

**THE WAR AGAINST UKRAINE AND THE EU: FACING NEW REALITIES,
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REVIEW BY:

MANYA MKRTCHYAN* 
Yerevan State University

Abstract

This book discusses the multiple implications of the war against Ukraine for the EU political system. It draws on a number of different authors to analyse the main dimensions of the Russian attack on Ukraine and the subsequent large-scale war, which impact the global order and EU foreign policy. In the context of war and Russia's large-scale invasion of Ukraine, the EU needs to position itself in a changing world order, internal and external challenges to liberal democracy and the development of its strategic autonomy. In various chapters of the book, the development and strengthening of strategic partnership and friendship with Ukraine is considered by the EU as one of the central foreign policy priorities. Without the support of the Ukrainian partner, it is difficult for the EU to achieve positive results in European politics and play the role of an influential power in the international arena. In this context, various authors note that only the formation of political and economic ties between the EU and Ukraine will be the optimal way out of the full-scale war and crisis that Ukraine has found itself in. Only the combination of opportunities and efforts will allow the Ukrainian political elite and society to eventually stand on par with leading European countries.

Keywords: war, peace, aggression, Ukraine, enlargement policy, European Union politics, global order, normative power, strategic autonomy.

Analyzing European integration within the framework of the concept of multi-level governance, it is necessary to note that the normative and other acts adopted by the EU authorities are addressed and affect, ultimately, the interests of citizens, which is expressed in the existence of rights and obligations (Knodt and Wiesner 2024; Costa and Blanc 2024; Jørgensen 2024). The institutional aspect of the EU development assumes a gradual evolution of supranational authorities. This issue has become more

* **Manya Mkrtchyan** is a PhD candidate of the Chair of Political Science of the Faculty of International Relations at Yerevan State University. Email: manya.mkrtyan@ysu.am. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3537-5393>.



acute in connection with the change in the geopolitical situation in Europe as a result of the EU expansion to the east and the formation of an economic and monetary union. At the moment, the issue of the political configuration and the mechanism for implementing power is in the spotlight. In connection with this issue, the issue of leadership in the EU is relevant. Frictions between small countries and countries with great economic potential are not decreasing, and after Russia's military aggression against Ukraine, these frictions have only intensified. Therefore, the expansion of the EU should be considered not in quantitative, but in qualitative, that is, political terms.

At the current stage of the war against Ukraine, the EU is faced with new realities, since the concept of multi-level cooperation also assumes that actors in integration processes can be not only EU member states, but also political and business elites, trade unions and transnational corporations and banks, various international organizations (Smith 2024; Wiesner 2024; Müller and Slominski 2024). It should be especially noted that EU legal norms receive mandatory legal force in the territories of states that are not members of the EU, as in the case of the Schengen area.

The political significance of integration processes and expansion lies not only in the fact that, moving east, the EU is increasing its resource potential. On the one hand, the political hegemony of the EU is being formed in the main territory of Europe, which gives it a completely different international status and positions. On the other hand, the admission of new members with completely different socio-economic and environmental characteristics, with deep interethnic and interstate contradictions will not be painless for both the EU and the newcomers. Therefore, development within the framework of the concept of multi-level governance is entirely justified. The concept allows for an explanation of differentiated approaches, such as 'Europe of several speeds', which will be applied in practice when creating a European socio-economic and political development model; the expanded EU will not represent a single picture for a long time. Significant differences have emerged in European affairs and in matters of global political significance. Moreover, the necessary reservations and the consideration of certain factors are increasingly becoming an obstacle to this. Therefore, it is so important that the expanded EU be built on a solid foundation, using the existing legal framework and institutions (Chaban and Zhabotynska 2024). And this corresponds to the historically traceable and justified tendency towards decentralization and balancing of power along with the creation of a public space of security and internal order, protected from the outside by a strong common political will, since in this case the risk of individual actions is minimized, social unity becomes achievable and the efficiency of the market economy increases.

In addition, the EU is in a state of constant development, continuous movement. It is difficult to predict the final result of all these processes. It may well happen that at this stage the direction of the EU evolution meets all the parameters, but after some time, under the influence of Russia's war against Ukraine and a whole range of internal and external factors, where, perhaps, some will even determine, the structures and institutions of the EU will be subject to changes, which will correspond to a new theoretical model of European integration (Knodt, Ringel and Bruch 2024).

Therefore, summing up all of the above, we can only say that even in the conditions of the Russian war against Ukraine, the EU remains a resilient and unique project,

which has practically embodied a new phenomenon of international relations. The direction of its development is not unambiguous. At this stage, the principles of its organization and the mechanism of its functioning can be most accurately reflected by the concept of multi-level governance. However, any theory or concept is subject to obsolescence, so it is possible that over time, this concept will be replaced by a new one, more fully and accurately reflecting the basic principles and trends of the development of the EU.

It is important to keep in mind that many authors consider the potential impact of the war in Ukraine on EU studies. It is obvious that the Russian war against Ukraine is the most destructive war in Europe since the end of World War II. At this stage, EU studies will be related to the war. Therefore, the Second Karabakh War of 2020 is also mainly important to consider in thinking about the dynamics of European integration, since this war in Nagorno-Karabakh should also cause a 'Zeitenwende' in EU studies. In this respect, the concept of multi-level governance reflects two dimensions of EU development. The functional dimension is related to the division of domestic and foreign policy into the competence of national and supranational authorities. The fate of national sovereignties and the political configuration of Europe depend on how powers are divided. The institutional dimension includes, on the one hand, the question of EU membership and, on the other hand, the structure of supranational authorities and decision-making mechanisms (Gawrich and Wydra 2024; Zarembo 2024).

Taking into account the Russian war against Ukraine and the provisions set out in the Treaty on EU, political union presupposes the resolution of issues related to the adoption of a common policy in the field of foreign affairs and security, including economic; disarmament and arms control in Europe; and the development of a common defense policy. Achieving these objectives meets the basic provisions of the concept of multi-level governance, since, firstly, contradictions between common and national interests are resolved. Secondly, the problem of national sovereignty ceases to be a stumbling block that hinders close political cooperation. This is possible provided that various actors operating at different levels, primarily supranational and national, form an integrated system of joint decisions. Practical confirmation of this provision can be demonstrated in the strengthening of the importance of the European Parliament, the general expansion of the EU's powers.

Thus, the concept of multi-level governance allows taking into account the heterogeneity of the EU, the differences in the political and socio-economic situation in its different member states. This is precisely the goal pursued by the principle of 'enhanced cooperation', according to which the delegation of additional powers to EU bodies by individual member states is permitted. At the same time, the sources and norms of law issued by them on the basis of these powers will extend their effect only to the territory of the member states participating in 'enhanced cooperation'.

Given the complex nature of the integration processes, it is becoming increasingly difficult to predict the development of events around the Russian war against Ukraine, so it will be necessary to focus on creating a few separate institutional elements with a guaranteed margin of safety and ensuring a high degree of procedural flexibility within the EU. Politicians who will be responsible for the enlarged EU must have at their disposal a set of rules concerning institutions and procedures with which they can

respond in a timely manner to the challenges of their era. The main emphasis in institution building and ensuring flexibility must be placed on the scale of the EU as a whole. At the same time, large-scale projects will still be necessary in order to constructively introduce institutional reforms into the agenda with the help of extensive negotiating packages, so the EU institutions and its member states must constantly update and strengthen this foundation. Most likely, there cannot be any absolutely indisputable results of changes in political processes at the regional or state level. There may only be assumptions that will be justified with an indefinite degree of probability, or will be completely incorrect, and possibilities that can also be realized only partially. These processes depend on many factors, which theories and concepts of European integration processes are trying to identify.

At this point, it is only possible to say with certainty that in the context of the Russian war against Ukraine, the EU is more than a simple sum of parts of nation states, and that the EU undoubtedly remains a unique phenomenon in the system of international relations, so further theoretical research will continue. After all, the final direction of the EU and its further institutional development remain resilient. Since politics at any level, state, regional or international, is a mobile and organic, not mechanical process, and it is impossible to accurately predict and forecast further developments. Planning is even more complicated by the practically unpredictable impacts that the Russian war against Ukraine has on the international system: the consequences of globalization are as little amenable to calculation as the possible inevitable circumstances arising from the new balance of power in the international arena. By making decisions on the expansion and deepening of the EU, the heads of state and government have outlined goals, the global impact of which must be discussed today. Since it is not possible to move from reliable forecasts to unambiguous policy recommendations, the task of the debate that reflects this process should not be to propose a single sensible and realistic approach to solving the problem, but to consider possible courses of action, with a panorama of different expectations and scenarios before us. The solution should not be the fearful uncertainty that many heads of government showed when making decisions at the reform summit, defending their national veto positions, but rather a discussion of measures to ensure flexible institution-building that will enable EU decision-makers and policymakers in the second decade of this century to have at their disposal a reinforced structure to respond adequately to the challenges of their era (Knodt and Wiesner 2024; Costa and Blanc 2024; Jørgensen 2024). Since in an enlarged EU there will be even less room to create political space for interaction and communication; shared memories and the collective awareness that countries are living in a truly fateful time for the community will be eroded; the vision of the final goal of integration policy will become, on the one hand, even more necessary to define a common goal, but on the other hand, in the enlarged EU it will be increasingly difficult to jointly create an institutional structure that is resilient to external influences. The EU, in its dynamic development full of difficulties, is turning into a new type of structure that does not fit into simple formulas and continues to develop through further changes and adaptations.

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Conflict of interests

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Ethical standards

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.

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