

THE WHITE PAPER ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE. THIRD SCENARIO

Irina-Ana Drobot

Lecturer, PhD, Technical Constructions University, București

Abstract: This article is a position paper arguing in favour of the plausibility of the third scenario included in the White Paper on the Future of Europe. As the states within the European Union are different it is natural to assume that they may wish to take a different course of action regarding various domains where they are stronger than others. The issue remaining is that of allowing, next to the common interests, specific interests that bring advantages to every country taken separately function of their specificity.

Keywords: EU, policy, security, budget, economy.

The White Paper on the Future of Europe is a document created by European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker in March 2017 on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Treaties of Rome, which presents five possible scenarios which the EU could follow by 2025. The following areas are considered: social, globalization and opportunities, economic and monetary union, European defense and EU finances. The scenarios are: carrying on; nothing but the single market; those who want more do more; doing less more efficiently; doing much more together.

The third scenario supports the possibility of collaboration between those EU Member States that want to achieve more than others in some areas. States wishing to focus on a particular area and to work together can form "coalitions of the willing" in the areas of defense, internal security, taxation and social issues. Meanwhile, the other Member States normally carry out their work.

The third scenario is realistic since the Member States are different from some points of view. The European Union offers possibilities through the creation of common policies, but at the same time different countries have different possibilities to achieve them, as well as different interests. For example, some countries are poorer, they cannot be of the same interest to the migrant, and so the migration policy cannot affect countries equally. At the time of the refugee crisis, in Romania there were opinions that a poor country could not create conditions for refugees such as other richer EU countries. The past of some countries also affects the way EU policies can be implemented, for example in the post-communist countries the environmental policy on air pollution has not worked as fast as in other countries, because industrialization has been promoted during communism. Also, in countries such as Poland and Bulgaria, the implementation of a policy on air pollution is slowed down for economic reasons, as ensuring jobs and running the factories is necessary for a certain level of employment and the functioning of electricity. Some countries may not be as much interested in a security policy, not wanting to develop it more in cooperation with another group of countries, not being as much affected by terrorism as others. For example, in Romania the danger of terrorism is not as great as in France or Germany.

As arguments against the advantage of this scenario, one might say that it would not be undesirable for EU Member States to be differentiated from the point of view of policies, to benefit all countries of the same opportunities and to have the feeling that they are equals. With regard to the EU budget, it is intended to be a way of pooling resources at Union level, and states can achieve far more goals than they could without support. If the EU budget were to focus on achieving more

in some areas for some states, perhaps at some point some less developed countries could benefit from less. There is a regional policy that invests in the possibility for less developed areas to benefit from economic growth and improving the quality of citizens' lives. However, the budget decided at EU level, annually, represents only about 1% of the Member States' economy each year. Thus, the budget may still be sufficient, especially as in budget-related scenario three, it is said that some states would use additional budgets made available for areas where they would like to do more. It could also be said that by making some countries more in the field of certain policies, they would be favored over others. But if some states want to do more in the field of security and the Schengen area, as well as migration, and if there are countries where there really is a danger of violence and terrorism, then the citizens of other states that do not have these issues would benefit from increased safety when traveling, finding a job, immigration or tourism. In addition, some countries may be disadvantaged by others when the EU allocates a budget for the development and implementation of policies if they do not adapt to the situation of those countries on the basis of weaknesses. However, there is a presentation of the results of the implementation of EU policies in the Member States, periodically, and attention to the situation of each country is drawn. For example, there is a study on the application of environmental policy to different EU countries, with some of them having higher pollution levels, and not respecting the standards imposed at European level. Such reports could be used to take action and remedy the situation in countries that should do more in this domain and get a larger budget or offer it. Other states may already be able to do more in the field of defense, and other countries that do not have the same opportunities could benefit from this if cooperation between states in some areas would then be created in order to be able to help each other. However, this would create disparities between states if they go too far in this direction, a matter for which regional policy solutions are being sought, trying to bring the weaker developed states to the same level as other ones that meet EU standards.

There are examples where there have been countries collaborating on groups wishing to do more in some areas, such as the Schengen area, the euro and education. These decisions have had positive consequences, motivating other states to reach the same standards to join them. Through the Schengen area, through a Europe without frontiers, economic benefits are brought to life for everyday life, and it is a common benefit. The euro has created the possibility of European integration among certain independent states. Like the single market, the changeover to the euro meant the necessary cooperation for employment policy and the improvement of living standards. In the field of education, cooperation is present again because the EU is contributing to improving the quality of education and by encouraging cooperation between states by providing opportunities for students to complete their education, and to gain experience abroad. In addition, there are policies that influence other states, whether or not they have the opportunity to do more: environmental and pollution prevention policies are of benefit to the entire Europe. What happens to the environment can influence other countries beyond the borders of those with pollution problems.

Scenario three can give Member States the chance to preserve their specificity, in that they can go for greater achievements in some areas that traditionally have better outcomes than others. For example, some states can be renowned in the field of engineering, construction, transport, others in the field of security or trade, education, etc. Scenario three can offer them the opportunity to continue to improve and also to collaborate with other states.

The EU offers policies to achieve co-operation between states to help others raise their levels in areas such as education, jobs, environmental policies, etc. In the White Paper, in the possible scenarios sections, there are examples of basic policies and their impact, such as single market and trade, Economic and Monetary Union, Schengen, migration and security, foreign and defense policy, the EU budget, as well as the ability to achieve results. There are policies that involve cooperation, such as the single market, the euro, the Schengen area, but others that could allow Member States that have the opportunity and wish to do more in certain areas to be able to have this opportunity. There are areas like education where some states may have more to offer, and

other countries' students can benefit from experience. There are, of course, areas where policies should be developed so that any state can meet certain standards of comfort and safety, such as defense, security, environmental policies, etc. Also, the development of the Single Market can only be achieved through the contribution of each and every Member State. Scenario three is a possible evolution of the European Union by the fact that there are similar examples in which some countries have grouped themselves for this purpose in the past and by the fact that each Member State can have greater development opportunities in certain areas. This does not mean competition among states, but cooperation, and it is for the benefit of other states that could exchange experience or get help. An example would be the White Paper, where employees from different states would have similar rights, including social protection, even if they are of different nations and different places of residence.

Scenario three is realistic in terms of elite theories: it is normal for some countries, as certain politicians take action to consider their own agendas, to promote the interests of their elites. Even if they are members of the EU, some Member States will consider their own interests besides the common ones, by pursuing the development of certain policies in particular areas. At EU level, some states may also have greater policy-related power. The principal-agent theory supports a similar idea, namely that there is an entity or person who makes decisions and moves to actions on behalf of another entity or person. As a result, there is a moral dilemma that agents (decision-makers) can act on behalf of their own interests, which may be contrary to others in whose behalf they have made the decisions. The scenario three is an attempt to decrease this dilemma in that there are common actions and decisions, and those that can be taken by certain groups of countries, those who want to achieve more.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Comisia Europeană(2017) *Cartea Albă privind viitorul Europei. Reflecții și scenarii pentru UE-27 până în 2025*, COM(2017) 2025 din 1 martie, © Uniunea Europeană.
Să înțelegem politicile Uniunii Europene, https://europa.eu/european-union/topics_ro