

Consolidation and crisis: The evolution of the European Union's legal framework in pursuing peace, stability, and unity amidst global challenges

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Abstract. In light of recent events like the coronavirus pandemic and the Russian-Ukrainian war, which pose serious obstacles to the European Union's ability to operate normally, research into the unique characteristics of the EU and future prospects for its growth and survival is especially pertinent. The purpose of the article was to learn about and examine the founding history of the European Union, the difficulties it has experienced throughout its existence, and the opportunities for it to continue to exist and develop as a special alliance of European nations. The main methods that were used in the work are the following: systematic, historical research method, forecasting method. The findings allowed for the construction of an understanding of the EU's past, its subsequent formation, and the peculiarities associated with its institutional structure. The article also highlighted a number of challenges that accompanied the development of the European Union and how the EU struggled with their solutions, in particular, attention was mostly paid to three main ones: the withdrawal of Great Britain from the EU, the pandemic that was caused by the coronavirus infection, and also the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war, expected and forthcoming energy and inflation crises, as well. A special place in the results of the article is the highlighting of the prospects for the further development against the background of modern problems that the European Union is facing. In particular, given a historical analysis of the functioning of the European Union, the main scenarios regarding the forms of further existence of the Union of European countries are proposed. The results of the work can be used in further research on relevant topics by historians, sociologists and lawyers as reference material for researching the peculiarities of the European Union

Keywords: unification of European states; pandemic; Brexit; Russian-Ukrainian war; development scenarios

Introduction

The necessity of consolidating efforts for the restoration and normal functioning of European society became one of the main prerequisites that provided the world with the European Union as a result. The purpose of the research work, in view of the above, is the disclosure of the main historical aspects regarding the founding of the European Union, highlighting a number of specific features inherent in it, as well as outlining the prospects for the further existence of the European Union. In order to find out in more detail and in depth the questions included in the purpose of the work, it is necessary to get acquainted with the most interesting scientific studies on the relevant topic. Thus, in the work of S. Bulmer (2020) there are considerations that the basis of the functioning of the European Union is the specific nature of the relationship between the EU and the member states, which is manifested in three main aspects: intergovernmental, institutional and management. Also, the understanding of the meaning of the EU as a union, according to the author, cannot be considered separately from its internal political foundations.

In the work of the Polish author K. Goniiewicz (2020) there are considerations about the pandemic caused by the coronavirus infection as one of the main challenges faced by Europe. In particular, the author focuses his attention on how the European Union reacted to the pandemic; analyzes the management decisions made by the institutions and governing bodies of the Union, which related, for example, to the organization and control of the medical field of the EU member states, the implementation of strategies regarding the need to implement distancing, isolation, treatment and vaccine development.

Another book, which is worth paying attention to, is the American author J. McCormick (2020), in which he offers several aspects of understanding the meaning and essence of the European Union: the institutions of the Union have some autonomy; decisions that are important for the EU and its internal and external policies are made through negotiations and agreements between governments. One more essential aspect that will help to understand the European Union is

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its inherent similarity with other regional blocs and associations, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, for example. The European Union, in the opinion of the author, is a unique case and the result of the coincidence of a number of circumstances, which excludes the possibility of repeating such a union association. Some features inherent in the EU functioning mechanism are noted by J. McCormick (2020), are tangential to those of other ordinary states. The concept of the EU should be formulated taking into account federalism and confederalism.

The American authors M. Cini and N. Pérez-Solórzano Borragán (2022) single out the historical aspects regarding the emergence of the European Union. The main reason for the establishment of the EU highlighted by the authors is the need to maintain peace in the region, which was the initial desire. It is also worth adding the allocation of a new place for Europe in the world order, as well as the need to preserve the European national state from decline by consolidating the efforts of countries, economic post-war recovery of the countries of the European continent. D. Hodson *et al.* (2022) point out that the main reason 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. D. Hodson *et al.* (2022) also note that, although EU institutions have been dynamically and continuously developing since their formation, however, in the authors' opinion, they lack democracy. The works outlined above and familiarization with them allow to deepen the understanding of the essence of the supranational entity – the European Union, as well as to look at the problems of such an entity from different angles, taking into account the relevance and urgency of their solution.

Materials and methods

The research work was carried out using a number of methods of scientific knowledge, among which it is appropriate to single out the historical method. It made it possible to outline the retrospective on the main stages of the creation of the European Union, to follow its development and functioning over the years, those achievements, as well as the most large-scale challenges that accompanied the development of the EU, etc. It is also expedient to single out the systematic method of scientific knowledge, which made it possible to consider the institutions of the European Union separately as its constituent elements, and how in their integrity they affect the mechanism of the European union. Another method that was used during the research is the forecasting method. With its help and with the use of data obtained as a result of the use of historical and systematic methods, it was possible to assume and characterize some of the probable scenarios and forms of further development and existence of the European Union.

The research was conducted in three main steps. At the first, the question of the ideological origins of the European Union, the main prerequisites, the chronology of its creation and further development was clarified. The research was also conducted using the analysis of European law based on the sources – the founding documents of the European Union. This stage is devoted to the main defining features of the EU, its uniqueness, specificity and values; the issue of the specifics of the work of the most important institutions of the European Union and their main features was also outlined. Attention was also paid to the biggest challenges that accompanied

and accompany the existence of the European Union. At this stage, it was also outlined what administrative decisions were taken by the European Union to solve these problems.

The second stage of scientific research is characterized by the presence of considerations regarding the further position of the European Union as an intergovernmental and supranational entity. A number of prospects for its further functioning, attraction of new members, etc. are highlighted. In particular, at this stage it was proposed to consider the main scenarios of the further development of the European Union, which may be determined by both internal and external factors.

At the end of the third stage of the study, the considerations and work of other scientists and authors on the relevant topic were parsed, in particular, regarding the legal nature of the European Union, its features, the greatest challenges during its existence, as well as opinions regarding the future of European unification and the main forms of such existence under by the influence of these or others' problems that may arise in the process of functioning of the EU. As a result of the analysis of such considerations and their comparison with the results of this work, a conclusion was formulated. The final stage of the research work also contains recommendations for the disclosure of further topics related to the subject of the respective research.

Results

Ensuring peace and sustainable development in Europe became possible only after the countries realized the significance and power of the union. In particular, it is worth noting that the very idea of unifying European countries dates back to antiquity, but significant impetus to the improvement and further development of such visions should be dated to the 19th and 20th centuries. Among the ideological inspirers of united Europe, it is worth noting Immanuel Kant, French writer Victor Hugo, political figure and Prime Minister of Great Britain Winston Churchill, as well as Charles de Gaulle (Rhinard, 2019). Most of the projects that were developed by the above-mentioned figures were aimed at eliminating the prerequisites and causes that caused the war in Europe, as well as ensuring long-term peace, overcoming the fragmentation that prevailed in the internal politics of countries, as well as ensuring post-war recovery and economic well-being; with the advent of the socialist regime, one of the main goals of the association also became the need to distance itself from the communist influence on European countries. It is also appropriate to note that the end of the Second World War should be defined as the beginning of an active and modern stage of European integration. Against the background of destruction, economic decline European countries felt the need to consolidate forces and resources, which had to be directed to post-war reconstruction, as well as to confirm the pre-war status of Europe.

Thus, on May 9, 1950, R. Schuman proposed the creation of a single market for steel and coal products between France, the Federal Republic of Germany and other European countries (Mhatre, 2021). A year later, on April 18, the Treaty of Paris was signed, which created the European Coal and Steel Community, which included Germany, France, Luxembourg, Belgium, Italy and the Netherlands (Kinross, 2020), which already signed the Treaty on the Establishment of the European Defense Community in 1952 (Johansson-Nogués *et al.*, 2020). The next important step in

European integration is the signing of the Treaty of Rome in 1957, which created two communities: the European Atomic Energy Community and the European Economic Community (Ladrech, 2022). Later, in 1957, the main executive bodies of the ECSC, Euratom and the EU merged. Such a merger made it possible to create and further develop a certain institutional structure, which consisted of the following bodies: the European Commission, the Council of the European Communities, the European Parliament, the Court of the European Communities, as well as the European Council, founded in 1974 (Ladrech, 2022). During 1968-1969, the main stages of European integration were completed, in particular, a free trade zone, a customs union, and the formation of a common market were formed.

The further tasks of European integration were determined by the Single European Act of 1986, which provided for the creation of a single internal market, common policy in social, economic and other spheres, and the document revealed the issue of the creation of the European Union not only as an institution of an economic nature, but also of a political nature (Schimmelfennig, 2021). These ideas were developed and outlined in the Treaty on the European Union in Maastricht, which entered into force on November 1, 1993 (Bellier & Wilson, 2020). This Treaty also defined three main “foundations” on which the EU rests: European communities, joint conduct of foreign and security policy, as well as cooperation in the spheres of internal affairs and justice. In the future, the activities of the executive and other EU bodies were aimed at the expansion of the Union, the creation of the Economic and Monetary Union, the introduction of the Schengen zone, the introduction of a single currency and other important actions and decisions that created the European Union that we see now.

The specificity of the European Union lies in two things: its institutions, as well as in the values that are the driving force of the EU's activities. In particular, the main institutional bodies can be considered: the European Parliament, which performs the functions of legislative power, exercises control over the budget and other EU institutions; The European Commission, as an executive body, makes legislative proposals, implements the policy of European unification, and its scope of powers also includes the allocation and disposition of the budget, approval of international agreements; the central bank of the EU is the European Central Bank, which determines the monetary policy of the European zone, and also directs efforts to ensure price stability in eurozone, etc. (Beltrán-Esteve, 2019).

The second aspect of the specificity of the EU is the value, which is the driving force both for the policy of expanding the union and for carrying out reforms, internal and external policy, etc. It is appropriate to highlight six main ones (Zeitlin, 2019):

1. Respect for human dignity.
2. Freedom, that is, the ability of a person to make a conscious choice on his own, without any influence on him.
3. Democracy, which is the capacity of the people to voice their opinions, evaluate government acts objectively, and comprehend that those opinions will be taken into consideration when making decisions about the allocation of power.
4. Equality of people should exclude discriminatory treatment of a person based on one or another characteristic: race, gender, orientation, etc.

5. The rule of law consists in the fact that all state authorities must obey the law, norms and rights without any kind of exceptions.

6. Respect for human rights is recognition of his uniqueness and individuality, awareness of a person's belonging to society, understanding that he has the same rights and taking this into account.

Yes, these values are the framework, the basis of the European Union, their observance is the basis of the policy of unification of European countries, which distinguishes this union from any other entities.

It is important to keep in mind that the operation of the EU has both advantages and disadvantages, such as the free movement of people and the creation of a free trade area. It is appropriate to single out some of the biggest in the history of the existence of the European Union: the withdrawal of Great Britain from the EU member states, the pandemic and the Russian-Ukrainian war (Keukeleire & Delreux, 2022).

The issue of Great Britain's exit from the EU, the so-called “Brexit”, has been repeatedly raised by British parties, politicians and, in particular, the public. It is worth noting that the exit process was accompanied by the slogan “Return power from Brussels to Britain” (Amato *et al.*, 2019). The main reasons for “Brexit” are the growing role of the supranational association in the internal politics of Great Britain, which did not suit the government. As a result, a referendum on EU membership was held in 2016, the majority – about 52% – voted to leave the Union and did not agree with the policy pursued by the EU (Amato *et al.*, 2019). And the exit finally took place in 2020. It is worth noting that this was a significant problem for the European Union due to the unprecedented nature of the situation and the strong economic and other ties that already existed between the EU and Great Britain. In particular, the main consequences of global significance accompanying the process of Great Britain's exit from the EU are the weakening of the EU's position on the world stage, the revision of European-American relations, etc. (Leruth *et al.*, 2019). To a large extent, this also affected the image of the European Union, but it remains important that the EU still adhered to its basic guidelines and values regarding the guarantee of democracy and equality and noted the full freedom of member states in deciding their future foreign policy.

The next significant challenge was the coronavirus disease COVID-19, which caused the pandemic (Rudan, 2020). It is worth noting that during the first waves of the coronavirus, the member states of the European Union were not fully united and consistent in their decisions, in particular, contrary to one or another contractual obligation, they reduced the export of medical equipment and imported it in large quantities from foreign markets (Rudan, 2020). Despite the embarrassment of individual governments, European institutions have shown solidarity and readiness to face the challenges of the pandemic, in particular, they have proposed approaches to solving the crisis, developed plans for economic assistance to countries affected by the impact of the pandemic on the economy, softened aspects of the rules on financial thrift through difficult conditions (Rudan, 2020). The resilience of the EU authorities managed to reunite the individual governments of the member states and call them to cooperate, in particular through the reception of other citizens for treatment, the transfer of humanitarian and medical aid. The decisions of the European Union related to the

organization of the purchase of protective equipment, the closing of the EU's external borders, the introduction of distance education, social distancing, the reduction and cancellation of large-scale measures to reduce crowding, etc., are quite important (Lynggaard, 2019). It is appropriate to note that the impact of the pandemic on the economy of the EU and the world had a sharply negative meaning, however, the unity of European states, in particular the activity of the leaders of the European Union regarding the allocation of common debt to finance the European recovery program called Next Generation EU, showed that even in critical conditions, the European Union adheres to values and is ready to face challenges (Léonard & Kaunert, 2019).

A full-scale conflict between Russia and Ukraine would be the next major shock for the EU. The outcome of this conflict and the extent of the European Union's involvement in it will have a significant impact on the future of the EU. On February 24, 2022, Russia carried out a full-scale invasion of the territory of the sovereign and independent state of Ukraine (Kaukeleire, 2022). It is worth noting that a few days after the invasion, the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, signed an application in which he testified to Ukraine's desire for EU membership. Already on March 1, the European Parliament made a statement-recommendation on granting Ukraine the status of an official candidate for membership (Hix & Høyland, 2022). During the spring of 2022, Ukraine filled out a questionnaire, after checking which the European Commission recommended to the European Council to grant Ukraine the status of a candidate for the European Union, which was done on June 23. In particular, the Ukrainian government hopes to start accession negotiations at the beginning of 2023, and accession itself will be possible no earlier than 2029 (Hix & Høyland, 2022).

It is worth noting that the primary purpose for the EU at the moment is the need to reorient the import of energy fuel due to the EU's dependence on Russian fuel supplies. It is also quite important to further support Ukraine in the fight against the aggressor country, which consists both in sanctions against Russia and in the promotion of Ukraine's accession to the European Union. In particular, with regard to sanctions, already at the beginning of the full-scale war, the EU introduced several packages of significant restrictions for Russia, such as, for example, closing Russia's access to the EU capital markets, a ban on lending to the Russian government and banks, a ban on trust services for the rich Russian population, ban on accounting and auditing, tax consulting, etc., ban on large deposit investments for Russian citizens in EU banks (Cini & Pérez-Solórzano Borrágán, 2022). Disconnection of Russia's large banking sector from the SWIFT system, along with other key sanctions such as a ban on investment in Russian-origin projects and a ban on the supply of euro banknotes to Russia, are other key measures (Cini & Pérez-Solórzano Borrágán, 2022).

A summary of the other achievements of the European Union throughout its history would also be appropriate. These include the abolition of the death penalty, the strengthening of the guarantee of respect for human rights, the fight against racism and non-discrimination, the protection and promotion of gender equality and freedom of expression, the promotion of the protection of children's rights, the preservation of cultural diversity, education in human rights and the cornerstones of democracy, the improvement of the quality of medicines and medical care, and

the promotion of international solidarity and cooperation. In view of this, it should be noted that the space of the European Union has become a safe place for everyone who is on its territory (Brodny *et al.*, 2021).

The unwavering support of Ukraine becomes a direct proof and testimony of the readiness of the EU to follow the values that became the basis of their unification. The tough policy towards the aggressor country testifies to the desire of the European Union to cooperate with Ukraine, which seeks to join the European space. Therefore, the question now arises: what are the future and prospects of the European Union against the background of crisis phenomena and war?

This question can be answered through a demonstration of several possible scenarios for the further development of the European Union:

1. Focus on increasing EU military security. In order to maintain its rightful place in the world order, the European Union will invest more and more forces and resources in the development of the military sphere (Wallace *et al.*, 2020). It may be possible to create a joint army of the European Union, the number of which will be close to the number of the largest world armies, for example, the army of the United States of America, China. Facilitating dialogue with world leaders to ensure partnership and security.

2. Mediation policy. The European Union will have a sufficiently developed defense sphere, but will show a mostly neutral position, acting as a mediator in resolving conflicts between states. In particular, it is obvious that such an approach is being pursued in view of the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine. As a result, some representatives of EU member states are trying to negotiate a solution to the problem of the escalation of the war on Ukrainian soil.

3. Disintegration of the European Union. Due to the devaluation of the basic principles around which the countries of Europe united, the EU is gradually disintegrating. Only a few permanent alliances between countries remain, but most of them pursue a policy of independence and separation from external influence. There is no cooperation between the countries regarding foreign policy, defense and security policy, and justice. Due to the weakening of Europe's position on the world stage, the influence of the USA, Russia and China is most felt on geopolitics.

4. The European Union: expansion or stability. Currently, it is appropriate to note that Ukraine actively seeks to join the European Union, professing the same values as the member states of the union. However, in the opinion of, for example, E. Macron, the President of France, the European Union needs time to recover and reform, so he proposes to abandon the expansion of the European Union for a certain time (Wurzel *et al.*, 2020). On the other hand, it is appropriate to note that if the policy of not attracting new members to the Union continues, it will lead to a decrease in trust in the EU, will threaten the image and position of the EU 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. It is worth noting that the six basic principles that the European Union professes are the initial provisions not only of the said association, but also of most democratic countries. One of the likely scenarios for the further development of the EU is its refusal to impose on other sovereign states a method of conducting policy based on certain values that are universal and

uniquely correct for the EU. It is impossible to incorporate these principles into the culture and thinking of people from other countries, so it is appropriate to note that in the future, the EU will take into account cultural differences, etc., when conducting dialogue with individual states.

Discussion

In order to form the conclusion of the relevant scientific research more thoroughly and fully, it is advisable to analyze the results of the works of other authors and scientists. So, for example, S. Hix & B. Høyland (2022) notes that this association is unique in its legal nature. The author emphasizes the voluntary integration between the countries of Europe, which took place around the fundamental values and basic principles of existence of the respective states. S. Hix & B. Høyland (2022) also emphasizes that the current state and appearance of the European Union dates back to the 1950s and began with the common market of the steel and coal industries. It is worth noting that the American author's reasoning largely coincides with the obtained results, in particular in terms of the uniqueness of the association. It is worth taking into account the opinions of the researcher regarding migration as a challenge for the European Union, and to add that against the background of the Russian-Ukrainian war, more and more Ukrainians, suffering from armed aggression by Russia, are forced to seek refuge in European countries (Geddes *et al.*, 2020).

According to G. Wallace *et al.* (2020), the European Union faced a number of challenges from the global world system in the second half of the 2010s. These challenges included Britain's decision to leave the EU, as well as EU member states' controversial views on U.S. foreign policy under President Trump, the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, and the Russian-Ukrainian war. G. Wallace *et al.* (2020) also note that these challenges had an impact on solidarity and integration, and in some places on the stability and support of European values, however, as the author points out, the European Union managed to show resilience in overcoming these challenges.

Indeed, despite external problems, such as "Brexit" (Leruth *et al.*, 2019) or the pandemic (Rudan, 2020), the European Union directed all its efforts to their quick and effective overcoming. As it was mentioned, in the case of responding to the spread of the coronavirus disease, the policy of the European Union showed its ability to make important administrative decisions, for example, closing the external borders of the EU, distancing, indemnifying the countries most affected by the pandemic, etc. With regard to the Russian-Ukrainian war and the EU's response to the relevant situation, it is appropriate to mention the support from the association by imposing sanctions on the aggressor country and promoting Ukraine's accession to the EU. But the question of the EU's energy dependence on Russian fuel and the need to find solutions regarding alternative suppliers, etc., remains relevant.

The British author D. Chalmers (2019) notes about some aspects of the successful functioning and development of the European Union, among which it is advisable to single out common borders, which made it possible to better develop the tourism sphere of countries, as well as attract investments for the development of certain regions, trade etc. D. Chalmers (2019) also notes some of the reasons, according to which Great Britain decided to leave the European Union, which have a historical aspect. In particular, the author quotes

the Prime Minister of Great Britain, Tony Blair, in which he notes that the country will not accept any agreements aimed at changing the legislation of the United Kingdom. The author also focuses attention on what are the future prospects for the existence of the European Union. Thus, D. Chalmers (2019) notes that for normal functioning, the European Union needs to revise its security and foreign policy.

It is worth agreeing with the author's conclusions and adding them to the obtained results, noting also the thesis about the dissatisfaction with Britain's membership in the EU and European policy on the part of the British themselves (Tagliapietra *et al.*, 2019; Bórawski *et al.*, 2019). The outcome of the referendum on Britain's exit from the EU, which was supported by some 52% of voters, is evidence of this. Regarding prospects and further development scenarios, as already mentioned, they will mostly depend on external factors and certain requirements of the present. The Belgian author S. Keukeleire and T. Delreux (2022) outline the nature and features of the European Union as the example of conducting foreign policy. In particular, for example, in matters of trade, the EU itself has an exclusive range of powers. The author emphasizes that the EU member states in conducting their foreign policy rely mostly on the internal needs of the country and do not aim to replace this method of policy implementation with a common foreign policy or a single foreign policy activity. This is significantly related to the close connection of foreign policy with the country's sovereignty and independence (Keukeleire & Delreux, 2022).

Appropriate agree with the given results of the author and take them into account. Indeed, the member states of the association retain their independence in their foreign policy, as evidenced by, for example, the Russian-Ukrainian war. Although the EU's support is steadfast and aimed at supporting the sovereignty of Ukraine, the policies of some individual member states show an unwillingness to confront energy dependence on Russia or reluctance to participate in the implementation of sanctions, etc. The American author L. Buonanno (2020) emphasizes the climate policy of the union and points out several interesting aspects. In particular, with regard to vehicle emissions, the European Union's policy is centralized, in contrast to issues related to climate change goals and objectives, which are jointly adopted by EU member states. According to the author, the policy regarding climate improvement is one of the main achievements that leads to the reformation of such related areas as agriculture, industry, transport, energy efficiency. L. Buonanno (2020) also points out that the policy of combating climate change is a means of promoting "green technologies", i.e. such farming methods that are associated with minimal resource costs and maximum effective results.

A. Geddes *et al.* (2020) emphasize that the treatment of migrants as asylum seekers is "undesirable", but the labor migration is regulated at the national level and is the responsibility of each state separately, as well as the integration of such persons to the European space. A. Geddes *et al.* (2020) also point out that after 2015, border control of passport-free travel has been significantly strengthened to curb migration waves along with the construction of fences, etc. It is only necessary to partially agree with the author's conclusions and add that currently the migration policy of the European Union shows openness and readiness to receive so-called "asylum seekers". This is largely due to the Russian-Ukrainian war, which forced Ukrainians to look for safer places to

live. The European Union must be ready for new challenges, which may be related both to the prospects for the continued existence of the union, and to the nearest threats: the search for alternative fuel suppliers, the introduction of tougher sanctions, the strengthening of security policy, readiness for migration waves caused by food crisis, etc.

Conclusions

The conducted research allowed for a deeper knowledge of the legal framework of the European Union. In particular, the aspect regarding the fact that the European Union became a consequence and desire of a number of countries to establish and maintain peace in Europe is important against the background of the research subject. The unification of European countries made it possible to consolidate efforts to more effectively contribute to the post-war recovery and stabilization of the economy. According to the results of the work, the main specific features of the European Union are its institutional structure, which in some places determines its unique and supranational character, as well as the values that are the basis of the unification of member countries.

It was also possible to find out and analyze the issues related to the biggest challenges faced by the EU in the process of its functioning, in particular, the withdrawal of Great Britain from the EU member states, the pandemic caused by the coronavirus infection, migration, as well as the Russian-Ukrainian war. Important administrative decisions regarding the response to Russia's actions on the territory of Ukraine are the unwavering support of the sovereign state, the imposition of sanctions on the aggressor country, as well as the provision of asylum for Ukrainians who suffered as a result of Russian aggression. Based on the analysis of the works of various scientists, it was possible to single out the main achievements of the European Union during its

functioning, among them: the establishment of the equality of people and their rights, guaranteeing their protection, the introduction of a free trade zone, the introduction of a free movement zone, the establishment of a gender equality and its promotion, the establishment of democracy and its development by individuals, the fight against climate change, etc.

Especially, has to be emphasise the importance of the EU comprehensive foreign and security policy, with the aim of preventing new or existing threats and managing regional and critical points in the global geographic area. The issue related to the prospects and future of the European Union is also important in this work. By analyzing and forecasting certain external factors it is advisable to single out several main scenarios for the further development of the EU: focus on increasing military security, mediation policy, disintegration of the European Union, European Union: expansion or stability, European values: policy of non-imposition, European Union: proper management of energy and economic crisis. It is advisable to devote further research on the relevant topic to the following questions: the expansion of the EU as a guarantee of the consolidation of the dominant position of the union, the reaction of the European Union to migration processes related to the ongoing war, an unprecedented catastrophe of human misery, which is extremely dangerous and affects world order, peace and stability. Despite everything, there is a word that the EU will survive and continue to be an example of a great and deep unification and a successful model of the democratic value of modern times.

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Conflict of interest

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Консолідація і криза: еволюція правової бази Європейського Союзу в прагненні до миру, стабільності та єдності в умовах глобальних викликів

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Анотація. У світлі останніх подій, як-от пандемія коронавірусу та російсько-українська війна, які створюють серйозні перешкоди для нормального функціонування Європейського Союзу, дослідження унікальних характеристик ЄС та майбутніх перспектив його зростання і виживання особливо актуальне. Мета статті – вивчити історію створення Європейського Союзу, труднощі, з якими він стикався протягом свого існування, а також можливості для його подальшого існування та розвитку як особливого союзу європейських держав. Основні методи, які використано в роботі, такі: систематизації, історичного дослідження, прогнозування. Отримані результати дали змогу побудувати уявлення про минуле ЄС, його подальше становлення та особливості, пов'язані з його інституційною структурою. У статті також висвітлено низку викликів, які супроводжували розвиток Європейського Союзу, і те, як ЄС боровся з їх вирішенням, зокрема, найбільше уваги приділено трьом основним з них: вихід Великої Британії з ЄС, пандемія, яка була спричинена коронавірусною інфекцією, а також російсько-українська війна, очікувані та прийдешні енергетична та інфляційна кризи. Окреме місце в результатах статті займає висвітлення перспектив подальшого розвитку Європейського Союзу на тлі сучасних проблем. Зокрема, з огляду на історичний аналіз функціонування Європейського Союзу, запропоновано основні сценарії щодо форм подальшого існування об'єднання європейських країн. Результати роботи можуть використати історики, соціологи та юристи як довідковий матеріал для вивчення особливостей функціонування Європейського Союзу в подальших дослідженнях відповідної тематики

Ключові слова: об'єднання європейських держав; пандемія; Brexit; російсько-українська війна; сценарії розвитку