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THE ISSUE OF THE NORDIC IDENTITY SPECIFICS CONCERNING THE EU INTEGRATION PROCESS

For the time being, the EU integration process, as far as the issue of the EMU participation is concerned, appears to diverge the positions of the EU member states. Though an apparent majority of the states has unanimously decided to institute the unitary macroeconomic policies, the northern dimension of the Union, comprising the UK and the Nordic states, has exposed a significant reluctance to it. As for the Nordic states, those of Island, Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland, the issue is actually determined by the Nordic identity. Therefore, the specifics of the Nordic identity are a challenging issue to analyze, as to whether currently the utility of the integration process is appropriate for the Nordic societies.

It is of significant importance to note, that the present socioeconomic supremacy of the Nordic states amongst the European community originates from a specific identity. Considering the Nordic identity generalised, it is the Nordic state of prosperity, constituted of economic policies for social equality, political priorities to preferring the public opinion, social assistance of exceptional consistency, much as social and political institutionalisation of incomparable efficiency, which specifies the Nordic states. As a consequence, the major opinion of the Nordic societies defines the present position as preferable to the EU realities. Furthermore, apart from the European community, possessing an enduring supranational sovereignty, the Nordic states are affiliated to preserving national sovereignty. This, in case of crisis situation, is supposed to be urgent for attending to stabilisation. As a consequence, the major opinion of the Nordic societies exposes a concerned resistance to being subordinate to the EU authorities. The reason is a continuing state of prosperity, stability and security, which, for the majority of the Nordic states, is identified with a persistent estrangement from the European political realities of superiority and confrontation [1].

Therefore, it is possible to consider a specific Nordic identity, which differs from those of the EU member states and causes the Nordic reluctance to converge with the EU realities. Incidentally, it is possible to consider a specific Nordic community, composed of the Nordic states with similar identity specifics, amongst the European one, which actuates a specific position to the European integration process. It is of particular actuality, as the present policies of the Nordic states, excepting Finland, are oriented to preserve the stated identity.

Analysing the current crisis of the EU integration process, these are the EMU participation consequences, which determines the dissimilarity of the European community attitudes to it. According to the theory, the determinant consequence occurs to be the aggregation of the macroeconomic conjuncture, related to the integrating area. It is the cause for a significant external affection, concerning the economic situation in the participating states. Subsequently, the position of a less efficient economy is being progressed, whereas the position of a more efficient economy is being regressed. Though there is a considerable difference of socioeconomic progress, concerning the existed constitution of the EU, this is of particular actuality as considering the recent extension of the EU to the Eastern Europe. Furthermore, the accession of the less efficient Eastern economies to the EEA is to cause a durable transition, an instance of which is the problem of migration. The Eastern states are considered to be the source of considerable immigration, which imposes a crisis to the internal stability of the Nordic societies. Relating this to the position of the Nordic states, stated by World Economic Forum GCI and Transparency International CPI, it suggests a danger to imposing socioeconomic supremacy of the Nordic states amongst the European community [2].

Global Competitiveness Index, World Economic Forum GCI, 2004

State	Rank	Macroeconomic environment	Public institutions	Technology
Finland	1 st	5.54	6.52	6.00
Sweden	3 rd	5.13	6.28	5.90
Denmark	4 th	5.38	6.56	5.25
Island	8 th	4.90	6.44	5.01
Norway	9 th	5.43	5.73	5.08

Corruption Perception Index, Transparency International CPI, 2004

Country	Rank	Corruption perception	Social confidence
Finland	1 st	9.7	9.5 – 9.8
Denmark	3 rd	9.5	9.3 – 9.7
Island	3 rd	9.5	9.4 – 9.7
Sweden	6 th	9.2	9.1 – 9.3
Norway	8 th	8.9	8.6 – 9.1

Incidentally, the EMU participation necessitates conforming economic policies, much as delegating sovereign authority to the EU institutions, which is supposed to affect destructively the stability of regional economies. As for the Nordic states, it implies reconstructing, rather than conforming, the economies structure, which endangers social prosperity, stability and security for an indefinite time. The utility of such a transition is perceived to be inappropriate. Subsequently, it indicates a major concern of the Nordic societies, whether the existence of the Nordic state of prosperity is to be preserved by the EU unitary macroeconomic policies. Disregarding of Finland, being rather enthusiastic to the integration process, this appears to be the cause for the major Nordic reluctance to the further integration with the EU [3].

Summarising the mentioned before, it is a problematic issue, whether to preserve the Nordic identity, much as sovereign authority, is preferable rather than to challenge the opportunities of the EU integration process. Despite the current obstacles, were the integration process to be intensified, it would enable to utilise efficiently an extended economic potential. As for the Nordic societies, especially those of Island and Norway, the major opinion is satisfied with the present situation. Furthermore, the major opinion expects the EU economies and policies to succeed as much as those of the Nordic states, so that it is reasonable and secure to participate. Therefore, the Nordic identity specifics, concerning the EU integration process, remain to be an issue of time.

REFERENCES:

1. Østergård U. The Geopolitics of Nordic Identity. Denmark Institute for International Studies, 1997. – <http://www.diiis.dk>.
2. World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report 2004. – <http://www.weforum.org>.
3. Transparency International Corruption Perception Report 2004. – <http://www.transparency.org>.