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Europeanness: A Path To Unity Within The European Union

Abstract

The postwar experience has shown that the implanting of European consciousness, or Europeanness, calls for coordinated efforts among the European institutions, national states, and NGOs. Such consciousness, a key pillar of the European integration, is necessary for the EU to effectively function and motivate member states' – also the EU's – citizens. And yet European institutions and EU governments show little interest in promoting the formation of this European consciousness. Pro-European social movements are weak, while anti-European ones gain strength. This désintéressement of the EU countries probably results from the conviction that the goal has been reached and that there is no more need for a widespread pro-European education of their societies. However analysis of the problem, and in particular of the interaction between European and national identities, shows that this is not the case. We fear that this lack of proactive measures mobilizing EU citizens to keep on struggling for a common Europe will lead to the erosion of existing achievements of integration within the EU, and undermine European values. It may threaten the future of the EU, which is not an ordinary integration grouping but a great peaceful, civilizational, social and economic project. Our hypothesis – positively verified in this article – is that the promotion of Europeanness in the EU societies is urgently needed to maintain the unity (and even membership) of the Union, and to avert trends unfavorable for all of Europe and therefore for the West as a whole.

Keywords: *European Union, integration, human dimension, European education*

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1. Introduction

One of the crucial objectives of the Grand European Project was to counteract a postwar revival of dangerous nationalisms on the old Continent. And resulting hostilities including another war. This objective was largely fulfilled: peace reigned in the integrating Europe, accompanied by growing prosperity. EU citizens now take both for granted.

Unfortunately, the European Project has not been finished. The growing popularity of anti-European parties and the weakness of European consciousness among EU societies endanger the future of the Union. The emergence of a greater EU consciousness requires the coordinated efforts of European institutions, member states and NGOs. This is indispensable for the EU to function and to motivate its citizens to support European integration. Freedom and democracy, not to mention security, are not given once and for ever. Events in recent years have provided many warnings, both within and outside the Union area. Yet instead of more cohesion-building actions we can observe a *désintéressement* in the enhancement of the – never strong – European consciousness. Maybe this is due to a false conviction that the goal has been reached and that there is no longer any need for a wide, pro-European education among the EU population.

Hence our hypothesis is as follows: The failure to mobilize citizens to struggle for a common Europe has undermined its integration and the preservation of European values. The EU is not an ordinary integration grouping. It is a great peaceful, civilizational, social and economic project. Our conclusion: propagating Europeanness is an overwhelming challenge.

The sense of the European identity, or *Europeanness*, is not on a collision course with the sense of national belonging. Europeanness creates a social dimension of “being in the Union”, of being and feeling European. It’s an important factor for the survival not just of “our” part of Europe but of the whole continent, and Western civilization as well. Otherwise, i.e. without propagation of the European identity among the EU inhabitants (who are more often than not unaware of their dual citizenship), it will be difficult to maintain the fragile unity in the EU and keep the membership of certain states; and to ensure the development of the European Project without excluding, albeit in a rather distant perspective, federalization or some other closer form of political integration within the EU. However, we must not link or mix up the development of a European identity among citizens with potential European statehood. Citizens, not the elites, should decide at some point about the creation of a “State of Europe” or “the United States of Europe”. This should occur when European consciousness will be ripe.

A question can be asked – does the perception of member states’ nationals match with the ambitions and visions of their leaders? Do we feel and think about ourselves as Europeans? As European citizens (in fact, EU citizens)? We are citizens of the state, citizens and hopefully patriots of our countries, even if it is temporarily deprived of statehood or effective sovereignty over the whole or a part of its territory. The European Union is neither a state nor a federation, but an integrating (with some resistance and setbacks) union of states; an intergovernmental organization with some supranational powers. Unlike other multilateral institutions, it has brought about the concept of citizenship for its people.

The European Union has strictly limited supranational prerogatives and calls itself – imprecisely – “Europe”. Each of its citizens has the right to the Union citizenship “on top of” their citizenship of their member state. But ... the awareness of this fact is negligible or nonexistent, particularly with regard to the rights and obligations derived from EU citizenship, never fully and clearly determined. Only in the Treaty of Maastricht of 1991 (entered into life on November 1, 1993) was a small step taken in the direction of a political union (in our opinion, also of a social one) by the concept that EU citizenship was to integrate the societies of member states, not just their economies.

The unification progress has in the meantime significantly stagnated. Euro-enthusiasm has largely dissipated, despite the expectations that the 21st century would belong to Europe and the hope that the sense of European identity and solidarity would consolidate (Laqueur 2011, pp. XI–XII and 5–6). Individual interests tend to weigh more than recognized common values. Populism is gaining growing support. The proclamation of the birth of the European nation after the publication of the manifesto of 15 February 2003 has turned out to be premature. Europeans care little about European issues; Europe was called into being, but where are the Europeans (Laqueur 2011, p. 79–81, 155 and 163)?

“Although the EU is ‘real’ for European elites, it is more remote for European citizens” (Risse 2010, p. 10) and largely absent in people’s minds, even though it strongly affects their lives. Europeanness remains peripheral at best, or even secondary or “lite”, unlike the sense of national identity (ibidem, pp. 3–7). According to John McCormick (2010, pp. 63–64 and 67), Europeans are the healthiest and happiest people in the world and “Europeanism” (as he and Anthony Giddens call it; we stick to the term *Europeanness*), is both a realistic and analytically valuable concept. People either have, or seek, group consciousness and affiliation to share their sense of belonging, and support values and standards they appreciate.

Today, in the 21st century, only a small percentage of people, at least on the old continent, is ready to die or risk their lives and health even for their own country. Although neither the Union nor the majority of its members demand

such sacrifice from their citizens, they manifest little solidarity within the EU, whether due to decreasing patriotism; globalization; to taking for granted the peace and stability (particularly after the Cold War ended); to giving in to the temptations of consumerism and love of comfort; to individualism combined with the supremacy of one's own interests and "mind privatization"; or to a common disgust with politicians and "dirty" politics (Judt 2011, pp. 1–2, 89–91, 127–129 and 173). Are EU citizens willing to die or suffer for Europe? The case of Ukraine, not an EU member state and without any realistic perspective to join anytime soon, seems to confirm this conclusion – as an exception, shaming the EU member states. "For the first time in the history people holding the European flag in their hands were killed (and still are! – R.P. and J. W.) by bullets" (Gdańsk 2014). "The Ukrainians demonstrated their Europeanness, dignity, their desire for freedom" – declared president Petro Poroshenko (Przemówienie 2014).

The point is that European integration has failed to transfer its focus from cooperation between governments to a care for what European citizens think and feel (Fligstein 2008, p. VIII).

2. The genesis of the problem

"In spite of its many successes, the Union has not put down emotional roots anywhere among its citizens ... The sense of 'enlarged patriotism and common citizenship' of which Churchill spoke has simply not arrived ... the EU must move closer to its citizens ... or it will not survive in recognizable form at all" (Giddens, 2012, p. 5). Although it has now existed for over half a century, despite crises (partly thanks to them?) and recognized weaknesses, despite never-ending disputes regarding its role and functions, the Union keeps enlarging and so far has not shrunk. However, the Union has not managed to form among its citizens the sense of Europeanness and bonds with "mother Europe" parallel to the bonds with their motherland, not at their expense.

The formation of the European society has remained for a long time a by-product of the economic integration, and particularly of the opening of the markets, which led to the increase of interactions among (some) citizens, mainly in the areas of business and management (Fligstein 2008, pp. 1, 10–11 and 18). "The identities of these people have shifted as they came to view themselves as having not just a national identity but also a European identity. This dynamic is at the core of the creation of Europe" (ibidem, p. 11).

Bernard Guetta has noted that: “It is impossible to create Europe without European civil society... until it becomes active, united Europe will be formed far from the citizens, it will fade away and crumble till one day when it completely disintegrates” (Guetta 2014, pp. 148–149). “Neither national elites nor the citizens of the member states aspire to be builders of the Union; they don’t ask what they can do for the Union but only what the Union can do for them” (ibidem, pp. 145 and 148–149). We fully support both opinions.

In the post-war era many NGOs played an important role in raising European consciousness and propagating the European message (*Centre International de Formation Européenne, Europa Union* in Germany *Federal Trust* in Great Britain, *Collège de Bruges, Institut universitaire européen de Florence*, etc.). They were mainly voluntary organizations, with meager financial support from the European institutions and national governments. It was then understood that without these pro-European social institutions one could not even dream about the “Europeanization” of the societies of the European Communities. Regrettably, their enthusiasm and involvement gradually decreased until it practically died down; for example at its peak the German *Europa Union* had 1.5 million members (Zielonka 2014, p. 65). In our opinion this is one of key reasons for the collapse of the actions aimed at promoting the pro-European dimension in member states’ societies.

In the new EU countries (as of 2004) such organizations were marginalized or totally excluded from shaping the “European attitude” before they could expand any meaningful activity (e.g. the European movement in Poland). They often lost their voluntary character as they started to pursue the marginal interests of narrow elites. A good example here is the candidates for members of the European Parliament from these countries: some are motivated not by the European interest but by their salary. Still worse, some MEPs, including some from the “old” member states, carry out disintegration policies inside of the Parliament.

Roman Kuźniar writes that during the first years of integration the citizens of Western Europe (then the EEC) had a feeling of being European not only in terms of civilization, but also in the sense of belonging to a community of states following the same political orientation. The process of the unification of Europe using the community method, i.e. intergovernmental one according to the ECSC/EEC model, started without previous democratic legitimization (Kuźniar 2013, pp. 128–129). “The Schengen Area and the Erasmus program made invaluable contributions to the fulfilment of the slogan ‘Europe of citizens’ and sense of unity of the citizens” as “the freedom to travel, live, work and study within the Area, on the territory of the Union (with some restrictions) is a powerful factor which transforms the consciousness of EU citizens” (ibidem, p. 134). “New rights and possibilities (covered by the EU Charter of Fundamental

Rights), which are advantageous for Europeans, did not solve the issue of civil legitimization of European integration, which resulted from the lack of a European *demos*, lack of civil society on the level of the whole Union...this issue is ... real and it is going to increasingly hinder the development of integration” (ibidem p. 142). And this is exactly what is happening.

Let us make that clear – we do not mean to substitute the sense – and pride – of belonging to one’s nation or state by a European consciousness. The whole point is that a Brit or a Pole should also feel European. In parallel; not “either – or”. Ultimately if you are British or Polish you are automatically (dual) European: the citizen of your own state and of “Europe”! The federalist thinking never saw any contradiction here. It rightly assumed that the original consciousness of national belonging would neither be diluted nor undermined. On the contrary, the latter should get stronger, and as a result one’s confidence will get a boost.

One can have a couple of collective identities as long as one can choose freely (Fligstein 2008, pp. 128–129). The two categories must not be set one against the other. What is the motherland of a citizen of the Swiss Confederation – Switzerland or the canton where he/she lives? One and the other. And what about Americans? The majority have in fact a dual identity – not just one related to the federation but also that associated with one’s ancestry. Thus, the fears that one will eclipse the other are false dilemmas and fears; the two categories are not on the same plane and hence they do not collide. We are dealing here with a member state and the union of states, regardless of whether this union in the future changes its international legal status.

European politics has never aspired to a powerful and common development of a sense of belonging to the European family under the label of “the Communities” (Risse 2010, p. 8), probably assuming that their unquestionable achievements – such as long-lasting peace and prosperity – would suffice. However, “the EU as a political organization is seen as remote from the interests of average citizens and its activities misunderstood” (Fligstein 2008, s. 15). “The loyalty of the individual and the group is still to the country of birth and to the nation. And while even such loyalty has become weaker, ... it is still much stronger than any pan-European sentiment or cosmopolitanism” (Laqueur 2011, p. 222). “Citizenship, democracy, rights and duties are intimately bound up with the state ... it is not clear how someone in Poimbra, say, or Rzeszow, can be an active citizen of *Europe*” (Judt 2011, p. 798). “The structural make-up of the EU explains a lot about why it is so remote from its citizenry ... (who) are nowhere directly involved... The EU has only a shallow pool of legitimacy to draw upon, since it has no deep roots in their everyday lives” (Giddens 2012, pp. 5–6).

The Treaty of Rome focused on the relations between the states constituting the Community, even though it provided for the freedom of movement of workers

and improvement of their standard of living, issues which were significant for the nationals of member states. The preamble speaks of "ever closer union among the peoples of Europe" (Zorgbibe 2005, pp. 35–36 and 42).

The Treaty of Maastricht did mention the issue of citizenship of the Union, but:

- how many EU citizens are aware of that fact, since probably only a tiny fraction have read the text?
- The Treaties of Maastricht and of Amsterdam provide that EU citizenship does not substitute (and rightly so) the national one, but supplements it (*s'ajoute à la citoyenneté nationale et ne le remplace pas*) (Zorgbibe 2005, pp. 332–333). The Treaty of Lisbon provides: "Every person holding the nationality of a Member State shall be a citizen of the Union. Citizenship of the Union shall be additional to and not replace national citizenship" (Article 20.1 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU).

Roger Bootle enumerates, among the four key faults of European integration, electorate alienation and the crisis of EU identity. He asks if the main point of the EU is about uniting the states and peoples considering themselves European, or just those ones which are geographically close (Bootle 2014, pp. 31 and 34). The Union (Brussels) is commonly perceived as a bureaucratic hydra, and in public opinion emotions and sentiments prevail. Rather than an objective assessment of its achievements, the Union is often blamed for the mistakes of governments (*ibidem*, pp. 58 and 67). The sense of co-governing is totally missing.

Most theories concerning the EU are not complete as they do not take into account how the changes in the EU have been perceived by the citizens of Europe and, in consequence, how they fed back into European processes (Fligstein 2008, pp. 26–27). The debate within the Union focuses on the intergovernmental dimension, whereas the citizens are interested in how integration impacts their life. It is no wonder that "the EU is surprisingly misunderstood by most of Europe's citizens" (*ibidem*, p. 125).

McCormick sees this situation in a more positive way, noting the progress of the program *People's Europe* which aimed to make Europe closer and more real in the eyes of the citizens (European citizenship as complementary, propagating the Union attributes such as a flag, hymn, Europe day; and the project – unfulfilled – of replacing national passports by uniform European ones). However, these efforts did not lead to the formation of the sense of belonging. One cannot achieve "Europeanization" by decree. The incorporation of a European consciousness into citizenship is of key importance, but no one knows how to make it happen (McCormick 2010, pp. 67–71 and 78–85). In fact we have a Europe of homelands and not a homeland – even as a second one – of Europe, let alone a common state...

In formulating the principle of subsidiarity, the law-makers wanted to shape the citizens' attitudes to integration and European institutions, but its implementation encountered resistance to the pressure to harmonize (Bootle 2014, pp. 79–80), whereas a balance between dynamic leadership and a simultaneous increase of national and local democracy in action should be sought. i.e. a special combination of selective centralism and decentralization. The Union – Anthony Giddens claims – under the influence of the latest crisis has become a *community of fate* and its citizens and political leaders have become aware of their interdependence. This should lead – in a positive scenario – to the building of solidarity and the sense of belonging to the EU as a whole, and not only to the nations and regions which form it (Giddens 2012, pp. 8 and 41). But this is not going to happen by itself, and the notion of being doomed to a community does not sound very inspiring.

Unfortunately, *l'Europe peine à enflammer les imaginations des citoyens* (Buhler 2011, p. 376). They can see how difficult it is for European politicians to agree on a joint position, and there is no democratic dialogue about the key political, economic, social and ecological challenges facing the continent. The Report of Europe 2030 Reflection Group, formed by the European Council at the end of 2007, warned that “our conclusions do convince neither the Union nor our citizens ... we will not be able to face the challenges unless all politicians, citizens, employers and workers manage to unite around the new common vision” (Buhler 2011, p. 399). These phenomena can be evidenced by the decreasing voter turnout during the elections to the European Parliament, or in referendums and their results. The situation is getting worse as a result of growing nationalistic and anti-European tendencies, particularly among radical right-wing, and sometimes left-wing, parties (ibidem, pp. 377–378), not to mention Scottish or Catalan aspirations, which weaken the position of their states in the EU as well as their own, even if the attempts at secession fail (Soros, 2014a). “Most Europeans would not have defined themselves as living in ‘Europe’ until very recently ... The sense of being ‘European’ for purposes of self-identification is a newly acquired habit” (Judt 2011, p. 66).

“Being German... I suppose I’d rather become at once a citizen of Europe. I would get rid of the idea of a national state. A more abstract European idea would allow me to identify more easily with it than with the German eagle”, states Daniel Tkatch. After his wanderings from Russia via Israel he ended up in Germany, admitting at the same time *ubi bene, ibi Patria* (Tkatch 2014). At the same time he is an EU national and owes his prosperity to the state (Germany). However, doesn’t he owe some part of his welfare – and luck – to the Union?

Many experts refer to the wave of nationalisms and consider their rejection to be vital for the emergence of a European consciousness and Europeanism (McCormick 2010, p. 73). Margaret MacMillan (Johnson 2014) and Timothy Snyder (Snyder 2014) unanimously warn that competing nationalisms (genuine and inspired) are as dangerous now as they were one hundred years ago. The catalyst of those worrying opinions has been not just the aggression against Ukraine, but also the independence aspirations of Catalonians, Flemings and Walloons, and the revival of nationalistic parties in many European countries, including Union founders (Kupchan 2012, p. 174).

“And disaster strikes when – as it now often happens in Europe – populism becomes a component of nationalism” (Król 2012, p. 158). What’s worse, pro-European parties, looking for votes, move toward rightist and even chauvinistic positions against their own convictions. Nationalistic attitudes have not been totally eradicated in Europe. “What have we achieved in the area of limiting the influence of nationalism? A lot with regard to words and binding behavioral norms ... very little as far as human mentality is concerned... *In lieu of patriotism nothing turns up, sometimes nationalism*” (ibidem pp. 159–160).

MacMillan reminds us that: “When the Cold War ended in 1989 and Soviet Marxism vanished into the dustbin of history, older forces, religion and nationalism, came out of out of their deep freeze” (MacMillan, 2010, p. XXVII). She warns against a toxic combination of various nationalistic aspirations and the false feeling of security generated by progressive globalization, comparing the situation of 2013/2014 to that of one hundred years ago (Johnston, 2014). Snyder goes further still and puts forward the hypothesis that the objective of Russian politics is – apart from reconstruction of the Empire and the creation of the Euro-Asian Economic Union (modeled after ... the EU!) – to destroy our Union with the support of the European radical right-wing parties (Snyder 2014).

“Europe is no longer mighty but has again become turbulent as conflicts and divisions spring up across the continent” (Giddens 2014, p. 3). Europeans witness the recurrence of a nationalistic and protectionist atmosphere, of national egoism, of populist attitudes which contaminate international relationships, and not just in Europe. It is only now that the significance of national and European safety is finally being appreciated, although we still sometimes count on the protection of the U.S. and NATO. The role of Europe (the Union) as the subject of coherent international politics and defense is emerging in the consciousness of both leaders and citizens (Buhler 2011, pp. 387–389, Wright 2014).

Hélas, so far the European Union resembles rather a political dwarf at its own wish or at the wish of some influential member states ... Perhaps the awareness of this fact will result in more understanding and social support for the necessity to transfer a greater part of sovereignty onto the Union. Maybe it

will decrease the fear of an alleged loss of sovereignty by member states, which the anti-European parties and movement warn us against? Perhaps, for the sake of the common good and values, we will finally manage to curb those national egoisms which destroy our ability to cooperate, not only in the economic sphere (Kołodko 2013, pp. 87 and 111, Orłowski 2011, pp. 199–201). Perhaps the common European interest will be finally appreciated and established as a legitimate important objective?

George Soros formulates his view even more radically, alluding to the prospect of a long-term stagnation in Europe, the risk of its economic and political disintegration, and the consequences of the “*European malaise*”. States which find themselves in a similar situation or crisis have a chance to survive, but “the European Union is not a nation; it is a voluntary and incomplete association of nations that may not survive a long period of stagnation” (Soros 2014b, p. XVII and 20).

The potential “systemic change” of the EU does not have to result in a withdrawal from the model that has been developed over the last fifty years, i.e. that of a “normative” entity whose strength is based on soft power and persuasion (Laqueur 2011, pp. 70–74). In light of Russia’s aggressive actions against Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, and its most recent show of its military capabilities, this change should consist in strengthening the EU’s strategic position *vis à vis* the big powers of the 21st century, especially Russia and the remaining BRICS countries, within – and as one of pillars of – the Western alliance (Buhler 2011, pp. 18 and 389–393, Woroniecki 2012, pp. 31–45).

According to Bootle, the emergence and/or strengthening of euro-skeptical parties in the Netherlands, Italy, Austria, Greece and Finland, and even France and Germany, is both the result of and a cause of a shift in public opinion (Bootle 2014, pp. 1 and 49–51). But Laqueur (2011, pp. 72–74 and 154) points out (and rightly so) that since the world has not become conflict-free after the end of the Cold War, the belief in the magical interaction (radiation) of the European model has been rather naïve and that “soft power” has its obvious limitations. Can any big power survive nowadays without its own reliable military force and deterrence potential? In the case of EU, what about a European army, a concept Jean-Claude Juncker has recently reanimated ?

3. Once again, the subject of the European identity

It seems hard to deny that, by far, not enough importance – to the detriment to the Union – has been attributed to disseminating knowledge about the joint European endeavour and to promoting European patriotism. The society remains – despite the tangible benefits from the EU membership enjoyed by the integrating countries – largely indifferent to its fate and critical towards “Brussels bureaucracy”, tending to blame it quite often for the sins of others.

At the beginning of the integration effort the main objective was to bring closer those countries, including former enemies, in order to carry out political and economic tasks (common market), with a strong emphasis on social issues, and to rebuild a devastated Europe. These objectives were enshrined in the Marshall Plan, which according to *Time* of 3 January 1949 (Judt 2005, p. 97, Fligstein 2008, p. 7), initiated a new and hopeful era in European history; and an animated OEEC which was formed for the same purpose (Piasecki, Woroniecki 1991, pp. 59–70, Zorgbibe 2005, p. 17). The Marshall Plan paved the way to the Union, as it “was setting up mechanisms for cooperation, reopening commerce, and building a European economy” (Soros 2014b, p. 10).

However, the issue of “citizens’ integration” has been dealt with to only a minor – and in our view definitely too small – extent, and then too late. The sense of dual citizenship has not been instilled in Europeans, i.e. the sense that Union citizenship is not an inferior or secondary one in relation to national citizenship, and that even if the latter one comes first, it is *primus inter pares*. Incidentally, the President of the European Council Donald Tusk stated, in his first interview, that he actually had four identities: as an inhabitant of Gdańsk, a Kashubian, a Pole, and a European (Wywiad 2014). According to Kuźniar, “a European will always be first French, Polish, Swedish or English” (Kuźniar 2013, p. 161). There is no collision whatsoever.

Risse contends, somewhat overoptimistically, that the data confirms that EU membership counts and leads to a growing identification with Europe, that the EU has formed public opinion, defining what it means to be European – however, in the second place and ... even then not always. Moreover, it can be seen that membership was a necessary, but not sufficient, condition even for the emergence of a “European *lite* identity” to emerge, whereby two identities – national and European – co-exist as two sides of the same coin (Risse 2010, pp. 93–96). As an alternative he examines the “Europeanization of the national identity of EU citizens,” as both identities naturally overlap, or are superimposed, on each other. He brings up illustrative metaphors (like an onion and marble cake) to visualize the relationship between the two identities. People do not have to encounter any problems with loyalties towards various groups or institutions and

do not have to be afraid that one loyalty will diminish the other. Most opt for the supremacy of the national consciousness (“nation first”), which indicates the dominance of “inclusive nationalists”, i.e. those who attempt to incorporate their European identity into the national one. From the angle of their identity, the proportions among various population segments differ, depending on their country of origin, age, gender, education, religion, etc. (Risse 2010, pp. 37–48).

It seems to us, however, that a concept of Europeanization of the national identity may confuse or even deform the picture. Firstly, it can be perceived as something obvious (it is hard to be a non-European Pole or German, even if you are an immigrant); secondly, it shifts the European dimension into the background (backyard?), as it concerns only a (recently acquired) feature of the (principal) national consciousness. Hence, it is better to stick to a concept of a dual identity or to two intertwined identities to take care of both.

As an advocate of European federalization, Guetta argues that otherwise the EU is going to function too far away from its citizens (Guetta, 2014, p. 120). “The European nation is to be created – and this can only happen through European citizenship”, which does not have to and should not imply resignation from its diversity, something that federalism does not presuppose (ibidem, pp. 13–14, 119, 121 and 123–143). Jan Zielonka, who propagates the vision of a functional EU reconstruction, states that Europe must be built or rebuilt on a bottom-up basis as overcentralization and intergovernmentalism have resulted in the crisis of cohesion, imagination and trust in the EU (Zielonka 2014, pp. XI–XIII and 3). European integration is oriented towards effectiveness and not towards inclusive legitimization, i.e. citizens’ participation, and “efforts to involve ordinary citizens in its work, however, have been sporadic, heavy-handed and artificial... it has lost support of most of Europe’s citizens” (ibidem, respectively pp. 32, 42 and 101). Nothing more, nothing less.

Charles Zorgbibe rightly opines that “the EU nationality is not being formed”. The bond of natural persons (and legal ones) with the EU is related to the fact of possessing the nationality (citizenship) of a member state. The notion of a Community citizen (*ressortissant communautaire*) is implicit. From the perspective of a member state, a citizen of another member state, while enjoying the same privileges, is still an intermediate category between their own citizen (as a result of being an EU citizen) and a stranger from outside the EU. The EU citizenship, acquired automatically together with the national one by the citizens of member states, may indeed look inferior in relation to the latter (Zorgbibe 2005, pp. 333–336). This is most unfortunate.

Legal acts governing the functioning of the Union do not enumerate citizens’ obligations towards the Union as other Basic Laws of its member states do. Those obligations occur indirectly (e.g. membership contribution to the EU

budget paid from taxpayers' money), and in the way difficult to grasp for most EU citizens, who are hardly aware, or even unaware, of their "dual citizenship". Only cars registered in member-states have acquired "citizenship" on their registration plates... In the case of half a billion Europeans, formal confirmation of their EU nationality – at least in their domestic ID cards – is missing, except for – sometimes – EU emblems.

As to the emblem, flag and hymn, currency, passports and awards – so called identity markers – the Union has many, but not all of them are commonly associated with Europe and duly recognized. The Union enjoys a positive image, but this requires a wider promotion by the Union and national political elites in order to strengthen the sense of European identity. It should be taken into account during the formulation of Europeanization programs and their implementation (Risse 2010, pp. 96–101). Giddens quotes Václav Havel: "When I pose myself the query 'to what extent do I feel European?', my first thought is, why didn't I ponder it a long time ago? Was it because I regarded it as of no importance, or was it something I simply took for granted? It was essentially the latter, but there is an additional factor: I have a feeling that I would have looked ridiculous if I had written or declared that I was European and I felt European ... Until very recently. Europe paid so little attention to its own identity...Hence 'conscious Europeanism' had little tradition until recently" (Giddens 2014, p. 148). We think that this still remains true.

Not only citizens, but also member states themselves (their governments) have problems with their Europeanness. Union institutions may have become more European, but politics is becoming re-nationalized, i.e. it shifts to national states (and their interests) again, thus weakening the EU's position on the global scene – even down to "geopolitical oblivion" (Kupchan 2012, pp. 154–158 and 176–177). Although the 2007–2008 crisis gave an additional impulse for the "comeback of the state", on the old continent it was rather the Union (mainly through the eurozone) which supported the countries in trouble and enforced solidarity with the quasi-bankrupt states. In the long run "states and empires, which have sovereignty only within their own frontiers, cannot address effectively global problems that require global solutions" (Morris 2011, pp. 609–610).

We fully agree with Bootle (2014, p. 201) that the Union is now at a turning point (or period), which demands from national elites a new look and reforms in order to deepen the belief in European institutions, to prevent a growing xenophobia and sprouting racist attitudes and incidents. We also agree with Charles Kupchan (2012, p. 175) who claims that the main challenge for Europe is the reversal of the aforementioned trend toward the re-nationalization of politics and lack of enthusiasm for deeper EU integration. We also agree with Zbigniew Brzeziński (2012, pp. 36, 77 and 127–128), who enumerates the ageing of the EU

society, low growth rate, significant debt and lack of unity and of a common European drive to act as a major power (as well as relevant strategies).

Giddens presents an interesting opinion at this juncture, advocating a “lean federalism”, understood as a new system which would strengthen leadership in the EU and lead to more democratic participation of EU men and women, at the same time boosting their European consciousness (Giddens, 2012, pp. 32–33). His plea, directed at citizens of the EU to get more involved in the processes of reforming the Union and thus demonstrate a bottom-up initiative, is well taken (*ibidem*, p. 43).

4. Conclusions

Outside observers like Brzeziński and Soros warn that: “The EU is an unfinished Project of European states that have sacrificed part of their sovereignty to form an ever-closer union based on shared values and ideals. Those shared values are under attack on multiple fronts. Russia’s undeclared war against Ukraine is perhaps the most immediate example, but it is by no means the only one. Resurgent nationalism and illiberal democracy are on the rise within Europe, at its borders and around the globe” (Soros 2014a); and “The Europe of today is still an unfinished business” (Brzeziński 2012, p. 132).

Why then not invoke, and appeal to, a dormant sense of Europeanness which would complement and strengthen the EU’s internal cohesion? Giddens rightly assesses that the Union has copied some solutions of national states, but ignored emotional feedback. Consequently, EU citizens treat membership in an instrumental manner. Only EU opponents are driven by emotions! Attachment to the EU needs to be established – and consolidated. It is going to acquire key significance if we want the EU to play an important and assertive role on the international scene (Giddens 2012, p. 207).

Paradoxically, the EU attracts people from the outside while caring little for its image among its own inhabitants. Perhaps in order to make a breakthrough it should go in the direction of a political union – just like the USA after the declaration of independence – and simultaneously towards a social union based on common obligations which stem from the European citizenship (Soros 2014b, p. XXII). The latter proposition would stimulate the sense of responsibility for the Union and of an all-European solidarity. It would fill the existing gap with respect to obligations of its citizens who are not cognizant of them.

Isn’t it high time at last to examine this issue in-depth and in a novel way, and to launch practical measures in order to deepen a human dimension of the European integration: bringing together EU citizens and instilling European

consciousness and pride in being a European – something that various European institutions and CIFE in particular have been fighting for? Pride in being a citizen of a union of countries sharing common values? The OECD, to which most EU member states belong, rightly focuses on like-mindedness. When will EU citizens adequately appreciate – as Timothy Garton Ash points out – that everyone in the EU can feel at home in any member state, while being, in fact, abroad? When will the EU become the Union of conscious Europeans proud of their Europeanness (Ash 2004, p. 190)?

For Kuźniar, “we should on one hand learn to identify our *raison d'état* in conjunction with the European one ... on this foundation two patriotisms should be intertwined: the Polish (meaning national – J.W. and R.P.) and European one” (Kuźniar 2013, p. 214). For Marek Beylin “presently the most important thing seems to be building European political representation – political European people – since now Europeans understand their Europeanness only as a comfortable lifestyle. We should initiate a big debate about this” (Beylin 2014, p. 3). Risse also raises the necessity of a debate about what Union and what politics the citizens want (Risse 2010, p. 8).

Grzegorz Kołodko paints a picture of the world two generations forward, which will be a collection of various regional groups (plus China), out of which the EU should be the most powerful, and for that reason it should move in the direction of a federation (Kołodko 2010, pp. 160–161). It should become a multinational and multicultural superpower, without though usurping exclusive ownership of the term “Europe” and the term “Europeans” when referring to the EU and its citizens.

At the same time even declared proponents of closer integration (Lamers, Schäuble 2014) in fact ignore the human dimension (except for improvement of the standard of living) and, consequently, the half a billion electorate of the EU. Giddens postulates replacing a weakening concept of the welfare state with a more dynamic one: that of a social investment state. He points out that such ostentatious initiatives as the over-advertised European Year of Citizens (2013), which hardly anybody noticed or even heard about, will contribute little if at all (Giddens, 2014, pp. 44 and 52). Shouldn't we talk first about a social union formed for the citizens and co-created by the citizens instead? Should we not draw the right conclusion from Zielonka's well-taken postulate to strengthen democratic legitimization and the community, besides the intergovernmental method (Zielonka 2014, pp. 57), and only then to continue the Union's political integration? The latter is not going to automatically generate a stronger citizen engagement in European matters.

It is therefore time for a serious debate and research program in the field of promoting and solidifying Europeanness, i.e. the strengthening of a human dimension within the EU for internal purposes (like increased support for

European politics and the consolidation of European solidarity), as well as for external purposes (through efforts targeted at the states and societies outside the Union). “The education establishments in all member states are (or, rather, should be – R.P. and J.W.) amongst the leaders in pushing forward a European identity Project” (Fligstein 2008, pp. 25).

The member states’ governments should make sure that national identities include a strong European ingredient. National and Union institutions should think about new social programs devoted to the formation of a European consciousness together with the national one (*ibidem*, p. 134). It is not going to happen by itself, or – at best – it is going to happen much too slowly. And it would be conducive to the formation of a pro-European alliance as a counterbalance to the openly or *de facto* anti-European forces.

The debate about Europeanness we propose cannot be separated from the still small and inadequate debate about the identity of the EU itself, both here and now, and tomorrow. The tearing down of the Iron Curtain has initiated a period when Europe must face its radical indeterminacy (Ash 2004, p. 54). “After giving the world the curse of the nation-state, Europe should now offer the global antidote. The European Union is a model of how nation-states can overcome their differences in a law-based transnational community of peaceful co-operation” (*ibidem*, p. 81).

It is thus high time for Europe to redefine itself and get united – not only on the international (intergovernmental) platform – but in the first instance to integrate internally on the platform of key significance: interpersonal. “Only a dynamic and strategically minded America, together with a unifying Europe, can jointly promote a larger and more vital West, one capable of acting as a responsible partner to the Russians and an increasingly assertive East” (Brzeziński 2012, p. 4).

In light of recent events and the attempts to undermine the Union and turn Europe against the USA, the unity of Europe is becoming essential for the West, for the world, and for Europe itself. Governmental efforts to achieve coherence in European politics and optimal relations between partners within the Union will not work if their electorates do not support them, i.e. if the Europeans do not acquire – together with their national identity – the sense of belonging to the European Community and care for Europe, epitomized by the European Union. “For the EU to flourish ... there must be a community ... A community should have an overall sense of purpose and, a rationale” (Giddens 2007, pp. 220–221).

Our hypothesis about the role of Europeanness and the threats to the EU’s future resulting from an underassessment of European identity by the EU citizens has, as we feel, been positively verified. The significance of Europeanness, understood as a sense of European identity on the same level as the sense of national

or local belonging, is acknowledged in the literature and – more importantly – in the social reality.

The implementation of the vision of a peaceful and strong Europe in the 21st century will not occur if the opinions and condition of average nationals from European countries do not coincide with the ambitions and proposals of pro-European elites and leaders, and if Europe does not become transparent, understandable, and friendly enough for its citizens. Otherwise the Union won't regain its dynamism, and won't become an authentic and vibrant social and political community and a powerful partner globally. The price of disintegration within the EU would be too high for both its citizens and for European and international stability and prosperity.

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Streszczenie

POCZUCIE EUROPEJSKOŚCI DROGĄ DO JEDNOŚCI UNII EUROPEJSKIEJ

Powojenne doświadczenie wykazuje, że zaszczepienie świadomości europejskiej (poczucia europejskości) – to proces wymagający skoordynowanych działań systemu instytucji europejskich, państw narodowych i NGO. A jest ona niezbędna dla sprawnego funkcjonowania UE i skutecznego motywowania obywateli państw członkowskich i zarazem UE. Stanowi kluczowy element poparcia integracji europejskiej. Tymczasem zainteresowanie instytucji unijnych i państw UE działaniami na rzecz tożsamości europejskiej jest niskie, proeuropejskie ruchy społeczne słabną, a antyeuropejskie umacniają. Désintéressement państw UE w tej kwestii wynika z błędnego przekonania, że cel został już osiągnięty i nie ma potrzeby szerokiej proeuropejskiej edukacji ich społeczeństw. Wskazuje na to analiza problemu, w tym interakcji między tożsamością europejską a narodową. Obawiamy się, że brak proaktywnych przedsięwzięć, mobilizujących obywateli UE do walki o wspólną Europę, doprowadzi do erozji integracji w ramach Unii i ztracenia europejskich wartości i zagrozi przyszłości Unii, która nie jest zwyczajnym ugrupowaniem integracyjnym, lecz wielkim pokojowym, cywilizacyjnym i społeczno-gospodarczym projektem. Stąd nasza hipoteza, poddana weryfikacji w artykule, o pilnej potrzebie energicznego krzewienia poczucia europejskości w społeczeństwach UE, aby utrzymać jedność (a nawet członkostwo) Unii i odwrócić niekorzystne – dla całej Europy i Zachodu – tendencje.

Słowa kluczowe: Unia Europejska, integracja, czynnik ludzki, edukacja europejska