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Rethinking European integration process in the light of crises introduction

European integration process has entered a new phase of instability and uncertainty due to cumulatively experienced and recent crises that have confronted the European Union (EU). Such a setback is directly related to serious questions and challenges that crises have posed against the EU's integrity, balance and cohesion. Contrary to previous crises, the EU has currently experienced multiple, more intensive and interdependent crises more or less simultaneously. The seriousness of the Union's current mode of the crisis has been reflected in the accelerated debates on the future of Europe, including the scenarios of differentiated disintegration. The aim of this article is to identify and examine the nature and the effects of cumulative crises in the EU's history. A key theme of this article is that the challenges of current crises can be better understood when put against a comparative historical context. Another key theme of the article is that crises, both exogenous and endogenous, have been inherent to the integration process, from the outset, but the latter type of crises deserve more attention as they tend to have a cumulative impact for the pace, direction, and future of the integration process.

Introduction

Most of these internal crises were rooted in dilemmas, tensions, and contradictions related with two key dynamics of integration, namely, deepening and widening of the EU. The first section overviews European integration process in the wider context of crises, beginning with the European Defence Community crisis, proceeding through the enlargement and deepening crises of the 1960s followed by a number of exogenous crises before the relaunch of European integration in the late 1980s. The post-Maastricht period marked a new and transformative context for the integration process in which crises of deepening and widening eventually culminated into the most consequential constitutional crisis of the EU. The recent and current crises which are examined in the second section, namely the Eurozone crisis, the refugee crisis and Brexit have all emerged against the background of a severe political setback to the European project. These crises have undoubtedly resulted in upsetting the institutional and constitutional balance and order of the EU. The article concludes by discussing key limitations to the optimistic scenario of "more Europe" as well as risks of the current status quo. History may well teach us that the crises of past matter but not in the pro-integrative way that many practitioners and scholars have assumed so far.

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European integration in the wider context of crises

Crises have always been present in the history of the EU. They have been mostly defined as critical and uncertain moments for European integration because of political, economic and institutional challenges they bring into the process. Since dealing with these challenges mostly necessitate new rounds of bargaining and compromises between EU member states, crises may result in a reconfiguration of the established order. However, crises may bring the integration process to a standstill and endanger both it's deepening (reforms aiming at an increase in the policy scope and the institutional capacity of the EU) and widening (territorial extension of the EU with the accession of new members). Hence, crises are regarded as "critical junctures" for the future shape and direction of the Union. As Ross argues crises imply major turning points in times of instability when decisive but uncertain change is impending.

Crises do not just mean moments of uncertainty but often invoke intensified conflicts, tensions, and contradictions amongst European actors. Generally speaking, such conflicts, be they old or new, raise either sovereignty disputes in relation to deepening or redistributive conflicts with regard to enlargement of the EU. Given the fact that deepening and widening have often gone hand in hand in the history of integration, crises would involve both issues and both type of disputes. For instance, the Eurozone crisis was, in essence, a burden-sharing crisis or a crisis of solidarity. At the heart of the Eurozone crisis was a deeply political and normative question: who should bear the burden of adjustment to asymmetric financial and economic shocks [Dyson, 2017]. The Eurozone crisis was a crisis of divergence between north-west core and southern periphery too. The previous enlargement of EMU has inevitably sharpened core-periphery cleavage within the Euro area and the re-distributive conflicts between creditor and debtor States in time of crisis. In a sense, both flaws in the original design and subsequent institutional evolution and widening of EMU played a part in the escalation of the Eurozone crisis.

Since its inception, the EU has found itself faced with external shocks or endogenous shocks that are the product of integration process itself. Both shocks are significant for the EU so far, as both produce asymmetric effects and threaten the meaningfulness and credibility of member governments' commitment to solidarity [Dyson, 2017]. However, this article focuses on the internal crises of the EU and draw attention to exogenous shocks only when they had a cumulative impact on the development of European integration.

Notwithstanding the foregoing controversy about the meaning and impact of crises for European integration, many practitioners, and scholarly analysts have advocated the narrative of "forward through crisis". The common-sense view is that crises can move the EU into a new cycle of forward movement in which widening, and deepening can occur simultaneously or that both of these dynamics can be reconciled in the course of the European integration process. Indeed, concurrent deepening and widening of the EU took place with the Single European Act (SEA) of 1986. But, the SEA represented a Treaty-based reform process in response to internal and external economic and political challenges confronting the Community, not to a particular crisis [Dinan, 2017]. As will be discussed below, both the crisis-laden 1960s and crisis-ridden 1990s and 2000s were characterized by a gap between processes of deepening and widening despite the official and rhetorical commitment of member states to accomplish both.

European integration process has always contained within itself the prospective of 'crisis' arising either from internal debates of *finalité politique* of the Union or from necessary accom-

modation of individual expectations, preferences, and ideas of member states. Moreover, the already existing tensions may be aggravated by political conflicts of an enlargement agenda requiring re-bargaining and re-adjustment of national preferences. Since the latter are largely shaped by relative gains and losses from the enlargement, the process to find a common ground becomes even more complex and may prone to hard intergovernmental distributional conflicts.

The very first political crisis of European integration had appeared with the refusal of the French National Assembly to ratify its own proposal for establishing a European Defense Community (EDC) as a Europeanized solution to the issue of German rearmament in August 1954. In fact, the way Pleven Plan had foreseen for the rearmament of Germany under the EDC was the same logic applied for the re-industrialization of Germany under a supra-national authority. However, the EDC project was regarded by integrationists as a critical step towards a more federal Europe so that the expansion of the scope of integration would be accompanied by an increase in the level of integration via the European Political Community. The dual reform agenda gave rise to a ratification crisis in French parliamentary politics. Schneider [2009] argues that the ultimate French rejection was related with an ongoing sovereignty conflict regarding the Member States' retention of authority over the sensitive area of defense. Ross [2011] describes the failed EDC initiative as a "crisis of design", originating from Member States' disagreement about the key institutional and policy setting. Accordingly, the crisis of design came from the different aspirations whether to form an intergovernmental or supranational method- the classical debate of European integration- in a highly controversial policy field.

In this sense, it became clear that crises can serve as lesson-drawing processes for the EU and its member states. Accordingly, the failed EDC/EPC project demonstrated the practical unattainability of launching supranationalism in areas of 'high politics'. Rather, the only feasible choice was to proceed with an expansion of the policy scope of integration (a transition from sectoral integration into more comprehensive economic integration) under the functionalist logic while seeking new compromises over the institutional level of this wider policy initiative

In the following period, the establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC) coupled with a period economic growth in Western Europe and a rapid the increase in European international trade in the 1960s had increased the new Community's attractiveness for outsiders both in Northern Europe and in the Southern periphery. Notwithstanding its growing external image and power, there has been still an ongoing political tension between the proponents of federalism and those of national sovereignty within the EEC framework. As different from the previous years of controversy around a single reform project, the early 1960s saw a clash of de Gaulle's vision of Europe as a 'Union of States' as framed in the failed Fouchet Plan advocating deeper political and economic intergovernmental cooperation for the Six under the leadership of France versus Commission President Hallstein's federalist vision of Europe. Kühnhardt [2011] argues that the defeat of the Fouchet Plan by French partners played a role in the subsequent French resistance against the accession of the UK, in 1963 and in 1967. Although the reasons behind the French No to Northern enlargement demands a multi-causal account, the crisis that the French veto over the British membership gave rise to a membership conflict and a sovereignty-based one. However, more severe and disruptive than the enlargement crisis was the French President's fierce opposition to the Commission's reform package on deeper integration. Just like the EDC crisis, Ross [2011] defines the empty chair as a crisis of design stemming from the Member States' diverging preferences for the designation of the institutional structure of the

EEC. The crisis of 1965 was not just a structural conflict over the new institutional arrangements, it precipitated the first constitutional crisis in the history of the EU. The post-crisis phase of European integration marked an apparent shift away from supranationalism towards intergovernmentalism in the politics and policy-making process of the EC.

Since the crisis was, to a large extent, linked to the presence of De Gaulle in French and European politics, the initial post-Gaullist years provided an opportunity to revive the reform agenda along the completion, deepening and widening of the European integration process. However, the shared impetus for reform and revival was soon to be constrained by a series of exogenous shocks and economic and financial crises of the 1970s. As a result, the period of Eurosclerosis blocked any major innovative step towards further integration including the ambitious Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) project. The reform agenda of the early 1970s was mostly dominated by increased member state divergences over the necessary policy measures and institutional adjustments at the European level.

The 1970s was not only characterized by a decline in the search for coordinated and Europe-wide solutions to pressing problems of the day but was also marked by a continued budgetary dispute between the UK and the rest of the EC since 1979. While a new rebate agreement at the Fontainebleau European Council of June 1984 permanently solved the dispute, British membership has been controversial since then. With regard to this, from the very beginning, there was clear British emphasis of the protection of Commonwealth interests and attachment to parliamentary sovereignty. Having been discontented with the accession deal struck by the Conservative party, the new Labor government further politicized the issue of membership through the processes of renegotiation and referendum. Although British citizens voted in favor of staying in the EC, both membership and concerns on the basic political issues of integration had remained contested in domestic party politics. Hence, the northern enlargement of 1973 has brought two Euro skeptical late-comers, namely Britain and Denmark into the EC. These new members posed a challenge to deepening of integration by means supranational institutional reforms.

Arguably, the enlargement crises of the 1970s and early 1980s (the accession process of Greece in 1981 followed similar lines with that of Britain) can be regarded as crises of adaptation or even crises of necessity. In this sense, crises at that point can be regarded as opening prospects for the relaunch of European integration under the Single European Act of 1986 . The SEA reforms marked the beginning of a new cycle of forward movement by means of completion (the single market), deepening (policy and institutional reforms) and widening (accession of Spain and Portugal).

The logic of Treaty-based reforms continued apace with the convening of two parallel intergovernmental conferences on the EMU and European political union in 1990. The resultant Treaty on European Union (TEU) of 1991 (also known as the Maastricht Treaty) established the new political entity of the 'European Union' bringing together the existing three Communities within its new architecture. Unlike its predecessor, the TEU brought only the issues of completion and deepening onto the post-Cold War European reform agenda. While the task of completion meant the progressive achievement of EMU in three stages (the third stage is underway since 1 January 1999), deepening amounted to broadening the scope of integration into foreign and security policies and cooperation in justice and home affairs, alongside some major institutional changes, including co-decision for the EP. Hence, the TEU constituted a critical juncture in the EU's history as it initiated a process of transformation from an economic community into

a polity-formation. Maastricht was not an outcome of crises but a series of political crises were followed from it. The Danes refused to ratify the new treaty in a 1992 referendum. In fact, the Danish referendum demonstrated the heightened controversy over the finalité politique about the European integration. As Phinnemore [2013] succinctly puts it "… the desire for a European Union was not universal". In order to prevent the Danish ratification crisis to turn into a threatening crisis for the EU as a whole, the Edinburgh Summit of December 1992 granted legal exceptions or opt-outs to Denmark in areas of core state powers such as monetary, external and internal security, along with the certain exceptions in European citizenship. Accommodating Danish sovereignty concerns secured a successful referendum outcome in 1993. In the meantime, the French people narrowly approved the TEU in September 1992.

In the short run, ratification problems and difficulties turned out to be challenging for Exchange Rate Mechanism and cast a shadow on the run-up to EMU [Verdun, 2016]. More importantly, the ratification process of the Maastricht Treaty allowed for further politicizing of EU decisions and decision-making in the context of referenda and elections. Parallel to the political contestation of EU issues in domestic arenas, there was a decline in public enthusiasm and support for the European integration project since the early 1990s as well [Guerra and McLaren, 2016].

It is worth stressing that these attitudinal changes on the part of European mass publics took place despite continuing attempts to accommodate national sensitivities and concerns by means of a differentiated or flexible form of arrangements. The opt-outs from major policy areas (EMU, foreign and security policy, JHA cooperation and social policy) for some member states (the UK and Denmark) would characterize the post- Maastricht EU. Fears of a less uniform and more differentiated EU were not shared by all scholars, however. Kühnhardt [2011] assessed the process of ratification crisis as a necessarily productive time to absorb the 1995 enlargement and to prepare for the possible challenges originating from the eastern enlargement.

The EMU emerging from these processes of enlargement is a highly differentiated institutional regime. In addition to UK's AND Denmark's traditional opting out clauses, the Central Eastern European Countries (CEECs) had been initially excluded from the EMU and Schengen until their harmonization process was achieved fully. Eastern enlargement of EMU has inevitably sharpened core-periphery i.e. old-new cleavage within the Euro area. That would appear as the re-distributive conflicts between creditor and debtor States in time of Eurozone crisis. Therefore, since the early 1990s deepening and differentiation started to go hand in hand because of the widening. In this sense, differentiated integration trend has been one of the critical repercussions of the Union's enlargement agenda. That is why, while differentiation has led to increased heterogeneity, it is attributed as a relief factor of the cost of the enlargement. The other nexus point is that although differentiated integration is regarded as an amelioration to the possible gridlock of decision-making, it poses a risk of some member States' 'being left outside'. Even though opting-out is self-imposed by the UK, Brexit debate is the self-evident of the fact that how outcomes of the differentiated integration might give critical signals for the future of the European integration. That would imply that UK's decreasing of influence over major political issues such as EMU. Nevertheless, in the following period of eastern enlargement round with increasing diversity and heterogeneity, concepts of absorption capacity, enlargement fatigue i.e. incapacity to integrate and discontent of the EU citizens have come out. They have been constraining factors of EU's "policy-making capacity, public support, and institutional reform". Accordingly, only when the

sustainability of these components is assured, absorption of new members and EU's deepening might be reconciled.

Against this background, the post-Maastricht period marked a new and transformative context for the integration process in which crises of deepening and widening eventually culminated into the most consequential constitutional crisis of the EU. The Constitutional Treaty is based on the idea of replacing all the former Treaties with the one single constitutional document abolishing the pillar structure which had been envisaged by the Maastricht Treaty. The promise of the Constitutional Treaty was a federal constitutional model [Dedman, 2009]. Abolishing of pillar structure was regarded as a further step towards the federalism whereby sovereignty of the member states would be decreased. As against its innovative and ambitious vision, it would lead a total stalemate for the future of the European integration project. The quagmire of the ratification crisis was triggered by the referendums held in France and Netherlands.

In a sense, French and Dutch refusals of ratification of the constitution have been firm reactions against the notion that the deepening and widening might go hand in hand. The moment of such reaction against the agenda of Europhiles was interpreted as European public's alienation from and their growing dissatisfaction about the EU institutions. According to Eurobarometer surveys, there has been also increasing discontent with regards to unemployment rates and liberalization initiatives. The prospective agenda of Union's enlargement was also counted as one of the concerns of the French and Dutch people. From this point of view, it was a fertile ground for the blossoming of the populist right-wing parties which articulate anti-immigrant, anti-globalist and Eurosceptic discourses all around Europe. The politicization of the European people which was activated by such mobilization acts of the right wing would become even much more salient in the following years.

Overall, the ratification crisis produced a watershed event in the European integration history which had witnessed many ebbs and flows occasionally. It marked the end of the enthusiastic vision of the European constitutionalization. On the other side, it marked the beginning of the 'period of reflection' that deemed EU to "…think a period for reflection, clarification, and discussion".Declaration of the 'Plan D: Democracy, Dialogue, Debate' would be a pause button for both further deepening and widening. The period symbolized EU's going into a coma during which it would focus on solving its own problems primarily.

RECENTLY EXPERIENCED CRISES

The examination of so-called cumulative crises within the history of the Union has provided general background regarding far more severe, more intensive and multiple crises that have recently emerged. So far, crises have been usually related to different answers to the question of the 'finalité politique' of the Union. There have been diverging aspirations of the member states which caused redistributive conflicts. Shifting our focus to currently experienced crises, it is of critical importance to highlight that the newest type of crises is the ones that triggered disintegration debates of the EU by arising more uncertainty for the direction and future of the integration process. Indeed, the tendency of accumulation has been felt even much more severely. Concepts such as 'democracy deficit', 'euro-skepticism', 'politicization' that became already prominent from 2005 onwards have begun to be constantly and incrementally articulated with every new wave of crisis.

Firstly, such mobilization acts played its role in the aggravation of severity of the crises that almost seemed to close the door of prospective widening agenda over which massive effort was put once upon a time. Secondly, deepening, which was driven at elite-level, became highly disputed, contested, and politicized. That made the notion of 'forward through crises' irrelevant. In this sense, the second section aims to give a clear description of the process during which EU's historical promise of conducting 'deepening and widening hand in hand' has fainted. Moreover, it is also the illustration of how the most important policy agendas of the Union i.e. deepening, and widening did come to standstill process. To this end, this section begins with an examination of the Eurozone crisis. Then it moves its attention to refugee crisis and Brexit. While the refugee crisis was indeed not originated within the borders of Europe, the Brexit was purely an internal crisis of the EU. Indeed, that presented "blurred lines between external and internal threats" of the European integration.

The eurozone crisis marked the beginning of EU's new agenda of preoccupation with a chain of crises on the horizon. In its roots, the Eurozone crisis was a burden-sharing crisis or a crisis of solidarity. At the heart of it, there was a deeply political and normative question regarding the responsibility sharing of adjustment to asymmetric financial and economic shocks [Dyson, 2017]. The crisis was triggered by the Great Recession of 2007-2008 because of the sub-prime mortgage crisis and liquidity shortage in the US. Its spread into European markets and Europe's being ineffective to react along with the design flaws of the EMU exacerbated the situation in the member states. As already implied, the EMU appearing from the enlargement rounds has been highly differentiated institutional regime. The differentiation became especially prominent with the rise of indebtedness in peripheral member states. Moreover, there is several flaws in its original design such as account deficits, non-convergence of fiscal policies under the control of member states with centralized monetary policies under the supranational control of ECB. As Vilpišauskas [2013] argues that the design of the EMU resulted in destabilization of the financial markets and undermining the strength of the monetary union. Moreover, what began originally as a 'financial' crisis turned into a 'political' one induced by discussions and inconsistent reactions of the member states. As a result, EU's agenda of policy-making has come to be occupied with rescue packages and action plans. There were diverging opinions regarding how burden-sharing mechanism could work. Diverging answers to this question stemmed from the divergent economic status of core/ creditor and periphery/ debtor members.

EU could not give any immediate reaction also because of clauses of 'no allocation of credit from EU to the member states' and of 'no bailing-out'. The fact that EU was caught unprepared for its eurozone's first crisis articulated widescale criticisms and challenged its legitimacy of policy-making. When the EU belatedly responded to the crisis, that would generate critical consequences for EU's integration. These can be analyzed in two different camps namely as 'functional spill-lover camp' at the elites level and 'constraining dissensus camp' at the public level. The functional camp implied the necessity to complete fiscal union by transferring competences to EU level that was not possible previously without the pressure of the crisis. That is why the economic crisis and its repercussions were mostly regarded as the 'revenge of the neo-functionalism'. In this respect, as Schimmelfenning [2014] argues that only neo-functionalist prescription foreseeing delegation of competencies to the EU level would protect the Eurozone from several damages in the face of politicization. In the same direction, the support for euro was surprisingly on the rise with appraisals such as "If the euro collapses, Europe collapses" by Chancellor Angela Merkel. Thus, high

dependency on 'Euro' was acknowledged. Accordingly, with the aim of preserving the financial stability of the eurozone, EU- and euro-level solutions were formulated. A new paragraph was inserted into the Article 136 TFEU thereby softening the no-bailout clause. Three funds namely as European System of Financial Supervisors and European Banking Authority and European Stability Mechanism (ESM) were established. In this light, Economic Adjustment Programs which envisaged bailing out packages under the name of 'Troika' comprising tripartite formation of ECB, European Commission and International Monetary Fund (IMF) were formulated. Greece, Ireland, and Portugal received financial funds under this provision.

What stands out regarding the survival plans has been Germany's firm attitude in insisting harsh austerity measures along with policy changes targeted especially to Greece in exchange for financial support. It converted financial crisis into a political one. Furthermore, 'Grexit' implying the possible exit of Greece from the eurozone was articulated in case Greece's non-compliance with the measures. Both because of harsh conditionality and the articulated threat of 'Grexit' in every round of bailout negotiations especially after the election of SYRIZA, EU could not draw a united picture. That is why the crisis is also associated with the lack of solidarity.

On the other side, designing elite-level belatedly solutions have generated massive reaction creating concrete 'constraining dissensus camp' of the European people. Such a context has generated Eurosceptic waves, parties, and discourses across the EU. The most concrete example has been the victory of radical left-wing SYRIZA which accused the PASOK government and EU's austerity measures to claim political credit in its electoral campaign. Euroscepticism has culminated also in other EU member states because of mobilization of the populist right-wing parties such as Front National in France or Freedom Party in Austria which are making use of cleavage between creditor and debtor member states. Mass scale politicization perpetuated by the Eurosceptic parties resulted in the necessity to accommodate public demands which have challenged EU's legitimacy of policy- and decision-making. As a result, any generation of incentive for reforms at the policy-makers level was obstructed.

The consequences of the eurozone crisis have two-dimensions. On the one hand it produced a new impetus towards fiscal integration, budgetary coordination, and surveillance and banking union. On the other hand, the way of elite's while conducting these initiatives drained all hopes and conformity of the public with their national governments and with EU's elites which have created concrete hindrance for the speed and incentive of further political integration. In this context, anti- EU sentiments have found a suitable ambiance to blossom. As already discussed, integration process of the EU has always included many spillovers and spillbacks. The latter can be taken as consequences of the historical crises of integration. However, the eurozone crisis, other than its being accompanied by the deep economic effects for the European citizens that became highly politicized, may be counted as a burnout of all of the gloomy moments of integration within its history. For the first time, the exit of one of the member states i.e. Grexit was debated. With the rescue packages, Greek membership was secured. However, support from the European public could not be secured because of elite-driven policy arrangements which triggered a public reaction. As a result, people's increasing interference in EU's policy-making caused a discrepancy between "functionally efficient and politically feasible solutions". Nevertheless, the rise of Euroscepticism accompanied with the politicization had not yet brought its worst repercussion. Even more gloomy and bitter political context was its own way first with the outbreak of the refugee crisis and then with Brexit.

EU's own internal political context occupied with Euroscepticism, politicization, and rise of xenophobic right-wing, the refugee crisis broke out. Indeed, by the time Europe awakened the severity of the situation in Syria, it had turned into a vicious combination of civil war, sectarian conflict and terrorist attacks of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). That resulted in massive displacement of people escaping to neighboring countries. However, prolonged and deteriorated situation in the region caused its spread into Europe. The ironic point was that the vulnerable Syrian people who tried to reach Europe used dangerous sea routes at the expense of their lives in order to save their lives.

How the flow of people generated a 'refugee' crisis within the Union can be analyzed in two dimensions. The first dimension is its humanitarian aspect which necessitated both humanitarian and moral responsibility to be taken by the member states. That comes from the legal definition of a 'refugee' as;

Any person [subject to] "…well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.".

In this respect, EU's responsibility has arisen from this implication of forceful displacement of Syrian people escaping from civil war and inhumane attacks. However, unwilling member states from which commitment to humanitarian duty was expected were in the manner of protecting themselves from the flux. As Greenhill [2016] argues that such an unwillingness shown by the member states during the refugee crisis are mostly schizophrenic and hypocritical because of EU's wide declaration of its being firm supporter of human rights, values and norms. On the other hand, the second dimension has been the cleavage arisen because of the different stance of the member states to the crisis categorized as; pro-refugees, anti-refugees, and states that are vulnerable to massive refugee flow. In this context, member states reacted -divergently- and according to their own interests. Member states in the latter category such as Italy and Greece have been the most vulnerable member states to the migration because of their 'geographical proximity' to the Middle East and MENA from which the main flow was coming. That is why they violated 'first country' rule of Dublin regulation by letting refugees pass through to non-frontline northern European states without legal registration. On the other hand, member states such as Sweden and Germany showing their pro-refugee position -granted asylum to Syrian refugees respectively in 2013 and 2015. However, Germany's unilateral act of 'opening doors' during the crisis was met with a certain aloofness by Denmark that reintroduced 'border control' within Schengen area. In the same direction, CEECs and the Baltic States that conducted very prohibitive migration policies were the firm opponents of accepting refugees. They applied very restrictive migration policies. More than just taking an anti-refugee position, some member states such as Hungary and Slovenia have even built fences across their borders to obstruct migration routes. That has arisen the question over the future of Schengen and over the future of unity of Europe that drew a divided picture. In this sense, the refugee crisis tested EU's solidarity as well.

Such a discontent coming from the migration flow would be soon further exacerbated because of a chain of terrorist attacks began with the Paris attacks in November 2015. France reacted

immediately by closing its borders and declaring a state of emergency. In the following period, terrorist attacks respectively in Brussels, Nice, Normandy, and Berlin have generated an EU-wide storm of 'insecurity'. As a result, "…Recommendation for temporary internal border control in exceptional circumstances putting the overall functioning of the Schengen area at risk" was introduced. In the context of the ongoing refugee crisis, EU was accused of not being able to manage its external border security. That was the point when EU's political refugee crisis has turned out a 'security' crisis. Accordingly, what began originally as a 'humanitarian' crisis has turned into a 'political' and 'solidarity' crisis respectively. Then it has become a 'security' crisis because of terrorist attacks. This continually evolving aspect of the refugee crisis reflects crisis' being a multi-dimensional.

EU's internal political context which has already been prone to flourishment of radical Euro-sceptic right-wing which has set their agenda over the ineffectiveness of the EU in every aspect of politics would be occupied with the articulation of xenophobic and anti-refugee discourses to mobilize and politicize people. In this sense, refugee crisis along with the terrorist attacks turned into right wing's tool of claiming political credit. The sharp rise of right-wing parties was the clear evidence of the fact that European citizens which became widely politicized took the euro-skeptic position during the 2017 elections. The rise of Front National in France and of Alternative for Germany in Germany can be given as concrete examples.

EU's divided picture continued also during the debates of solution packages formulated within the framework of European Agenda on Migration. Just like the divergent repercussions of the crisis in the member states, reactions against the proposed implementation packages were also diverging. Accordingly, Hungary opposed the quota system of resettlement based on the redistribution of the refugees. Slovakia and Poland supported such reaction. Hungary asserted that it has been already affected seriously. As Müftüler-Baç [2015] argues that Hungary rejected Germany's 'open door policy' on the grounds that it is a way of posing 'moral imperialism'. In a sense, that was a concrete rejection of German predominance which became prominent since the eurozone crisis within the Union.

In order to formulate a solution to the crisis, the EU cooperated with Turkey that had been violating human rights and fundamental freedoms. They formulated mutual cooperation during the series of mutual visits and summits such as 'EU-Turkey summit of 29 November 2015'. In this respect, EU kept its silence for the sake of securing its own interests and of halting refugee flow to its soil. That negligence did decrease its leverage of imposing democratization to its candidate countries. More importantly, its being -discursive-defender of human rights and norms and fundamental freedoms was highly questioned.

However, EU could not save itself from being at the center of criticism. In the first place, EU could not actively respond to the situation in the region from where Syrian civil war originated. That is why EU's worldwide actorness was put into question. Member states mostly prioritized their own interests over such a delicate issue of humanitarian responsibility. In a sense, they were escaping from the responsibility for the sake of their own interests at the expense of moving away from *Esprit's de corps* of the Union.

What will be discussed in the latest section of this article is indeed a very sui-generis debate within EU's history of integration. In this sense, it is even open to discussion whether calling exit decision of a member state as a 'crisis' is a well-directed argument from the point of view of this article. Because the main aim of this article has been so far was to focus on the dramatic

moments within EU's integration history which impeded 'deepening' of the Union by generating 'uncertainty'. These have been the moments which have been usually overcome with the help of bargaining talks among member states. Accordingly, regarding Brexit -i.e. Britain's exit from the EU- as just 'another' crisis is highly questionable.

As already implied in the previous sections of this article, from the very beginning, UK has been always skeptic towards policy-making at the supranational EU level. In fact, together with Denmark, they have been posing challenges to the 'deepening' of the Union. There was no exception in their attitudes towards EU during the recent crises. Rather, the presence of Eurosceptic wave, politicization, and anti-immigrant sentiments further weakened UK's commitment to the EU.

In the beginning, Brexit referendum appeared as Cameron's political move of claiming credit by promising to hold an in/out referendum. Such a political movement has been in fact related to Cameron's calculation that 'Remain camp' would win. As Hobolt [2016] argues that holding a referendum would be more likely to give an unfavorable result on the grounds that the people find a ground to show their anger by rejecting proposals of their governments- in this case by rejecting Cameron's 'Remain' campaign-. However, he would be supporting ‚remain camp' in exchange for some demands he clarified in early 2017 including securing national currencies, exemption from contribution to eurozone bailouts, no more engagement with further integration and restriction of claiming migration benefits for the first four years in the UK. These demands – especially the latter- faced with the aloofness of other member states on the grounds that it is discriminating against other EU nationals. Kroll and Leuffen [2016] regard UK's agenda of renegotiation as a 'failure' because its demands were far beyond the previous concessions and flexibility of opting outs or differentiation' given to her.

The reasons of the British people voting for the 'Leave camp' have been the same reasons that of holding in/out referendum at the very first place. Accordingly, main factors can be listed as their distrust of national government and conducted policies, dissatisfaction with the economic situation and feelings of insecurity aggravated respectively by the eurozone and refugee crises. In fact, the existent problems since the eurozone crisis that generated predominance of the populist right-wing articulating Eurosceptic, xenophobic and anti-immigrant discourses had already overshadowed UK's conformity within the Union. Herein, mobilization acts of the UK Independence Party (UKIP) to demonstrate EU as a scapegoat of the economic problems and of the 'losers of the globalization' have been a very critical factor. To this end, the 'leave camp' played its card of "taking back control from Brussels" by emphasizing that the country did lose its authority to decide over critical economic, security, migration and political issues. Accordingly, it set its agenda to criticize low rates of unemployment, of economic growth and migration policies all of which would be compensated only by leaving EU. As Vollard [2014] calls it 'Eurosceptic dissatisfaction' was self-evident in every single statement of the 'leave camp'. They also focused on the future possibility of EU's enlargement- especially of Turkish accession- in order to make people further politicized regarding the issue of migration which had been already delicate because of the refugee crisis. With these aspects, the leave camp did point backwardness of the EU through which it could accomplish its main aim of leaving Union.

On the other side, Bremain camp asserted "UK's being stronger in Europe" which was not a very firm and strong argument when the presence of the setbacks in the economy are considered. Such probable economic instability arising from UK's leave was prioritized because the British

people were mostly not feeling committed to the EU. The assumption was based on the comparison of the current situation of economic stability with a probable exit from EU. Examples include the bright side of the globalization such as preserving UK's global influence and international job and investment opportunities. That is why the winners of the globalization i.e. the young and educated people were more inclined to vote for remain. In that sense, the socio-economic difference between voters of the two camps was self-evident. Bremain side focused also the social aspects of staying together with the Union as EU is mostly regarded as the guarantor and defender of equality, human rights, and anti-discrimination laws. These alleged reasons to remain were regarded as falling behind the severe and harsh criticisms of Brexit supporters against the setbacks of the EU.

The result of the referendum to leave the EU was shocking for all over the EU. The repercussions for each side would be different though. For the EU's political context, these can be analyzed in three categories; calculations of Eurosceptic parties, the discomfort of pro-EU parties and EU's political context. Accordingly, the expectations of the Eurosceptic parties looking for support for their anti-EU aspirations were justified. Moreover, the possibility of 'domino effect' as a spread to other member states was highly regarded as a glimmer of hope and beginning the end of EU's integration for their rise and shine. The Eurosceptic-parties which regarded the 'Brexit contagion' as would-be- victory, called holding a referendum for their own states as well. As Nicoli [2017] argues that the victory of one euro-skeptic party in a member state would be Eurosceptic parties' necessary political incentive to mobilize people in other member states. On the other side, British decision to leave the EU produced shockwave and disappointment for the pro-EU parties. For them, this result indeed needs to be given special attention to understand the root causes and to propose alternative solutions while setting their own political agenda. Otherwise, the possible spread to other member states would be detrimental both for their own legitimacy and for the total political project of the EU. As Phinnemore [2016] argues that arising challenges of the 21st century such as the rising inequality generating mass reaction against globalization can no longer be negligible.

The most critical implications would be for the ambitious political project whose traditional historical notion of 'forward through crises' is put into question. The rise of politicization and anti-EU sentiments aggravated by the ongoing chain of crises of every kind; economic, political and security challenged EU at an unprecedented level in recent years. In this respect, the ability of the European integration to deepen and widen had been already restricted because of the politicization and contestation of the European politics since the eurozone crisis. Moreover, these setbacks did reach the level that cannot be got over with the help of 'differentiation' which turned into a 'dysfunctional' attempt especially after the Brexit.

As a result, the literature on the European integration shifted its focus to the concept of European dis-integration debates after the UK's decision to leave. To this end, broad perspective of possible scenarios and commentaries on the future of Europe integration along with the key limitations to the optimistic scenario of "more Europe" became highly relevant. These have been not in the pro-integrative direction in the recent years. The underlying reason behind it is a long process of historical accumulation of crises. Thus, the cumulative tendency of the crises has necessitated an analysis by putting them against a comparative historical context. In such comparison, it is found that while both exogenous and endogenous, have been inherent to the integration process, from the outset.

However, the latter type of crises deserves more attention as they tend to have a cumulative impact on the pace, direction, and future of the integration process. Accordingly, it has been observed that rising trend of politicization by the articulated anti-EU sentiments has challenged EU's integration in the recent years. The chain of crises has begun with the Eurozone crisis. The repercussions were accumulated during the upcoming Refugee crisis and the Brexit debate. The concrete reaction of this accumulation in the UK was manifested by the leave decision. In other member states, the rise of the Eurosceptic right-wing parties during the national elections implied the decrease of trust to the EU level of policy-making.

To conclude, this article has presented a new phase of instability and uncertainty due to cumulatively experienced and recent crises that confronted the EU. The main theme of this article has been that the challenges of current crises can be better understood when put against a comparative historical context. In this light, that crises, both exogenous and endogenous, were seen to be inherent to the integration process from the outset. However, the very recent type of crises has implied more uncertain future for the pace, the direction of the integration process. In this sense, the Qua Vadis of Europe remains a puzzle still to be solved.

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