

Brexit and Theories of European Integration

البريكسيت و نظريات التكامل الأوروبي

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Abstract:

Recent events have cast doubt on the EU's long-term viability as a successful political and economic organization. Many events, ranging from the euro and sovereign debt crises to the rise of right-wing, populist, and anti-liberal forces, have called into question the very underpinnings of European integration, whether it be economic cooperation or a community of values. Following the Brexit referendum, this issue got even more pressing. As a result, a new line of inquiry into European disintegration has recently emerged. It was designed to fill a significant vacuum in the body of literature, which had previously emphasized integration processes. The goal of this research is to look at Brexit which is an exemplification of disintegration tendencies through the glasses of European integration theories to see how well they match up.

Keywords: *Brexit; European Union; European Integration; European integration theories; Euroscepticism.*

ملخص

ألقت الأحداث الأخيرة بظلال من الشك على جدوى الاتحاد الأوروبي كمنظمة سياسية واقتصادية ناجحة. أثارت العديد من الأحداث، بدءاً من أزمة اليورو والديون السياسية إلى صعود القوى اليمينية والشعبوية والمناهضة للبرلمانية، تساؤلات حول الأسس الأساسية للتكامل الأوروبي، سواء كان ذلك التعاون الاقتصادي أو مجموعة القيم. بعد استفتاء خروج بريطانيا من الاتحاد الأوروبي، أصبحت هذه القضية أكثر إلحاحاً، نتيجة لذلك، ظهر خط جديد من التحقيق في التفكك الأوروبي. وعلى ذلك تم تصميمه لملء فراغ كبير في مجموعة الأدبيات، والتي كانت قد أكدت في السابق على عمليات التكامل. الهدف من هذا البحث هو إلقاء نظرة على خروج بريطانيا من الاتحاد الأوروبي وهو مثال على الميل إلى التفكك من خلال نظريات التكامل الأوروبية لمعرفة مدى توافقها.

الكلمات المفتاحية: *البريكسيت، الاتحاد الأوروبي، التكامل الأوروبي، نظريات التكامل الأوروبي، الشكوكية الأوروبية*

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I. INTRODUCTION

The literature devoted to explaining the process of European integration and its future is vast. The impulse for its emergence and later blossoming came from the need to understand the path breaking phenomenon of close cooperation between the countries of sometimes great diversity and difficult past relations. The main issue was how it became possible for this integration to last for such a long time and come that far. Recently, however, this trend has come to a halt. Numerous internal crises within the EU combined with Brexit dynamics provoked a rapid rise in studies on disintegration, which can hardly be treated in terms of simple reversed integration. Many phenomena from euro and sovereign debt crisis to the emergence of right-wing, populist and anti-liberal movements have brought into question the actual foundations of European integration, be it economic cooperation or a community of values. There is, however, big asymmetry between the processes of integration and disintegration. Although integration processes took huge efforts and many years to take place, disintegration may happen in much shorter period of time.

In this paper we are trying to reflect on Brexit with help of the recent body of disintegration literature. In the past, scholars claimed that the EU is a political system *sui generis* and as such can hardly serve as a basis for a general theory of integration. Inspired by this argument, we claim that Brexit is such an unprecedented, indeterminate and unpredictable event that (at least so far) it can hardly serve as an exemplification of a rationally motivated act of quitting the EU. It fits the post-functionalist approach to the European integration, but seems capable of bringing new dynamics into this process.

This paper combines both theoretical and empirical perspective on the profound political event of Brexit. We have selected three influential theories of integration, namely neofunctionalism, intergovernmentalism and post-functionalism, in order to employ them as distinct perspectives on explaining the rationale of Brexit. However, we call into question the assumption that Brexit was the outcome of rational political and economic calculus. It is likely that it is such an unprecedented event that it falls outside any theoretical classification. In order to verify our assumptions, we refer to publicly available data and observations found in scientific literature, reports, magazines and media news. For doing so, we have opted to ask the following research problematic:

What are the theories of European integration that can help to explain the Brexit phenomenon?

In order to answer this research problematic, the research paper must contain

- **The Historical context of the European Union Emergence**
- **Theories of the European Integration**
- **The disintegration Debate**
- **Theoretical Explanation of the Brexit**
- **An empirical critique of the European Integration**

First: The Historical Context of the European Union Emergence

The European Union is a family of liberal democratic states, action collectively by through an institutionalized system of decision-making. When joining the EU, members sign up not only the body of EU treaties, legislation, and norms, but also democracy, human rights, and principles of social justice. Since its establishment in the 1950's, commentators have argued over the kind of the body of the European community now is Union. The EU's enlargement experience to date is often heralded as one of the great achievement of the European integration project.

1. The EU: Establishment and Development:

For over 60 years, the European project has been synonymous with peace and stability. On the ruins of the Second World War, visionary statesmen came together, intent to build a new Europe. The EU's contribution to peace, stability and the reconstruction of the (Western) European continent, and the positive role played by the Union on the global scene, were acknowledged in 2012 when the EU was awarded the Nobel Prize. (Cini & Borragan, 2016)

Moreover, the fact that the European project would be capable of playing such a role was in part made possible by the military inclusion of the Western European countries in the NATO alliance. The Marshall Plan also gave a substantial impulse to strengthen mutual economic cooperation. Accomplishing this cooperation was not self-evident. Likewise, the European project has faced its share of crises along the way. Over the years, various, overlapping European platforms for cooperation were established. In 1947, the OECD was established. The Council of Europe was founded in 1949. Both were intergovernmental organizations. In 1951, it was decided to take the road of supranational cooperation with the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). (Cini & Borragan, 2016). This was only the first step. The European Economic Community and the European Atomic Energy Community followed in 1957 with the signing of the Treaty of Rome. This laid the foundation for European economic integration. The Internal Market went on to be the bedrock of European prosperity and cooperation.

In other matters too, EU Member States over the years have worked towards closer cooperation, including in the areas of agriculture, fisheries, environmental health, public health and consumer affairs. With its Cohesion Policy, the EU is seeking to foster convergence between competitiveness and social progress in the Member States. (Yorulmazer, 2017)

From the outset, the EU was an organization that also pursued political integration. Determined to put an end to the devastating wars from the past, the founding fathers envisioned a European community of stability, peace, democracy, fundamental rights and freedoms. In addition to that, the direct election of the members of the European Parliament from 1979 onward, gave the future EU greater representative legitimacy. In 2000, the adoption of the Charter of the Fundamental Rights of the European Union, the Member States gave the signal that the EU is based on the values of the Age of Enlightenment that are shared by all Member States. In 1987, the foundation was laid for the European Political Cooperation. The then European Community became involved in the foreign policy of the Member States and the cornerstone was laid for the Common Foreign and Security policy that we know today. With the Fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the integration of the Eastern and Central European countries got under way for which the then EC offered prospects in terms of democracy and economy and geopolitical security. (De Mars & Fella, 2020)

After the Schengen area became a reality in 1995, the national borders started disappearing for persons, after they had already done so for goods. Since then, customs checks at the internal borders have been brought to an end. Schengen countries are committed to removing all obstacles to the swift flow of road traffic. The national authorities are still allowed to conduct border controls, customs checks in ports and airports, but only to check whether or not travelers are the rightful holders of tickets. (Ewa, 2020)

Furthermore, in 1999, the euro was introduced. In 2002, physical euro coins and banknotes were put into circulation as legal tender in the majority of the Member States. Today, the euro is the common currency of 337.5 million EU citizens in nineteen Euro-zone countries. Starting out as a modest group of six countries in 1951, the Union grew to become the second biggest democracy in the world, home to over 500 million residents.

Today, European cooperation is under pressure. After the financial and economic crisis, the asylum and the security crisis, and with the Brexit looming large, it now looks as though the Union is set to shrink for the first time in its history. To the Union, the Brexit will represent the loss of over 60 million EU citizens and the loss of a global financial and economic player, a member of the UN Security Council, NATO, the G-7 and the G-20, with a strong diplomatic and intelligence network; all assets we now need more than ever. (Hall, 2020)

Also, the European Union (EU) is commonly known as one the most significant and sui generis international organizations. It consists of 28 member states which cover an area of almost 4 500 000 km² and has 500 million citizens. Without a doubt, the EU is a major world trading power thanks to its single market of 28 European countries. According to the Eurostat, the EU's GDP (Gross Domestic Product, the most frequently used measure for the overall size of an economy) was equal €15.3 trillion in 2017. (Bailey, 2020)

Additionally, the European Union is the largest trade block in the world. It is the world's biggest import market for over 100 countries and a significant exporter of manufactured goods and services. Together with China and the United States of America, the EU is one of the three largest global players in international trade. Without a doubt, these economic statistics themselves make European Union one of the most influential political actors in the world. (Trond, 2020)

Well as, European Union's enlargement strategy turned out to be an effective and powerful tool also for social transformation in those member states which have undergone significant economic, democratic and societal developments. Such improvements were possible thanks to the EU policy which assumes cooperation in order to achieve peace, freedom and prosperity as well as to assert Europe's role in the world. (Yorulmazer, 2017)

The main aims of the EU include assuring the well being of its citizens, combating social exclusion and discrimination and deepening the solidarity between member's states while respecting their history, their culture and their traditions. In fact, these noble goals are not easy to achieve in a group of 28 countries, each with its own, unique perspective and different political and economic priorities. (Hemmer, 2018)

Besides, during several decades of its existence, the European Union went through various peaks and valleys. It was the last decade that was particularly tough, since 2008 the EU has had to face several crises: financial, Russian-Ukrainian and migration one. Even though the EU handled each of them, more and more negative opinions about the EU's actions and the EU itself emerged. Since the last decade whenever the EU was mentioned on the media, there were always contentions about the EU crisis expressed. (Cini & Borrigan, 2016)

The sentence "the European Union is on the verge of crisis" was repeated over and over again on the media without deeper reflection and substantive explanation. This narrative has been built over the years and reached its peak on 24 June 2016 when the Brexit referendum results were published. (De Mars & Fella, 2020)

Next after that, the controversial referendum in which the United Kingdom's citizens decided to leave the European Union has an unprecedented implication – the first withdrawal of a member state from the EU. Therefore, it initiated a new chapter in the EU's integration history. The results of the referendum also imply that the EU has run out of original ideas in both a conceptual and functional sense.

Nowadays, after decades of its existence the European Union has to face the lack of vision and unprecedented brand identity crisis. A reaction to this predicament was a publication by the European Commission of the “White Paper on the future of Europe. Reflections and scenarios for the EU27 by 2025”, provides five possible scenarios of the EU’s future development. In order to thoroughly predict how the withdrawal of the United Kingdom will affect the European Union and which of the presented scenarios is the most plausible, the essence of the European Union’s integration mission has to be taken into consideration. (Ewa, 2020)

2. The Integration of the European Union

During both World Wars, in particular the Great War, Flanders was a field of combat. These events led to an inherent desire for peace in Flanders. Together with its external foreign economic aspirations, this has been the motivation for Flanders to want to contribute to the European integration process. (Cini & Borrigan, 2016) Historically, Flemings have played a leading role in European cooperation. Over the decades, prominent Flemish politicians have made a decisive contribution to the design of the European integration project, all the way up to and including the current European Union.

Moreover, time and again the Government of Flanders consistently and purposively defended new treaty changes. The fact that Brussels not only has become the capital of Flanders, but also the main seat of the European institutions means that the ‘Berlaymont’, the ‘Justus Lipsius Building’ and the ‘place du Luxembourg’ are no exotic or unfamiliar places to many Flemings, the ties between the wide number of European civil servants in the capital.

In other words, the idea of European integration emerged during the Second World War. In 1941 a founding father of the EU, Italian politician Altiero Spinelli, and an Italian actor Ernesto Rossi declared in their “Manifesto of Ventotene” the necessity of creating an international organization that would prevent countries from starting bloody wars. Two years later during a meeting of the French Committee of National Liberation French political and economic adviser Jean Monnet, who is widely known as an architect of European unity, declared: “There will be no peace in Europe, if the states are reconstituted on the basis of national sovereignty..”. The countries of Europe are too small to guarantee their peoples the necessary prosperity and social development. The European states must constitute themselves into a federation...” (Cini & Borrigan, 2016)

Meanwhile, the political impulse for the realization of this vision was a speech delivered by the then British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, in 1949 in Zurich. Churchill called for “United States of Europe” in order to prevent future wars in Europe. On 9 May 1950, the then French Foreign Minister, Robert Schuman, announced the so-called “Schuman Declaration”, which was a plan for European supranational cooperation. However, it needs to be pointed out that this idea was originally thought out by Jean Monnet.

Eventually, the unification of the European countries started in the 1951 through the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community by six founding members; that is, Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and West Germany. Six years later, in 1957, with a view to ensure enduring peace, economic development and democracy the aforementioned six founding members signed the Treaty of Rome, which called into existence the European Atomic Energy Community and the European Economic Community. (De Mars & Fella, 2020)

After that, in the beginning of 1973, the group gained three more members: Denmark, Ireland and the Great Britain. Within the next fifteen years Greece, Portugal and Spain joined

the group. The next milestone in the history of European integration was the signing of the Single European Act in 1986, which created the single market and cleared up problems stemming from the free flow of trade between European countries. (Rosamond, 2016)

The European Union was formally constituted after the signing of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 by twelve European states. That was a turning point in European integration and a breakthrough in the cooperation between European countries. After this historic moment the European Union enlargement policy was a fact. In 1995 Austria, Finland and Sweden joined the European Union. Fifteen years later no fewer than 10 new countries joined the EU, followed by Bulgaria and Romania, which achieved the status of EU member states in 2007. In 2013 Croatia became the latest EU member state. What was set up for purely economic reasons within years of the successful cooperation evolved into a unique organization which covers areas such as safety, justice, migration, climate change and health. (Trond, 2020)

Furthermore, the European Union has become a major political player worldwide, desiring to foster stability, prosperity, democracy, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law at the international level. In 2000 the EU even established its own official motto - "*In varietate concordia*" (Eng. 'united in diversity'). According to the European Commission the motto means that, via the EU, Europeans are united in working together for peace and prosperity, and that many different cultures, traditions and languages in Europe are a positive asset for the continent. Without a doubt, the European integration process is a unique phenomenon on a global scale.

Unfortunately, the impact and consequences of the European Union's expansions quickly became noticeable and the Eurosceptic tendencies grew in strength. Nationalist and populist parties have been gaining more and more supporters and the initial enthusiasm derived from the creation of the union has burnt out. There are several reasons for being dissatisfied with the functioning and the policy of the European Union –bureaucracy, weakened sovereignty of the nation states, internal sabotage exemplified by blocking various ideas proposed by member states as well as economic and migration crises. (Popham, 2018)

However, the real economic and political turmoil was caused by the Brexit referendum, which was conducted on 23 June 2016. The United Kingdom's citizens decided to leave the European Union and soon afterwards the government respected the nation's decision. On 29 March 2017, the United Kingdom officially initiated the EU withdrawal procedure. (Popham, 2018) regulated in article 50 of the Treaty on the European Union (TUE). After a two year period of negotiating the conditions of leaving and the future relations between United Kingdom and European Union, Brexit will have come into effect by 30 March 2019. (Chéron, 2019)

To sum up, it will be a real watershed in the history of European integration because the United Kingdom, one of the oldest member states, will become the first country to ever leave the EU. Taking into consideration the numerous discussions and doubts regarding the shape and condition of the EU which burst out after the British referendum, the current situation of the EU could be described as the largest crisis of this group since the beginning of its functioning.

3. Implication for European unity and Integration

The first problem the EU would face from Brexit is the unprecedented experience of negotiating the withdrawal of a member state. The very idea of withdrawal is a taboo,

representing a reversal and challenge to the idea of European integration as a process that moves forwards not backwards.

To begin with, the EU also has a procedure for withdrawal as set down in Article 50 of the EU's Treaty. It provides a withdrawal timeframe of two years, possibly longer if both sides agree this is necessary. Negotiating for the EU would be a team nominated by the Commission and approved by the Council. In addition, Article 50 requires any withdrawal agreement contain both a deal for the withdrawal of the member state and a framework for a post withdrawal relationship with it. This whole deal would have to satisfy the remaining EU member states through a vote in the European Council, and receive the support of the European Parliament. Also, in the case of the UK any deal would also require the support of the UK Government, British Parliament, and possibly the British people if there was pressure for the deal to be subject to approval by another referendum. (De Mars & Fella, 2020)

Nevertheless, the possibility of the European Court of Justice becoming involved should not be overlooked, it providing an avenue through which private individuals and/or companies challenge the withdrawal deal. Any such negotiations could also be set against the backdrop of ongoing negotiations to deal with the problems in the Euro-zone and Schengen. The context within which a UK withdrawal takes place could therefore be another period of considerable EU institutional change, naval-gazing and tense relations between individual leaders and national elites. Any institutional naval-gazing would also be the result of the EU needing to make changes to its own institutions and procedures to fill the gap left by Britain. (Ewa, 2020)

The EU would face the never-easy task of negotiating changes to the voting system used for making decisions in the European Council, a reallocation of seats in the European Parliament, changes to staffing quotas, and increases in budgetary payments to make up for the loss of the UK's large net contribution (£8.5 billion in 2015). When combined with possible changes to the Euro-zone, Brexit could add to shifts to the EU's balance of power and changes to the EU's policies and outlook. Perhaps the most dramatic consequences of Brexit would be one that put the unity of the EU under pressure. (RADLEY, 2019)

The EU's unity has come under considerable pressure during the Euro-zone and migration crises. While they have so far held together, and the response has if anything been to push for further integration, the Euro-zone and Schengen remain vulnerable and future tests of their unity cannot be ruled out. If the UK and other non- EU members thrived and the Euro-zone continued to struggle, then Britain's withdrawal could trigger centrifugal forces leading other member states to question their membership and commitment to integration, in turn stalling integration and beginning a process that unravels the EU. (De Mars & Fella, 2020)

The key here is likely to be Germany, in writing about the potential for the EU to disintegrate, Douglas Webber notes that the EU has never faced a 'crisis made in Germany', the EU's driver, paymaster and indispensable nation. Additionally, that crisis might be is not clear, but Brexit that combined with another crisis in the Euro- zone or Schengen could strike deep into the EU's heart leading both Germany and other members to question their membership.

Any such 'domino theory' by which Brexit makes other EU members states question and abandon their membership or commitment to integration, has to be set against the likelihood of another domino effect within the EU should the UK secure a renegotiated relationship that provokes envy elsewhere. Other states could then demand concessions, creating the aforementioned EU 'a la carte'. (Alson, 2018)

Whichever way is taken, Britain's behavior could appeal to far left and right wing groups, especially in some Southern and Eastern European member states, adding to the problems the Euro-zone crisis has caused for anchoring these states into the European mainstream. It could also have some appeal to groups in Northern and Western Europe, such as France's Front National. At the same time, if the UK struggles outside the EU then its appeal and decisions would be limited, strengthening the EU's position. Losing a member noted for being 'an awkward partner' could allow the EU to work together more effectively. That is said that, Britain is not the only member of the EU who can be awkward. Both the Euro-zone and Schengen, neither of which Britain is a member of, have struggled to find the necessary unity and leadership in the face of ongoing problems. (Bailey, 2020) The centre of power in the EU could also shift. Germany's already strong position could be further strengthened with implications for the Franco-German axis. Britain has sometimes played a role in this bilateral relationship. France could be left facing an EU where the centre of gravity has shifted further eastwards and where Germany's 'culture of restraint' and preference for geoeconomic thinking over the geopolitical, comes to shape the EU's international standing.

However, Germany might also be left feeling uneasy at the withdrawal of an ally that has helped it push an economically liberal, free-market agenda. The political and geographical centre of the EU could shift eastwards and southwards. Some member states may gain from a withdrawal, seeing it as a chance to enhance their position within the EU. Some such as the Irish Republic, more heavily linked to the UK than others, may face significant challenges. The EU's place in Europe could also be changed. Brexit could change the EU's relationship with countries such as Norway and Switzerland who are connected to the EU through either membership of the European Free Trade Area (EFTA) and, or the European Economic Area (EEA). These were intended as conveyor belts towards eventual EU membership. (Hall, 2020)

Brexit has the potential to throw them into reverse. The Brexit would also remove from the EU a member that has been more willing than many to contemplate Turkish membership of the EU. While such membership has long been in doubt, the Brexit would more than likely end any remaining hopes. For countries such as France, who have already made clear their unease at Turkish membership, losing a large Western, developed and largely Christian state such as Britain would make it more likely they would block enlargement to a large, developing, South Eastern European and largely Muslim state such as Turkey. (Gibbins, 2020)

At the same time, Britain's exit and new external relationship with the EU could open new possibilities for the EU's relations with states such as Turkey. How the EU's relations with these non EU European states develop could be shaped by whatever post-withdrawal relationship is established with Britain. The EU will be compelled by geography, economics (including the power of the City of London), law (Article 50 TEU requires it – but not the departing member state – to attempt to negotiate a post-withdrawal relationship), demographic links indeed, by sheer realpolitik, to develop a working relationship for managing common problems and a deeply interconnected relationship. A variety of proposals have been put forward for a post Brexit UK-EU relationship. (Bové, 2015)

These range from special trade deals through to membership of the European Free Trade Area and, or the European Economic Area. Each has been discussed in great detail, even been the subject of €100,000 prizes. The focus is almost always on what would be good or bad for the UK. (Bailey, 2020)

What would be good or bad for the EU is rarely assessed despite the EU having to agree to any such deal, and therefore likely to be in the driving seat of any negotiations. What the EU agrees to will depend on what is in its economic, social and security interests, which ideas define the political debate, institutional links, international events and the outlook of individual leaders. (Ewa, 2020) Should the Brexit weaken the EU then Britain could try to use this as an opportunity to redraw the economic and political relationships of Europe, moving away from the more supranational political setup of the EU towards more intergovernmental arrangements focusing largely on trade. The British government and political class may also expect Britain to be treated in some special way. This does not simply reflect some high self opinion of Britain's place in the world. It reflects the UK's much larger demographic, economic, social and military size compared to other non EU European countries such as Norway and Switzerland, who also have their own unique arrangements with the EU. (Gibbins, 2020)

It is also a reflection of Britain's future position. Britain's economy is predicted to overtake that of France by 2020, and London looks set to continue powering ahead as Europe's most international city. Sometimes in the 2040s Britain's growing population looks set to overtake that of a declining Germany. By mid-century Britain could therefore be the largest member of the EU. Any expectation of special treatment also reflects forty years of membership. The UK outside the EU would move from decision maker to decision shaper, but it will be the best placed country outside the EU to shape decisions through bilateral or multilateral governmental links, or through networks involving civil society or the business community. (Hemmer, 2018)

One of the biggest tests of the Brexit for the EU will therefore be whether it can present a united front to the UK. Given the mutual interests in areas such as foreign, security and defence matters, and the global power of the financial institutions of the City of London, the EU could engage the UK through forums such as an EU+1 arrangement, an EU2+1 involving France, Germany and the UK, or a modified version of the EU's current G6. While the ability of the UK to divide and rule should not be overplayed, it should not be underestimated either. The EU has struggled to act in a united way in dealings with a range of other non-EU states such as Russia, the USA, Turkey and Israel. To what extent then can it be expected to manage a united front to the UK? However, we should not overlook the possibility that should the EU become more united then its relationship with the UK might come to resemble that of the USA's relationship with the UK: a one sided 'special relationship'. (Hall, 2020)

4. The European Union as an International actor

Since the 1970s, a number of researchers have been debating the nature of the European Union, in particular its status as an international actor. In international relations, an actor is an individual or a collective entity capable of devising a personal strategy and acting autonomously in order to achieve certain objectives. An actor can also be defined as an entity whose actions in international or transnational domains have an impact on the distribution of resources and the definition of certain values at the global level. Proponents of the realist approach in international relations initially applied this concept to states; it was later extended to other types of entities involved in international relations or with transnational activities. For a realistic approach, one must privilege the analysis of international organizations, non - governmental organizations, companies, etc. (Bailey, 2020)

Some of these realists continue to doubt the EU's actorness, justly arguing that the EU is neither a state nor a constituted political entity and is not in a position to act rationally.

Therefore, it cannot be a full-fledged actor in international relations and should not be called an actor under any circumstances. (De Mars & Fella, 2020) . However, since the late 1970s, Gunnar Sjöstedt has renewed the debate by affirming that the European Economic Community is an incomplete actor capable of articulating Member States' interests and preferences in order to implement autonomous external action .More recently, various studies have attempted to show that, on the contrary, the EU is a major actor in international relations by highlighting the fact that its uncertain legal status has been clarified by the Maastricht and Lisbon treaties (Cini & Borrigan, 2016)

Finally, the EU's status, the core issue in the debate between the proponents of the above approaches, has been partially determined by Jupille Joseph and James Caporaso, as well as Charlotte Bretherton and John Vogler, who proposed a new definition for actors in international relations, suggesting the expression, "collective actor", for example (Jupille, Caporaso, 1998). Others have proposed the concept of a "European External Action System". All have since agreed to consider the EU as a veritable actor in international relations. (Cini & Borrigan, 2016) Also we can assess the relevance of the concept of actorness by showing that geography can significantly contribute to debates on the EU's role in international relations. Actorness is based on a set of criteria. Scholars of international relations have never used such an approach; too few consider geographical space an important parameter. In the first half of this article, we will review international relations publications on actorness and focus on their relevance for the EU.As for the EU's actorness in international relations, the analysis has led to mixed findings. The EU is an actor in international relation, but only a partial one. The extent of its action is uneven across the various domains. Above all, the second part of this article has shown that the EU's degree of autonomy in a given international context is ultimately limited. Foreign policy action seems to conform to the existing geography of functional relationships; economic and commercial in this case. In other words, EU's action largely determined by the structure and the context in which it finds itself, resulting in a limited capacity to curb these trends beyond the narrow circle of countries where its influence is hegemonic. (Chéron, 2019)

Similarly, the coherence of the EU's foreign policy action has not been proven. The neighborhood, including countries eligible for the European Neighborhood policy along with Russia, do not seem to be as much a priority as the European Commission's official communications suggest. In addition, there is a clear contrast between Mediterranean neighbors and those of the East. Coherence between speech and action has therefore not been established. Coherence between different policy areas seems greater, especially between external trade policy and the geography of development aid. However, there is once again a sharp contrast between the two neighborhoods; but inverted this time. (Alson, 2018).Finally, the degree of effectiveness in the EU's external action is uneven. Trade agreements signed between the EU and non-EU countries have had limited and in some cases no impact. These agreements seem to simply apply a formal framework onto a pre-established relationship. More generally, the geographical study of the EU's relations with its neighbors could benefit research in international relations by highlighting, for example, the effectiveness of the Northern Dimension or the Union for the Mediterranean by testing the coherence of these regional EU initiatives with its other external actions.

Second: Theories of European Integration

Within the vast literature theorizing on the European integration, three approaches seem to have earned a particular significance. These are the theories of neo-functionalism, intergovernmentalism and postfunctionalism, though some of them exist in more detailed configurations (like realist or liberal version of the middle one) . It is useful to briefly introduce them before proceeding with further analysis.

1. The Neo-Functionalist Theory

According to the neo-functionalist theory, the European integration proceeds due to positive spillovers it creates. This can be understood in two dimensions. First, progress

in integration in one area stimulates deeper integration in other areas think of the single market and then common currency, banking union etc. Second, some issues are tackled more effectively by a coalition of states instead of introducing regulations by each state separately. Such economies of scale mean more efficacy in dealing with common challenges and bring down the costs of designing and introducing the necessary legislation. Once the integration process has entered a specific path, the costs of leaving it are high and so it leads to a creation of a supranational entity with a political arena of its own. Also, various pressure groups find it easier to deal with one central political actor, which in turn gains more legitimacy and recognition. (Chelotti, 2019)

Even though some crises or retardation may appear on the path to even deeper integration, they are in fact important factors in the whole process when adjustments can be made or new agenda could be formulated. Because of the deepened connection to the supranational regulations, increasing reliance on the new central political body and a participation in the new political structures, the process of integration earns dynamics of its own which is hardly reversible without enormous economic costs and political chaos. In sum, neo-functionalism is deterministic view, which assumes that the spillovers and search for political efficiency will eventually lead to creation of new political entities. (George, 2016)

2. Intergovernmentalism

In contrast to the neo-functionalism, intergovernmentalism concentrates on the leading role of nation states in the process of integration. The integration is a product of cooperation between governments, which perceived it as beneficial for national interests. Thus the progress in integration is shaped by states' goals and benefits being often a response to changing exogenous conditions, economic advantages and current constellations of power and preferences. Supranationalism is not going to make nation states obsolete, as it is formed and steered by negotiations between governments. Delegation of selected sovereignty dimension is not an act of submission, yet rather a rational calculation that made nation states even stronger. As a matter of fact, even today the political bodies of the EU cannot function without the consent of national governments and their officials. According to this theory nation states are there to stay and the future of the EU lies in their hands. (Thomson, 2018)

In response to recent assertions of growing intergovernmental dynamics, this paper explores what really is intergovernmental about the substantial reforms the EU underwent as a result of the financial crisis. It is shown that the Eurozone reform and the asylum reform differ considerably in terms of the role performed by the European Council (NI) and the function of institutional expertise offered by supranational actors, drawing on key arguments of both New Intergovernmentalism and Liberal Intergovernmentalism (LI). While the European Council worked well with the Commission, which offered crucial technical expertise, and played a key facilitation role in the Eurozone crisis, the member states still hold the majority of the competence in the field of asylum. As a result, the Commission engaged in political activity, alienating the European Council, which later served as a reform impediment.

3. PostFunctionalism

More recently, the shortcomings of the above approaches led to the theory of post-functionalism. The new theory claimed that neo-functionalism and intergovernmentalism has become increasingly less useful in explaining the progress of European integration due to the politicization of the previously rather technocratic process. Post-functionalism puts more emphasis on the influence of national politics based on identities and territorial communities, which interests have entered the scene. The debate about the role and shape of the European Union has moved to national politics and therefore to masses, public opinions, internal political struggles and home sentiments. In domestic politics, voters are more concerned about losses (or gains) in welfare, identity, competitiveness or migrations, which is exploited by national parties. Thus the main actors of the European drama are no longer only governments, officials, bureaucrats and big business, but also citizens and political parties. As a result, the 'permissive consensus' enjoyed previously by political elites has turned into 'constraining dissensus' which produces heavy political restraints on further integration.

However, the theoretical outcomes of post-functionalism are open the theory does not imply implicitly integration or disintegration, various scenarios are viable. It is rather the supranational and national reaction to crises and the dynamics it produces that is decisive here. Further integration will be an effect of political conflicts and struggles, not technocratic consensus. Neo-functionalism and intergovernmentalism view the European integration as a cooperative process led by interest groups and governments and therefore disintegration is hardly possible unless we envision a political or economic breakdown leading to a disruption of cooperation between core European countries. In contrast, post-functionalism underlines conflict emanating from the incompatible national preferences and systems of values. It embraces European disintegration as a possible scenario, especially that it seems to empower eurosceptic movements and parties, while mainstream centre left and centre right parties shy away from controversial issues like more distribution and national identity. (Eliot, 2018)

Third: The disintegration Debate

For many years, the European integration seemed irreversible and the theories of integration tended to confirm this confidence. However, recent developments within the EU and in its surroundings triggered a scholarly debate on the possibility of disintegration. Neill Nugent (2017, ch. 1) points to a number of crises, which have developed in the last two decades and contributed to this situation: relatively poor economic performance of the EU countries, banking crisis, sovereign debt and euro crisis (with the prominent role of the Greek crisis), the migration crisis, EU leadership deficit, increasing contradictions and differentiation within the EU, Brexit, questioning of the European identity, rising euroscepticism, weakened EU legitimacy among European citizens and a declining position of the EU on the global scene. Each of them is not remarkable per se, but facing them all at once is a real political challenge. The EU dealt with many crises in the past, but the fact of accumulating so many urgent issues in one historical moment seems exceptional. (Grande, 2019)

1. The European Disintegration

Grosse (2016) suggests that the troubles the EU is facing made the idea of supranationalism bleak and contributed to the rise in popularity of intergovernmentalism. It seems easy to notice rising power and influence of Germany in addressing EU-wide challenges with a weakening role of other countries, like France or Italy. This way, the EU is on a path to a confederation of states with asymmetric political power, questioning the foundations on which the EU has been built. The appeal of deepening and widening of the EU integration seems to have lost its charm and, as a consequence, its dynamics. (Marks, 2019)

The discourse on the EU disintegration is thus motivated by a number of premises, which can be reduced to three prevalent phenomena. First, in many cases the governance on the EU level showed no particular superiority over national policy making, which questions the assumptions of neo-functionalist theory. The low hanging fruits of the European integration have already been picked and the economies of scale of both economic and political processes may have started to bring diminishing returns. The solutions proposed to the member states during the migration crisis or linked to the sovereign debt crisis engendered huge controversies and were often at odds with voters' preferences. Also, the (often ad-hoc) reaction of EU authorities to various hardships and challenges usually led to the expansion of the body of European legislation and regulations, but with poor results and performance. Thus supranational governance has showed that it not only tackles social and economic problems with less efficiency than national politics, but that it can also breed negative political externalities. (Marks, 2019)

Second, the idea that the EU is and should continue to be based on common pan-European values and supranational identity is put under growing pressure. As it seems, the recent crises and their poor handling by the EU officials and bureaucrats have strengthened national identities leading to the questioning of the common values. The divergence between European nations has become more pronounced than before and pro-integrationist attitudes were pushed into defensive positions. And, third, the European continent has witnessed a comeback of geopolitics and rivalry between the states. On the one hand, there have been considerable shifts in the geopolitical position of Europe with USA losing its interest in EU matters and Russia acquiring tools and channels for causing rifts and destabilization within the European community. On the other hand, Germany confirmed their status of economic powerhouse of Europe as well as leading political player and agenda setter causing the impression that the EU is becoming Berlin's sphere of influence. This situation may have contributed to Brexit and might trigger even more eurosceptic tendencies among European societies. (George, 2016)

So in general terms, a disintegration of supranational political entity can be a result of accumulation of a series of negative events and processes, which make further integration difficult by its delegitimation or political deadlock. In such case societies, politicians and various interest groups do not perceive it any more as sensible and beneficial due to political contra-dictions and economic hardships. (Chelotti, 2019)

However, it seems too early to judge if the EU has already reached this position. As Schmitter and Lefkofridi argue, 'the EU is not likely to break as long as it successfully fulfills key functions for the Union's economy and society as a whole; but it can and will break if it does not'. They identify the areas in which we can still observe gains from cooperation and where we can reap mutual benefits, that is convergence in technocratic policies and expert advice leading to advances in public policies, more economic security and stability, and increased social welfare. Yet, some societies seem to have been left with their problems including sluggish growth, stagnating wages, unemployment and migrations. These issues may fuel disintegration tendencies in the future if not addressed properly by EU authorities. (Thomson, 2018)

Integration leading to growing divergence is not sustainable by any means. In an effort to combine various theories of integration, many scholars proposed a model of integration/disintegration based on cumulative sequence. He placed the emphasis on the equality of opportunity, which in political terms means that some, usually less endowed, players are offered a voice to be heard and a chance to build equal welfare and reap economic benefits like more successful states. If that kind of equality leads to better resource allocation and efficacy of political processes, then the rules of the game are accepted and the support for integration grows. Interests of wealthy and less developed, strong and weak societies become convergent; their chances are perceived as equal. In contrast, when hardships of various nature lead to political and economic divergences contributing to an increase in the inequalities of opportunity, tendencies to disintegrate begin to appear. Parties feel discriminated and have the impression of playing on a tilted table, so in consequence they start to believe they would be better off on their own. The directions of causation depend thus on the accumulation of positive and negative experiences. It is crucial to search for winners and losers of integration processes, because there the discontents and tendencies to separate emerge. (Ozel, 2018)

2. Discussion: how does Brexit fit into this theoretical framework?

Theories in general are simplifications of reality. However, all theoretical constructions need to be internally coherent and should refer implicitly or explicitly to some kind of intrinsic logic. Otherwise they would be a set of postulates or generalizations with little connection to the real processes and phenomena. In the case of integration theories, as well as the attempts to create reliable disintegration theories this logic seems to refer to rational political claims and actions which would hopefully lead to achieving better results in comparison to the alternative state of affairs in a given social or political issue. In reality

— it does not matter if this state of improvement will actually be gained, it is rather the existence of rationale or the conviction that it will happen. (Ozel, 2018) —

At the first sight Brexit is a manifestation of European disintegration both in theory and in reality. Behind this step lies the faith that the British can do better without EU rules, regulations and structures, which have apparently become too sclerotic and constraining for the British society and economy. National government is expected to tackle the accumulated and future challenges with more efficacy than supranational Brussels authorities. It is thus no wonder that a part of the Brexit debate concentrated on the attempts to explain and justify it in a rational manner. Even though hard-ships and threats stemming from Brexit were acknowledged, there must have been some rationale justifying the whole process. (Johen, 2018)

This attitude was especially evident for Eurosceptic politicians and commentators. The list of the reasons that have finally led to the lost referendum and the decision to leave the EU is well known. The negative attitude of the British conservative party to the European integration and a substantial Eurosceptic electorate have always suggested that the UK was reluctant to delegate parts of its sovereignty to the continent. However, due to the geopolitical position, it was more beneficial to join the EU than to stay outside the integration process. Yet, British accession to the EU has always bred dissatisfaction among voters, same as migration into the UK. Thus London has adopted the attitude of an outsider opting for European confederation instead of deeper integration.

Additionally; Britain joined the EU to protect its interests, not because it was eager to integrate with the continental values and structures. It was a marriage of convenience, not of love and devotion. In this perspective, Brexit is just a response to the changing circumstances and the consequences of being an EU member. It should not come as a surprise that Britain was first to react to the undesirable developments within and outside the EU, as it has always been the most sceptic member. The disintegration processes have already started years ago, but Brexit is just a solid manifestation of it and it should have been expected.

For Richardson (2018) this is a clear failure of the idea of supranationalism. Top-down coercion in the process of governing the EU has displaced the politics based on consensus-seeking and respect of national diversity. The divergence between European elites and citizens has never been so huge. Richardson thus rejects the idea that it was the internal factors of British politics that have led to Brexit. It was rather the unwanted and arbitrary expansion of EU authorities into the national public policies and regulations far exceeding the expectations of European people that triggered the animosity of many citizens against the EU. The processes of integration and unification have a pace of their own and too much pressure on hastening them brings negative consequences. (Johen, 2018)

Even though the above argumentation has something to it and provides some explanation of Brexit rationale, we believe that it is an attempt to provide ex-post justification to a sudden and unexpected move. The true reason for Brexit was the lost referendum, which was a political gamble by PM David Cameron, who left the office after the defeat. The referendum itself was a triumph of civic ignorance, post-truth and disinformation embodied in a negative campaign, which referred to general discontent of neoliberal modernization and imaginations of past British colonial power. The standard set of arguments of the Leave option included immigration control, rejection of Brussels bureaucracy, opposition to the establishment and the wish to 'make Britain great again'. Alas, no detailed plan of how to achieve these goals was presented. It was a game of emotions targeted at the discontented masses, not a discussion based on rational, geopolitical and economic calculations.

Recent developments around Brexit negotiations and lack of coherent British political position seem to confirm that the process of leaving the EU is highly improvised. Even during the Brexit campaign there were no calculations or simulations offered predicting how much British economy would lose (or gain) on leaving the EU slogans on new trade agreements,

restoration of imperial trade networks and 'no compromises' were offered instead. However, according to economists' calculations British GDP per capita may shrink by 10% in 10 years if UK leaves the Single Market. Ben Rosamond was right predicting that Brexit would be a haphazard, unpredictable and consequently open-ended and indeterminate process. Today, more than three years after the referendum, we still do not know whether Brexit will indeed take place or what kind of institutional form it will take.

What we know though is that Brexit has caused a major political crisis in the UK and impaired reputation of the country, which will be hard to retrieve in the future. Many studies have confirmed that the British voting to leave the EU were usually motivated by anti-immigration and anti-establishment feelings. They were thus trying to express their lack of confidence in the changes that modern societies have been going through lately and found a suitable scapegoat for their decreasing welfare and growing uncertainty of life. The Leavers were often the less educated and less well-off people, feeling left behind by the processes of globalization, including the movements of people and capital, which actually reflects the situation in many countries across Europe. (Ben, 2016)

Paradoxically, these groups are also the most vulnerable to Brexit consequences taking into consideration possible economic downturn and weakened geopolitical position of UK as a lone country in the globalized world. After the Brexit referendum, numerous studies have been published on how Brexit might affect the UK economy in the longer term. The vast majority of these studies predict a negative impact of Brexit on UK economy, which will harm the well-being of the most vulnerable citizens. To our best knowledge, none of the alternatively considered relations between UK and the EU presents itself as more advantageous compared to the full membership. From the theoretical perspective, Brexit can be interpreted through the postfunctionalist theory of integration that puts the pressure of explanation on masses and politics. Schimmelfennig argued that the Leave campaign and the motivations to quit the EU were in line with postfunctionalist expectations. He also predicted that due to weak institutional bargaining power states seeking disintegration like the UK need to moderate their demands and make concessions to the EU when negotiating the leave conditions. (Schimmelfennig, 2018)

Also Hooghe and Marks emphasize that Brexit referendum portrays tensions between functional integration and nationalist resistance, which have never connected. The set of arguments of both sides was completely disjunctive and touched upon divergent issues (i.e. economics vs. national identity), so there was no common denominator between them to find a ground for a plausible discussion. For this reason, it was the immigration issue that finally proved to be decisive. The Brexit situation seems to prove something more though, namely that the benefits of EU integration are not acknowledged and appreciated enough until a society faces the possibility to lose them and that people's vote is vulnerable to manipulations, fallacies and false hopes making it doubtful basis for long-term political decision making of great significance. The public opinion is also volatile. (Marks H. , 2019)

According to post-referendum polls, the Leave decision was hasty and impulsive and a petition to repeat the vote was swiftly signed by 6 million Brits. Does it suggest that the technocratic elites were right after all? Do post-functional assumptions need to yield to neo-functional theories? Such conclusions would be too rapid at the moment, but they provide grounds for a renewed discussion. The prevalence of neo-functionalism is for example clearly seen in the issue of regaining national sovereignty after leaving the EU. In fact, it is hard to imagine a return to the situation of pre-1973, when the UK was still outside the European Communities. The complexity of the whole situation has induced the UK government to make a desperate plea for transition period after March 2019 to allow the country to set up its own regulatory machinery, which would order the relations between the EU and the country. The attempts to postpone or even cancel Brexit, which were made after that date, suggest similar concerns.

Moreover, there are premises to expect that the UK will be extensively subject to EU rules and European Court of Justice, even if Brexit takes place due to the need to sustain trade and keep working inter-national and legal relations. Even though the United Kingdom may pay a price for leaving the EU, the latter might actually benefit from it in political terms. Brexit may become a factor prompting European countries to foster the integration and speed up the ‘muddling through’ of deepening and widening the unification . (Zielonka, 2014) It will thus become a factor of integration, not disintegration, especially for those countries that are willing to join the EU core. What is more, the EU officials have shown that they can act quickly and effectively to protect the interest of the community and its members.

He demonstrates clearly that in the EU–UK dispute over Brexit conditions it was the British that were unprepared for the negotiations and were unable to reach any of their goals. The EU, in contrast, acted in accordance with its own priorities set in legal acts, did not get involved in unnecessary political bargains and openly supported the Irish side of the border conflict. As one diplomat said, for the EU it was not a divorce but amputation, performed with determination and no sentiments. This situation shows therefore that, first, the EU as an organization has proved to be able to act quickly and effectively in protecting its interests when the situation required it and, second, that leaving the EU is linked with high economic and political costs as the future will probably confirm even more.

In short, Brexit negotiations might lead to institutional empowerment of the EU’s institution, unless the post-functionalist questions of national identity and internal political struggles prevail over European integration.

Fourth: Theoretical Explanation of the Brexit

Brexit, also known as the "British exit," clearly refers to the UK leaving the EU. Where, in June 2016, 17.4 million people chose to leave the European Union in a referendum known as a vote in the public. This resulted in 52% for the Leave side and 48% for the Remain side.

1. The Realism perspective of the Brexit

Realists believe that the distribution of power within the global system, as pioneered by Gideon Rose, Robert Jervis, and Collin Duck, defines international relations. Furthermore, the theory's central tenet that decision-makers "and their state" act in calculated, rational ways to maximize the national interest remains true. Of course, structural factors like material capacities like wealth or military force, and how decision-makers employ them, affect the power that Britain or the EU has in Brexit . (Czech 2019) Neoclassical Realism thus aids in our comprehension of how the UK or the EU manage the challenges posed by Brexit. First, given that the remaining EU's \$13.8 trillion economy exceeds the UK's \$2.4 trillion, the UK runs the risk of overextending. Second, while maintaining a sizable trade deficit with the rest of the EU, Britain has its military might on the table due to its membership in NATO. Thirdly, the European political and security structure is in flux as a result of Donald Trump's victory and Russia's attitude toward Eastern Europe. Therefore, achieving the requisite unity in decision-making may be the toughest problem for the EU that is still in existence. That is to say, because it is not a traditional state, the EU may find it difficult to use its power. (Czech 2019)

2. The constructivism perspective of the Brexit

Contrarily, constructivism, which had as its forerunners Alexener Wendt, Nicholas Onuf, and Thomas Risse, placed emphasis on the norms, customs, and regulations that govern both international and European politics. The way "we" interpret our role in the world is more important than our tangible abilities. Constructivists concentrate on how identities are created and how they affect foreign policy as a result. (2018, Nugroho) The national interests of Britain or the EU in the Brexit environment will be affected by their perceptions of who they are and the role they believe they should play in the world. (Rosamond 2016) Furthermore, any understanding of Brexit for constructivists will need an account of how the UK and the rest of the EU construct their identities and how these play out in relation to one another. Additionally,

theories of "parliamentary sovereignty" and Britain's self-image as a great power, as well as the EU's commitment to "ever closer union" and theories of free movement of people can be used to explain the approach. (Rosamond 2016). Additionally, Theresa May has been charged with prioritising politics above economics in her handling of the Brexit talks. The surviving EU might also put political beliefs ahead of economics since, as Eurosceptics correctly point out, it is a political project. The UK's break with Europe has a number of causes and motives. The main focus of this essay is on explaining the Brexit phenomenon by providing examples of its causes and motivations in the UK.

3. The Relations with the EU

First, Britain's history is distinct from that of its neighbors in Europe. It stands apart from other European countries due to its status as an unconquered island nation, a long history of parliamentary democracy, and an engrained conviction that it can eventually take care of itself. It never displayed any sympathy for the European ideal. (Hayward et Ben 2020) Additionally, it joined in 1973, but a four-month referendum campaign found it challenging to undo the drip-drip effect of forty years of unfavourable media coverage. Britain is not the only European nation where politicians agree on a policy in Brussels before returning home and blaming Brussels for the choice. But compared to other countries, the game was played far more intensely and extensively in Britain. (Stockemer 2018)

Second, the Blair government's 2003 decision to grant full freedom of movement rights to all the 2004 accession states was a more recent distinctive British act that also significantly influenced the referendum outcome. As a result, on January 1, 2004, the United Kingdom and Ireland granted complete free movement to all ten accession states from Central and Eastern Europe, the Baltic States, Cyprus, and Malta. With the exception of Sweden, every other member state of Western Europe kept their seven-year prerogative under the Treaty to halt complete labour mobility. The only three countries that allowed for complete free movement of persons looking for work were the UK, Ireland, and Sweden. It is obvious that the British chose not to use their Treaty-granted authority to limit free migration. However, the Leave campaign found it easy to blame the EU for the increase in workers entering the UK and not the British government during the EU Referendum campaign. (Rosamond 2016) Therefore, this influx was reinforced by the economic crisis. As the Eurozone failed to deliver growth across its 19 members, and the economy of debtor nations contracted sharply, more people arrived from southern Europe and Ireland.

Thirdly, the British economy rapidly righted itself after the crisis, as the UK was in control of its own currency, and debt and could deploy effective fiscal stabilizers. However, London then found that because of the Eurozone's addiction to fiscally rigid economic policies, the UK was also acting as the employment shock absorber for Frankfurt. (Stockemer 2018)

Nevertheless, the sheer volume of people moving to the UK from the CEE states, and from southern Europe appears to have been a major factor in driving the Leave vote. It is noticeable, in parts of the country, such as London and the major cities, where there had long been foreign communities; the British were much more relaxed about immigration and voted heavily to stay in the Union. However, in parts of the country which had recently seen a surge of new foreign workers, they voted heavily to leave. This means that the Leave vote also surged in parts of the country where there was very little new or historical immigration, but where voters feared that immigration might also soon arrive in their neighborhoods. (Hayward et Ben 2020)

So, even these specifically British causes of the referendum leave vote were heavily influenced by European actions and developments. There are also a number of common worries, concerns and anger about the European Union across the continent and which in the UK reinforced the Leave vote. Finally, the most obvious is the failure of the Euro-zone to either reform itself so it has the same capability as any other sovereign issuer of currency to pool debt, and provide the transfers and fiscal stabilizers to run a single currency zone. Or organize a soft

Euro exit strategy for the states with whom Germany principally is not prepared to pool debts and fiscal transfer policies. (Anand 2020)

Technically of course, one can say that the UK is not a member of the Euro-zone and therefore of what concern is it to London? However, as explained above, extremely damaging fiscal policies in Frankfurt and Brussels have a direct impact on the UK, flooding Britain with more people looking for work. Equally it reduces the value of the single market to the UK, as Euro-zone fiscal rigidity squeezes economic growth. (Anand 2020)

In this article, the aim is to explain the relationship's type between the EU and the UK, also the challenging situation of the negotiations among the two sides. The relations with the EU has never been in a good terms, this means, from a historical perspective speaking, the joining was gradually late comparing with the other members.

First of all, although prominent figures on both sides have emphasized that they want the future partnership between the UK and the EU to be close and special, considerable uncertainty surrounds the next phase of the negotiations. This is despite the greater clarity brought by the December 2019 general election. As well as the challenge of identifying a landing zone that is acceptable to both the UK and the EU, the climate within which the negotiations take place, the continuing reluctance of the UK government to spell out the trade-offs, and, potentially, a greater spread of views among the EU27 than in the first phase, could cause difficulties. (De Mars et Fella 2020) Not only the government's majority gives control over the choice of future options, but also the Withdrawal Act lays the groundwork for regulatory autonomy, while its solution to the Irish border question allows the UK to make the trade deals with partners across the globe that were ruled out under the backstop. But the majority and the Johnson version of the withdrawal deal also carry potential difficulties. Moreover, the magnitude of Boris Johnson's victory has convinced some Brexiters that the UK's hand has been strengthened in the negotiations with the EU, not least because they believe the credibility of the no deal threat is even greater. (De Mars et Fella 2020) However, the government has yet to explain to the British public the trade-offs that leaving the EU entails and especially the economic impact, the likely increase in 'red tape', and a growth rather than a contraction of the machinery of government. (Menon 2020)

Along with, the talk of the UK and the EU negotiating as one sovereign power to another, meanwhile, fails to recognize the asymmetry of the negotiations. The government is again pinning hopes on its ability to divide and conquer in the second phase, and not afraid to go public on this view. The Prime Minister has also ruled out the possibility of an extension to the transition period beyond December 2020, despite warnings that 11 months is too little even to reach anything more than the barest of trade agreements which would lead to maximum differentiation between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Downing Street does not exclude a piecemeal agreement, which leaves some issues unresolved, but allows the UK to depart the EU. (Menon 2020)

Moreover, even that sort of deal would be complex. The EU will demand assurances on fair competition as the price for agreement to zero tariffs and zero quotas on goods, potentially at odds with the government's aim of regulatory autonomy. The Prime Minister's insistence that a free trade agreement must cover services as well will be difficult to deliver. (De Mars et Fella 2020) Also, they have expressed doubts that it will be possible to reach an agreement covering all the areas where the UK says it wants to negotiate before December 2020. The short timeframe will compel the EU27, who themselves have differing priorities, to agree the issues on which agreement has to be found. However, efforts on the EU side to impose sequencing are likely to be resisted by London. Furthermore, the negotiations will cover a range of sensitive substantive issues: fish, data protection, intellectual property, energy, transport, and procedural questions such as the role of joint committees, where the UK and the EU are unlikely to see eye-to-eye. And, the relation will be affected too by how the UK is seen to be treating EU citizens in the UK under the settled status scheme. (Sampson 2020)

In addition to that, the UK and the EU have also stated that they want a strong security relationship in the future. But although co-operation on security issues and the exchange of intelligence is likely to continue, and the UK will of course remain part of NATO alongside other EU member states, it seems likely that the UK's involvement in EU policies will be looser than currently. (De Mars et Fella 2020) As a result, the EU has indicated that it will not allow the UK access to tools in law enforcement and judicial cooperation that are restricted to member states and Schengen countries, the European Arrest Warrant, the Schengen Information System, and the European Criminal Record Information System, but that it is open to the development of alternative arrangements. The two sides will need to negotiate alternative provisions for access to a better future and neighborhood in Europe.

Though, any UK participation would require a financial contribution. Foreign policy is the area where change is least likely, partly because the Common Security and Defense Policy's is itself a loose framework and does not formally constrain EU member states in policy making, and partly because co-operation often takes place outside EU structures. Although the UK has insisted on the primacy of NATO, downplayed the role of the EU, and been a strong opponent of institutionalizing EU foreign policy, it has co-operated closely with France and Germany, and supported EU actions, such as the imposition of sanctions on Russia following its annexation of the Crimea, that further UK policies. So, UK co-operation with the EU or individual member states where interests coincide is likely to continue after Brexit. (Hall 2020)

Fifth: An empirical critique of the European Integration

The conflict between intergovernmentalism and supranationalism continues to dominate analyses of European integration processes. In this issue, sides are frequently chosen based on extremely case-specific empirical data. How false such generalizations can be is demonstrated by an investigation of two situations, European telecoms and electricity regulation. While the latter case emphasizes the value of intergovernmental vetoes, the former decision is frequently invoked to promote supranational claims. However, deeper investigation reveals the European Commission's extremely similar supranational policy approach to both sectors and the ensuing weakness of the predominate interpretation. These issues could be avoided by doing an examination of European integration utilizing a multi-level governance method.

1. Theories of European Integration and Empirical Evidence

The role of intergovernmental or supranational forces has historically been debated in theories of European integration. Simply put the importance of supranational organizations and actors in relation to the participating nation-states is the main question. Such a topic is obviously one of degree, and as a result, a number of opposing viewpoints may be identified.

The role of intergovernmental or supranational forces has historically been debated in theories of European integration. The significance of supranational institutions and actors to the participating nation-states is the main emphasis of the question, to put it simply. Of course, the answer to such a question depends on the specifics; therefore various viewpoints can be identified. The neorealist tradition in theories of international relations is the basis of an extreme position that denies any influence of the supranational level (IR). This strategy places a strong focus on national sovereignty, causing international cooperation to appear to benefit just the lowest common denominator of participating nations.

Neoliberal theories founded on the theory of international regimes hold a second, more dominant stance in the discussion of European integration. Although this is a rationalist strategy based on nation-states that maximise their utility, by emphasizing regimes, it takes supranational institutions into account. International regimes provide an institutionalized setting for resolving coordination or collaboration difficulties and for overseeing the implementation of policies that are characterised by international interdependence. Once international regimes are in place, there is a motivation to handle more challenges of global interconnectedness within

this institutional framework, causing these regimes to gain importance and become the institutional setting for resolving a wider range of problems.(Hoffmann, 1966)

Another viewpoint, which could be referred to as constructivist, goes a step further by recognizing the existence of supranational actors in addition to supranational organisations. In this case, it is believed that the allocation of certain rights to the European Commission and the Court of Justice, such as the Commission's formal monopoly on initiating policy and the Court's independence in determining violations of the legal obligations of Member States, has resulted in a qualitative change. This contrasts with rationalist strategies that prioritise Member States' interests. The fact that supranational organizations are actors implies that they contribute their own interests to the integration process in addition to the interests of all Member States as a whole. Neofunctionalism must be cited as an example of the opposite end of the spectrum. Neofunctionalism, which was based on the functionalism of Mitranyi, proposed an increasing momentum towards integration as a result of functional interdependence between policies, causing sectoral integration to "spillover" into other sectors and the growing supranational orientation of national élites. In accordance with this theory, as private and supranational actors gain importance, the nation-state gradually loses control over the direction of integration. Actor inclusion, however, does not yet equate to a distinct microfoundation for the strategy. Institutions are also not given much prominence in this perspective. In the early years of the European Community, neofunctionalism predominated. However, it experienced a severe setback during the integration crises of the 1960s and 1970s. (Haas, 1964)

The dispute between intergovernmentalism and supranationalism is based on unique theoretical and empirical premises that have their roots in neorealism and neofunctionalism. Theoretically, the integration process is considered as being naturally constrained by governmental interests in maintained sovereignty. On the other hand, the functional demands placed on structures and procedures give integration a boost and free it from confined questions of sovereignty. A direct comparison is challenging due to the disparate epistemological pillars. The two techniques' initial empirical foci share the same characteristics. Intergovernmentalism holds that since treaty negotiations impact future integration processes, investigations of "high politics" are relevant to understanding European integration. Instead than focusing on governmental players, neofunctionalism places more of an emphasis on the processes of sectoral integration and professional élites and associations. (Schmidt, 1996)

2. An Institutional Critique of European Integration

The majority of intergovernmentalist views of European integration centre on treaty negotiations among governments of the European Union. Recent studies have also looked at power index analysis, which contends that a government's capacity to shape policy depends on all potential coalitions in the Council of Ministers, to which it is essential. This strategy has two significant flaws. First, it ignores the political inclinations of governments, exaggerating the influence of governments with extreme preferences while underestimating that of governments with more moderate preferences. Second, the crucial roles played in legislative procedures by the European Parliament and the Commission of the European Communities are not taken into account by power index analyses. The distribution of agenda-setting and veto power nowadays has a systematic impact on the outcomes of policy. These legislative dynamics must be taken into consideration if intergovernmentalism is to provide an explanation for decisions made during treaty rounds. (Ben, 2016) Since 1957, the European Union has achieved great things for its citizens and the world: a continent at peace freedom for its citizens to live, study or work anywhere in the EU the world's biggest single market.

II. Conclusion:

In this paper, we have attempted to show that straightforward classification of Brexit in the integration theories is highly problematic. It does not seem to fit neither neo-functionalism nor intergovernmentalism, as both approaches predict that due to high economic and political costs of leaving no government would intentionally follow that option. However, the case

of Brexit seems to confirm the basic assumptions of post-functionalist approach to European integration.

In this perspective, the political and economic rationality adopted by governments and interest groups is countervailed by other rationalities referring to identity and social issues as well as the legitimization of power. Interestingly enough, the British outbreak of euroscepticism was provoked by the government itself, even though national authorities so far used to protect the consensus on EU integration by keeping the discordant tendencies at distance. Brexit thus exemplifies the risk of unpredictable capitulation to eurosceptic demands and as such depicts the change in the rules of the game within the politics of European integration. It may also serve as a boundary line for leaders on how far they can go with regard to political gambling, especially that the support for the EU remains high in their countries.

It is hard to predict today whether Brexit will foster further integration of encourage other countries to become more critical of the EU and play even more risky political games. Many point to the former considering the political atmosphere around Brexit and possible, yet unrevealed, consequences of the leave. What seems, however, easier to project is that it will open a new chapter in the research on European integration.

More attention will be paid to domestic politics and the creation of European identity, the analysis of conflict arenas and the rules therein, shifts in the decision-making capabilities, as well as how European issues are handled within particular member countries. It is only by such a reallocation of scholarly focus that we can further analyze and understand the European integration.

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