violent (Yugoslavia) split of certain european states after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and more generally with the strength of regionalist forces. The presentation will discuss the very important and specific case of Kosovo and its possibly worldwide implications

- In order to be sustainable, a political unit must display two fundamental features : (a) a strong political organisation, allowing this unit to act in a coherent way both internally and externally ; (b) a common culture allowing its people to share a sense of common fate.

Today the European Union is at the cross-roads, inasmuch as, after the failure of the Constitutional Treaty to be ratified, its political organisation has been seriously weakened . Moreover, the " European culture " is by no means strong enough to compensate for the weakness of the political organisation. What are the medium-term prospects in these two fundamental dimensions ?

3) The last part of the presentation will concentrate on two complementary issues :

- How can one characterize the external influence of the European Union, at present and in the short-to-medium term ? How to assess the hard and the soft power of the Union ?

- Will the EU ultimately look like the United States, or like a larger Switzerland ? What are the likely consequences of the various scenarios ?