

Policy Risks to the United Future of Europe



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European integration has been the cornerstone of building and strengthening liberal democracies within the transatlantic world and allied countries. The European Union (EU) and NATO, together with the Anglo-Saxon countries and allies, represent the institutional architecture of liberal international order. However, freedom and democracy are facing policy risks that affect European integration, mostly due to rising populist disinformation as well as Russian aggressive policy.

Protecting the security, freedom, and democracy of the European future and NATO-led global order requires building a strong European central intelligence agency in addition to the existing national security systems.

Considerations about a new institutional architecture of Europe open up ideas for building the United States of Europe – fashioned after the United States of America, originally founded on the classical liberal and federalist ideas, as *A New Order of the Ages*. In line with that, building a renewed and potentially federal future of Europe in more liberty, equality, and fraternity shall be taken into consideration.

THE NEED FOR BASIC INSTITUTIONS

Together with the United States, the European Union is the building block of the liberal international order. Within that institutional context, NATO provides security infrastructure for this transatlantic alliance. Despite their certain differences, European and American institutions share common values of liberal democracy, including individual freedom, open society, the rule of law, and market economy.

However, those values have been put into question partly due to rising populist disinformation as well as Russian aggressive

policy. Attempts by various actors to decrease trust in the transatlantic institutions and European values – considered as liberal in a broader sense – directly affect the future of European integration and its enlargement, not to mention the federalist idea of the European Union.

In order to move toward a federal structure, the EU would need to build basic institutions – such as intelligence and armed forces. Let us, therefore, examine the initiatives and options for creating a European central intelligence agency, to support the existing Common Foreign and Security policy



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within the NATO framework. This way, the EU would be strengthened institutionally as a U.S. partner, instead of relying on the false dilemma of *independence* from the United States.

THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

Ideas focused on European unification have been developing gradually. Since the very inception of the European project, these proposals did not only have a distinct European, but also a transatlantic character. Originally, the notions and heritage mostly associated with the Enlightenment had a major political influence on both the American founding and European integration. There were important actors behind this European idea, including notable and prominent Freemasons - such as Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, Giuseppe Mazzini, Giuseppe Garibaldi, Richard Coundenhove-Kalergi, and Winston Churchill.

Benjamin Franklin drew a European constitutional proposal¹ for a Federal Union and One Grand Republic based on free trade. Franklin even referred to the idea of a "Grand Design"². Moreover, George Washington also supported European unification³ while William Penn had an initiative for the European Parliament⁴.

Meanwhile, French poet Victor Hugo advocated the idea of European fraternity during his 1849 speech at the Internal Peace

¹ <https://www.europewatchdog.info/en/council-of-europe/united-europe/>.

² <http://www.sirjournal.org/research/2018/1/29/ben-franklin-and-the-united-states-of-europe>

³ Reding V. (2012) *Why We Need a United States of Europe Now*, a speech delivered on November 8, European Commission. Available [online]: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_12_796

⁴ <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/can-europe-make-it/william-penn-englishman-who-invented-european-parliament/>

Congress in Paris. Furthermore, in the context of European liberal revolutions in 1848, leaders of the Italian unification Giuseppe Mazzini and Giuseppe Garibaldi saw European unification as a continuation of Italian unification. It is also worth to mention that a liberal English philosopher John Stuart Mill supported the idea of European unification.

During the First World War, German pastor and liberal politician Friedrich Naumann, in his 1915 book *Mitteleuropa*, advocated the Central European federation as a defense alliance and a single economic area. Within this proposal, Naumann did not put emphasis on government regulations, but rather on voluntary exchange of labor, ideas and culture, as well as well-organized German entrepreneurs. It could be assumed that



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Naumann's idea also envisaged a greater (continental) European federation⁵.

In 1931, Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi founded the Pan-European Movement in Vienna. Furthermore, French politician and Prime Minister Édouard Herriot and British politician Arthur Salter wrote books about the United States of Europe. Finally, Winston Churchill advocated the European Union between continental states, but without the United Kingdom. In 1942, he supported the idea of the United States of Europe with minimized barriers and unrestricted travel. After the Second World War, Churchill supported the same idea in 1946 during his speech at the University of Zurich.

After the Second World War, European integration started to be gradually realized. European institutions were built in various formations, as well as a much broader Council of Europe. Moreover, the 1957 Treaty of Rome and the 2009 Lisbon Treaty support the idea of an ever-closer union⁶.

Throughout the 21st century, several prominent politicians have also supported the idea of bringing European states closer together. Former European Commission's Vice President Viviane Reding advocated for a political union in the form of the United States of Europe as a logical next step after a common currency. In her 2012 speech in Passau, Reding referred primarily to the

⁵ Greiner F. (2015) *Articulating Europe During the Great War: Friedrich Naumann's Idea of Mitteleuropa and Its Public Reception in Germany, England and the USA*. Available [online]: <https://www.ledonline.it/index.php/LCM-Journal/article/view/912/774>.

⁶ However, concrete planning to implement this federal idea would require a sufficient level of public and political support among Europeans and the member states. While it is necessary to have an open discussion about the European long-term future, it is also necessary to communicate potential reform ideas in a way that populists do not use for boosting already growing Euroscepticism.



THATCHER WAS SUSPICIOUS OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION, A POLITICAL UNION, AND FEDERALISM

ideas of Victor Hugo⁷. Former European parliamentary liberal leader Guy Verhofstadt fosters the idea of the United States of Europe as a federation, but not a super-state⁸. Verhofstadt's book *Europe's Last Chance* (2017) advocates a fully-fledged federal Union⁹. It is worth remembering that Verhofstadt is a part of the Spinelli Group, a network of like-minded federalists in the European Parliament¹⁰ backed by the Union of European Federalist¹¹. It will be interesting to see to what extent the federalist idea has been present in the debate about Europe.

THE FEDERALIST DILEMMA

While, for example, the United States, Canada, Australia, Austria, and Germany are federations, consisting of states/districts, the

⁷ Reding V. (2012) *Why We Need a United States of Europe Now*, a speech delivered on November 8, European Commission. Available [online]: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_12_796

⁸ <https://www.euronews.com/2019/05/13/guy-verhofstadt-eu-presidential-hopeful-talks-to-euronews>

⁹ Verhofstadt, G. (2017) *Europe's Last Chance - Why the European States Must Form a More Perfect Union*, New York: Basic Books.

¹⁰ <https://thespinelligroup.eu/>

¹¹ https://www.federalists.eu/fileadmin/files_uef/Spinelli_Group_Page/2018_Manifesto_EN.pdf

European Union is a unique supranational and intergovernmental polity without a federal structure.

Although federalism is usually perceived as a progressive attempt to increase the size of the central government and its bureaucracy, the federalist idea should not be exclusively mixed with such perceptions. In this context, it is important to mention Margaret Thatcher who was strongly against European federal superstate as undemocratic. However, Thatcher noticed that, for example, American federalism means restoring power to states¹².

On the one hand, Thatcher was suspicious of European integration, a political union, and federalism. On the other hand, Thatcher was against creating a strongly bureaucratic superstate led by French ideas directed against neoliberalism, while she saw the importance of the single market. It seems that Thatcher put Europe in a classical dilemma – a federalist superstate led by the French, versus a Europe of strong nations connected by means of the single market.

European unity should certainly not be a projection and extension of national interests of particular member states, especially those who are critical to so-called *neoliberalism* and American foreign policy. Secondly, more European integration and even federalism should not be equalized with more bureaucracy and higher centralization, although these risks can appear even without further integration toward federalism. Therefore, a potential federalist option for Europe should rather be the classical American version adopted into the European context. Perhaps Thatcher would agree with that (especially nowadays, when the United Kingdom is not a part of the EU



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anymore), the same way as Churchill supported the United States of Europe without the UK.

Federalism does not undermine national identities and member states' legacies – it can only strengthen their positions. However, Europe is not just about different nations coming together – the European vision stems from strong individuals, communities, and active citizens, who want to work on self-improvement and prosperity. Therefore, individuals are the main architects of

¹² Thatcher, T. (2003) *Statecraft: Strategies for a Changing World*, London: HarperCollinsPublishers.



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freedom and nations are as strong as individuals are free.

FORGOTTEN IMPORTANCE OF CIVIC EDUCATION

Especially due to rising Euroscepticism, European integration and the federalist idea need a common identity, values, and virtues. Despite the motto *United in Diversity*, the majority of Europeans still lack this sense of unity, in comparison to the United States of America. It is difficult to assume that America was founded without obstacles to federalist unification of different states.

Therefore, it is important to understand the legacy of the U.S. Founding Fathers' vision to create an exceptional historical experiment based on the enlightened classical liberal ideas inspired by Reformed Christianity, purified from medieval European legacies of clericalism, hierarchies, and corruptive

collusions with absolutist rulers. This newly formed American framework connected many Founding Fathers and other influential Americans within the Freemasonry as the leading manifestation of the Enlightenment, as the basis for building *A New Order of the Ages*¹³.

In his book on *The Political Theory of the American Founding* Thomas G. West (2017) describes the political ideas behind building the American federal experiment based on democratic self-government. West points out important policy areas for the American federal government, such as protecting the natural rights to life, liberty, and property through domestic and foreign policy; trade policy and market freedom; reliable money for exchanging goods and services; border protection; rule of law protected by free, impartial, and independent judiciary; basic safety net and public education. Concerning the latter, West refers to several Founding Fathers who emphasized the development of civic virtues to protect the constitution, to secure liberty, and promote civic humanism. He also mentions thoughts of Benjamin Franklin, according to whom only virtuous people have the capability for freedom, and thoughts of James Madison that government will fail without virtue. West goes on to state that the founders saw the need for moral education based on the rational knowledge of natural rights in order to support institutions and good government.

In particular, Thomas Jefferson emphasized the role of pre-university education to instruct about rights, interests, and duties, and the role of university education to understand principles of politics, order, and virtue. In line with that, West illustrates that the government supported state universities

¹³The original reads *Novus Ordo Seclorum*. See: <https://www.greatseal.com/mottoes/seclorum.html>



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to develop reasoning faculties, enlarge minds, and cultivate morality based on liberal education, with a focus on training sober public servants¹⁴. In addition to this observation, West mentions the civic virtues of frugality, industry, liberality, moderation, temperance, prudence, wisdom, courage, and justice¹⁵ that were highly important to the Founding Fathers.

¹⁴ West, T.G. (2017) *The Political Theory of the American Founding – Natural Rights, Public Policy, and the Moral Conditions of Freedom*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁵ Ibid. The author mentions several civic virtues in many parts of the book. For information on particular pages, see the Index of the book (p. 419).

Thomas G. West's book illustrates that a functioning democratic government and open society require a comprehensive public policy and political culture based on strong civic virtues and high social trust. Furthermore, the role of public education for civic life and democracy is crucial¹⁶.

EUROPEAN VALUES AND POLITICAL DILEMMAS

It is important to understand this context because good governance and democratic institutions even in Europe need to be supported by strong civic education. While national and even regional narratives are strong throughout Europe, there is a question of to what extent European identity and common values could be developed to support further European integration?

American Political Scientist Samuel Huntington emphasizes individuality as the central mark that distinguishes the West¹⁷. Moreover, Scottish Historian Niall Ferguson mentions many values and legacies of the Western civilization. Among them are devotion to work, accumulation of capital and Protestant work ethic, rational organization, individual freedom, the Enlightenment, scientific revolution, democracy and representative constitutional government, independent courts, property rights, and the freedom of worship¹⁸. Despite some differences and institutional deficits, these values are common on both sides of the Atlantic and represent the basis for the transatlantic institutions.

¹⁶ In line with that, a system of land-grant universities and colleges has been developed in the United States since the 19th century. Even the leading private universities, including the elite Ivy League universities (Harvard, Yale, Princeton, etc.) put a strong emphasis on civic education for democracy, together with their initial role of providing education for church ministers.

¹⁷ Huntington, S. (1996) *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, New York: Simon & Schuster.

¹⁸ Ferguson, N. (2012) *Civilization: The Six Killer Apps of Western Power*, London: Penguin Books.

As mentioned earlier, the federalist idea cannot afford itself another etiquette of a one-size-fits-all solution. Centralization and uniformity are certainly not European values, but differences in opinions and thoughts within the civilized and constructive framework. United Europe cannot afford exclusivist political ideologies and populism, whether it is backward clerical or fundamentalist agenda on the socially conservative side or progressive-leftist attempts to impose a cancel culture, radical intersectionality, and undermining essential traditions. Therefore, actors on both sides of the political spectrum should strive toward moderation, since center-right and center-left help democracies to consolidate, instead of producing strong ideological divisions.

THE FRAMEWORK FOR POTENTIAL FEDERAL EU REFORM

Considering the basic functions of the government and the current institutional context of the European Union, there should be a joint security system, including armed forces and the central intelligence agency. In addition to this, the EU already has the institutional framework shared with its member states to protect fundamental market freedoms and competition, as well as a foreign trade policy.

The EU should be based on a strong Parliament and a Council of ministers. The Parliament shall be elected through transnational voting lists, with each national parliament delegating its representatives. The European Commission, as the executive council, should be chosen by its president, and derive its legitimacy from the majority of the Parliament, independently of appointments from the member states¹⁹. In line with this,



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European Liberal Youth's proposals for a federal Europe²⁰ include institutional reforms focused on several areas. The European Commission should transform itself to a political executive branch with a reduced portfolio composed by a coalition and supported by a parliamentary majority²¹.

²⁰ https://www.lymec.eu/about_us

¹⁹Verhofstadt, G. (2017) *Europe's Last Chance - Why the European States Must Form a More Perfect Union*, New York: Basic Books.

²¹ LYMEC's Vision on Institutional Reform – European Commission. Available [online]: <https://future.europa.eu/processes/Democracy/f/6/proposals/13234>

At the same time, the European Council should be merged with the Council of the EU²², while the European Parliament shall only have a single seat in Brussels²³. The Council and the Parliament should then have the right to submit legislative proposals, while the European Union ought to be represented by the President of the Commission²⁴. With respect to subsidiarity and the political limits, the EU should focus on trade, internal market, foreign affairs, defense, migration, asylum, fundamental rights, climate, and energy²⁵ since these policies are of a cross-border and common relevance for Europeans.

Although the European Monetary Union (EMU) exists, the euro is not a common currency in the whole EU. Moreover, unlike the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and Switzerland, some member states are still not a part of the Schengen area, which guarantees European freedom of movement. Therefore, the federalist concept should consider including all the member states in the EMU and the Schengen area, instead of relying on several fragmentations.

Furthermore, the EU does not have a fiscal union, so the question is to what extent a potential federation would be authorized to collect joint taxes. If we assume that federalism supports a limited government, a potential federal government should not

require additional or at least excessive public money to be redistributed through the EU budget, although the EU budget is just around 1% of the GDP (significantly less than in the United States and even Switzerland). In any case, potential European tax policy should accept the tax competition between the member states in order to protect their freedoms concerning personal and corporate income taxes, as well



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²² LYMEC's Vision on Institutional Reform - European Council. Available [online]: <https://futureu.europa.eu/processes/Democracy/f/6/proposals/13236>

²³ LYMEC's Vision on Institutional Reform - European Parliament. Available [online]: <https://futureu.europa.eu/processes/Democracy/f/6/proposals/13237>

²⁴ LYMEC's Vision on the EU's Democratic Legitimacy. Available [online]: <https://futureu.europa.eu/processes/Democracy/f/6/proposals/13366>

²⁵ LYMEC's Vision on the EU's Political Limits. Available [online]: <https://futureu.europa.eu/processes/Democracy/f/6/proposals/13333>



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as a tax-free treatment of reinvested profits (like in Estonia and Latvia). Moreover, despite populist concerns that Europe costs a lot, the EU budget is less than one-fortieth of member state's budgets. Despite this fact, the EU has been referred to in some slogans as *the EUSSR*, although the former Soviet Union and its communist dictatorship controlled 100% of official national income²⁶.

²⁶Verhofstadt, G. (2017) *Europe's Last Chance - Why the European States Must Form a More Perfect Union*, New York: Basic Books.

In the potential context of the United States of Europe, European Liberal Forum's *Liberal White Book Europe 2030*²⁷ mentions a common finance minister of the Eurozone. However, the *White Book* warns that this idea would not get a strong popular support, but may instead provoke a backlash and hamper further integration, since the large majority of EU citizens identify exclusively or primarily with their member states²⁸.

Furthermore, despite the need to control the overall level of European government, it is important to tackle populist-led misinformation about the European administration. Simplified conclusions about a large bureaucracy highly depend on the context. While the EU administration has a little bit more than 30.000 employees²⁹ (and a part of them are translators), the U.S. federal government's executive branch has more than 2.7 million civilian employees³⁰.

BUILDING THE EUROPEAN CIA

Security is one of the fundamental roles of any government. In liberal democracies, security provides a framework to protect values of individual liberty and our fundamental rights.

A united Europe needs a strong institutional framework at least in its bare minimum – and that is security. The EU has been facing

²⁷European Liberal Forum (2020) *Liberal White Book Europe 2030. A Liberal Roadmap for a Resilient and Prosperous EMU 3.0*, Chapter 7, p. 248. Available [online]: <https://liberalforum.eu/think-tank/liberal-white-book-europe-2030/>

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹European Commission (2020) *HR Key Figures*. Available [online]: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/european-commission-hr_key_figures_2020_en.pdf

³⁰Congressional Research Service (2021) *Federal Workforce Statistics Sources: OPM and OMB, Updated on June 24, 2021*, Table 3, Page 6. Available [online]: <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R43590.pdf>



EUROPE NEEDS A STRONG TRANSATLANTIC ALLIANCE, INCLUDING JOINT AND COORDINATED INTELLIGENCE COOPERATION WITHIN THE NATO ALLIANCE

a rising risk of Russian and Chinese authoritarian influence³¹ supported with disinformation against its member states. Terrorist threats should also be taken into account as well as Russian aggressive policy. These core reasons pose sufficiently big challenges that require a joint intelligence community and a dedicated central agency, in addition to the existing national agencies.

Europeans need a joint foreign and security policy, which would be easier to coordinate and cooperate within the EU and with the United States, set within the NATO framework. History shows that Europe was not able to solve any conflict alone, nor can Europe do much on its continent with regard to Russian aggression in Ukraine. Therefore, Europe needs a strong transatlantic alliance,

including joint and coordinated intelligence cooperation within the NATO alliance.

No matter how far the European integration would reach, security policy should remain the competence of the member states. However, rising cross-border security challenges, within the Union and throughout the world, from terrorism to rising authoritarian influence, justify the need to create a European central intelligence agency. Member states cannot solve these complex global risks alone, especially because these policy risks challenge the global role of Europe.

Although the EU has a certain institutional level concerning intelligence policy, it is far from a comprehensive and holistic framework. In 2012, the EU formed the European Union Intelligence and Situation Center (EU INTCEN). Since 2011, it has been a part of the European External Action Service (EEAS) and under the authority of the EU's High Representative. EU INTCEN succeeded the Joint Situation Center (SITCEN), whose mission was to focus on early warnings, diplomatic reporting, non-military intelligence, and crisis task force.

The current EU intelligence structures are flawed, and the intelligence sharing is selective, while the EU heavily relies on NATO's capacity. The central intelligence agency would help the EU to enter the international scene³², while the current capacity of the EU to produce its own security intelligence is low and depends on information sharing between the national agencies³³. So far, there have been intergovernmental initiatives to improve European intelligence

³¹ <https://www.kremlinwatch.eu/userfiles/handbook-on-countering-russian-and-chinese-interference-in-europe.pdf>

³² Christodoulos, I. (2013) *Is a European Union Central Intelligence Agency Needed?*, Research Paper No. 161. Available [online]: <https://rieas.gr/images/rieas161.pdf>

³³ Estevens, J. (2020) "Building Intelligence Cooperation in the European Union". [in:] *Janus.net*, E-Journal of International Relations, Vol. 11(2). Available [online]: <https://doi.org/10.26619/1647-7251.11.2.6>

cooperation. Therefore, the Intelligence College³⁴ in Europe was established in 2019³⁵ and the letter of intent was signed in 2020 in Zagreb³⁶.

In 2015, Guy Verhofstadt, the leader of liberals in the European Parliament, emphasized that the European intelligence cooperation is a failure, and so he initiated the creation of a European intelligence agency and expressed the need to activate article 42 (7) of the Lisbon Treaty³⁷, which guarantees assistance to member states that are victims of armed aggression on their territories³⁸. Considering the terrorist attacks on Madrid, Brussels, Paris, and London, Verhofstadt concluded that Europe could not continue with a fragmented security policy. However, establishing a single European intelligence would not mean abolishing national security services³⁹. Verhofstadt's proposal was to bundle all information about terrorists⁴⁰. However, forming a new agency was opposed by the German foreign intelligence

³⁴ This intergovernmental initiative fosters academic and professional views on intelligence-related topics and contributes to the strategic intelligence culture in Europe. For more information, see: <https://www.intelligence-college-europe.org/>

³⁵ <https://www.intelligence-college-europe.org/>

³⁶ *Letter of Intent concerning the development of the Intelligence College in Europe* (2020). Available [online]: <https://www.intelligence-college-europe.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Lol-English.pdf>

³⁷ Euractiv (2015) *Verhofstadt Calls for Creation of EU Intelligence Agency*. Available [online]: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/justice-home-affairs/news/verhofstadt-calls-for-creation-of-eu-intelligence-agency/>

³⁸ Official Journal of the European Union (2012) *Consolidated Version of the Treaty of the European Union*. Available [online]: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:2bf140bf-a3f8-4ab2-b506-fd71826e-6da6.0023.02/DOC_1&format=PDF

³⁹ Verhofstadt, G. (2017) *Europe's Last Chance - Why the European States Must Form a More Perfect Union*, New York: Basic Books.

⁴⁰ NOS News (2016) *Ook na aanslagen Brussel is een Europese CIA nog ver weg*, March 28. Available [online]: <https://nos.nl/artikel/2095686-ook-na-aanslagen-brussel-is-een-europese-cia-nog-ver-weg> [in Dutch]



THE CURRENT EU INTELLIGENCE STRUCTURES ARE FLAWED, AND THE INTELLIGENCE SHARING IS SELECTIVE

agency (BND)⁴¹, as well as several member states.

KEY POLICY RISKS TO THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

Rising populism and disinformation pose a significant risk for trust in the functioning of the current European institutions. There are many anti-EU narratives, claiming that the European Union is weak, paralyzed by conflicts, and unable to address crises⁴², that it is without democratic legitimacy, or that it is even totalitarian⁴³.

Disinformation is connected with the erosion of Enlightenment values. Post-truth narratives and alternative fact approaches

⁴¹ EUobserver (2017) *German Spy Chiefs Say 'No' to EU Intelligence Service*. Available [online]: <https://euobserver.com/justice/139311>

⁴² Greene, S. et al. (2021) *Mapping Fake News and Disinformation in the Western Balkans and Identifying Ways to Effectively Counter Them*. Available [online]: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/653621/EXPO_STU\(2020\)653621_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/653621/EXPO_STU(2020)653621_EN.pdf)

⁴³ Hinšt, D. (2021) "Disinformation as Geopolitical Risk for Transatlantic Institutions", [in]: *International Studies*, Vol. XXI(2). Available [online]: <https://hrcaak.srce.hr/clanak/388303>

encourage *deep state* narratives, undermine the democratic processes, and erode trust in institutions like the EU and NATO.⁴⁴

To tackle this problem, the European Commission has adopted The Action Plan against disinformation (2018) and the European Democracy Action Plan (2020). Its aim is to counter disinformation and defend the stability of democratic institutions by focusing on democratic civic education, European values, critical thinking, and media literacy⁴⁵. It will be important to evaluate the implementation of these two key documents, especially with regard to specific member state's policies.

Detection and countering populist disinformation can strengthen the resilience of institutions, develop the civil society sector, and increase market opportunities for private intelligence services, researchers, policy analysts, digital marketers, and other actors⁴⁶. Despite the increasing domination of artificial intelligence, human intelligence will strengthen its competitiveness with regard to critical thinking, fact-based public policy process, and civic virtues⁴⁷. Without significant effort in this area, it will be extremely difficult to expect a further

European integration process, since obstacles and resistances will be even larger.

⁴⁴ Hayden, M. (2019) *The Assault on Intelligence. American National Security in an Age of Lies*, New York: Penguin Books.

⁴⁵ European Commission (2018) "Action Plan Against Disinformation", [in]: *JOIN* Vol. 36. Available [online]: https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/action_plan_against_disinformation.pdf; European Commission (2020) *European Democracy Action Plan*, COM(2020) 790. Available [online]: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0790&from=EN>

⁴⁶ Hinšt, D. (2020) "Populist Conspiracy Narratives and Other Forms of Disinformation in Croatia", [in]: *4liberty.eu* Review, No. 13, pp. 134-148. Available [online]: <http://4liberty.eu/review-13-populist-conspiracy-narratives-and-other-forms-of-disinformation-in-croatia/>

CONCLUSIONS

Building the United States of Europe would not be an easy feat, despite the popularity of the idea that goes back to the U.S. Founding Fathers. Europeans still fear that federalism will undermine national identities and increase centralized bureaucracy. Contrary to these misconceptions, federalism can support a more efficient and limited government, as well as strong national and other identities together with a common European identity.

European identity requires a political culture based on strong civic virtues, civic education for democracy, and high social trust, as the U.S. federalist experience testifies. In order to move toward federalism, the EU would need basic security institutions – starting with the central intelligence agency. This is especially important due to a rising risk of Russian and Chinese authoritarian influences, Russian aggressive policy and terrorist threats.



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