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# THE CONSEQUENCE OF THE EU ENLARGEMENT – THE NEW BORDERS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

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*European construction aroused popular aspirations, which were radically opposed to what is actually happening: aspirations for a continent that would resist antisocial policies while being open to the world, according to a democratic, social, ecological and solidarity-based logic... This was in particular what was hoped for in Eastern Europe, where the populations aspired to live better and more freely. Their hopes were profoundly disappointed, preparing the ground for xenophobic currents... Understanding what were the turns that history took, where things went wrong, understanding the present crisis is essential for the peoples to be able to re-appropriate their choices and thus their future. (Catherine Samary)<sup>1</sup>*

## THE MEANING OF BORDERS

The economic crisis of 2008 raised old fears and questions to be solved. The stability and integrity of the European Union were questioned as the problems seemed to be somewhat similar, but the reasons and the heritage were different among the old, as well as the new member states. This paper is an attempt to point out the roots and differences on the European continent. It tries to explore the problem how the phenomenon 'Europe' can be identified, from which angles we can speak about a homogeneous Europe, and where cleavages can be pointed out. If such cleavages exist, can they serve as inner borders of the continent, what can be told about their origin, historical background?

Starting off our investigation the first and foremost problem we have to focus on is the question of borders. Borders are strongly connected with the possibility to identify a unit, a group of people, settlements, defense zone, possibility of separations from the others. Among others, one group of the most visible borders is political borders. Unavoidably, they can exclude and oppose, dividing the larger from the smaller, the

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.viewpointonline.net/eastern-europe-faced-with-the-crises-of-the-system-catherine-samary.html>

richer from the poorer, the weaker from the stronger. As a practical consequence of their political nature, they often also mark the division line between one currency zone and another, or the limits between different types of electrical sockets. Apart from political borders there exist many types of boundaries that demarcate the outer limits of the place we call ‘home’, or at least of that area where stuff looks, sounds and tastes familiar. They usually are the most visible ones, though. Not just on the border, where the precarious embrace of two sovereign entities has solidified into barriers, buildings and a bureaucracy; also on either side.

The examination of the roles of the borders is a complicated problem. The first question is the way in which we make a definition about the role and the appearance of borders. There are physical aspects, such as the process of designation of borders, the changing of borders, or even their disappearance. The second problem is the examination of the spatial changes of borders, the definition of the question what kind of decision could affect how they actually change, what kind of conflicts could arise after the new positions of borders. Changes can be a consequence of a historical development (Gorzelak, Jałowiecki, 2002); borders can be created naturally or violently (Bialasiewicz, 1999, Paasi, 2002). They can be created by the state (from above), from outside (as a consequence of the winning of the war), from inside (according to national demands). Borders can be distinguished according their character—natural or created. According to Éger and Bialasiewicz (Éger, 2001, Bialasiewicz, 2002), borders can be created in several ways: they can be natural or artificial, or even symbolic<sup>2</sup> (Bialasiewicz, 1999).

*Table 1. Classification of the borders*

Result	Initiator
From above	State
From outside	After a victorious war
From inside	National demands

*Edited by the author*

<sup>2</sup> This latter issue is characteristic in those cases when there is no way to describe the political borders of a given state. Partly because the national demands and the political decisions are far from each other, or because the previously existed state became divided among other empires, as in the case of Poland in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Apart from the political, cultural, physical or geographical borders of Europe it is also important to define the so-called inner<sup>3</sup> borders of the continent. As this definition is not clear, there is a great number of scientists who try to delineate borders of different parts of Europe in different ways, especially if they want to describe such problematic issues as Central, Eastern or East-Central Europe.<sup>4</sup>

Border as a phenomenon got its importance with the birth of the nation states in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and kept it through several ages. After the First World War, with the collapse and the disappearance of the great empires in Central and Eastern Europe, state borders strengthened their separating role. (Hardi – Hajdú – Mezei, 2009)

Connecting the problems of borders with the identification of Europe it is obvious that 'Europe' can be identified as a concept as well as a continent, and the borders of both oscillate wildly. (Jacobs, 2012) According to Jacobs's interpretation, in the Middle Ages, 'Europe' became virtually synonymous with Christendom. A relatively recent and generally unaccepted theory sees Europe spanning half the globe, from Iceland to the Bering Strait, nearly touching Alaska. During the cold war, however, the opposite tendency triumphed more often: all of the Soviet Union, including Vilnius, Riga and other cities that today lie within the European Union, were excluded from Europe entirely. At times even the Soviet satellite states in the Warsaw Pact were left out, as well, so much had "Europe" come to be synonymous with "the West" and its associated political values.<sup>5</sup>

## DIVERSITY IN EUROPE

Analyzing Europe's historical models we can distinguish some characteristic aspects. Among others the so-called diversity can be mentioned; the difference in the process of development of the different regions. As a consequence, from there can be distinguished minor inner structures separated by geographical, historical, economic and cultural cleavages, or the results of different ways of development and the interactions among the zones. Secondly, the role of expansion, or the connection

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<sup>3</sup> Or it can be called invisible.

<sup>4</sup> If we take a look at the Hungarian attempts we have to mention Gábor Gyani (Gyani, 1988, 1999), or Jenő Szűcs (Szűcs, 1981) who distinguished two different parts of the Eastern part of Europe during the age of Socialism. This was a unique experiment as they argued that it was an inner cleavage in the so-called homogeneous Socialist bloc breaching with the theory of the homogeneous Socialist world. In the last decade of the Socialist era the transition, with the change of the regime the idea of Central Europe became more and more accepted. Several works got published, the idea of the redefinition of Europe, the Central European borders, their meaning became the theme of several dissertations, articles in the region.

<sup>5</sup> <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/01/09/where-is-europe/>

between an expanding Europe and other cultures of the world, the global connections. Thirdly, the diversification, the political sphere. Instead of a homogeneous political, cultural and economic integration nation states appear to entail potential political conflicts. Finally, the possibility of the interruption of historical problems and wounds, the weakness of the chance of the integration. (Kosáry, 1997)

Although attempts to create federative structures existed, such as the ideas of Jászi to reorganise the Habsburg Monarchy in accordance with the federal way – but his theory was not supported by the surrounding nations. Instead of integration they wanted to create their own nation states. (Erdősi – Gál – Hajdú, 2002)

The examination of the roles of borders was very popular among the geographers in the West, even during the age of Socialism; however, it was almost neglected in the Socialist sphere of Europe. There are several reasons for this lack of interest. Among others, there was no reason to deal with borders because it was against of the attempts of the creation of a partly homogeneous Socialist sphere of interest. As most of the policies were controlled either by the state parties themselves, or directly by Moscow, there was little chance to care about cross-border cooperations, even if there had appeared such attempts between Socialist states.

During the age of cold war it was well known and agreed upon where the borders of the divided Europe were to be found, and which borders were the most important ones (Bialasiewicz, 2009). The borders that divided Europe also divided the world. They made geopolitical division between East and West. The Iron Curtain both divided Europe, and because the division was exported to other parts of the world, also worked as a global border. The revolutions of 1989 brought, among other things, a profound reordering of the spatial imaginary of Europe. The collapse of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet bloc rendered necessary new geographical stories, new spatial representation to capture and codify the cartographic chaos of the ex-Eastern European space (Bialasiewicz, 2003). Although the cold war was over the border did not disappear at once. It was inevitable that the European borders between West and East became strengthened and while in the Western part of Europe a kind of integration was recognisable with the declining role of the borders, in the Eastern part of the continent the isolation of the borders became even more determining.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> That caused several problems in the case of the so-called national, or artificial borders of some states from the Socialist group. The intensity of cross-border relations declined, as all initiatives had to become either from the capitals, or at least the capitals had to support such attempts. For instance, this practice

Typically, for the group of former Socialist countries a specific cleavage arose between the two parts of Europe. In the Western part of the continent borders began to lose their importance, and states going into the direction to struggle over the creation of federative structures—the then existing federative Socialist states, such as Czechoslovakia or Yugoslavia launched their processes of dissolution. The situation did not change significantly after the transition either. As Western European states were going ahead of the loss of their borders following the idea of unification, the collapse of old federative states in the post-Socialist world<sup>7</sup> recalled old fears and repressed nationalism with a new, overdue process of nation-making. (Hardi – Hajdú – Mezei, 2009) That duality can be recognised in the perception of the EU membership within the “old members” and the “new” member states. The process and the experience of European integration are present together with the reflex of the nation states that can influence the perceptions concerning the notion of borders.

### THE DIVISION OF EUROPE AS A HISTORICAL FACT

As the whole Central and Eastern European (CEE) region belonged to the sphere of interest of the Soviet Union, it was hardly possible to discuss about any kind of cultural, ethnic, or even religious cleavages, or just differences within the group of the Socialist countries. However, especially from the second half of 1980's new discussions began about the structure of Europe. Following Huntington's theory or the consequences of the discussion between Halecki and Bidlo from the 1930's about the borders of East and West, it was accepted that the historical division of Europe into Central and Eastern was dated from 1054 as a consequence of the great schisma. According to this division, the Baltic states, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, Slovakia and Croatia remained the Western part of CEE region, while the territory of Russia, Belarus, the Ukraine, Bulgaria, Romania, FYROM and parts of Bosnia created the Eastern. (Huntington, 1996, Gorzelak, 2002) The theories composed either in the interwar period or in the Western democracies gradually became shared among post-Socialist scientists, too.<sup>8</sup> It is also accepted that Central Europe composed a frontier belt between West and East, it remained the border of the West, a special kind of

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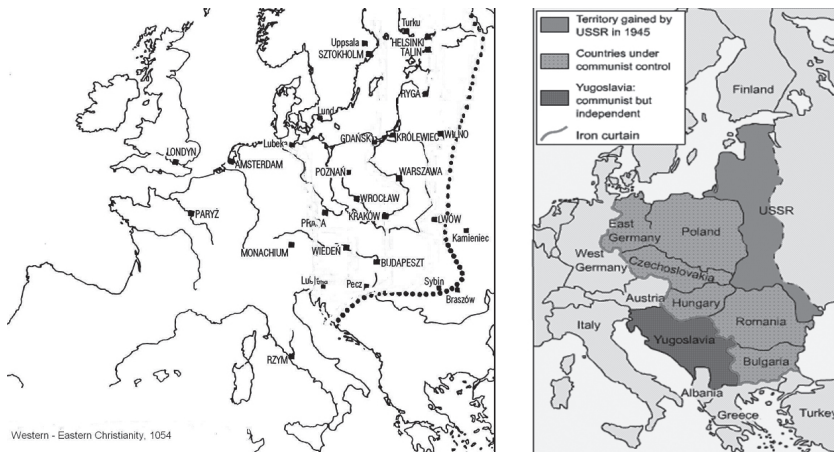
hindered the intensive cross-border relations between the Hungary and the Hungarian ethnic minority around the Hungarian state borders. (Gulyás, 2005)

<sup>7</sup> Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia

<sup>8</sup> See Halecki's perception about the division of Europe, or Fox's theory about the role of religion as a reason of cultural cleavages (Halecki, 1993, Fox, 2004), or Wallerstein's perception about the core, the semi-periphery and the periphery. (Wallerstein, 1984)

transitional zone. It is a special transitional and civilisational zone. A part of periphery or semi-periphery without the Mediterranean and the Scandinavian space. If we take a look at the following maps, we can see the cleavages from the West and from the East. It was commonly accepted that the transition zone lies between the so-called Iron Curtain and the cleavage of Eastern Christianity.

Figure 1.



Source: Gorzelak, Grzegorz, 2010 *The regional patterns of the post-socialist transformation in Central and Eastern Europe* (RSA conference, Pécs)

The first map shows the line between Latin Christianity and Orthodoxy, while the second map represents the line of the Iron Curtain.<sup>9</sup> England, the Netherlands, or even the feudal France belonged to the more developed parts, and as for the neighbouring territories, the German and Italian regions were divided, some parts belonging to the core area and some parts to the semi-peripheries. The famous Polish geographer, Grzegorz Gorzelak in his theory calls the frontier belt as “Golden Curtain”, the symbolic line that divides the rich West from the poor East. With the enlargement of the EU it is still an issue, as it will be seen later.

Examining the consequences of this division it is also important to explore the reasons of these dynamic changes. The European continent of the 18<sup>th</sup> century can be characterized as a triple-divided construction (Wallerstein, 1983):

<sup>9</sup> As the first map is in Polish there are some cities with Polish names, like Rome=Rzym, Munich=Monachium, London=Londyn, etc.

1. A more developed epicentre—a central core or plateau, the developed countries with the appearance of capitalism, the free market, global division of labour, including the existence of independent political units (in this case, states) at the same time. There is no political centre, compared to global empires.
2. A periphery—a synonym for the dependent developing countries. The main reason for the position of the developed countries is economic power.
3. A semi-periphery—states that are located between the core and the periphery. They catch influence from the core area, but there are characteristic features that make them similar to the periphery, too.

It can be said that this division survived for centuries. This historic heritage remained in Europe as a dual structure.<sup>10</sup> The difference can be caught in the following issues: nation state versus global governance, representation of the local or global interests, federalism or strong nation state. The questions of the role of religion and the national language are also remarkable.

There is a difference in the question of the role of the state. The revival of nation states after transition was very often accompanied by strong centralisation efforts, which resulted in the total absence or a weakness of the decentralised institutional system and autonomies of the regions. The judgement of 1989, or the transition process itself differs according to the judges. It can be described as the ‘*annus mirabilis*’ when a great political and economic transformation appeared without violence (Kornai, 2005). On the other hand, there is a perception that as the change was so rapid and covered all spheres it can be called revolution. According to rather sceptical Jürgen Habermas, it can be described rather as a “repairing revolution” instead of a regenerative revolution.<sup>11</sup>

There is another phenomenon frequently used to characterize this region. As the assistance of the state, or the government is determinative the initiatives usually come from above. The word is “refolution”, which is a composition of two words: reform and revolution blended together (also created by Ash (Ash, 1990, Frentzel-Zagórska,

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<sup>10</sup> If we look at the difference between East and West, semi-periphery can be calculated to the East, too.

<sup>11</sup> *Nachholende Revolution*. Referring to the fact that the reason of these revolutions was the going back to the democratic legal state and the norms of the developed capitalist Western European region. According to Habermas’s theory, bureaucratic Socialism could not be identified as an alternative version of organised Capitalism. It is rather a backward formation of Capitalism. This is why the revolutions of 1989 can be called as “repairing revolutions”. This definition implies that this type of revolution does not have any importance or lesson for the developed Western world.

1993)). It referred at first to the role of the participants of the transition. Ash states that the initiators of the reforms were rather the Communists in late Socialism and the ideas of the “inhabitants”, the newly organised or reorganised civil society was not so determining. As it is visible, the state, the “upper level” got an enormously great role inherited from previous centuries.<sup>12</sup>

### THE SCENARIOS OF TRANSITION

The economic and political transition of the 1990's across the CEE region was simultaneous with the faster expansion of globalisation in Europe. (Gál – Rácz, 2008) The change of the regimes brought to life several scenarios in connection with economic transition. New models were created, new types of identification emerged. At the millennium more optimistic views became widespread according to the success or failure of the transition. The model created by Iván Szelényi<sup>13</sup> distinguished three different types of transition models from which two “belong to” the post-Socialist European states. He estimated the outer-directed capitalism as the better scenario from the two European models with the limited possibility of transition crisis and a relatively short time frame. However, the crisis that reached Europe in late 2008 pointed out that the deeper a country is involved with foreign capital and foreign direct investment, the greater vulnerability it has to experience.

At the time of the economic transition in the CEE countries in late 1980's and the early 1990's economic development policies were facing extraordinarily big challenges due to the following circumstances:

1. The transition to market economy was accompanied by the urgent demand of adaptation to a completely different environment of world economy.
2. There was an inappropriate development trend of economy based on depressing structure of obsolete industry and stagnating service sector.
3. There was a significant deficiency in domestic capital funds with high foreign debts. (Gál – Rácz, 2008)

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<sup>12</sup> It also has got a Hungarian version: “Reforradalom” that is also the composition of the two words into one. There is another description, the so-called “velvet revolution” which also refers to the fact that the events took place mostly without violence. As Ash remarks, the symbol of the new type of revolution is the “round table” instead of the guillotine that represents the possibility of agreement instead of terrorism.

<sup>13</sup> Iván Szelényi (2004): Kapitalizmusok szocializmusok után. Egyenlítő 2004/4. pp. 2-11.



*Table 2. Types of Transition*

Transition types	Outer-directed capitalism	Top-down directed capitalism	Building capitalism from below (bottom)
<b>Type of Capitalism</b>	Liberal system (New EU-8 members in CEECs)	Patrimonial system; Politically controlled capitalism (Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria)	Hybrid system (China, Vietnam)
<b>Political strategy of transition (conflicts within elites)</b>	Victory of the technocracy over bureaucracy; collaboration with intelligentsia for the hegemony	Bureaucracy preserved its power, using it for the acquisition of private wealth	Coalition of bureaucracy with the new national bourgeoisie; Bureaucracy preserved its political power
<b>Foreign capital</b>	Predominant	Little	Growing portion of TNCs; many small investors
<b>Political system</b>	Multi-party democratic system	Multiparty system with authoritarianism	Mono-party system
<b>Transition crises</b>	Deep, relatively short period (4-5 years)	Shallow at the beginning, but long lasted (10 years < )	No crises

*Source: Iván Szelényi edited by the author*

The transition, however, had another face. The major part of the new economy was necessarily built on foreign investment-based or restructured economic organisations. The expansion of multinational firms yielding their profits from their absolute price advantages (cheap products) in the first period of transition served as a basis for this new economy. The new economic development model was primarily centred around the product export-orientated processing industry, and its system of relations and cooperation (both in market and development aspects) were determined by international networks.

János Kornai in his essay of 2005 explained the transition as a miracle that had taken place without any greater wave of violence or foreign military occupation. The transition itself affected all spheres of the economy and the political institutions.

Table 3. *Transitional Models*

Characteristics	CEE region	Transformation of the Soviet Union from Socialism into Capitalism	Hungary: Horthy restoration Chile: Pinochet restoration	China: transformation after Mao	West Germany: transformation after WW <sub>2</sub>	The great historical transformation in Europe: from the Middle Ages into modernity, from pre-capitalism into capitalism
In the main direction of the development of the economic system?	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
In the main direction of the development of the political system?	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Parallel in all spheres?	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Without violence?	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Without foreign military occupation?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Fast?	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No (very long)

*Source: Kornai, J. (2005): Közép-Európa nagy átalakulása – siker és csalódás, Közgazdasági Szemle, 52/12 edited by the author*

## HISTORICAL BORDERS AND EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

The change of the regime also raised the question concerning the future of the nation state versus European integration. This issue, we argue, is strongly connected with the problem of identification. As a result of the transition, the post-Socialist world experienced the rebirth of nation states on the map of Europe, on one side, and the collapse of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, on the other. The question of national autonomy and the dissolution of the old states in accordance with

the appearance of the process of democratisation of the given societies raised even more new questions. New, or entombed problems occurred again, such as dangerous nationalism and xenophobia that led to new conflicts again. If we accept the normative regulation of the nation state that includes its inhabitants, territory and the problem of the legitimacy of sovereignty we have to discuss the problem of becoming an independent nation state or to belong to any other supranational bodies.

The EU membership can be characterized as a final proof that the transformation is over, however, it brought about some problems that need proper solutions. There is an East–West dimension, which could be embraced in the discussion about EU membership, or scepticism about the EU. As Scruton says, the EU tries to demolish the territorial legal authorities such as national faith, all the elements that mean the basis of European legitimacy since the era of Enlightenment. (Scruton, 2005)

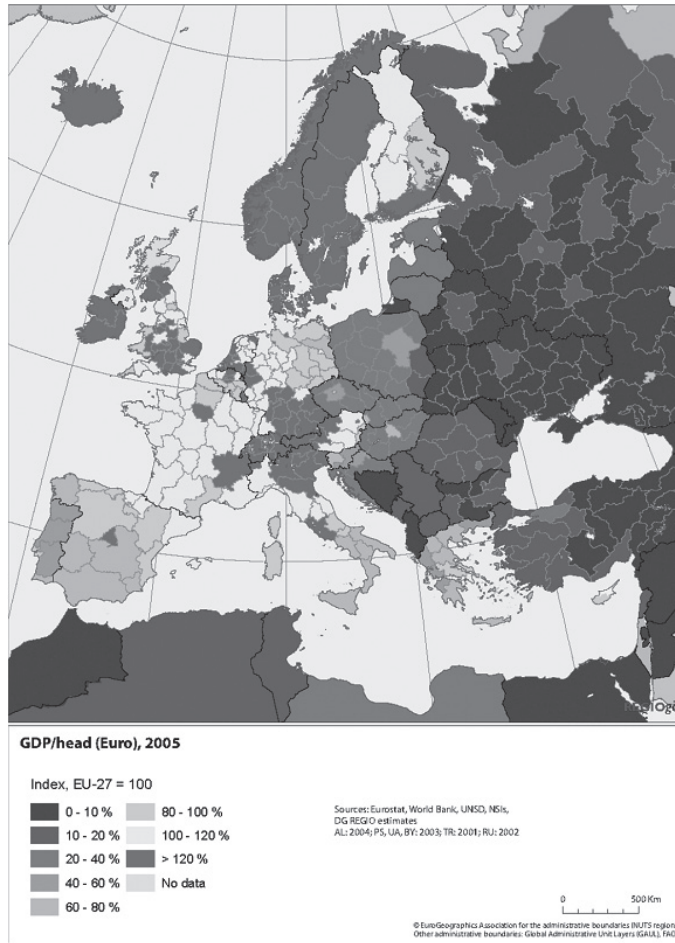
Among others the following issues have to be mentioned: the problem of “Western overshadowing” which can be detected in the process of economic decision-making, like the question of “delocalisation”, or the problem of immigration and competition for cheap labour, “social dumping”<sup>14</sup> or the problem that the East is conceived almost solely through the inflow of EU funds.

In 2004 ten new member states joined the European Union. Eight of them belonged to the group of former Socialist countries, five of them (Slovenia, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) were relatively young states, the parts of dissolved states. Three years later two other states joined the European Union, so altogether more than one-third of the EU member states had previously “belonged” to the Socialist bloc with almost 40 years of Socialist heritage. With their EU membership a lot of new problems raised and a number of debates began to focus on the ‘multi-speed’ Europe. As it became obvious, according to different calculations, the EU membership and the incoming support caused rather diversification than convergence. (Gorzelać, 2010) Different sets of data prove that there is no clear influence on regional growth and regional differentiation in the new member states.

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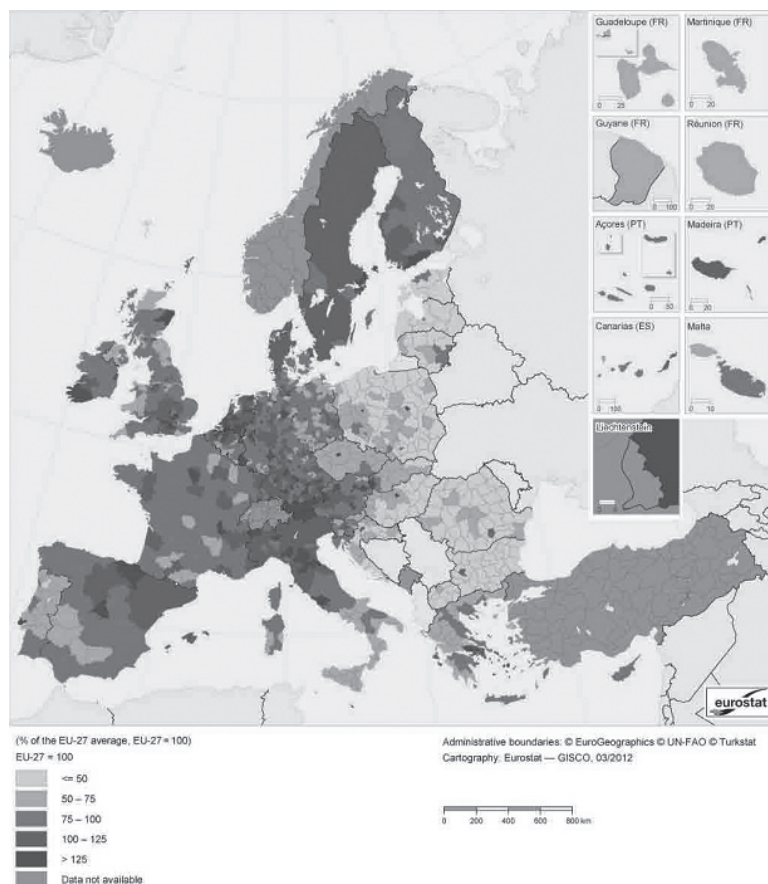
<sup>14</sup> <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/areas/industrialrelations/dictionary/definitions/SOCIALDUMPING.htm>

Figure 2. GDP per capita in EUROS in 2005



Source: Gorzelak, G. (2010): *The regional patterns of the post-socialist transformation in Central and Eastern Europe.*

Figure 3. The change in GDP from 2000 to 2009 in NUTS 2 regions



Source: EUROSTAT, 2012

## THE CRISIS AND THE REACTION

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 opened a new historical chapter for Eastern Europe. But it also marked a turning point at the heart of neo-liberal globalisation and European construction. The economic crisis in the early 2000's brought to the surface a lot of questions originated in the process of ambiguous transformation. The scenarios for the transformation were different, however, the tasks that had to be solved were almost the same. As Samary argues the problems concerning the success or failure of economic transition already began in the late 1980's.

1. The Hungarian Communist leaders were the only ones to decide to respond to the crisis of external debt by selling the country's best enterprises to foreign capital – which initially made it possible to attenuate an internal austerity policy, and made Hungary, in the first years of the following decade of “transition”, the principal host country for foreign direct investment. Nor did they hesitate, following on the new European relations established by Gorbachev, to help bring down the Wall, for a price.
2. In Poland after the repression of Solidarnosc under the regime of the Polish general Jaruzelski, compromise agreements made possible the introduction of liberal shock therapy in the country, backed up by the cancellation of Polish debt decided on by the United States at the beginning of the 1990's: no expense was spared to win over the new elites “who were in power to privatizations ... and to NATO.” (Samary, 2012)

EU membership—apart from giving the final ‘proof’ of the member states that they belong to Europe—did not solve a lot of already existing problems. However, it was expected to become even wider. From the late 1980's with the entry of Spain and Portugal in 1986 by the mid 2000's it grew from 1 to 4.9. With the arrival of Romania and Bulgaria in 2007, it increased to 20.1. But as Samary sees whereas enlargement towards the countries of Southern Europe and Ireland was accompanied by an increase in the “structural funds” of the European budget, it was the opposite which was decided in the EU's “Agenda 2000”. Germany had only given up the deutschmark by obtaining severe budgetary rules; and it did not want to “pay out” for the integration of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

Summarizing the debates on the inner borders of Europe we have to focus on the depth of the integration in several aspects. The heritage of the previous centuries is well known, such as the role of the FDI (foreign direct investment), as well as foreign human capital, or the foreign experience combined with the local initiatives. According to the statistical data collected by Eurostat or the World Bank, the fear of growing inequalities is still alive. The ever-existing periphery or semi-periphery cannot disappear at once. Summarizing our statement it can be said that instead of the Iron Curtain there is a visible ‘Wage Curtain’ emerging.

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