



HOW TO CITE:

Sotiroski, L. (2023). Europe as a peace project: specifics, achievements, challenges and perspective of the European Union. *Jurídicas*, 20(2), 54-67.  
<https://doi.org/10.17151/jurid.2023.20.2.4>

Received on October 20, 2022  
Approved on March 03, 2023

# Europe as a peace project: specifics, achievements, challenges and perspective of the European Union

LJUPCHO SOTIROSKI\* |

## ABSTRACT

The study of the specific features of the European Union and its future prospects regarding its development and existence is particularly relevant in light of current events such as the coronavirus pandemic and the Russian-Ukrainian war, which pose significant challenges for the normal functioning of the European Union. This article aims to find out, analyze and reveal the history of the formation of the European Union, the challenges it has faced, and its prospects for further development and improvement as a unique association of European countries. The main methods employed in this study include: systematic analysis, historical research, forecasting. The findings provide insights into the origins and subsequent formation of the European Union, as well as the functioning of its institutions. The article also examines various challenges that accompanied the development of the European Union and how it addresses them, with particular focus on the withdrawal of Great Britain, the coronavirus pandemic, the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian conflict,

and anticipated energy and inflation crises. Additionally, the article discusses prospective scenarios for the further development of the European Union in light of contemporary challenges. In particular, given a historical analysis of the functioning of the European Union, the study proposes potential paths for the Union's continued existence. The findings contribute to further research in relevant fields such as history, sociology, and law, serving as a valuable reference material for exploring the peculiarities of the European Union.

**KEYWORDS:** European state unification, pandemic, Brexit, Russian-Ukrainian war, development scenarios.

---

\* Doctor of Law (EU law and International law). International University Europa Prima, North Macedonia, Skopje. E-mail: [sotiroski\\_l@univ-tech.org.pl](mailto:sotiroski_l@univ-tech.org.pl). [Google Scholar](#). ORCID: 000-0002-8516-7509



## **Europa como proyecto de paz: especificidades, logros, retos y perspectivas de la Unión Europea**

### **RESUMEN**

El estudio de las características específicas de la Unión Europea y de las perspectivas futuras de su desarrollo y existencia es especialmente pertinente en estos momentos, con el trasfondo de acontecimientos como la pandemia causada por la infección del coronavirus, así como la guerra ruso-ucraniana, que suponen retos importantes para el funcionamiento normal de la Unión Europea. El propósito del artículo era averiguar, analizar y revelar la historia de la formación de la Unión Europea, los retos a los que se enfrentó la UE durante su existencia, así como las perspectivas de su futura existencia y mejora como asociación única de países europeos. Los principales métodos que se utilizaron en el trabajo son los siguientes: sistemático, método de investigación histórica, método de previsión. Los resultados permitieron formarse una idea sobre la historia del origen y posterior formación de la Unión Europea, las peculiaridades del funcionamiento de las instituciones europeas. El artículo también puso de relieve una serie de retos que acompañaron el desarrollo de la Unión Europea y cómo la UE luchó con sus soluciones, en particular, se prestó atención sobre todo a tres principales: la retirada de Gran Bretaña de la UE, la pandemia causada por la infección del coronavirus, y también la guerra ruso-ucraniana en curso, las crisis energética e inflacionaria previstas y por venir. Un lugar especial en los resultados del artículo lo ocupa la puesta de relieve de las perspectivas de desarrollo ulterior de la Unión Europea en el contexto de los problemas modernos a los que se enfrenta la Unión Europea. En particular, a partir de un análisis histórico del funcionamiento de la Unión Europea, se proponen las principales hipótesis sobre las formas de existencia ulterior de la Unión de países europeos. Los resultados del trabajo pueden ser utilizados en posteriores investigaciones

sobre temas relevantes por historiadores, sociólogos y juristas como material de referencia para investigar las peculiaridades de la Unión Europea.

**Palabras claves:** unificación de los estados europeos, pandemia, Brexit, guerra ruso-ucraniana, escenarios de desarrollo.

## I. Introduction

The necessity of consolidating efforts for the restoration and normal functioning of European society became one of the main factors that led to the establishment of the European Union. The purpose of this research work is to delve into the main historical aspects regarding the formation of the European Union, highlight its distinctive features, and outline prospects for its continued existence. To find out in more detail these research objectives, it is necessary to review the most interesting scientific studies on the subject.

Bulmer and Lequesne (2020) consider that the basis of the functioning of the European Union is underpinned by the unique nature of its relationship with the member states, characterized by intergovernmental, institutional and management dimensions. They also claim that comprehending the meaning of the EU as a union cannot exclude understanding its internal political foundations.

Goniewicz *et al.* (2020) address the COVID-19 pandemic as one of the main challenges faced by Europe. The authors focus on how the European Union reacted to the pandemic, analyzes management decisions made by the institutions and governing bodies of the Union related to organizing and overseeing the healthcare systems of the member states, implementing strategies such as social distancing, isolation, treatment and vaccine development.

In his work, McCormick (2020) offers insights into various aspects of understanding the meaning and essence of the European Union. He highlights the institutional autonomy and emphasizes that crucial regarding its internal and external policies are reached through negotiations and agreements between member state governments. Additionally, McCormick draws parallels between the European Union and other regional blocs and associations, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, underscoring the European Union's unique character resulting from a convergence of circumstances. He notes that certain features inherent in the EU functioning mechanism deviate from those of other ordinary states and proposes formulating the concept of the EU considering both federalist and confederate principles.

The authors Cini and Pérez-Solórzano Borragán (2022) emphasize the historical aspects regarding the emergence of the European Union. They highlight the primary motive behind the establishment of the EU as the imperative to uphold peace in the region, which is its initial desire. Additionally, they underscore the repositioning of Europe within the global order and the need to preserve the European nation-states from decline by fostering collaborative efforts for post-war economic recovery across the continent.

British author Hodson *et al.* (2022) assert that the key factor for the successful development and functioning of the European Union is the uniqueness of its institutional structure, which differs from all existing institutional bodies of other international organizations. However, they also contend that despite the dynamic evolution of EU institutions since their inception, there remains a democratic deficit.

Engaging with the aforementioned works enhances our comprehension of the essence of the supranational entity—the European Union—. It enables us to explore the challenges facing such an entity from diverse perspectives, considering the relevance and urgency of their solution.

## **2. Materials and methods**

The research employed various methods of scientific inquiry, with particular emphasis on the historical method. This approach facilitated a retrospective examination on the key stages in the formation of the European Union, tracking its evolution and functioning over time, including its achievements and the significant challenges it encountered. Additionally, the systematic method of scientific inquiry was employed to analyze the constituent institutions of the European Union individually and assess their collective impact on the mechanism of the European union. Furthermore, the forecasting method was utilized to project potential scenarios and forms of future development and existence of the European Union, drawing on data obtained from historical and systematic analyses.

The research work was conducted in three main stages. The first stage involved elucidating the ideological origins of the European Union, its main prerequisites, the chronology of its establishment and subsequent development. European law analysis based on foundational EU documents was also undertaken during this stage, focusing on defining features, uniqueness, specificity, and values that underpin the functioning of the European Union. Additionally, attention was given to the specific operations of the key EU institutions and the challenges encountered throughout the existence of the European Union. Administrative decisions made by the European Union to address these problems were also outlined.

In the second stage of research, considerations regarding the future position of the European Union as an interstate and supranational entity were explored.

Various prospects for its continued functioning and potential attraction of new members, were highlighted. Specifically, this stage involved proposing main scenarios for the future development of the European Union, influenced by both internal and external factors. Key issues addresses included the fate of European values, the state of European integration, potential scenarios for European Union expansion or contraction, and the maintenance or erosion of EU values in Europe.

At the conclusion of the third stage of the study, the analysis of various works of scholars and authors on the relevant topic was conducted, particularly focusing on the legal nature of the European Union, its features, the major challenges it has faced throughout its existence, as well as opinions on the future of European unification and the potential forms of its existence influenced by various challenges that may arise during the functioning of the EU. Through analyzing and comparing these perspectives with the findings of this research, a conclusion was formulated. The final stage of the study also includes recommendations for further topics related to the subject matter of the research.

### **3. Results**

These achievement of peace and sustainable development in Europe became feasible only after countries recognized the significance and power of the union. It is noteworthy that the idea of unifying European countries can be traced back to antiquity, but it gained significant momentum for improvement and further development in the 19th and 20th centuries. Notable ideological figures who inspired a united Europe include Immanuel Kant, French writer Victor Hugo, political figure and Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and Charles de Gaulle (Rhinard, 2019). Their projects aimed to eliminate the causes of war in Europe, secure long-term peace, overcome political fragmentation, and ensure post-war recovery and economic prosperity. Additionally, one of the primary goals of the association was to distance itself from communist influence in European countries following the advent of the socialist regime. The end of the Second World War marked the beginning of an active and modern stage of European integration. In the aftermath of destruction and economic decline, European countries recognized the need to consolidate efforts and resources for post-war reconstruction and to restore the pre-war status of Europe.

On May 9, 1950, R. Schuman proposed establishing a common market for coal and steel products between France, the Federal Republic of Germany, and other European countries (Mhatre *et al.*, 2021). A year later, on April 18, the Treaty of Paris was signed, which established the European Coal and Steel Community, composed of Germany, France, Luxembourg, Belgium, Italy, and the Netherlands (Kinross *et al.*, 2020). Subsequently, in 1952, these countries signed the Treaty on the Establishment of the European Defense Community (Johansson-Nogués *et al.*, 2019).

Another milestone in European integration was the signing of the Treaty of Rome in 1957, which established two communities: the European Atomic Energy Community and the European Economic Community (Ladrech, 2022). In the same year, the main executive bodies of the ECSC, Euratom and the EU merged. This merger led to the creation and development of a specific institutional structure, consisting of the European Commission, the Council of the European Communities, the European Parliament, the Court of the European Communities, and the European Council, founded in 1974 (Ladrech, 2022). By 1968-1969, the major stages of European integration were accomplished, including the establishment of a free trade zone, a customs union, and the formation of a common market.

The subsequent tasks of European integration were outlined by the Single European Act of 1986, which paved the way for the creation of a single internal market, a common policy across various social and economic spheres, and the evolution of the European Union into both an economic and political institution (Schimmelfennig, 2021). These concepts were further advanced and established in the Treaty on the European Union in Maastricht, which took effect on November 1, 1993 (Bellier and Wilson, 2000). This Treaty established three primary pillars upon which the EU rests: European communities, the conduct of joint foreign and security policy, and cooperation in internal affairs and justice. The subsequent activities of the EU focused on expanding the Union, creating the Economic and Monetary Union, establishing the Schengen zone, and introducing a single currency —important initiatives that shaped the European as we know it today—.

The uniqueness of the European Union stems from two key aspects: its institutions and the values that drive the EU's actions. The main institutional bodies include the European Parliament, which functions as the legislative authority and exercises control over the budget and other EU institutions; the European Commission, which serves as the executive body, proposing legislation proposals and implementing policies for European unification, as well as managing the budget and approving international agreements; and the European Central Bank, which manages monetary policy for the eurozone and strives to maintain price stability within the eurozone, etc. (Beltrán-Esteve *et al.*, 2019).

The second aspect that distinguishes the EU is its values, which serve as the foundation for the expansion policies, reforms, and both internal and external of the union. Six main values stand out (Zeitlin *et al.*, 2019):

1. Respect for human dignity.
2. Freedom: Ensuring individuals can make conscious choices independently, free from undue influence.

3. Democracy: Providing citizens with the ability to objectively evaluate government actions, express their opinions, and have their voices considered in decision-making.
4. Equality: Preventing discriminatory treatment based on characteristics such as race, gender, orientation, and others.
5. Rule of law: Ensuring all state authorities abide by laws and regulations without exceptions.
6. Respect for human rights: Acknowledging each person's uniqueness, their role in society, and their equal rights.

These values form the framework of the European Union and underpin its unification policies, distinguishing it from any other entities.

It is important to acknowledge that the functioning of the European Union brings not only benefits such as a free trade area and free movement but also certain challenges. Some of the most significant challenges in the history of the European Union include the United Kingdom withdrawal from the EU, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Russian-Ukrainian war (Keukeleire and Delreux, 2022).

The issue of the United Kingdom's exit from the EU, known as "Brexit," has been repeatedly raised by British parties, politicians, and the public. The process was accompanied by the slogan "Return power from Brussels to Britain" (Amato *et al.*, 2019). The primary reasons for Brexit include the increasing role of the supranational association in the internal politics of the UK, which the government found unsatisfactory. A 2016 referendum on EU membership resulted in a majority of about 52% voting to leave the Union, disagreeing with the policies of the EU (Amato *et al.*, 2019). The exit was finalized in 2020, which posed a significant challenge for the European Union due to its unprecedented nature and strong economic and other ties that existed between the EU and the UK. Notably, the major global implications of the UK's exit from the EU include the weakening of the EU's position on the world stage and the revision of European-American relations (Leruth *et al.*, 2019). This situation also affected the image of the European Union, but the EU remained committed to its core principles of democracy and equality, emphasizing the freedom of member states to determine their foreign policy.

Another major challenge for the EU member states was the COVID-19 pandemic (Rudan, 2020). During the early waves of the pandemic, EU member states were not entirely coordinated in their responses, with some reducing medical equipment exports and importing large quantities from foreign markets (Rudan, 2020). Despite initial disarray among individual governments, European institutions demonstrated

solidarity and readiness address the challenges of the pandemic. They proposed crisis management approaches, developed economic aid plans for countries affected by the pandemic, and relaxed financial rules to accommodate difficult conditions (Rudan, 2020). The resilience of the EU authorities managed to reunite the individual governments of member states and encourage cooperation, including accepting other citizens for treatment and providing humanitarian and medical aid. Key decisions of the European Union such as organizing the purchase of protective equipment, closing the EU's external borders, transitioning to distance education, implementing social distancing, and reducing large-scale events to minimize crowding, were crucial (Lynggaard, 2019). Although the impact of the pandemic on the EU and global economy was sharply negative, the unity of European states, especially through the European recovery program called Next Generation EU, demonstrated that the European Union upholds its values and is prepared to face challenges (Léonard and Kaunert, 2019).

The next significant challenge for the European Union is a full-scale war between Russia and Ukraine. The resolution of this conflict and the nature of the EU's involvement will play a crucial role in shaping the prospects of the European Union. On February 24, 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of the sovereign and independent state of Ukraine (Keukeleire and Delreux, 2022). Shortly after the invasion, the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy signed an application expressing Ukraine's desire for EU membership. By March 1, the European Parliament had recommended granting Ukraine official candidate status for UE membership (Hix and Høyland, 2022). During the spring of 2022, Ukraine completed a questionnaire, and after evaluation, the European Commission recommended to the European Council that Ukraine be granted candidate status, which occurred on June 23. Ukrainian aims to start accession negotiations in early 2023, with accession potentially feasible by 2029 (Hix and Høyland, 2022).

A significant challenge for the European Union is the need to reorient the import its energy imports due to the bloc's dependence on Russian fuel supplies. Additionally, the EU must continue support Ukraine in its fight against the aggressor country, including through sanctions against Russia and aiding Ukraine's path to EU membership. In terms of sanctions, the EU has enacted several packages of restrictions on Russia since the start of the full-scale war, such as closing Russia's access to the EU capital markets, prohibiting loans to the Russian government and banks, a banning trust services for wealthy Russians. (Cini and Pérez-Solórzano Borragán, 2022). The EU has also disconnected key Russian banks from the SWIFT system, banned investments in Russian-origin projects, and prohibited providing Russia with euro banknotes, among other measures (Cini and Pérez-Solórzano Borragán, 2022).



The EU's achievements over its history include the abolition of death penalty, the promotion of human rights, non-discrimination and the fight against racism, the protection and promotion of freedom of speech, gender equality, the protection of children's rights, cultural diversity, education on human rights and democracy, improvements in medicine and health care, and the promotion of solidarity and cooperation among countries. As a result, the European Union has become a safe haven for those within its territory (Brodny *et al.*, 2021).

The EU's unwavering support for Ukraine is a testament of its commitment to its foundational values. The EU's firm stance against the aggressor country demonstrates its willingness to collaborate with Ukraine, which aims to join the European community. Therefore, the question remains: what are the future and prospects of the European Union amid these crisis phenomena and war?

This question can be addressed by exploring several possible scenarios for the further development of the European Union:

1. Focus on increasing EU military security: The European Union may invest more resources in the development of its military capabilities to maintain its position in the global order (Wallace *et al.*, 2020). This could include creating a joint EU army of a size comparable to the largest world armies, such as those of the United States of America and China. Facilitating dialogue with world leaders to ensure partnership and security would also be a key aspect.

2. Mediation policy: The EU may maintain a neutral stance by acting as a mediator in resolving conflicts between states. This approach has been observed in the context of the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war, with some EU member states attempting to resolve the conflict through negotiations.

3. Disintegration of the European Union: The EU could face the risk of disintegration if its foundational principles lose value. In such a scenario, only a few enduring alliances might remain, while most countries pursue independence and separation from external influence. Lack of cooperation between member states on foreign policy, defense, security, and justice could weaken Europe's global position, allowing other powers like the United States, Russia, and China to play a more significant role.

4. The European Union: Expansion or stability. Ukraine is actively seeking to join the EU, sharing its values with member states. However, President Macron of France suggests the EU needs time to recover and reform, advocating for a pause in expansion (Wurzel *et al.*, 2020). Conversely, a continued policy of not accepting new members may erode trust in the EU and threaten its image and position in the world as an association open to all, the Union will gradually collapse from the outside, and this, in turn, will lead to destruction from within.

5. European values: policy of non-imposition. The six foundational principles align with those of most democratic countries. One possible scenarios for the further development of the EU is its decision not to impose its policy methods based on these values on its sovereign states. Recognizing that these principles cannot always be seamlessly integrated into other cultures, the EU may adopt a more flexible approach in its dialogue with individual states.

#### 4. Discussion

In order to enhance the depth and comprehensiveness of the conclusion drawn from the scientific research, it is advisable to analyze the findings of other scholars and researchers. For instance, Hix and Høyland (2022) underscore the distinctive legal nature of the European Union, emphasizing the voluntary integration among European countries around fundamental values and principles. Hix and Høyland (2022) also trace the current state of the European Union dates back to the 1950s, originating with the common market of the steel and coal industries. Additionally, they highlight challenges such as migration policy and the Russian-Ukrainian war.

It is noteworthy that the perspectives of American author largely align with the findings obtained, particularly concerning the uniqueness of the EU. Considering the view of the researcher on migration as a challenge for the EU, it is pertinent to mention that amidst the Russian-Ukrainian war, an increasing number of Ukrainians, affected the armed aggression by Russia, are seeking refuge in European countries (Geddes *et al.*, 2020). The issue of migration from the Middle East and North Africa due to the food crisis is also relevant.

Wallace *et al.* (2020) observe that during the latter half of the 2010s, the EU faced several challenges from the global world system, including Brexit and differing views among member states regarding US foreign policy under president Trump, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Russian-Ukrainian war Wallace *et al.* (2020) also note that although these challenges impact solidarity, integration, and stability of European values, the EU demonstrated resilience in overcoming them.

Indeed, despite external challenges, such as Brexit (Leruth *et al.*, 2019) or the pandemic (Rudan, 2020), the EU devoted considerable efforts to their swift and effective resolution. In response to the pandemic, the EU demonstrated its ability to make important administrative decisions, such as closing the external borders, implementing distancing measures, indemnifying the countries most affected by the pandemic, etc. Regarding the Russian-Ukrainian war, the EU supported Ukraine by imposing sanctions on the aggressor country and advocating for its accession to the EU. However, the issue of the EU's energy dependence on Russian fuel and the necessity to find alternative suppliers, etc., remain relevant.

Chalmers *et al.* (2019) highlight certain aspects contributing to the successful functioning and development of the EU, including common borders, fostering tourism development, attracting investments, and facilitating trade. They also discuss historical reasons behind the decision of Great Britain to leave the European Union, quoting former Prime Minister Tony Blair on the reluctance of the country to accept agreements aimed at altering UK legislation. The authors stress the need for the EU to revise its security and foreign policy for sustainable functioning.

It is worth agreeing with the author's conclusions and incorporating them into the findings. Additionally, the thesis concerning the dissatisfaction with Britain's EU membership and European policy by the British themselves should be noted (Tagliapietra *et al.*, 2019; Bórawski *et al.*, 2019). This dissatisfaction is demonstrated by the results of the Brexit referendum, in which about 52% of voters supported leaving the EU. Prospects and future development scenarios for the EU will largely depend on external factors and certain demands.

Keukeleire and Delreux (2022) examine the nature and features of the European Union as an example of conducting foreign policy. In matters of trade, for instance, the EU possesses exclusive powers. The authors emphasize that member states prioritize their internal needs when conducting foreign policy and do not seek to replace this approach with a common or unified foreign policy strategy. This is closely related to the sovereignty and independence of each country (Keukeleire and Delreux, 2022).

It is appropriate to agree with the findings of the author and take them into account. Indeed, member states maintain their independence in foreign policy matters, as exemplified by the Russian-Ukrainian war. While the EU's support remains resolute in upholding Ukraine's sovereignty, the policies of some member states reveal a hesitancy to confront energy dependence on Russia or engage in the implementation of sanctions.

Buonanno and Nugent (2020) highlight the EU's climate policy, pointing out several noteworthy aspects. For instance, the EU's vehicle emissions policy is centralized, while climate change goals and objectives are jointly determined by member states. According to the authors, climate improvement policy is a major achievement that drives reforms in related areas such as agriculture, industry, transport, and energy efficiency. Buonanno and Nugent (2020) also mention that climate change policies promote "green technologies," involving farming methods that focus on minimal resource consumption and maximum efficiency.

It is appropriate to agree with the reasoning of the authors and integrate their insights into the research. Thus, the EU's efforts to combat climate change are among its significant achievements, alongside initiatives to establish gender equality, guarantee rights and freedoms, and more. (Bellier and Wilson, 2000).

Geddes *et al.* (2020) stress that the treatment of migrants as asylum seekers is “undesirable,” whereas labor migration is regulated at the national level and is the responsibility of each individual state, as is the integration of these individuals into the European space. Geddes *et al.* (2020) also note that since 2015, passport-free travel border controls have been significantly strengthened to manage migration flows, including constructing fences and other barriers.

It is appropriate to partially agree with the author’s conclusions and add the current migration policy of the European Union demonstrates openness and readiness to receive “asylum seekers.” This is largely due to the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war, which has driven many Ukrainians to seek safer living conditions. Additionally, while the asylum policy is a fundamental aspect of the European Union, member states independently decide the forms and manners in which asylum is granted.

The European Union must be prepared for new challenges that may be related both to the prospects for the continued existence of the union and to immediate threats such as securing alternative fuel suppliers, implementing stricter sanctions, enhancing security policies, and preparing for migration waves caused by food crisis, among other potential challenges.

## 5. Conclusions

The research work provided a deeper understanding of the legal nature of the European Union. The EU’s origin as a means of establishing and maintaining peace in Europe is particularly important in light of the research subject. The unification of European countries facilitated collaboration for more effective post-war recovery and economic stabilization.

The analysis revealed the main features of the European Union, including its institutional structure, which imparts a unique and supranational quality, and the foundational values uniting member states, such as respect for human rights, dignity, the rule of law, democracy, and the promotion of youth policy.

Furthermore, this work examined the significant challenges the EU has faced during its existence, including Brexit, the COVID-19 pandemic, migration, and the Russian-Ukrainian war. Key administrative decisions in response to Russia’s actions in Ukraine including unwavering support for Ukrainian sovereignty, imposing sanctions on the aggressor, and providing asylum for displaced Ukrainians affected by Russian aggression.

The analysis of various scholars’ works identified the EU’s primary achievements during its tenure, such as the establishment of equality and rights protection, the introduction of free trade and free movement zones, gender equality and promotion, the advancement of democracy, and combating climate change.

Particularly noteworthy is the importance of the EU's comprehensive foreign and security policy, aimed at preventing new or existing threats and managing regional and critical points in the global geographic area. Looking to the future, this work highlighted potential scenarios for the EU's continued development, including focusing on increasing military security, mediation policy, disintegration of the European Union, expansion or stability, European values and the policy of non-imposition, and managing energy and economic crises.

Further research on the topic should focus on the expansion of the European Union as a means of consolidating its dominant position, the EU's role in resolving the Russian-Ukrainian war, and its response to migration processes related to the ongoing conflict. These are unprecedented challenges with serious implications for global order, peace and stability. Despite these challenges, there is optimism that the EU will persist and continue to serve as a model of great and deep unification as a successful example of democratic values in the modern world.

### **Bibliographical references**

- Amato, G., Moavero-Milanesi, E., Pasquino, G., & Reichlin, L. (Eds.). (2019). *The history of the European union: Constructing utopia*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Bellier, I. & Wilson, T.M. (Eds.). (2020). *An anthropology of the European Union: building, imagining and experiencing the new Europe*. Routledge.
- Beltrán-Esteve, M., Giménez, V., & Picazo-Tadeo, A. J. (2019). Environmental productivity in the European Union: A global Luenberger-metafrontier approach. *Science of The Total Environment*, 692, 136-146. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2019.07.182>
- Bórawski, P., Wyszomierski, R., Będycka-Bórawska, A., Mickiewicz, B., Kalinowska, B., Dunn, J. W., & Rokicki, T. (2022). Development of renewable energy sources in the European Union in the context of sustainable development policy. *Energies*, 15(4), 1545. <https://doi.org/10.3390/en15041545>
- Brodny, J., Tutak, M., & Bindzár, P. (2021). Assessing the level of renewable energy development in the European Union member states. A 10-year perspective. *Energies*, 14(13), 3765. <https://doi.org/10.3390/en14133765>
- Bulmer, S. & Lequesne, C. (2020). The European Union and its member states: An overview. In S. Bulmer & C. Lequesne (Eds.), *The member states of the European Union* (pp. 1-24). Oxford University Press.
- Buonanno, L. & Nugent, N. (2020). *Policies and policy processes of the European Union*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Chalmers, D., Davies, G., & Monti, G. (2019). *European Union Law: Text and materials* (4a ed.). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108654173>
- Cini, M. & Pérez-Solórzano Borrágán, N. (Eds.). (2022). *European union politics*. Oxford University Press.
- Geddes, A. P., Hadj Abdou, L., & Brumat, L. (2020). *Migration and mobility in the European Union* (2nd edition). Red globe press.
- Goniewicz, K., Khorrám-Manesh, A., Hertelendy, A. J., Goniewicz, M., Naylor, K., & Burkle, F. M. (2020). Current response and management decisions of the European Union to the COVID-19 outbreak: A review. *Sustainability*, 12(9), 3838. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12093838>
- Hix, S. & Høyland, B. (2022). *The political system of the European Union*. Bloomsbury Publishing House.

- Hodson, D., Puetter, U., Peterson, J., & Saurugger, S. (2022). *The institutions of the European Union*. Oxford University Press.
- Johansson-Nogués, E., Vlaskamp, M. C., & Barbé, E. (2019). *European union contested: Foreign policy in a new global context*. Springer International Publishing.
- Keukeleire, S. & Delreux, T. (2022). *The foreign policy of the European Union*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Kinross, P., Suetens, C., Dias, J. G., Alexakis, L., Wijermans, A., Colzani, E., Monnet, D. L., & European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) Public Health Emergency Team. (2020). Rapidly increasing cumulative incidence of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in the European union/european economic area and the United Kingdom, 1 January to 15 March 2020. *Eurosurveillance*, 25(11). <https://doi.org/10.2807/1560-7917.ES.2020.25.11.2000285>
- Ladrech, R. (2022). *Social democracy and the challenge of European Union*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Léonard, S., & Kaunert, C. (2019). *Refugees, security and the European Union*. Routledge.
- Leruth, B., Gänzle, S., & Trondal, J. (2019). Exploring differentiated disintegration in a post brexit European union. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, 57(5), 1013-1030. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12869>
- Lynggaard, K. (2019). *Discourse analysis and European Union politics*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- McCormick, J. (2020). *European Union Politics*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Mhatre, P., Panchal, R., Singh, A., & Bibyan, S. (2021). A systematic literature review on the circular economy initiatives in the European Union. *Sustainable Production and Consumption*, 26, 187-202. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.spc.2020.09.008>
- Rhinard, M. (2019). The crisisification of policy-making in the European union. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, 57(3), 616-633. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12838>
- Rudan, I. (2020). A cascade of causes that led to the COVID-19 tragedy in Italy and in other European Union countries. *Journal of Global Health*, 10(1), 12. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7125421/>
- Schimmelfennig, F. (2021). Rebordering Europe: External boundaries and integration in the European Union. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 28(3), 311-330. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2021.1881589>
- Tagliapietra, S., Zachmann, G., Edenhofer, O., Glachant, J.M., Linares, P., & Loeschel, A. (2019). The European union energy transition: Key priorities for the next five years. *Energy Policy*, 132, 950-954. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.enpol.2019.06.060>
- Wallace, H., Pollack, M. A., Roederer-Rynning, C., & Young, A. R. (Eds.). (2020). *Policy-making in the European Union*. (Eighth edition). Oxford University Press.
- Wurzel, R. K. W., Liefferink, D., & Di Lullo, M. (2019). The European council, the council, and the member states: Changing environmental leadership dynamics in the European union. *Environmental Politics*, 28(2), 248-270. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09644016.2019.1549783>
- Zeitlin, J., Nicoli, F., & Laffan, B. (2019). Introduction: The European Union beyond the polycrisis? Integration and politicization in an age of shifting cleavages. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 26(7), 963-976. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2019.1619803>