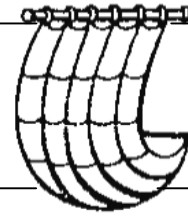




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EU-Russia relations :
**How to overcome the deadlock of mutual
misunderstanding ?**

By

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intends to make available a series of concise texts covering essays, conferences, contributions from experts and researchers whose ideas may further encourage either general or more specific reflection on the question of European construction

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Foreword

It takes at least two to « overcome the deadlock of mutual misunderstanding ». That is why the « Interbrew-Baillet Latour Chair » on EU-Russia relations was glad to invite Mr Nikolay Kaveshnikov for a two-months research trip at the Université catholique de Louvain (the Institute for European Studies) in autumn 2001. His visit proved to be a step towards that goal: extensive exchanges of views, information sharing, frequent participation in lectures and seminars indeed helped to fill the cultural ‘gap’ between East and West. This contribution is another result of the journey.

In his analyses, Nikolay Kaveshnikov combines the jurist’s views on the European integration with the Russian citizen’s and scholar’s outlook on EU-Russia cooperation.

This particular ‘blend’ thus enriches the analysis of EU-Russia relations by a sensitive evaluation of young russian citizens’ perception of Western Europe. Going well beyond the traditionnal antagonism between “Westernizers” and “Slavophiles”, the contribution identifies nuances and evolutions in these perceptions. It goes deeply into the idea that Russia is ‘another Europe’. From there, it becomes understandable that cooperation between one Europe and the other should, first of all, overcome mutual prejudices and misunderstanding, in order to move closer to real cooperation and sectorial partnership. Somewhere between ‘antagonism’ and ‘fusion’, pragmatists of good-will suggest that Russia should be considered as a (real) partner in some areas where cooperation would be highly beneficial to both parties.

The author’s views - a critical look at the EU coupled with pragmatism - are nothing but a reflection of Russia’s evolving attitude toward the EU.

Laetitia Spetschinsky
Interbrew-Baillet Latour Chair

EU-Russia relations : how to overcome the deadlock of mutual misunderstanding ?

By

Nikolay Kaveshnikov

“We, the leaders of the Russian Federation and the European Union...
reaffirm the particular importance we attach to the strengthening of our
(long-term) strategic partnership.”

*Joint Statement of EU-Russia Summit, 29 May 2000; 30 October 2000; 3
October 2001*

“Russia and the European Union should move from common words to
development of practical aspects of cooperation.”

Igor Ivanov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 5
May 2000

The relationships between Russia and the European Union are regarded as increasingly important both in Moscow and in Brussels. Declarations about ‘strategic partnership’ that aims at preventing the emergence of new dividing lines in Europe are countless. During the last decade a set of bilateral and unilateral documents underlining the importance of these relations has been adopted. The most important ones are the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA, 1994), the Common Strategy of the EU on Russia (1999) and the Medium-Term Strategy for Development Relations between the Russian Federation and the European Union (1999). A network of permanent cooperation bodies was established according to the PCA and started work in 1999. It consists of the Cooperation Committee (high-level officials), which coordinates the work of nine subcommittees responsible for particular policy aspects of EU-Russia relations. The Cooperation Council, which meets annually at a ministerial level, heads the network. Last but not least, EU-Russia Summits at the highest level take place twice a year. The Russian Concept of Foreign Policy mentioned the EU among the top priority regions. The first Common Strategy of the EU was addressed to Russia, and this fact is regarded in Russia as a testimony to the EU’s intention to have Russia involved in a new European order.¹

Undoubtedly the EU and Russia are deeply tied together, and their relations have a great potential. Security on the European continent is inseparable; its maintenance requires in-depth EU-Russia cooperation in soft-security issues such as combating terrorism and international crime, crisis prevention and management, non-proliferation, disarmament, conventional weapons export and environmental pollution. Coordination of positions on various issues of international policy, and cooperation in the framework of international organisations such as the United Nations, OSCE and Council of Europe can foster the efficiency of actions and will enable both parties to play a more important role in the world. The European Union and Russia are deeply interconnected economically as well. Russia represents an enormous market that is waiting to be ‘explored’ - and this will be done mainly by European companies due to the competitiveness of European technologies and industrial goods, geographical proximity and

¹ LIKHACHEV, V., ‘Rossiia i Evropeiskii soiuz v strategicheskoi perspektive’, *Mezhdunarodnaia Zhizn*, n° 1, 2002, p. 40-50.

cultural similarity. Russia is currently the main EU supplier of hydrocarbons, and Russia's share of energy imports to the EU is expected to increase in the future. In turn, the European Union accounts for 35% of Russia's foreign trade (primarily raw materials), about 50% of its net foreign investment and nearly \$100 billion of foreign debt (about 65%).² The EU is also one of the main suppliers of modern technologies to Russia, and this will be vitally necessary to trigger structural reform when macroeconomic stabilisation provides the preconditions for stable economic growth.

In contrast to official declarations, the level and intensity of EU-Russia cooperation are currently very modest and characterized by separate actions and the absence of a strategic framework. Of course, it is always difficult to move from programmes and plans to their implementation, but many political initiatives leave no more practical results than water dripping into the sand. Some examples of this pattern are mentioned below.

Both parties emphasise the importance of a constant dialogue on political and security matters. The EU-Russia Summit in October 2001 created favourable conditions for this dialogue. By establishing a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), the European Union is equipping itself to play a more important role on the international stage; the Russian Federation's internal reforms are progressing in order to consolidate the democratic rule of law and the modernisation of its economy. It was decided to 'institute specific consultations on security and defence matters' and to examine 'mechanisms for contribution by the Russian Federation to the European Union's crisis management operations' including the implementation of civilian crisis-management instruments. But the rhetoric about the importance of partnership contrasts with the practical results. The next summit in May 2001 failed to implement these decisions. Only after the tragedy of September 11th, were monthly consultations between the EU Political and Security Committee Troika and Russia established in order to identify opportunities for political and security cooperation. Even then, the emphasis was on issues of non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control that are mostly declarative and have no practical implication for EU-Russia relations. The most important aspect of cooperation in security matters - the arrangements for possible Russian participation in the civilian and military crisis-management operations of the EU - will be developed as progress is made in ESDP. Decisions were postponed until an indefinite date in the future. Even NATO, whose relations with Russia suffered from the tensions of the last decade, was more successful in elaborating new procedures for the involvement of Russia in decision-making.

The October 2001 the summit addressed another set of questions, which had become crucial after the events of 11 September 2001: the fight against terrorism, transnational crime and cooperation in judicial matters. What have Russia and the European Union done to meet these new soft-security challenges? The result of the summit was a Statement on International Terrorism. But everyone these days has made joint and individual statements condemning terrorism. Wasn't it clear before then that terrorism should not only be condemned but also jointly opposed? It should be noted that, in the wake of September 11th, the EU Member States have not wasted time in taking concrete measures to counteract terrorism and organised crime. For example, they have adopted detailed provisions on a common European arrest warrant. Meanwhile Russia and the EU continue to discuss various definitions of terrorism and in what way this definition should be applied to the situation in Chechnya. Some slight

² In 2000, Russia-EU foreign trade amounted to \$48 billion out of total Russian foreign trade of \$137 billion (calculated from Goskomstat Rossii, 2001, pp. 607-608). Net foreign cumulative investment amounted to \$54.5 billion on 1 January 2001, including \$27.3 billion from the EU Member States (*ibid.*, p. 579). Of the total Russian debt, that is about \$150 billion (including the debts of state banks on 1 January 2002 (statistics of Bank of Russia, loaded from <http://www.cbr.ru>)) more than \$100 billion belonged to EU Member States and EU residents (interview with adviser to the Bank of Russia, Olga Butorina).

progress was made in the next six months, but the joint initiatives in the field can still not be compared with EU-USA achievements in the common fight against terrorism and criminality (the agreement between the USA and Europol, discussions about extradition, etc). Cooperation in combating organised crime is impeded by the image of Russia ingrained in the minds of many European politicians as a source of criminal threats, an image which partly reflects the reality, but which is appreciably exaggerated by European mass media. Can the struggle against organised crime be efficient if the hunt for criminals has to stop at the Schengen borders?

Another example is the energy dialogue, which was instituted on a regular basis between Russia and the EU at the Paris Summit of 30 October 2000. It was intended to provide ‘an opportunity to raise *all the questions* of common interest relating to the sector, including the introduction of cooperation on energy saving, rationalisation of production and transport infrastructures, European investment possibilities, and relations between producer and consumer countries.’ The EU is the main consumer of Russia’s energy exports (45%), and Russia is one of the main suppliers of the EU’s energy imports (more than 50% of gas and about 15% of oil). Over the coming decades, the share of Russian energy in European consumption is expected to grow. Russia confirmed its readiness to make a valuable contribution to the stability of the European energy market in a long-term perspective. Simultaneously, Russia underlined that it wants to go beyond its traditional role of exporter of primary energy (oil and gas). To that end, Russia is interested in technology transfers to develop higher value-added exports (refined products and petrochemicals) as well as power generation from coal and nuclear sources and electricity import in the EU. Russia has also shown an interest in the growth of transport infrastructures and the encouragement of European investments. On 29 November 2000, in the very beginning of the energy dialogue, the Russian Deputy Prime Minister (Viktor Khristenko) and the EU’s Director General for Energy and Transport (Francois Lamoureux) considered that ‘in order to achieve further integration of the energy sectors... special emphasis should be given to specific sectors including hydrocarbons, electricity, coal and energy efficiency’ and ‘noted the interest of Russia in the establishment of a specific European guarantee mechanism and the participation of the EIB in the financing of energy projects on Russia’.³ The necessity of encouraging ‘EU investment and technology transfer to Russia’s energy sector’ was recognised by the EU at the highest level, in particular in the Joint Statement of the EU-Russia Summit on 17 May 2001.

Four joint working groups, set up in November 2000, fulfilled their duties and presented their summary report to the EU-Russia summit on 3 October 2001. The summit took note of the report, established a high-level Committee on Energy Cooperation and passed to the official stage of the energy dialogue. As they were mentioned in the Joint Statement, progress could be made in the short term in the following areas:

- 1) improvement of the legal basis for energy production and transport in Russia;
- 2) ensuring the physical security of export networks ‘*if and when* this is considered necessary by the Parties;
- 3) legal security for long-term energy supplies i.e. long-term contracts;
- 4) the recognition of certain new transport infrastructures as being of ‘common interest’, but such projects ‘are the responsibility *of the States and companies* concerned’ (i.e. not of the EU).

³ PRODI, R., DE PALACIO, L. & PATTEN C., *Communication on the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue*, http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/energy_transport/russia/comm-final-en.pdf, 2001, pp 12-13.

On the other hand, a lot of important issues were mentioned as ‘requiring subsequent examination and technical study’. Among these issues were the following:

- 1) the potential and merits of an investment support scheme;
- 2) the conditions for reinforcing energy science and technology cooperation;
- 3) certain preconditions which should be required for electricity import into the EU.

Some other issues, such as the import of refined products, petrochemicals and nuclear materials into the EU and the future implementation of emerging mechanisms in economic relations not related with energy supply, were not even mentioned in the Joint Statement.

This means that:

- 1) further exceptional negotiations will be held on the gas and oil trade;
- 2) questions of technology transfer and of state guarantees for European investments are postponed to the indefinite future;
- 3) Russia’s wish to see an energy partnership as a contribution towards achieving the concept of a common economic space was not supported by the EU.

Of course, very important results were achieved, such as the decision to manage pilot projects in Arkhangelsk and Astrakhan. But the initial impulse had raised hopes that a much more intensive and widespread network of cooperation could be established. Many prospective ideas and promising political statements yielded a relatively modest practical result; the beautiful Christmas tree turned into a telegraph-pole.

It is not that all the abovementioned attempts to build a more in-depth framework for EU-Russia cooperation (and many others not cited) were unsuccessful. All technical disputes are based on some principal misunderstandings that determine the behaviour patterns of both partners. Fundamental disagreements on key questions like self-evaluation, the priorities of foreign and domestic policy and the strategic goals of cooperation produced most of the specific disputes and disappointments on a wide number of the questions discussed. All attempts to solve particular problems without an analysis of these ‘hidden’ disagreements and a redefinition of the basic preconditions of cooperation were doomed to deal, not with the causes of illness, but with its symptoms.

Perhaps the most significant among these fundamental disagreements leading to frustration in many practical aspects of cooperation between Russia and the EU is the difference between Russia’s self-evaluation and the image of Russia among many EU officials. The European Union takes Russia primarily as an object of policy, not as a subject. This can be clearly understood from an analysis of the EU Common Strategy on Russia.⁴ Of the four principal objectives mentioned in the document, two concern Russian internal affairs and further development of socio-economic transformation. The first is ‘consolidation of democracy, the rule of law and public institutions in Russia’, and the second is ‘integration of Russia into a common European economic and social space’, which has prerequisites such as ‘operational market economy... fair and transparent legislative and regulatory framework ... approximation of legislation between Russia and the EU’. The ‘major effort must obviously come from Russia’, while the EU may provide expertise and support and will wait for the results to establish

⁴ Although the Common Strategy is viewed as too vague, and although its added value is under question (see, for example, Solana, 2001), it reflects the main features of EU attitude to Russia.

substantive cooperation and to integrate Russia into European structures. Financial assistance through the TACIS programme reflects these EU goals clearly: more than 50% of resources are allocated to projects related to human rights, development of civil society, legal reform, etc.⁵ It should also be taken into account that two other EU Common Strategies are aimed at helping Ukraine and the Mediterranean rim. These countries are exclusively objects of EU policy and Russia's place in the list provides confirmation of the EU's attitude to Russia as primarily an object. Of course, Russia is not completely comparable with these countries. It has a dual role in the framework of EU foreign policy: a challenge to stability, from one side, and a partner in managing some problems of mutual interest, primarily in Central and South Asia and in the Middle East, from the other. But up to now the first approach has been dominant among EU officials.

Russia, from its side, is trying to build a partnership with the EU 'on the basis of equality'⁶. The Russian elite has more or less understood that Russia is not a superpower like the former USSR. It should take the next step - to accept the fact that Russia is not even a great power, like the EU or China. Russia possesses nuclear weapons - one of the components which characterises a great power, but whose importance in a post-modern world of soft-security threats, globalisation and economic interdependence is declining steadily. A great power should also be able to provide economic security. Russia failed to do this in 1998 and, without integration into the world economy, its current economic growth is doomed. All discussions about great power status are ridiculous if the Russian dream, as pronounced by President Vladimir Putin, is 'to provide such economic growth as will make it possible to reach the average level of Portuguese GDP in 15 years'.⁷ In addition, a great power should be able to provide military security. This means that the Russian army should theoretically be ready to hold the line against China's pressure and in practice to maintain stability on its southern borders. This seems impossible, even if all Russia's \$40 billion budget for military purposes is devoted to this aim.

The asymmetric nature of EU-Russia relations is evident and creates a considerable obstacle to the emergence of a strategic partnership. The current EU population is approximately 380 million (and will rise to about 550 million after enlargement) compared to Russia's 145 million people. The Russian economy is between 5% and 12% of the size of the EU economy, depending on the method of calculation.⁸ As shown above, even though the EU depends on Russia in certain sectors such as energy supply, the overall economic relationship is of asymmetric interdependence, with the EU playing a much more important role for the Russian economy than vice versa. Of course, the EU is not yet a significant player in geopolitics because it lacks the key aspects and instruments of a 'politically' great power. But even now the cumulative political influence of the EU Member States in the world is much greater than that of Russia. Moreover, the contemporary trend is evident; the European Security and Defence Policy is developing, new mechanisms and instruments are appearing, and the level of coordination among Member States is increasing. The EU is well on the way to creating such key components of foreign policy as a common defence policy, including common military forces, separable from NATO's infrastructure and able to maintain peacekeeping operations in the EU 'near abroad.' The European elite has the political will and the opportunity to turn the EU into a first-rank political actor. Russia has the same political will, but all attempts to act as a great political power meet the limit of scarce resources.

⁵ EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *Tacis Programme*, Annual Report 1999

⁶ Medium-term Strategy for Development of Relations between the Russian Federation and the European Union (2000-2010)

⁷ PUTIN, V., "Rossiia na rubeje tysiacheletiy", (Russia on the eve of millennium), *Nezavsimaja Gazeta*, 30 December 1999, p. 4.

⁸ VAHL, M., "Just good friends?", Brussels, *CEPS Working Document*, n° 116, March, 2002, p. 4.

The best result Russia can achieve, if it develops a stable and democratic political system, providing a legal and regulatory framework for economic growth and managing reasonable and predictable foreign policy, is to become a regional power. The European Union is as interested in that process as Russia itself, in the sense that it would allow Russia to maintain stability in Central Asia and have a great impact on the a balance of power in the rest of the continent. Brzezinski's 'black hole' in the centre of Eurasia is the worst thing that could happen to Europe. Moreover, acting jointly with and through Russia, the EU is more likely to succeed in the modernisation of Central Asia, because their common historical heritage gives Russia many channels of influence to operate a cheap and efficient policy in the region. Regrettably, due to Russia's weakness, these possibilities and potentials are not currently fully utilised.

The principal stumbling block in EU-Russia relations is the contradiction between Russia's unreal claims for overall equality and the EU's desire to integrate Russia on a differentiated basis. Russian opposition to such an approach is perceived as an unwillingness to cooperate, which leads to an increase in practical disputes and to overall stagnation of the relations. The EU's approach demonstrates a lack of perspective: it isn't ready to make minor concessions today in the name of strategic gains in the near future.

These contradictions force us to analyse the problem of EU-Russia cooperation *ab initio*. What does Russia want? Is it still an enigma that cannot be assessed by common sense? What kind of cooperation with the EU is Russia looking for? Or maybe, as many Western scholars argue, Russia has not yet passed the point of bifurcation, has not yet formulated a stable and reasonable foreign policy? If these scholars are right, European officials should simply wait. As we have seen, at present they often use this pretence to postpone the implementation of various projects. Russia should reinforce its democratic institutions and practices, take further steps toward the market economy, develop its civil society, etc. The quality of democracy in Russia should undoubtedly be reinforced. But I suppose the contemporary state of Russian society, elite, and foreign policy paradigm allows EU-Russia cooperation in spheres of mutual interest to be reinforced. The evidence for this assumption lays in the analysis of Russian public opinion and elite discourse on the main trends and priorities of foreign policy.

Firstly, traditional clichés implemented in the analysis of an unusual situation, such as post-Soviet Russia, can turn into deep-rooted prejudices. They are often used in political discussion but can hardly explain reality. It is notable that the substance of these prejudices does not vary according to their origin - Russian, American or European - or their functional aims - to substantiate anti-Russian or anti-European (anti-Western) policy. The geopolitical reflections of Gennady Ziuganov look like a distorted mirror image of Samuel Huntington's theory of the clash of civilizations; Zbigniew Brzezinsky and Vladimir Zhirinovskiy seem to be twins dressed in different clothes. It is easy to find examples of 'Russian imperialism syndrome', 'pan-Slavonic solidarity' or 'organic hostility to the West' in Russian history and use them to explain contemporary Russia. By contrast, I argue that the opinions of Russians about self-identity, other countries and international relations go beyond the framework of ideological myths and are often much more rational than their interpretation. Secondly, Russians themselves pay little attention to the situation abroad, because they are deeply preoccupied with domestic problems. Only extraordinary events, such as the Kosovo conflict, the NATO eastward expansion, the European reaction to the Chechen crises, and anti-terrorist operations in Afghanistan are able to, to some extent, scale this barrier of indifference. Even in 1995-96, when the majority of Russian politicians and mass media were campaigning against NATO enlargement, 37% of Russians had no clear-cut opinion on this question.⁹ This means that more attention

⁹ SOMOV, V., 'O griaduschem rasshirenii NATO', *Izvestiia*, 10 January 1997.

should be paid to Russian public opinion on domestic policy to find indirect characteristics of self-evaluation.

‘Russia and Europe (the West)’ is a very complex topic with many aspects. It is possible to measure and analyse the public opinion only by separating these aspects. The authors chose three dimensions of investigation (see table 1): self-identity of Russian society in East-West terms; desirable type of governance; and actual relations with foreign countries. They found that most Russians think that the main similarity between Russia and the East is in the economy. In making this assessment they apparently take into account the level of life and the level of economic development (which they consider as ‘Eastern’). They don’t compare the legal, institutional and structural frameworks of the economy (which have much more ‘Western’ characteristics). It is very logical and self-critical to compare Russian and Eastern countries’ economics, especially as 52% of Russians think that the Russian economy is poorly developed and 37% that it is semi-developed. The results for Russian culture and national character are the opposite; an overwhelming majority of the population (nearly 83%) consider them similar to the Western ones, but with some specific features. The poll carried out by the Foundation *Obschestvennoe mnenie* (1999) gave the same results: 45% of respondents argued that Russia, from its traditions, culture and history, is a European country; 38% were not able to answer properly and only 16% regarded Russia’s identity as Asian. Russians know quite a lot about European countries and the life of European societies. They can understand most of the information received, because they have common cultural grounds and behavioural patterns. They are able to make well-grounded comparisons between Russia and Europe and find a lot of differences in details. On the other hand, Russians have little information about Asia and can detail neither similarities nor differences between Russia and Asia. All speculations about the Asian nature of Russia are founded on a lack of understanding of what Asian societies and the Asian way of life are. As Vladimir Popov¹⁰ noted: ‘Before I visited Asia, I thought Russia was not Europe. But from Asia, it becomes clear that Russia is a part of Europe. The difference between Russian and European lives seems negligible when compared to the difference between China and Europe, be it Holland or Russia’.

Table 1. Do you consider Russian culture/national character/economy to be Western (as in the USA, France and Germany) or Eastern (as in China, Japan and India)? (%)¹¹

	Western	Mixed	Eastern
Culture	59.8	23.6	16.8
National character	44.3	39.1	16.8
Economy	22.8	25.9	51.3

In 1999, as a member of the ‘Lipetsk research group’, I organised four focus groups on European problems¹² and obtained the following results. On the question ‘Is Russia a part of Europe?’ all groups were of the opinion that there were many characteristics which unite Russia and Europe, but also many

¹⁰ POPOV, V., ‘Rossija mejdu Kitaem I Evropoy’, *Sovremennaja Evropa*, n° 2, April-June 2002, p.111.

¹¹ GORSHKOV, M. et al., *Osenny krizis 1998 goda: rossyskoe obschestvo do i posle*, Analiticheskie doklady RNISiNP, Moskva, ROSSPEN, RNISiNP, 1998, pp. 74-75.

¹² Interviews with these focus groups were carried out during the Summer European School in July 1999 in Lipetsk. Some 53 students (aged 18-23) from 16 regions of Russia took part, while 14 scientists and professors participated as lecturers. The School was managed by the Russian Association of European Studies and Lipetsk State Pedagogical Institute with the financial support of the Delegation of the European Commission in Moscow.

features dividing us. 'Russia is not Europe in the West-European sense of the term, neither is it Asia. "Russia is *another Europe*" was a common conclusion of these young people.¹³

One of the most important shifts in Russian society is the emergence of a new type of personality, called by Kantor (1999) 'modern Russian European' (*russky evropeets*). These people often cannot themselves define their European identity but their behaviour patterns are quite European. Their guidelines are Western standards of living, which means good household conditions, a car, electronics and all modern household appliances, good quality education for their children, tourism trips and other kinds of active leisure. People with such a value system do not rely upon the state but rather upon themselves. They appreciate the emerging possibilities for choosing their sphere of activity and ways to earn money, and they are ready to work hard to provide a high standard of living for themselves and for their families. Based on this system of values, a civil consciousness and political positions have begun to be formed. It is impossible to estimate the number of such 'Russian Europeans' in the total population of the country, but undoubtedly there are a lot. These people have not yet become the moving force of further economic and political reforms, but their influence on the political process is increasing steadily.

Russia is *another Europe*. Nobody questions the European nature of such countries as Greece, Poland or Slovenia, but nobody can deny the huge differences between them and France, Germany or the UK. Today the boundary of Europe is moving eastward, but it isn't a boundary between European and non-European societies. This new boundary is separating those who have already reformed themselves, and adopted new economic and political cultures, and those who are still in transition. What does the Russian population think about the ultimate goal of the transition? Does it want to 'go to Europe,' i.e. to build a state based on a market economy, democracy, the rule of law and respect of citizens' rights? In an opinion poll conducted by VTsIOM in February 2000, answers to the question 'What type of state would you prefer Russia to become?' were as follows¹⁴:

- 'a state looking like developed Western countries (democracy, market economy, citizens rights) - 39%;
- 'a state with its own unique characteristics' - 28%;
- 'a socialist state like the USSR' - 22%

Preferences for a 'Western' future were prevalent but the cleavage in the society is evident. However it should be taken into consideration though that the vast majority of votes in favour of the USSR are explained by nostalgia for a stable and comparably wealthy past, while those in favour of unique characteristics are influenced by disappointment with the ongoing reforms. Speaking more precisely about desirable political structures, the overwhelming majority of people preferred modern democratic institutions:

- presidential republic like the US - 25%;
- semi-presidential republic like France - 14%;
- parliamentary republic like Germany - 10%;
- constitutional monarchy of the UK type - 4%.

¹³ VOROBIEVA O. et al., *Rossii i Evropeysky Soiuz: sovremennoe sostoianie i perspektivy sotrudnichestva. Materialy evropeyskoy letney shkoly* (Russia and the European Union: Contemporary Situation and Perspectives of Cooperation. Materials of the Summer European School), Lipetsk, Lipetsk State University, 1999, pp.22-24.

¹⁴ See KLLAMKIN, I. & KUTKOVETS, T., 'Chego jdet Rossia ot Putina', *Moskovskie Novosti*, 7-13 March 2000, p. 8.

The political system of the former USSR was supported by only 20% of the respondents, while a large proportion of the population (27%) had no opinion on the question.

Attitudes to the market economy were more controversial. Only 9% of the population saw the economic transition as an undoubtedly progressive achievement, with 37% considering it generally positive but with many negative aspects. At the same time 38% thought it was a gross error or even a deliberate devastation of Russia.¹⁵ Such an ambiguous evaluation of the market reforms in Russia is understandable. Most Russians adhere to the market economy as a principle, but were shocked by the transition period, which brought an unprecedented decline in living standards for most of the population. Even in Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries, which were much more successful in their economic transformations, popular support for market reforms decreased; the overall opinion was neutral or even negative at the lowest point of the cycle (1997-98).¹⁶

Economic growth in Russia began only two years ago, in 2000, and the small improvement in the standard of living has not yet changed the negative legacy of the decade of economic collapse. We should pay more attention to the opinion of the elite, because it evaluates the market reforms more rationally. Representatives of the elite can consider the economic situation in the country without confusing it with their personal income; they mainly view the development of a market economy in Russia positively¹⁷. Despite the tragic experience of the 1990s, people don't want to reconstruct a socialist economy. However, the overwhelming majority (64%) of respondents considered a market economy with some elements of state regulation as an optimal model for the future; 9% preferred a more liberal model and only 14% adhered to a socialist planned economy.¹⁸

One of the most widespread myths is that Russians dream of rebuilding their empire and recovering their superpower status. At first sight, this may appear to be true: top of the list of ideas that inspire Russian people is 'the unity of all people in order to revive Russia as a great power' (41% in 1995 and 48% in 2001). But under the old name, people refer to a completely new ideal. 85% of Russians believe that the main characteristic of a great power is respect (not fear) from other states and nations and 84% consider that the only way for Russia to gain such respect is for it *to develop its economy and consolidate democracy*. Moreover, the second idea after 'the revival of Russia as a great power' is 'strengthening of rule of law in Russia', which was a priority for 47% of the people in 2001 (but only 30% in 1995).¹⁹ It is reasonable to conclude that there is a broad consensus among the Russian population on the question of the future development of the country: most people are looking forward to further development of the market economy and democratic institutions of the Western type.

Russian public opinion on the necessity to develop cooperation with Western countries and on the current level of bilateral relations confirms the absence of anti-Western jaundice even more clearly. Of course, public opinion reacts drastically to any contradictions in international relations. For example, in May 1998 47% of Russians considered that cooperation with the West was positive for Russia, but a year

¹⁵ GORSHKOV, M. et al., *op.cit.*, pp.224-229.

¹⁶ Central and eastern eurbarometer 1997, figure 3; and 1998, figure 71.

¹⁷ LEVINTOVA, E., 'Politichesky diskurs v postsovetskoy Rossii', *Monitoring obshchestvennogo mnenia*, n° 2, March-April 2002, pp.16-25.

¹⁸ KANDEL, P., 'Zapad i Rossija v rossijskom obshchestvennom mnenii', *Sovremennaja Evropa*, n° 2, April-June 2000, p.31.

¹⁹ ZDRAVOMYSLOV, A., 'Natsionalnoe samosoznanie rossijan', *Monitoring obshchestvennogo mnenia*, n° 2, March-April 2002.

later, in June 1999, only 39% of respondents supported this thesis.²⁰ Military operations in Yugoslavia and unsuccessful negotiations on Russia's foreign debts took place during this period and influenced the image of Western countries negatively. Answers to the question 'Should Russia strengthen economic relations with Western countries?' showed a similar picture: 46% of respondents agreed with this suggestion in September 1998, but only 35% in May 1999. However the percentage began to grow after May, and reached 68% in January 2000.²¹ This shows that adherence to cooperation with the West is overwhelming and quite robust: although it declined during foreign policy crises it returned to a high level soon after the end of the crisis. It testifies to an unwillingness to take a confrontational stand and demonstrates firm, even if not well-grounded, hope for mutual understanding.

Among regions with which Russia should develop economic and political relations, Western Europe is a top priority. Very interesting research was conducted by Joseph and Marina Dzialoshinski in 1998. They distinguished four types of perceptions of European civilisation in Russian society producing various views on the possibility of communicating and cooperating with European countries: isolationists, convergents, unionists and people without a fixed opinion. Isolationists (12.2%) were of the opinion that in a long-term perspective Russian and European civilisations are incompatible in principle, so Russia should only have economic relations with Europe and should always be prepared for various conflicts due to mutual non-understanding. Unionists (38.3%) have the opposite opinion: Russian and European basic behaviour patterns and values are broadly the same. Convergents (34.7%) hold intermediate positions: our civilisations have common values and opportunities for intensive cooperation, but we are far from a total coincidence of basic values. The fourth group consists of a small proportion of people (14.8%) without a definite opinion. This research²² also shows that the vast majority of the Russian population (73%) has a positive attitude to Europe, believes that there is a similarity in most basic values and wishes to develop cooperation in all principal spheres of life. In spite of all the tensions in foreign policy and the rhetorical statements of some politicians, an orientation toward Western (primarily European) civilization and integration into the world community and the international economy dominates in Russia, especially among young, educated, self-employed and professionally active people.

Despite the relative importance of public opinion, everyone realises that foreign policy is primarily a matter for the elite in all countries. This is especially true in Russia, where the habit of state institutions being influenced by civil society is not ingrained. The dispute within the Russian elite about the country's identity, place in the world and paradigm of foreign policy, emerged just after the collapse of the USSR. Initially, the discussion was constrained by three traditional concepts, all rooted in the 17th century: Atlanticism (*zapadnichestvo*), Eurasianism (*evrasijstvo*) and anti-Westernism. The main idea of contemporary Atlanticism was formulated by the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Andrey Kozyrev, who considered the countries of Western Europe 'as natural allies of the new Russia' and believed that the 'establishment of qualitatively new relations with them is the single priority of foreign policy'.²³ According to this logic, Russian national interests correspond to Western interests, and Russia should simply follow their policy. The anti-Western approach (neo-imperialism) is based on paranoid ideas of a conspiracy against Russia and propose to create a new counterweight to the USA, to lead the opposition of the Third World to the

²⁰ Foundation *Obshchestvennoe Mnenie*, 1999.

²¹ Vserossiiskii tsentr izucheniia obshchestvennogo mneniia (VTsIOM - All-Russia Centre for Public Opinion Research). English version of the website at <http://www.wciom.ru>

²² DZIALOSHINSKY, J. & DZIALOSHINSKAIA, M., 'Chto znaiut i chto dumaiut o Evrope rossiiane', *Evro*, n° 9-10, 1999, pp. 9-14.

²³ LAZEBNIKOVA, O., 'Zapad i borba v politicheskikh i nauchnykh krugah Rossii po voprosam ee vneshney politiki v Evrope (1991-1994 gg.)', *Doklady Instituta Evropy*, n° 16, Moscow, Institut Evropy, 1995, p.12.

West.²⁴ Finally, the traditional concept of *eurasjystvo* (originality) proposes that Russia should play the role of intermediary, a bridge between East and West, or even isolate itself in order to concentrate exclusively on domestic development.²⁵

Lack of space means that it is impossible to analyse all the advantages and disadvantages of these concepts. But it is important to mention that a certain consolidation of the elite on the idea of a 'realistic foreign policy' has occurred during the last few years. The first signs of a more balanced and pragmatic foreign policy appeared after the nomination of Evgeny Primakov as the Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1996. The end of the Cold War did not bring 'a stable and predictable world'; it was insufficient to neutralize 'old and new dangers and risks', such as terrorism, the spread of nuclear weapons and regional conflicts. It will require 'decades of active efforts by many countries to reach stability and balance'.²⁶ Moreover relations between Russia and the West should be based on 'equal partnership' and Russia should protect its interests 'more energetically and effectively', but without new confrontation.²⁷

The concept of realism gained momentum after the election of Vladimir Putin in 2000. Realism demands that Russia should concentrate on problems of national development, avoiding isolationism and confrontation in foreign policy. The main goal is to integrate Russia into the world economy as deeply as the competitiveness of the national economy allows, and to use new opportunities to attract foreign investment and stimulate domestic industry. Foreign policy is regarded as a way of stimulating economic growth and providing optimal conditions for the development of the national economy. This implies the denial of arrogance and unreal goals. 'For the first time in many decades - if not centuries - we are not in conflict, we are not in confrontation either with the world or with individual countries. But we must still learn to uphold our positions and win in the tough competition which reigns in the world and, above all, in world markets...In conclusion I would like to say: Russia is laying no claims to a special 'way'. But it does claim a place in the world and an attitude to itself that matches our rich history, the creative potential of our people and the vast size of our great country. It claims this because we are currently building a truly democratic society in our country and we want to be active participants in the construction of a multipolar democratic world pattern'.²⁸ The most unusual phenomenon of contemporary Russia is that 'foreign policy has ceased to be a subject of fierce debate for domestic political forces, on the contrary it is a sphere on which a broad public consensus is forming'.²⁹ Of course, some contradictory opinions do still exist, but the main political forces support the above-mentioned guidelines of foreign policy, which, again, does not exclude disagreements on specific policy questions.

Russia should - and aspires to - cooperate with European countries (and the USA as well) in a number of spheres in which their interests coincide, and in which cooperation can bring added value. A majority within the elite understands that further democratic development is not only a prerequisite for this cooperation, but also a vital necessity for internal stability and economic growth. The major challenge

²⁴ See for example LIPITSKIY, V., 'Vostok bezmolstvuet', *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, 30 March 1994, or ZANEGIN B., 'SShA v regionalnykh konfliktakh: malye voyny i bolshaia politika', *SShA i Kanada: Ekonomika, Politika, Kultura*, n° 8, 1999, pp. 28-29

²⁵ See KARA-MURZA, S., 'Rossia kak tradicionnoe obschestvo' in ZASLAVSKAIA T. (ed.), *Kuda idet Rossia? Obshee i osobennoe v sovremennom razviti*, Moscow, Intercenter, 1997, pp. 16-25, and NEKLESSA, A., 'Konets civilizacii ili zigzag istorii?', *Postindustrialny mir: centr, periferia, Rossia*, seria Nauchnye doklady', Moscow, MONF, IMEMO, n° 91, 1999, pp. 31-74.

■ ²⁶ PRIMAKOV, E., *OMRI Daily Digest*, 15 January 1996

²⁷ PRIMAKOV, E., 'Na gorizonte - mnogopoliusny mir', *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, 22 October 1996

²⁸ PUTIN, V., *Speech on Russia Day*, Moscow, 12 June 2002, www.kremlin.ru (in Russian)

²⁹ IVANOV, I., 'Vneshnija politika Rossii na sovremennom etape', *Vestnik RAMI*, n° 2, 2001, p.15.

Russia should meet, in order to integrate into the world economy, is to join the WTO. Foreign policy should be active in all regions where Russia has specific interests. But the main priority of Russian foreign policy must be European countries, due to the common values and intensive network of cooperation that already exists as well as the promising potential.

The time when Russians worked themselves into lather arguing whether Russia was or was not a part of Europe has gone. The former Eurasian slogan 'Russia cannot be understood with the mind' has been replaced with a new one: 'back to Europe'. Actually, we have been and remain Europeans; Russia is *de facto* a European country. But what do we mean by 'Europe'? To integrate into Europe does not mean to join the EU, especially since this aim is completely unrealistic and potentially harmful both to Russia and to the EU itself. Europe is a set of numerous regional organisations with different memberships and competencies. Russia is a member of the Council of Europe and OSCE; Russia has a well-established institutional framework of cooperation with NATO that was renewed in May 2002. Russia plays an important role in many subregional organisations (such as the Council of Black Sea Cooperation, the Council of Baltic Sea States, and the Barents Euro-Arctic Region Council) as well as in some organisations of the post-Soviet era that are European in nature and unite European countries such as Ukraine, Moldova, etc. It is true that the EU is the most important organisation of European states, but is it developing towards a more homogeneous entity? I would argue that the EU, on the eve of enlargement, while widening and deepening integration, is replacing *fragmentation among countries* by *fragmentation among groups of Member States*, rather than moving toward homogeneity...

The creation and maintenance of a uniform legal regime have always been strategic tasks of the European Union, and even the precondition of its existence and development. In the spheres transferred to supranational competency, EU law should be applicable in all Member States and has precedence over national law. The European Court of Justice has the exclusive right of interpretation of these norms and thus guarantees the uniformity of application of EU law. For this reason, the applicant states were obliged to accept the *aquis communautaire* unconditionally and in full. The few temporary exceptions to that uniform legal regime (granted to Spain, Portugal and some other countries at the time of their accession) were caused by the necessity for the new members to adapt, and the duration of such exceptions was precisely determined. However, when the number of Member States increased, it became more and more difficult to maintain that uniformity. While some Member States aspired to deepen the integration process, others, on the contrary, opposed supranational tendencies. The EU decision-making mechanisms allow these contradictions to be resolved as long as the decision does not require any amendment to the founding Treaties. Steps towards further integration which demand a revision of the Treaties imply decisions by unanimity, making the safekeeping of the uniformity of EU legal space dependent on the Member States' good will. However, the last decade has shown that good will and adherence to pan-European interests are not enough for all Member States to find a broad consensus on some crucial issues. The more or less uniform legal space of the Union has started to dissipate again as new borders have appeared inside the Union. This happened first with the Maastricht Treaty, when the UK refused to transfer additional powers on social policy regulation to the EU. As a result, these provisions on social policy were established in a separate protocol and became obligatory only for those Member States who signed it. Later, some exceptions were granted to Denmark in order to guarantee a positive result to the second referendum on the Maastricht Treaty. The Maastricht Treaty also entitled Member States not to participate in Economic and Monetary Union, and this provision was used by the UK and Denmark, although they fully complied with all the necessary criteria. The Amsterdam Treaty provided for a stage-by-stage integration of the *Schengen aquis* in EU law, having made simultaneous exceptions for the UK, Ireland and Denmark, and so

fragmenting the EU legal space in this sphere as well. The EU enlargement will increase this fragmentation considerably, since essential restrictions concerning free movement of citizens of CEE countries will be instituted for at least seven years from the date of their accession.

The Amsterdam Treaty has transformed the fragmentation of the EU's legal space from an exception into a rule, by initiating the mechanism of closer or enhanced cooperation. If 'at least a majority of Member States' intend to intensify cooperation in a particular policy while other Member States do not want to follow them, they can 'as last resort' establish a closer cooperation authorised by the Council acting unanimously. Countries that have established closer cooperation have the right to use 'institutions, procedures and mechanisms' of the Union. Thus, the widely discussed ideas of 'a two-speed Europe', 'a Europe of concentric circles' or 'avant-garde and periphery' now have a legal base for the first time in the EU's history.

The Nice Treaty transformed the essence of the mechanism of closer cooperation, by drastically facilitating the procedure for its establishment. Closer cooperation is now possible under the initiative of eight or more Member States (previously it had to be half of the Member States), authorised by the Council on the basis of a qualified majority vote (previously unanimity was required). The provisions for establishment were changed in order to minimize the negative impact of the forthcoming enlargement of the EU on this mechanism. Moreover the Nice Treaty has resolved the question of the establishment of closer cooperation in the second pillar (i.e. Common foreign and security policy of the European Union). It is now obvious that the 'European avant-garde' will consist of a minority of the EU-27 and will develop without any real control or influence from the rear-guard. In the future, the avant-garde will experiment with new forms of deepening the integration and will offer these as guidelines for the EU-27, which means that new Members (and some old ones) will be *de facto* left out of the adoption of some strategic decisions.

The provisions of the Nice Treaty actually allowed for different types of 'avant-garde'. One group of Member States may establish closer cooperation in, for example, foreign policy, and another in economic policy or in cooperation among law enforcement bodies. Germany establishing closer cooperation with the countries of Northern and Central Europe, and France, in a counterbalance, with the countries of the Mediterranean would look like the Europeans' worse nightmare. But such an opportunity exists, according to the Nice Treaty. Certainly, that forecast seems improbable, even though serious tensions arose between France and Germany after Nice. However, these or other similar hypotheses can be used by some countries to blackmail their EU colleagues in future negotiations, which of course will further weaken the already quite fragile European solidarity.

It is necessary to note one more feature of the fragmentation of the EU legal regime: separate blocks of *aquis communautaire* are increasingly used outside the Union. Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, although not members of the EU, entered the 'area of four freedoms'³⁰ in 1992. This has required the incorporation of the appropriate part of the *aquis* in their national legislation³¹. More than 1700 legislative acts were incorporated just after the signing of the EEA (European Economic Area) agreements, and since then the majority of acts adopted by the EU in the framework of the first pillar have been automatically extended to the three EEA countries. In addition, in March 2001 Norway and Iceland

³⁰ i.e. core freedoms of the EU single market : free movement of goods, persons, services and capital.

³¹ The EU on one side, and Austria, Finland, Switzerland, Sweden, Norway and Iceland on the other side, signed EEA Agreements in 1992. However a referendum in Switzerland failed to ratify the Agreements; Liechtenstein joined the EEA Agreements a bit later; while Austria, Finland and Sweden joined the EU in 1995.

joined the Schengen area. It is important to note that, although the newly adopted EU legislation on the *Schengen aquis* and the four freedoms have legal force in Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, these countries' rights are limited to decision-shaping, not decision-making. Switzerland is in a rather special situation. Because of its traditional neutrality, its contractual relations with the European Union are of limited character; however all EU legislation is studied carefully by the Swiss authorities and much of it has been adopted into national law. Moreover, a lot of sector agreements between Switzerland and the EU have been concluded. The last package of such agreements (devoted to free movement of persons, air and land transport, agriculture, research, public procurement and the mutual recognition of conformity assessments) was signed on 21 June 1999 and negotiations on four new agreements are underway. In spite of the many contradictions that allow Switzerland to participate *de facto* in the European Economic Area, disputes emerge periodically in its relations with the EU, especially over the liberal financial laws that facilitate money laundering.

Summarizing all the above, it could be argued that the fragmentation of the EU legal space is already considerable, and will increase and spread beyond the EU's borders, generating a rather chaotic map of the continent. A map in which a diversity of national legal regimes is replaced by and supplemented with a diversity of legal regimes of non-hierarchical subsets of European states united by the common regime of regulation of particular policies. Even the enumeration of these groups, existing today or planned for the near future, takes a lot of space:

- ◆ the Euro area - 12 Member States (Greece joined in 1 January, 2001);
- ◆ the Schengen area - 12 Member States plus Norway and Iceland;
- ◆ the area of 'foreign and security policy', in which the role of EU Member States differs essentially due to their membership of NATO and WEU, WEU only, or neither of these organisations;
- ◆ the European Economic Area which has extended the regime of four freedoms to Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein;
- ◆ the area of 'agrarian and regional policies' which will be extended to the CEE countries no earlier than 2014;
- ◆ the areas of closer cooperation consisting of 10-12 old Member States which will most likely arise, in foreign policy, Justice and home affairs (JHA) cooperation and, probably, in economic policy.

Such a pattern of contemporary EU development is a natural outcome of compromise between the desire to deepen the integration and the will to preserve national autonomy in sectorial policies. When the discussion about EU enlargement was launched in the early 1990s, three models of the influence of enlargement on the institutional structure of the EU were formulated: federalisation, the emergence of a Europe of variable geometry and confederalisation.³² It is obvious now that the EU has chosen the second way. The variable geometry includes, on one hand, the establishment of subsystems of some 'old' EU Members, and, on the other hand, the appearance of 'partial' (CEE countries in future - EU Members with exceptions) and 'virtual' Members (Norway, Iceland, Switzerland, which are not EU Members, but take part in/are the object of integration in some spheres of EU competency).

³² PEDERSON, T., *The European Union and the EFTA Countries: Enlargement and Integration*, London, Pinter Publishers, 1994, p. 163-165.

Moreover, some unofficial structures of decision-making, consisting of the so-called 'key' Members of the EU, are emerging. Big states have always had an advantage over smaller ones inside the EU. Relations between France and Germany formed the core axis of the European Union throughout its history. However, the ongoing substitution of this bilateral axis by a permanent multilateral network of consultations between some key Member States has aggravated these contradictions. The story of the informal supper, organised by Tony Blair on 4 November 2001 with the aim of elaborating a common position on the war in Afghanistan, is a clear example. Originally, it was planned as a meeting of leaders of the UK, Germany and France; Silvio Berlusconi of Italy and Jose Maria Aznar of Spain insisted on participating, arguing that Italian and Spanish military contingents were taking part in the ground operations. Two other leaders were also invited - Guy Verhofstadt of Belgium (because Belgium held the EU presidency during that period) and Wim Kok of the Netherlands (no obvious reason). This episode has caused great discontent among the eight Member States 'not invited for supper'. A high official of one of these countries has declared: 'We were treated like applicant countries. Decisions were taken, and we were simply informed about them'.³³ These informal consultations are an embryo of future closer cooperation; it doesn't matter much whether it will be institutionalised or not. All the indications are that the fragmentation of the EU legal space is turning from a temporary, transitional phenomenon into a permanent and formalized mechanism.

Having tried to answer one question - how should Russia be integrated? - we are moving to another, very important question: where should Russia be integrated? This brings another perspective, another scenario. Russia should not strive to catch up with the European Union. Equal strategic partnership might be called an illusion, like EU membership. On the contrary, the existing asymmetries could be successfully used while integrating with Europe in various functional fields. In particular, speaking about the north-west regions - the borderlands - 'much more limited forms of cross-border cooperation can be more useful for promoting economic development'.³⁴ This means that the border regions could benefit from their peripheral status and use the fruits of cross-border cooperation for their local or regional development, and not for the sake of the Russian economy as a whole. The case of the Kaliningrad exclave illustrates this scenario. It would indeed be more rational to make it a zone of intense cross-border cooperation instead of an ambitious 'pilot-project' for the EU-Russia relations, since Kaliningrad is a very specific case that can hardly compare to other Russian regions.

This scenario also means that Russia, instead of pursuing strategic goals, could follow the logic of 'sectorial integration' in several fields such as energy cooperation, the fight against organised crime, and creating a common European research area. Both Russia and the EU lag behind the USA in their research achievements. To fill the niche, it seems reasonable to combine Russian research potential with the EU's financial support to obtain visible results. The same reasoning could be applied to JHA cooperation. 'One would have to be blind not to realise that only the construction of some kind of a 'common internal security system', with the participation of the EU Member States, the applicant countries and those from the 'direct neighbourhood', can provide results in the fight to counteract cross-border criminal activities'.³⁵ Instead, the EU is persistently trying to protect itself from Russia as well as other 'near abroad' countries, relying primarily on tightening the visa regime.

³³ Cited in *The Economist*, 2001, p.31

³⁴ KAKONEN, J., 'Asymmetry and International Borders', in ESKELINEN et al. (eds) *Curtains of Iron and Cold: Restructuring Borders and Scales of Interaction*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 1999, p.381.

³⁵ POTEKINA, O. & KAVESHNIKOV, N., *Rational Insight or Political Kitsch? Dividing Lines Existing or Imaginary, EU-Russia: Cooperation or...?*, Report on the 3rd Convention of the CEEISA together with NISA and RISA 'Managing the (Re)creation of Divisions in Europe', Moscow, 20-22 June, 2002, p.7.

So the same question is on the agenda: how can Russia be integrated into the fragmented European space? By erecting the Schengen borders, the EU has tried to combine two incompatible aims - to cooperate with Russia and to protect itself from Russia, regarding Russia mainly as a threat. This contradiction in purpose, which demonstrates a tendency to adopt 'protective strategies' rather than cooperation, spoils the beautiful picture of a post-modern paradise of a 'maze' Europe with 'fuzzy' edges, where different legal, economic, security and cultural spaces are likely to be bordered differently, and where cross-border multiple cooperation will flourish.³⁶

We may speak about post-modern governance inside the European Union, but it stops at its external borders. It seems quite obvious that rumours about the death of borders are exaggerated. Even within the macro-regional processes, the border with Russia has a separate, and even a schizophrenic, function. The formation of cooperative macro-regions along the eastern external border of the EU, for example, in the Baltic Sea and the Barents Euro-Arctic regions, is one of the ways of initiating practical cooperation and avoiding most of the contradictions in EU-Russia relations. Another way is to foster activity in many functional fields of cooperation. Russia is unlikely to become part of the 'Europe of four freedoms', but Russian membership of a 'Europe of JHA cooperation' or a 'Europe of research policy' would benefit everyone.

Russia - situated far from the 'core', outside the dividing lines, be they geographical, functional or imaginary - could not be integrated into a 'Big Europe' following the logic of 'concentric circles'. This current framework of EU-Russia cooperation is already near to breaking point. Up to now, the development of real cooperation with Russia has been reduced to making Russia play by Western rules and on Western conditions. The logic was simple: not being members of the club, Russia had no right of veto. Europe, as well as the West as a whole, is ready to develop cooperation, but only depending on the progress that Russia achieves in implementing democratic reforms in both the economy and civil life. We should change the logic of cooperation. If there are common strategic purposes (such as the formation of a uniform Europe, in opposition to common threats), it is necessary to create common mechanisms for achieving these purposes. If the West is interested in a democratic Russia, it is necessary to include it actively in a democratic space and community instead of denying such cooperation. This approach was applied by the West to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, and, earlier, to the defeated Germany and Italy.

While keeping in mind strategic aims, Russia could be integrated into a fragmented Europe, 'with the multiplicity of governance structures and the multiple identities of the actors', where 'various constellations relate to one another'.³⁷ Regional, as well as functional and sectorial integration, while trying to bridge current division only where it is possible (a vehicle with limited aims), could play a positive role in re-shaping the EU-Russia relationship. Leaving aside the bright slogans about strategic partnership we should maintain several asymmetries and dividing lines. This could provide for a shift from 'ideas, words and images' to a rational insight which can stimulate real and fruitful EU-Russia relations.

³⁶ CHRISTIANSEN, T. & JORGENSEN, K.E., 'Transnational governance 'above' and 'below' the state: changing nature of borders in the new Europe?', *Regional and Federal studies*, Vol. 10, n° 2, 2000, p.64.

³⁷ CHRISTIANSEN, T. & JOENNIEMI, P., 'Politics on the edge: on the restructuring of borders in the north of Europe', in ESKELINEN et al. (eds) *Curtains of Iron and Cold: Restructuring Borders and Scales of Interaction*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 1999, p.13.

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